

ABSTRACT

One of the main areas of marketing research has been the study of service quality. The increasing growth of service sector has drawn many academicians into the field of service quality, which provides varied thoughts of evaluating the service quality. The intent of this research was to understand the customers in emerging retail market like India and to test the applicability of RSQS construct in South India.

There was limited replication studies testing the reliability and validity of the retail service quality scale attempted in India particularly in South India. The validity of Dabholkar et al. (1996) retail service quality model has to be assessed in South Indian retail market. This research further provided a complete understanding of the retail service quality scale and the construct and defines relevant factors of the construct within a market that had not previously been successfully studied in this field.

There were many studies that explore the service quality dimensions affecting service quality in retail stores in India, but only few studies had investigated the applicability of retail service quality scale (RSQS) in India. The retail service quality in India was under researched, and in particular the applicability of Retail Service Quality Scale (RSQS) model. Consequently, this research strives to close a gap existing within the retail service quality

research literature by extending the study of the construct to emerging retail regions like India.

The objectives were framed and the empirical data using established retail service quality scale items as questionnaire were collected and the findings were supported the literature that retail service quality was best measured using a multi-factor instrument. With respect to the factor structure of the construct, the research findings indicated that in South Indian retail market, Retail Service Quality Scale exhibited acceptable level of reliability settings and shows good content and discriminant validity. Retail Service Quality was best represented by the three factors of Physical Aspects, Personal Interaction and Problem Solving.

This research work had advanced the knowledge on measuring retail service quality using RSQS and analyzing the validity of service quality construct. It also contributed in understanding the Retail Service Quality Scale (RSQS) and its factor structure and testing the scale in retail market like South India. Thus, from a theoretical point of view, this research had tested for content validity of how well an established scale instrument measure retail service quality in South India.

This research is believed to be the first replication study of Retail Service Quality Scale (RSQS) in South India, thus this research serves as a voice for future replication studies.