



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT
AHMEDABAD • INDIA

Research and Publications

Examining the Influence of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction and Patronage Intentions in Convenience Store Industry

Dheeraj Sharma

W.P. No.2014-04-05

April 2014

The main objective of the working paper series of the IIMA is to help faculty members, research staff and doctoral students to speedily share their research findings with professional colleagues and test their research findings at the pre-publication stage. IIMA is committed to maintain academic freedom. The opinion(s), view(s) and conclusion(s) expressed in the working paper are those of the authors and not that of IIMA.



**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT
AHMEDABAD-380 015
INDIA**

Examining the Influence of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction and Patronage Intentions in Convenience Store Industry

Dheeraj Sharma

Faculty, Marketing Area, Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad, India

Email: dsharma@iimahd.ernet.in

Abstract

This paper explores perceptions of service quality in the convenience store (c-store) industry. The study applies the extant SERVQUAL models (Parasuraman, Berry, and Zeithmal, 1988; Dabholkar, Thorpe, and Rentz, 1996) in a c-store context. The study examines the reliability and validity of the service quality measure in a c-store context and, additionally, models the implication of perceived service quality on customer satisfaction and patronage intentions in c-store context. Additionally, this study examines which dimensions of service quality are most important in c-store context. The results suggest that perceived service quality positively influences customer satisfaction and patronage intentions in the convenience store industry. Further, availability of merchandise and courtesy are strongest determinants of patronage intentions and customer satisfaction.

Keywords:

Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Retail Patronage

Examining the Influence of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction and Patronage Intentions in Convenience Store Industry

INTRODUCTION

Past researchers suggest that focuses on customer service will bring positive results for a retail store, while lack of customer service will create negative impact on performance outcomes (Jeter 2006). However, a small business like a convenience store (c-store) is often seen as a place where customers buy only a few items and, hence, spend less time in store. Plausibly, a discrete exchange approach that only focuses on cost and efficiency will be as effective as a focus on service quality. Consequently, service quality has not been considered to be an important factor in the success of the c-stores (Clarke, 2000; Jones, Mothersbaugh, and Beatty, 2003). Another common assumption is that consumers transact business at c-stores primarily due to locational convenience (Sutton and Rafaeli, 1988).

Contrary to these assumptions, repeat customers constitute almost 30% of the retail base of the c-stores (Morganosky, 1997). Furthermore, in an empirically investigation based on data from 250 stores, Gomez, McLaughlin and Wittink, (2004) suggest that customer satisfaction is an important predictor of patronage of c-stores. In concurrence, Sutton and Rafaeli (1988) have empirically demonstrated that cashier's friendliness and promptness influences c-store patronage. On the whole, customer service is an important element in the success of small businesses (Chaganti and Chaganti, 1983). Overall, past research contends recognizes that focus on service quality management practices can provide competitive advantage for small business (Upton, Teal, and Felan 2001), yet empirical research in this domain remains scant (Dane, Loy, and Stafford, 2008; Kuratko, Goodale, and Hornsby 2001).

Several prior studies have focused on service quality and its outcomes (c.f. Bolton and Drew, 1991; Clarke, 2000; Cronin and Taylor, 1994; Grönroos, 1988; Parasuraman et al., 1985; 1988; 1991; Parasuraman, 2002; Dabholkar et al., 1996; Saleh and Ryan, 1991), but research of service quality in c-store settings remains scant. An examination of c-store service quality is

particularly important because the consumer's shopping experience is different than in a retail store (Kirkup, De Kervenoael, Hallsworth, Clarke, Jackson, and Del Aguila, 2004; Grayson, 1998; Sutton and Rafaeli, 1988).

Despite a plethora of extant research that theorizes the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction, there appears to be little consensus about service quality enhancement resulting in correspondingly improved consumer satisfaction (Dick and Basu, 1994; Bitner, Bom, and Mohr, 1994). Further, the relationship between service quality, customer satisfaction, and patronage has received little empirical scrutiny (Iacobucci, Ostrom and Grayson, 1995; Sivadas and Baker-Prewitt, 2000). To this date these relationships have not been examined in a c-store context at the individual level.

