

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Retail service quality in India: construct exploration and measure development

Retail service
quality in
India

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Abstract

Purpose – Service quality is a perceptual construct that is likely to differ across industries, customer segments and markets. The purpose of this paper is to explore the construct of retail service quality in the Indian context, and identifies quality components as a precursor to developing a quality measure.

Design/methodology/approach – Initially, the construct comprehension was done using exploratory research involving customer depth probes and juxtaposing it with the available literature. After defining the broad contours of retail service quality and surface considerations, the study attempted to discover retail service quality dimensions by factor analyzing the collected data.

Findings – It was found that retail service quality construct is composed of seven critical dimensions – ambience and layout, salespeople, merchandise, convenience, services, prices and customer care.

Research limitations/implications – The specific quality component structure found in this study highlights the need for managers to prioritise their retail operation and marketing efforts in sync with the uncovered quality dimensions.

Originality/value – This paper explored the quality phenomenon in the Indian retail context using a bottom-up approach. This paper provides the much-needed insights to firms that are entering the Indian market on what the quality means and the components it is made up of.

Keywords Retailing, Customer satisfaction, Customer expectations, Quality dimensions, Retail service quality measure

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Retailing is one of the more recent industries that have been opened up to foreign competition in India. As a result, it has been undergoing major structural changes. It is estimated that organized retail share is likely to increase (from 8 percent) to 20 percent by 2020 (Deloitte, 2014). This is likely to have a disruptive effect on companies and retailers that do not align their strategies to a more competitive environment, that requires a greater emphasis on customer-oriented marketing (Morgan *et al.*, 2009; Kirca *et al.*, 2011; Lin, 2012). Many scholars have argued that customer satisfaction and happiness can be critical to creating brand loyalty that can offer stability in uncertain markets (Gonçalves, 1998; Ellis, 2006; Palmatier *et al.*, 2007; Zhou *et al.*, 2008; Morgeson *et al.*, 2011).

The opening up of modern retail pitches it in direct competition with traditional retailing. Unorganized retail is still attractive to many buyers in India because of several factors, including proximity, goodwill, credit, bargaining, as well as convenience (Joseph and Soundararajan, 2009). With the growth of organized retailing in India, companies and retailers would need to improve their service quality (Parikh, 2006; Khare *et al.*, 2010; Rajaram and Sriram, 2014). But it is not clear what



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“service quality” refer to in an Indian context; and what it constitutes of. This research aims to fill this gap by articulating retail service quality, its dimensions and proposing a service quality measure. We argue that the service quality conceptualization, based on research conducted elsewhere, is not suitable for India, which is culturally and economically distinct. Several studies (e.g. Carman, 1990; Finn and Lamb, 1991; Gagliano and Htahn, 1994; Samli *et al.*, 1998; Chowdhury *et al.*, 1998; Paulins and Geistfeld, 2003; Ma and Niehm, 2006; Clotey *et al.*, 2008; Gable *et al.*, 2008; Sweeney *et al.*, 1997; Wong and Sohal, 2003, 2006; Boshoff and Terblanche, 1997; Plooy *et al.*, 2012; Wong *et al.*, 2001; To *et al.*, 2012; Morschett *et al.*, 2005; Swobada *et al.*, 2007; Perumal, 2005; Leen and Ramayah, 2011; Jain, 2010; Khare *et al.*, 2010; Naik *et al.*, 2010; Dhume, 2012; Bhaskar and Shekhar, 2011; Ramakrishnan and Ravindran, 2012; Tanwar *et al.*, 2012) have reported that the service quality is a highly context dependent concept. Malhotra *et al.* (2005) has also argued that concepts developed in the West (without incorporating knowledge of the local context) are likely to lead to inappropriate marketing strategies. For example, Yap *et al.* (2007) reported different factor structures emerging from SERVQUAL in seven different industries. Both SERVQUAL and Retail Service Quality Scale (RSQS) were also found to be unsuitable to assess customers’ perceptions of service quality of modern retail stores in China (Zhou *et al.*, 2002) and India (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988; Dabholkar *et al.*, 1996). In view of this evidence, it is important to develop a valid service quality scale specific to the Indian retail industry.