This study examines the influence of service quality on customer satisfaction and individual patronage intentions. We employ the SERVQUAL model promulgated by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988; Dabholkar et al, 1996) to examine service quality in a c-store setting. Additionally, we examine the impact of service quality on customer satisfaction and patronage intentions. Since research on service quality in a c-store setting is limited, we first scrutinize general service quality and then specifically examine service quality in the convenience store domain.

This study follows a model with five constituents of service quality (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Dabholkar et al., 1996); namely; 1) physical aspects 2) reliability 3) personal interaction 4) problem solving 5) policy; and two key outcomes 1) customer satisfaction and 2) retail patronage.

The remaining paper is divided into six sections: section1 discusses the difference between traditional retail shopping behavior and c-store shopping behavior. Section2 summarizes the extant literature on service quality. Section3 discusses the retail SERVQUAL model and its applicability in c-store setting. Section4 theorizes the relationship between service

quality and two performance outcomes, namely, customer satisfaction and patronage intentions in c-store setting. Section 5 deals with the empirical examination of relationships. Section 6 offers prescriptive and descriptive insights for academe and industry.

This research study is important because the c-store industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the United States. C-Store industry represent small businesses owned and operated by mostly individual either as franchising operation or independent store operation. In 2005, there were 140,655 convenience stores; setting record revenues of \$495.3 billion an increase in sales of 25.5% from the previous year, and an increase of 18.2% in profits reaching \$5.9 billion (Longo and Chanil, 2006). In-store revenues also showed growth, surpassing all other competing channels while overall retail sales increased 9.1% (Longo and Chanil, 2006). Despite the growth in the industry many c-stores are facing closure (Chanil, 2004). Primary reason for the failure of c-stores is focus on marketing strategy that is transaction in nature. In other words, the marketing strategy of c-stores centers on convenient location and quick check-outs (Terasaka, 1998). Contrarily, in a recent study conducted by J.D. Power and Associates of the Japanese c-store industry, perceived service quality has been identified a critical factor in c-store success. The results of the study conducted in Japan indicate that service quality was an important predictor of customer satisfaction (Anonymous, 2005).

RETAIL SHOPPING VS C-STORE SHOPPING

As stated by Haynes, Pipkin, Black, and Cloud (1994), the consumer decision process in a retail setting involves a choice context. Compared to a typical retail store, purchases in a c-store are less planned. Unlike in a traditional retail store, consumers in a c-store exhibit a propensity for spontaneity and impromptu decision-making (Maruyama and Trung, 2007). In other words, more decisions are made and quicker in a c-store. Extant literature indicates that setting and context may constrain, augment, or modify cognitive functioning with regard

consumer behavior in the marketplace (Alba, Lynch, Weitz, Janiszewski, Lutz, Sawyer, and Wood, 1997).

The disparity in decision-making (between traditional store and c-store) can be primarily attributed to availability of more product choices. The increased availability of product choices solicits increased need for information processing (Johnson and Russo, 1984). However, when confronted with more choices, consumers use rules of thumb (i.e. heuristics) as a means of economizing cognitive faculties (Thaler and Mullainathan, 2000). This view is supported by Kahneman and Tversky's (1982) prospect theory, which suggests that there are limits to human cognition and judgment and individuals tend to economize the use of the cognitive resources.

This view is supported in literature that contends that consumers have wide variety of shopping styles, which are primarily related more to context and setting than individual consumer proclivity. Additionally, these styles of shopping appear to affect consumer decision making (Sproles and Kendall, 1986; Wesley, Lehew, and Woodside, 2006).

The notion of context in relation to service quality is precisely what this paper seeks to explore. In other words, does the traditional model of service quality that contends and maintain that service quality drive customer satisfaction and patronage, hold up in a c-store setting? Specifically, does the dimensionality of the SERVQUAL model changes in a c-store context? Does perceived service quality (PSQ) influences customer satisfaction and patronage intentions in a c-store setting?

SERVICE QUALITY

Service quality refers to a customer's judgment about the excellence or superiority of a service provider's performance (Babakus and Boller, 1992; Cronin and Taylor, 1994; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, 1988; Taylor and Baker, 1994; Teas, 1993; Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman, 1996). Past studies argue that perceived service quality can be considered to be similar to attitude because it is overall evaluation of the service based on its perceived

goodness (Bolton and Drew, 1991; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Iacobucci, 1998; Parasuraman et al., 1988).

Bolton and Drew (1991) developed a model to find the effect of service changes on customer attitudes toward service quality. Their findings suggest that perceived service quality is stable over time and does not change significantly over a short time period. Past research examining the relationship between perceived service quality and performance-related outcomes provides conflicting results.

Cronin and Taylor (1992) investigated the ways to measure customer service quality and established a relationship between service quality, customer satisfaction, and purchase intentions of customers. They concluded that service quality is a precursor of customer satisfaction and that consumer satisfaction, rather than service quality, has a direct effect on consumers' purchase intentions. On the other hand, further research conducted on the antecedents and consequences of customer satisfaction by Anderson and Sullivan (1993) stated that lower than expected quality has a great corresponding impact on customer satisfaction and repurchase intentions.

Contrarily, Anderson, Fornell, and Rust (1997) argue that focus on service quality may lead to tradeoffs between customer satisfaction and productivity. Anderson et al., (1997) concluded that exclusive focus on service quality may result in decreased productivity. Further, Mittal and Kamakura (2001) found that even though consumers may have the same satisfaction level due to their perceived service quality, their repurchase rates may vary depending on the shopping context. This view is supported by Salomann, Kolbe, and Brenner (2006), who found that increased use of self-service has diminished the importance of traditional service quality and retailers will increasingly need to focus on efficiency and productivity to maintain profitability.

These results are particularly important for examining the c-store industry because, compared to a traditional retail format, a c-store format focuses more on a transactional exchange rather than on a relational exchange (Pressey and Mathews 1998). In view of the aforementioned literature, the applicability of SERVQUAL in non-traditional retail setting needs further exploration. The following section discusses retail SERVQUAL model and its applicability in c-store setting.

SERVQUAL MODEL AND ITS APPLICABILITY IN C-STORE SETTING

The original SERVQUAL has been applied to measure service quality in various contexts, such as professional services (Freeman and Dart, 1993), health care (Lam, 1997), tourism (Tribe and Snaith, 1988), business schools (Pariseau and McDaniel, 1997) and information systems (Kettinger and Lee, 1994). However, past researchers have found mixed support for the validity and reliability of the original SERVQUAL model (Babakus and Boller, 1992; Bolton and Drew, 1991; Cronin and Taylor, 1992, 1994). Notwithstanding the failure of many researches to attain the five-dimensional factor structures posited in SERVQUAL; Parasuraman, Berry and Zeithaml (1993) argue that the five-factor structure of service quality is practically, theoretically and conceptually sound.

TABLE 1

Authors	No. of Factors
Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) and Parasuraman, Berry and Zeithaml (1991)	5
Cronin and Taylor (1992)	1
Babakus and Boller (1992)	2
Schneider, Wheeler and Cox (1992)	3
Cliff and Ryan (1994). Brensinger and Lambert (1990)	4
Carman (1990)	6 to 8

Dabholkar et al., (1996) extended a measure based on SERVQUAL which captures the service quality specifically in a retailing environment. The first dimension captures the consumer's perception of the appearance of the physical facilities and the convenience offered to the customer by the layout of the physical facilities. Baker, Dhruv, and Parasuraman (1994) contend that the store appearance is important to customers for choice of store. Further research suggests that customers value the convenience of shopping offered due to the physical aspects of the store (Gutman and Alden, 1985; Hummel and Savitt, 1988; Mazursky and Jacoby, 1985; Oliver, 1981)

The second dimension in the service quality model is reliability. It has two sub-dimensions, namely 1) assurance (Dabholkar et al., 1996) and availability of merchandise (Westbrook, 1981). The assurance sub-dimension measures the consumer perceptions that the store will keep its promise and the availability dimension assesses the consumer perceptions of whether he/she can rely on the availability of merchandise.