Indian retail market is very large, fragmented and predominantly unorganized (Jayawardhena and Farrell, 2011). Its liberalization is expected to bring about a major structural change. The notion of quality, its constituent elements and their relative importance, thus vary across different services (Lee, 2011). The quality is important because customer perception and attitude is shaped by it (Khare *et al.*, 2010). Hence, an appropriate service quality instrument is needed (Parikh, 2006) to measure and monitor quality for competitive advantage (Tanwar *et al.*, 2012; Sinha *et al.*, 2011; Zameer and Mukherjee, 2011; Bhaskar and Shekhar, 2011).

Retailing has evolved into a critical sector generating and providing value to customers (Sorescu *et al.*, 2011) and retail growth has resulted in dense and diverse service encounters (Zeithaml *et al.*, 2012). Thus retailers need to develop benchmarks for assessing performance on various quality dimensions (Sivakumar *et al.*, 2014) in order to stay competitive. This provides a compelling case for revisiting the quality construct from an Indian perspective (Torlak *et al.*, 2010). The paper begins with a review of the service quality literature and the importance of carrying out present research. Next research method is described followed by statistical analysis and primary findings. Finally, implications for retailers and limitations are also discussed.

Literature review

Quality is important for both customer attraction and retention. Customer retention has significant positive effects on sales and profitability (Duncan and Elliot, 2002). Quality influences buying behavior of both current and potential customers, thus helps organizations stay competitive (Gronroos, 1984; Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988; Rust and Oliver, 1994; Kasper *et al.*, 2000). In their study, Dabholkar *et al.* (2000) and Ranaweera and Neely (2003) acknowledged the positive effects of high service quality on a range of consumer behavioral outcomes. Raithel *et al.* (2012) have also argued that high levels of quality reduce customers’ perceived risk and result in increased profits and sales. Successful service firms practice continuous quality improvement (Mersha *et al.*, 2012).

High service quality helps in creating a satisfying shopping experience, and leads to customer satisfaction (Arnold *et al.*, 2005; Barnes *et al.*, 2010; Ponder and Dugar, 2011). However, the unique nature of services hinders transferability of quality concepts and models from goods to services. Unlike a physical product (or good), the conceptualization and measurement of service quality is complex. Initially, service quality was understood as the difference between customer expectations and perceptions (Lehtinen and Lehtinen, 1982; Lewis and Booms, 1983; Gronroos, 1984; Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988; Boulding *et al.*, 1993). More recently, concepts such as quality “inferiority” or “superiority” (Bitner and Hubbert, 1994), customer impression (Berry, 1980; Buzzell and Gale, 1987) and long-term evaluation (Cronin and Taylor, 1992) have been introduced.

Researchers have approached service quality either antecedent or component perspective (Dabholkar *et al.*, 2000; Surroja, 2003). In either case, there is much evidence to suggest there no universal set of components or antecedents applicable across different services, because of contextual differences. Even SERVQUAL (Parasuraman, *et al.*, 1988), the most widely accepted scale, has been criticized for its limited applicability in different industries and cultures (Carman, 1990; Babakus and Boller, 1992; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Teas, 1993, 1994). With these gaps in mind, the present study develops a context-specific service quality scale for Indian retail industry. Please refer to the approach used in the proceeding section.

Research methodology

Marketing research often requires exploration of constructs. A construct is an abstract idea that a research seeks to identify and measure. Simple constructs are easy to articulate and measure, but complex constructs require deconstruction in order to identify the underlying facets. A complex construct is holds various dimensions together by some commonality (Lavrakas, 2008). In 1979, Churchill (1979) developed a valuable paradigm for developing rigorous measures of marketing constructs. Since then it has been widely used in marketing research (e.g. Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988; Dabholkar *et al.*, 1996; Cadwallader *et al.*, 2010; Gundlach and Cannon, 2010; Kumar *et al.*, 2011; Josiassen, 2011; Murray *et al.*, 2011). This paradigm represents a multi-stage process that starts with domain specification, sample item generation, data collection and measure purification. We adopt Churchill’s (1979) approach for the purpose of developing the retail service quality construct and measures for the present study.