The third dimension is personal interaction. It has two sub-dimensions, namely, 1) responsiveness and 2) courtesy. These sub-dimensions are very closely related and capture how promptly and well the customer is treated by the employee.

The fourth dimension is problem solving. This dimension captures how customers perceive the store handles various store and merchandise related issues, such as merchandise returns, merchandise exchange, and complaints. This view is in concurrence with Westbrook (1981), who contends customers are often apprehensive about the timeliness and procedure of handling problems and complaints. Additionally, Westbrook 1981; Mazursky and Jacoby, 1985) indicate that customers view the ease of returning and exchanging merchandise as an important criterion for consumption decisions.

The fifth dimension is store policy, which captures the consumer's perception of the sensitivity of the store to the needs of customers. The dimension is reflected in store policy regarding the hours of operation, credit/debit card usage, parking availability etc. This view coincides with Westbrook (1981; Mazursky and Jacoby (1985) who suggest that the credit and charge account policies of the store are important consideration for store choice. Additionally, Oliver (1981) indicates that customers view availability of parking as an important criterion for store choice.

Application of SERVQUAL to c-store setting becomes pertinent because contrary to common assumption, c-stores mainly focus on repeat-customer business (Walker, 2006). Further, the physical environment of the store and friendliness of the employees are key components for success in c-store operations (Lisanti, 2006). Under the same philosophy, McKenna (2006) argues that it is important for c-stores to provide customers a positive and memorable buying experience. Rafaeli and Sutton (1988) suggest that in view of increasing competition in the c-store industry, for c-stores to sustain earnings and growth, service quality can be an important factor. Rafaeli and Sutton (1990) confirmed that customer demand is positively related with the cashier's empathy.

The major differences between the c-store consumption behavior and traditional retail consumption behavior arise from the transactional focus in c-stores and the relational focus in traditional retail stores. However, this research argues that the SERVQUAL model may be applicable in a c-store context because service quality is a tool to augment the perceived value to the consumer and facilitates consumption behavior (Mehta, Lalwani, and Han, 2001). Service quality can augment the overall value of offering to the consumer, thus, facilitating the consumption decision. Additionally, service quality is critical component of store image, which aids in store choice decision (Mazursky and Jacoby, 1985).

OUTCOME VARIABLES

Customer Satisfaction

Prior studies indicate that customer satisfaction is an important theoretical as well as practical issue for marketers (Churchill and Suprenant, 1982; Moutinho and Goode, 1995; Piercy, 1994). Researchers in the services domain emphasize the importance of service quality perceptions and it's the relationship with customer satisfaction (c.f. Anderson and Sullivan, 1993; Bitner and Hubbert, 1994; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Levesque and McDougall, 1996; Rust and Oliver, 1994; Taylor and Baker 1994). Consequently, past researchers have suggested a close relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction (Bitner and Hubbert, 1994; Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Patterson and Johnson, 1993; Taylor and Baker, 1994). Despite the intuitive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction, there is scant empirical research demonstrating a direct link between service quality and customer satisfaction in a retail context in general, specifically in a c-store context (Fisk et al., 1993; Levesque and McDougall, 1996).

Recent literature suggests that convivial salespeople augment customer satisfaction in retail banking (Levesque and McDougall 1996). Additionally, researchers contend that that the tangible and physical attributes of the service environment can prompt customer's affective responses and influence consumption intentions (Wakefield and Blodgett, 1999). Lastly, a service focus is important to enhance customer satisfaction (Sivadas and Baker-Prewitt, 2000).

Plausibly, there may be positive relationship between perceived quality of service and customer satisfaction. Consequently, it is hypothesized that:

H1: Perceived service quality is positively related to customer satisfaction.

Patronage Intentions

Bitner (1992) proposes that perceptions of the environment or environmental dimensions lead to certain beliefs or emotions about the environment, which then determine whether a

consumer will approach (i.e. patronize) or avoid a particular setting. Shim and Kotsiopulos (1992) used Darden's (1980) patronage model of consumer behavior to suggest that both personal characteristics and store attributes may influence patronage behavior. However, Rust and Zahorik (1993) contends that a direct link between components of service quality and patronage intentions needs should be explored.