Data collection and sample

The population of this study comprised retail customers in the city of Delhi and National Capital Region (NCR), and the context was determined to be department stores and hypermarkets. First, the service quality domain was established through extensive literature review followed by a series of qualitative customer probes “such as what does quality mean to them, what dimensions are important, etc.”, interviews with customers and experts in the field.

The qualitative depth probes and expert opinions survey helped in formulating preliminary insights into the Indian retail service quality domain and components. In the next step, the retail service quality dimensions were identified using a judgmental method, which was then transformed into a data collection instrument. The instrument was then administered on a selected sample of shoppers who were intercepted at various shopping destinations. This was followed by data analysis – for

extraction of retail service quality dimensions for the purpose of developing a valid service quality scale. The data were collected using non-probability convenience sampling from 125 respondents. Data coding, recording and analysis were conducted with the help of SPSS software.

Item identification and pre-testing

In order to understand and establish broad contours of retail service quality, an exploratory research was conducted. Using the mall intercept technique, deep probes were conducted. A sample of 50 shoppers was probed to explore what service quality in the Indian retail context actually meant to them. The shoppers were also prompted to reveal aspects important to them in assessing store service quality. At this stage, attempts were made to dig deeper into the consumer mind by asking them “why” and “how” again and again. A deliberate attempt was made to stay away from any of the available quality frameworks during these probing exercises. The idea was to obtain a qualitatively rich picture of what transpires in consumers’ minds when they assess retail service quality. What acts as a reference point in making evaluations is fundamental to discovering a customer-oriented understanding of the retail service quality (Wong *et al.*, 2001; Vazquez *et al.*, 2001; Gable *et al.*, 2008; Martinelli and Balboni, 2012).

The interactions with customers were recorded so these could be later analyzed for revealing thematic patterns. Although, *prima facie*, the discussions appeared unstructured, deep probing and a careful analysis led to development of a rich repertoire of customer-generated attributes. The customer attributes were diverse and included a total of 73 quality aspects (see Appendix). Next, these quality attributes were shared with ten practitioners and academic experts to discuss possible redundancies and repetitions. This discussion round led to a condensed list of 68 quality attributes. These attributes were then distributed into different service quality categories by cross-referencing with the existing service quality frameworks. With multiple iteration involving categorization and re-categorization, all of the quality aspects were collapsed into seven categories based on content convergence. The seven categories included: convenience, customer services, policy, merchandise, sales people, physical facilities and store layout. This process is technically similar to factor analysis with one difference – it involved a judgment-based process of classification.

Pilot testing and refinement

The identified service quality dimensions formed the basis for instrument development. The initial draft of questionnaire was shared with marketing experts for their feedback on its adequacy and structural properties. Further analysis, including face and content validity, was also performed. The initial draft questionnaire was given to a sample of five respondents to check for language, layout and response ease. After attending to the deficiencies they identified, the modified questionnaire was administered on a sample of 50 respondents divided equally between both genders and aged above and below 35 years. The data so collected were tabulated, coded and subjected to statistical analyses. This was performed to establish internal consistency and reliability. The results of pilot study led to the development of the final questionnaire that consisted of 28 items. This final survey was administered on a sample of 125 respondents. A total of 101 usable responses were obtained.

Results

Exploratory analysis

Preliminary data analysis – data appropriateness test. In order to identify latent variables that lie beneath the surface variables, the factor analysis procedure was used. Prior to exploratory factor analysis, the data were checked for its appropriateness and factorability. First, correlations among the 28 service quality items were studied and results revealed a high degree of variable relatedness indicating possibility of grouping. There were 132 correlations significant at 0.05 level and 66 correlations significant at 0.01 levels. There were many correlations above 0.30, which pointed at data suitability (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007).

An analysis of anti-image correlation matrix (the matrix containing the negative of partial correlations) showed that all the elements on the diagonal axis had values > 0.5 . Hence, data were found suitable for factorability (Guo *et al.*, 2009; Josiassen, 2011; Aduke, 2012). A KMO test was performed on the collected data to test sample adequacy. The KMO test statistics stood at a value of 0.785 (KMO > 0.5). Based on Bartlett's test of sphericity, the correlation matrix generated differed significantly from the identity matrix. These tests suggested that various service quality items are significantly related, and it is justified to perform an exploratory analysis.

Identifying retail service quality dimensions/factors. The variance associated with each of the factors is depicted through scree plot. This plot revealed the presence of seven factors present in the data. This is observable in Figure 1, which shows that elbow occurs after seven factors.

The next step in the research process involved identifying the hidden retail service quality dimensions. Exploratory factor analysis as an interdependence multi-variate method on the data was conducted. Principal component analysis with varimax rotation was used. The factor retention was guided by results of scree plot and eigenvalues. Those factors with eigenvalue of more than 1, with loadings higher than 0.5 and low cross-loadings were retained for further analysis. Factors with larger eigenvalues (1.00 or higher) explain bigger variance, and therefore, were included. The factors with small or negative eigenvalues were omitted (Tabachnick and Fidell, 1996). The distribution of items among different factors after rotation has been presented

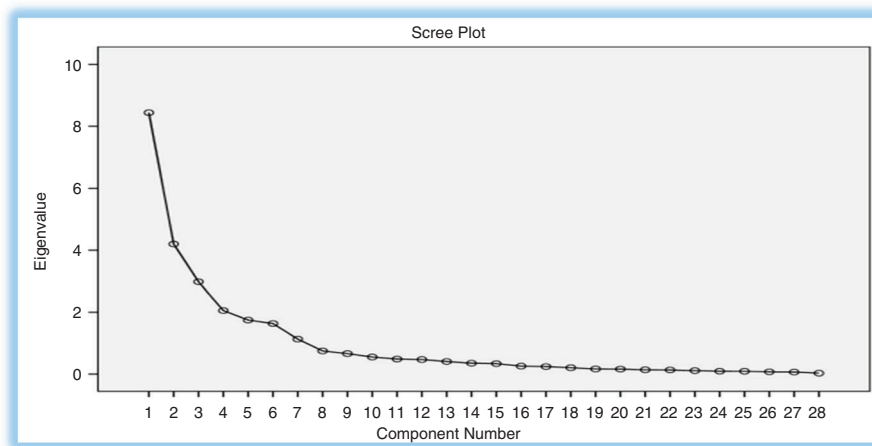


Figure 1.
Scree plot

in Table I, which reveals a seven-factor solution. These components of retail service quality were named based upon the variable loadings. The presence of multiple factors indicates that retail service quality construct is not one-dimensional but a multi-dimensional construct.

Reliability analysis. The components derived from the factor analysis and their constituent dimensions are provided in Table II. This retail service quality measure developed on the basis of seven dimensions was subjected to reliability analysis to check for its consistency. The last two columns on the right side of the Table II show the components along with their factor loadings and reliability coefficients. Cronbach's α was used to assess the internal consistency between items and reliability of the scale. As a rule of thumb, Cronbach's α value of more than 0.60 is considered as the threshold level for exploratory research (Nunnally, 1978) as is being followed in other studies (Falk *et al.*, 2010; Homburg *et al.*, 2010; Reimann *et al.*, 2010; Slotegraaf *et al.*, 2011; Josiassen, 2011; Lin and Hsieh, 2011; Hulland *et al.*, 2012). The measure developed in this study had a high score of 0.90 of the reliability coefficient. The composite reliabilities for the multiple items also indicated a good internal consistency.

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7
Easy access to the store				█			
Clear signage				█			
Ease of finding offers				█			
Clearly indicated prices				█			
Convenient shopping hours							█
Liberal exchange and return system					█		
Efficient crowd management					█		
Fast billing					█		
Reasonable prices						█	
Prices charged in relation to quality						█	
Honoring of promises made							█
Executing error-free transactions			█				
Adequate product variety			█				
Wide range of products and services			█				
Quality products offered			█				
Latest trends provided		█					
Helpful salespeople		█					
Guidance provided		█					
Personalized attention		█					
Courteous interaction		█					
Complete information		█					
Effective resolution of customers' problems		█					
Good ambience	█						
Comfortable shopping in the store	█						
Organized store layout	█						
Ease of movement	█						
Systematic display	█						
Attractive store interiors		█					