Additionally, past researchers have established a relationship between the perceived quality of the service and the financial outcomes of the business (Babakus et al., 2004; Lee and Hwan, 2005). According to acquisition utility the economic gain or loss from the transaction is equal to the amount by which the utility of the purchased good exceeds the purchase price (Lichtenstein, Burton, and Karson 1991). Service quality substantially increases perceived value of the transaction, thus increasing the acquisition utility, which enhances perceptions of economic gain. Thus, it may be expected that such enhanced acquisition utility may have a positive effect on consumer patronage.

In a neighborhood, patrons of a c-store are likely to anticipate making purchases over an extended period of time (Laforge, Reese, and Stanton, 1984). The acquisition utility gained from good service and personal interaction is expected to increase incrementally. Furthermore, Baker (1998) suggests that consumer perception of service quality can influence consumer decision making and store choice criteria. Additionally, Bitner (1992) suggests that the store environment may influence consumer's patronage intentions. In our model, the quality that consumers perceive in a store is based on store environment cues. Consequently, perceived service quality is posited to positively influence the patronage intentions in c-store setting.

H2: Perceived service quality is positively related to patronage intentions.

Relationship between customer satisfaction and patronage intentions

Prior literature indicates that customer satisfaction is the key antecedent to patronage intentions (Hutcheson, and Moutinho, 1998; Stank, Goldsby and Vickery, 1999; Taylor and

Baker, 1994). East (1997) argues that customers who are satisfied with a particular offering are more likely to engage in repeat purchase of the same offering and dissatisfied customers, on the other hand, are likely to switch. Additionally, service quality perceptions influence intentions to recommend the store (Dabholkar, et al, 1996; Zeithaml, Berry and Parasuraman, 1996; Sivadas and Baker-Prewitt, 2000). Furthermore, customer satisfaction is one of the important criteria for customer retention (Sivadas and Baker-Prewitt, 2000). Finally, past researchers have theorized that customer satisfaction is key determinant of store loyalty (Dabholkar, Shephard, and Thorpe, 2000). Plausibly:

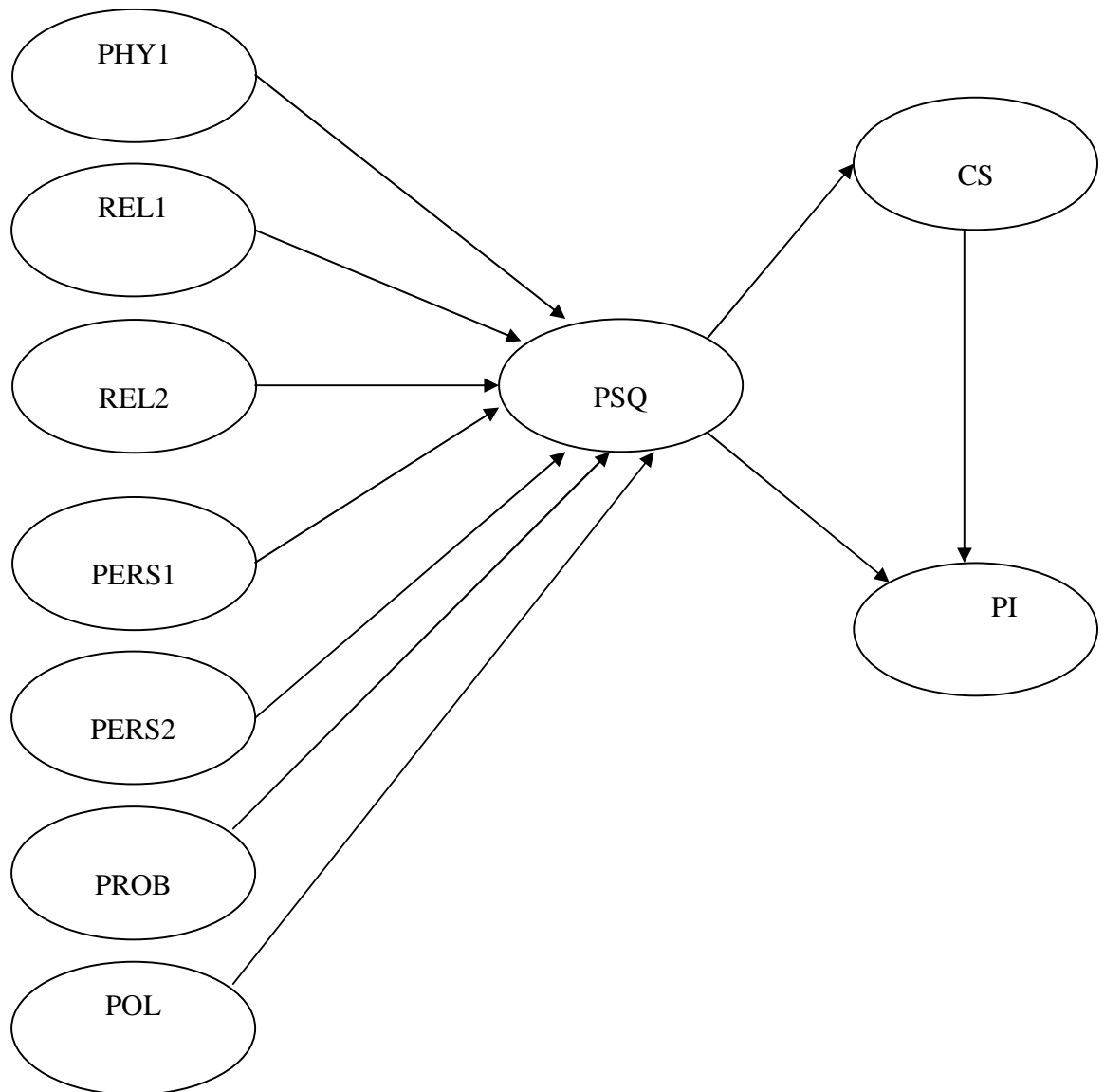
H3a: Customer satisfaction is positively related to patronage intentions