Table I.
Exploratory factor analysis

Extraction method: principal component analysis
Rotation method: varimax with Kaiser normalization/rotation converged in 12 iterations

Factors	Items	Factor loadings	Reliability coefficients
Factor 1	Good ambience	0.93	0.93
	Comfortable shopping in the store	0.90	
	Organized store layout	0.74	
	Layout facilitates easy movement in the store	0.71	
	Product items displayed systematically	0.77	
Factor 2	Attractive store interiors	0.83	0.95
	Helpful salespeople	0.91	
	Guidance provided by staff to customers	0.92	
	Personal attention by staff to customers	0.86	
	Courteous interaction by staff with customers	0.85	
Factor 3	Complete information by sales people to customers	0.87	0.89
	Effective resolution of problems and complaints	0.86	
	Adequate product variety	0.87	
	Wide range of products and services	0.87	
	Quality products offered	0.84	
Factor 4	Latest trends provided	0.80	0.85
	Easy access to the store	0.79	
	Clear signage to guide customers	0.61	
	Easy to find scheme/offers	0.60	
	Clearly indicated product prices	0.67	
Factor 5	Convenient shopping hours	0.77	0.91
	Efficient crowd management	0.83	
Factor 6	Fast billing	0.84	0.91
	Reasonableness of price	0.92	
Factor 7	Prices in relation to quality	0.93	0.70
	Honoring of promises made	0.75	
	Liberal exchange and return system	0.69	
	Execution of error-free transactions	0.63	

Note: Overall reliability score: 0.90

Table II.
Service quality
measure – reliability
analysis

Findings and discussion

This study aimed to explore and identify and measure the retail service quality construct in India. It was found that the retail service quality construct consisted of seven factors, which indicated its multidimensional nature (Parikh, 2006; Swobada *et al.*, 2007; Alhemoud, 2008; Plooy *et al.*, 2012; Martinelli and Balboni, 2012). The items that load on factors provide clues about the composition of these factors. The process of pattern making via exploring commonness accorded meaningful expressions accorded to these factors. The factor naming is a process of arriving at a higher order of abstraction (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994; Lin and Hsieh, 2011; Zemack-Rugar *et al.*, 2012; Samiee and Chabowski, 2012), by which a name is assigned on the basis of commonality. Factor labeling is done on the basis of domain representativeness. It is through this process the factors were assigned names. The factors consisting of retail service quality were store layout and ambience; frontline staff behavior and attitude; merchandise assortment and its trendiness; shopping ease and comfort; crowd management; value; and customer care. Table III lists the extracted components with their names, explanation and managerial implications.

The first dimension, “ambience and layout,” refers to the physical characteristics of the retail store (please refer to Table III). This relates to physical aspects of the stores,

Table III.
Service quality
dimensions:
explanation and
managerial
implications

Components	Explanation	Managerial implications
Store layout and ambience	Aspects related to the design and layout of floor space, the overall look and feel of the interiors of a retail store including the placement of fixtures and products within the store	Space, layout, atmospherics management
Frontline staff	Factors related to staff's training and mannerism involving efficient interactions with customers	Staff skills and attitude training of customer-facing staff
Merchandise	Includes variety, range, selection, quality including the latest products and trends in fashion	Product depth, breadth, trendiness
Shopping ease	Services that promote customers' comfort, simplify shopping experience and reduce difficulties	Comfort management
Crowd management	Minimizing delays in customers' checkout and ensuring efficient management of crowd	Crowd management/ interventions
Value	Product prices charged in comparison to competitor retail stores as well as in relation to the quality offered	Value management/ alignment
Customer Care	Factors promoting customers' interest, and thereby increasing trust and faith on the retailer	Customer focus/ orientation