Mediation effect of customer satisfaction

Past research indicates that both service quality and customer satisfaction are important antecedents of patronage intentions (Wong and Sohal, 2003). Wong and Sohal (2003) contend that customers who are satisfied with the service quality of the service provider exhibit loyalty towards the same service provider. Service quality acts as an exogenous variable to customer satisfaction, specially, when their effects are considered simultaneously in a structural model. In other words, customer satisfaction and patronage intentions are augmented when perceive service quality increases. In turn, customer satisfaction directly influences patronage intentions. Thus, we posit service quality to have both direct effects on the patronage intentions and indirect effects through its relationship to customer satisfaction (see figure 1). Our contention for the role of mediator in service quality and patronage relationship is also endorsed by Dabholkar, et al., (2000), who used a data randomly collected from 397 churches to demonstrate the mediating variable role of customer satisfaction between service quality and behavioral intentions.

H3b: Customer satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between service quality and patronage intentions.

FIGURE 1



PHY1: Physical Aspects; REL1: Assurance; REL2: Availability of Merchandize; PERS1: Responsiveness; PERS2: Courtesy; PROB: Problem Solving; POL: Store Policy; PI: Patronage Intentions; CS: Customer Satisfaction; PSQ: Perceive Service Quality

METHOD

Data Collection: Data for this study was obtained using a survey instrument. Data was collected from the customers of seven c-stores in Northern Louisiana region. Customers of the C-stores were handed the survey, self addressed return envelope, and instructions to complete and return the survey. A total 205 completed surveys were returned from a distribution of 2500, resulting in a response rate of 8.2%.

Measures: The perceived service quality (PSQ) scale consisted of 28 items. Seventeen items originate from the SERVQUAL scale to which Dabholkar et al. (1996) added eleven items. Customer satisfaction was measured using a 5-item scale developed by Gremler and Gwinner (2000). The scale measures consumer satisfaction in a retail context. A 3-item scale anchoring developed by Gotlieb and Sarel (1991) was used to measure patronage intentions.

Reliability and Validity: To confirm construct unidimensionality, validity, and reliability, we evaluated the psychometric properties of the 28 service quality items, 5 items related to customer satisfaction, and 3 pertaining to patronage intentions by using the method of CFA by means of AMOS 5.0 (Anderson and Gerbing 1988).

Due to the small sample size compared to the number of parameters to be estimated, we ran two CFA models. First, we estimated a second-order CFA model for the PSQ scale with its five dimensions (and two sub-dimension). The results of the CFA indicated less than optimal fit. Hence, based low loadings and modification indices, we deleted two items, one each from physical aspects and problem solving. After deleting two items the model demonstrated a good fit: $\chi^2=633.75$, $df=284$, $GFI=0.95$, $AGFI=0.89$, $CFI=0.99$, and $RMSEA=0.049$ supporting the second-order seven-dimensional factorial structure (two dimension have two sub-dimensions) of our service-quality scale.

The second CFA model included all endogenous constructs: PSQ (7-items each for the dimensions and sub-dimensions, summed up at the first-order level), customer service (5-item) and patronage intentions (3-item). After deleting one item of job satisfaction, the fit indices appeared acceptable: $\chi^2=181.72$, $df=64$, $GFI=0.96$, $AGFI=0.91$, $CFI=0.99$, and $RMSEA=0.055$. The hoetler's N was 245 and 272 ($p=.05$ and $p=.01$) suggesting the sample size was adequate for testing the relationships posited in the model.

Average Variance Extracted, Composite Reliability, Convergent Validity and Discriminant Validity. The AVEs of the scales of service quality, customer satisfaction and patronage intentions were 0.61, 0.98, and 0.85 respectively. The composite reliability scores for the preceding constructs were 0.93, 0.99, and 0.94 respectively. The AVEs of the seven dimensions of PSQ scale were: Dem1=0.93, Dem2=0.93, Dem3=0.96, Dem4=.95; Dem5=.92; Dem6=.94 and Dem7=0.98, while the composite reliabilities of seven dimensions were 0.96, 0.96, 0.98, 0.96, 0.95, 0.94, and 0.99 respectively. Hence, both AVEs and composite reliability scores met the acceptable levels of Bagozzi and Yi (1988).

Acceptable convergent validity was achieved with significant ($t > 1.96$) critical ratios for all the indicators (Gerbing and Anderson 1988). The test for discriminant validity was supportive, no confidence intervals (+/- two standard errors) for the estimated correlations for the constructs included 1.0 (Anderson and Gerbing 1988).

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. PSQ overall	-									
2. Dem1	.55**	-								
3. Dem2	.69**	.26**	-							
4. Dem3	.84**	.26**	.37**	-						
5. Dem4	.78**	.21**	.37**	.55**	-					
6. DEM5	.42**	.21**	.46**	.25**	.30**	-				
7. DEM6	.39**	.26**	.32**	.36**	.18*	.47**	-			
8. DEM7	.42**	0.08	.15*	.19*	.42**	.42**	.42**	-		
9. CS	.27**	.23*	.27**	.22**	.13 ⁺	.23**	.31**	.72**	-	
10. PI	0.45**	0.22*	0.51**	0.19*	.42**	.26*	.43**	.77**	.22**	-
Mean	6.36	6.25	5.99	5.99	6.11	4.88	4.11	5.77	5.62	6.06
Standard deviation	0.93	0.99	1.44	1.38	1.42	1.63	2.11	0.81	1.28	0.98

* $p < .10$; ** $p < .05$; *** $p < .01$ (one-tailed test)

Non-Response Bias. For testing non-response bias, multivariate analysis of variance was applied to all the variables related to the three constructs, comparing the early respondents with the late respondents (Armstrong and Overton 1977). The multivariate tests of Pillai's trace (Sig. = 0.436), Wilks' Lambda (Sig. = 0.426), Hotelling's Trace (Sig. = 0.427) and Roy's Largest Root (Sig. = 0.426) were all non-significant, indicating no group differences in the covariance matrices made up of the variables. As such, non-response bias may not be a problem.