such as attractiveness of interiors, store organization, ease of movement and the product display. The second dimension, "frontline staff," identifies the importance of salespeople or customer contact staff and represents the human side of the retail service encounter. It includes aspects such as their behavior in terms of courteousness, helpfulness, individualized attention, information provision, attending customer problems and guidance. The third dimension entitled "merchandise" relates with the products or goods sold in the store and covers various aspect such as variety, range, trendiness and quality of merchandise. The fourth dimension "convenience" is about feeling comfortable to shop in a store. Some related aspects include ease of access, navigational assistance through signage and shopping hours. The fifth aspect titled "services" is related to the billing process and crowd management practices. "Value" is the sixth component, which included reasonableness of price in relation to quality and competition. The last component titled "customer care" includes aspects such as customer interest protection, exchange and return policies, and honoring commitment. Quality influences revenues and profit (Brown *et al.*, 1991; Buzzell and Gale, 1987). Therefore, quality in services has become an important area of study in marketing (Vanniarajan and Manimaran, 2008). Researchers continue to look at it from different perspectives. The abstractness associated with services has generated debates about its evaluation again and again (Berry, 1980; Zeithaml *et al.*, 1993).

The present study attempted to develop retail service quality construct in India. The results revealed that service quality is a seven-dimensional construct. The dimensions explored are somewhat similar to SERVQUAL and RSQS. This convergence could be explained on the basis of globalization (Levitt, 1986). There has been emergence of a global consumer culture in India (and other developing countries) with a common set of symbols, products, brands and consumption activities (Terpstra and Kenneth, 1991; Khilji and Rowley, 2013). Scholars have argued that information, physical connectivity and trade is leading to cultural homogenization of markets across the globe (McLuhan, 1962; Levitt, 1983; Kim and Bhawak, 2008; Maystre *et al.*, 2009). Customer preferences are influenced by changing trends in developed world like Indian witnessed spurt in western influences on clothing (Reinartz *et al.*, 2011). Service organizations should focus

on providing “high-quality” service based on customer research (Iacobucci *et al.*, 1995; Olorunniwo *et al.*, 2006; Zeithaml *et al.*, 2012) as different quality models suggest (Seth *et al.*, 2005). The study concludes that Indian retailers need to build competence along aforementioned dimensions in order to compete effectively.

The study also reveals that human side of service is a principal aspect of retail service quality as it is crucial in determining service delivery, rapport building (Gremler and Gwinner, 2008; Coelho *et al.*, 2011). This has been highlighted in service marketing literature (Kumar *et al.*, 2006; Brown and Lam, 2008). The three of the seven retail service quality components in this study were found to relate with people side of the retail service operations. Service employees are responsible for service delivery and are key to customer satisfaction. The service employees are in a position to uncover latent customer needs and evolve creative solutions (Grewal *et al.*, 2009; Verhoef *et al.*, 2009). The human side could both be an opportunity and challenge, depending upon how a store manages its human resources. The contact staff interacts directly with customers, and they determine how the organization is perceived (DeRose and Tichy, 2012). A service encounter is a moment when a customer comes in contact with a service provider or “moment of truth” at which impressions are created (Normann, 2001). The importance of customer service personnel is highlighted in the expression that “frontline is bottom-line” (Jackson and Sirianni, 2009).

Customer satisfaction and loyalty are the best strategies for achieving competitive advantage. The quality dimensions are helpful in developing a customer-oriented perspective in creating and delivering quality. The quality systems cannot be developed under ambiguous or impressionistic understanding of customer expectations. Although service quality is an elusive construct (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985; LeBlanc and Nguyen, 1988; Carman, 1990) but it is important to measure it, “If you can’t measure it, you can’t manage it” (Zeithaml *et al.*, 1990). This study contributes to the quality concretization process by defining domain, dimension identification and measure development in retail context as it needs the same in other contexts like e-commerce (Parasuraman *et al.*, 2005), higher education (Abdullah, 2006), hotels (Wilkins *et al.*, 2007), health care (Senic and Marinkovic, 2013) and self-service technologies (Lin and Hsieh, 2011). The retail service quality measure developed in this research offers an effective tool of quality measurement. However, objective feedback is essential for developing specific programs to maintain and enhance service quality.

Limitations and future research

It is rare for a research study to be limitation free. First, this study is based on a sample of retail stores located in the national capital region of Delhi, which is a metropolitan and urban area. Future research should be undertaken to examine transferability of these results to different retail store categories. Quality is a sector-specific phenomenon; the quality dimensions found in this study may not be fully applicable across other services even within India. Inter-industry difference in services (e.g. health, retail, banking, etc.) lead to inter-category differences across quality measures (Lam and Woo, 1997; Kilbourne *et al.*, 2004; Wong, 2002; Nadiri and Hussain, 2005; Zhou *et al.*, 2002; Lee and Ulgado, 1997; Lam, 2002). Hence, the scale may need further adaptation. Finally, the present study is only a preliminary investigation. The relative importance of the quality dimension should be further explored in different contexts. Research could also be undertaken using alternative methodologies such as the longitudinal design to examine how quality construct evolves and changes over time.

The Indian retail is at the foothill of a major transformation due to deregulation of its economy. The growth in retailing in India (Kaur and Singh, 2007; Mohanty, 2012; Jhamb and Kiran, 2012), makes it necessary for retailers to evaluate their marketing strategies, both to defend their home turf against foreign players and to make a foray into foreign markets (Goswami and Mishra, 2009; Jain, 2010; Dhume, 2012). The instrumentality of quality in achieving better marketing performance is well established (Bhaskar and Shekhar, 2011; Kushwaha and Gupta, 2011; Manjunath and Prabhu, 2011; Ramakrishnan and Ravindran, 2012; Tanwar *et al.*, 2012). Ogden and Ogden (2005) advocated that planning could play a key role in administering and controlling retail operations. It should be customer oriented based on accurate interpretation of customers' desires and expectations. Dealing with demanding customers requires adoption of quality-oriented strategies (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988; Kandampully, 1998; Wong and Sohal, 2003; Rao and Kelkar, 1997). Service quality has to become the cornerstone of the marketing strategy due to increasing competition and a hostile business environment (Asubonteng *et al.*, 1996). It is therefore critical for researchers and practitioners to advance understanding of the concept.

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- (1) Quick and error-free billing;
- (2) ease of parking;
- (3) parking assistance;
- (4) seating arrangement (lounges);
- (5) signage and maps;
- (6) self-payment option;
- (7) clear and readable printouts;
- (8) quick counters;
- (9) ease of identifying offers;
- (10) store timings;
- (11) web site;
- (12) storage counters for heavy shoppers;
- (13) clear announcements;
- (14) shopping handbags;
- (15) carts availability;
- (16) price displays unambiguity;
- (17) advice and guidance to shoppers;
- (18) attention to shoppers;
- (19) on time customer services;
- (20) product adaptation;
- (21) relationship building;
- (22) customer feedback;
- (23) helpdesk;
- (24) post-purchase care;
- (25) enjoyable shopping;
- (26) updated stocks;
- (27) technology-based support;
- (28) crowd management;
- (29) fixed prices;
- (30) anchor as well as non-anchor stores (medium and high-end stores);
- (31) positioning;
- (32) updated pricing records;
- (33) item security;

- (34) festival and weekend discounts;
- (35) stock replenishment;
- (36) promotions policy;
- (37) credit facility;
- (38) electronic payment;
- (39) door step delivery;
- (40) exchange and return policy;
- (41) quality in relation to price;
- (42) overall price value;
- (43) product assortment;
- (44) variety and variation;
- (45) freshness;
- (46) availability;
- (47) product quality;
- (48) stock as per trends and occasions;
- (49) sales personnel training;
- (50) knowledgeable staff;
- (51) salesperson availability;
- (52) staff helpfulness;
- (53) staff efficiency;
- (54) staff friendliness;
- (55) problem solving;
- (56) motivated staff;
- (57) information to customers;
- (58) physical facilities;
- (59) ambience;
- (60) water;
- (61) restrooms and medical facilities;
- (62) healthy environment;
- (63) trial rooms;
- (64) entertainment avenues;
- (65) snacking area;
- (66) music;
- (67) cleanliness,

- (68) play area for kids;
- (69) layout;
- (70) aisles and sections;
- (71) racks and display;
- (72) order of sections; and
- (73) space organization.

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