Hypothesis Testing. We estimated the structural model in AMOS 8.0 (Byrne 2001) to test for the hypotheses using the purified scales of the constructs generated from the above mentioned steps. The structural model (model 1) consisted of service-quality measures (7-item summed at first order level for each dimension/sub-dimension), customer satisfaction (4-item) and patronage intentions (3-item). The fit indices demonstrated a reasonable fit: $\chi^2=155.12$, $df=63$, $GFI=0.91$, $AGFI=0.89$, $CFI=0.96$, and $RMSEA=0.052$. Service quality appeared as a

significant predictor of both customer satisfaction and retail patronage ($t=3.23$, $p\text{-value}<0.001$, $t=2.30$, $p\text{-value}=0.014$, one-tailed) supporting hypothesis 1 and 2. Additionally, customer satisfaction is a significant predictor of retail patronage ($t=2.18$, $p\text{-value}=0.022$) supporting hypothesis 3a. Table 3 shows the results of the structural analysis.

The partial mediating role of customer satisfaction on the relationships between service quality and patronage intentions (H3b) was assessed by removing the path from service quality to customer satisfaction and comparing this model with the model that estimates the path from service quality to customer satisfaction (model 1). The model without customer satisfaction as the partial mediator achieved a good fit: $\chi^2=371.263$, $df=179$, $GFI=0.936$, $CFI=0.963$, $RMSEA=0.046$, Hoelter (.05) index=291 and Hoelter (.01) index=311. There is a significant unmediated path from service quality to patronage intentions. Examination of the mediated model paths reveals that service quality to patronage intentions continues to be significant, while the service quality to customer satisfaction path is also significant. However, the level of significance of the direct path from service quality to patronage intentions increases in the unmediated model (Baron and Kenny, 1986), thus, suggesting that customer satisfaction is a partial mediator, thus supporting H3b. The results of hypotheses tests are shown in Table 3

Table 3
Hypotheses Tests Results

	Mediated Model	Unmediated Model
Structrual Estimates^a	$\chi^2=155.12$, $df=63$, GFI=.91, CFI=.96, RMSEA=.052, CN=245(.05) CN=272(.01)	$\chi^2=171.133$, $df=64$, GFI=.90, CFI=.95, RMSEA=.062, CN=244(.05), CN=270(.01)
PSQ→CS	.073(3.23)	
PSQ→PI	.046(2.30)	.059(2.89)
CS→PI	.076(2.18)	.066(1.99)

PSQ=Perceived Service Quality

PI=Patronage Intentions

CS=Customer Satisfaction

POST HOC

The relationships between the service quality dimensions and the two outcome variables were examined by using multiple regression analysis. Summated scores were created for each of quality dimension (Table 5). The results of the multiple regression analysis indicated that all the seven quality dimensions had a significant impact on the two outcome variable, explaining 64% of the variance. Availability of merchandise (REL1) is the most important determinant of the customer satisfaction is ($\beta=0.42$). The results concur with the study conducted by J.D. Powers in Japanese c-store industry (Anonymous, 2005) which identified reliability as a strong predictor of customer satisfaction. Surprisingly, the second most important determinant of the two outcomes is courtesy ($\beta=0.38$). The remaining service quality dimensions contribute rather equally to overall service quality with Beta weights ranging from 0.30 (responsiveness), 0.28 (Physical aspects), 0.27 (assurance), 0.25 (problem solving), and 0.24 (store policy).

Availability of merchandise ($\beta=0.39$) and courtesy ($\beta=0.35$) are the strongest predictors of patronage intentions. Support for these results is found in the relationship marketing literature. Uusitalo (2001) advises that c-store should not only provide quality products for customers but also provide a pleasant store experience to attain optimal performance outcomes. The third strongest determinant of patronage intentions was physical aspects ($\beta=0.32$). Other factors were similar in their ability to predict patronage intentions in c-store with Beta weights ranging from 0.25 (responsiveness), 0.24 (assurance), 0.22 (problem solving), and 0.21 (store policy). In total, the service quality dimensions explain 68% of the variance in patronage intentions. Overall, availability of merchandise and courtesy seem to be the most powerful driver of all dependent variables. This finding confirms that the reliability and personal interaction represent the most critical factor for assessing the patronage intentions and satisfaction with c-store retailers. The results of the analysis are summarized in Table 4

TABLE 4

Relationship between SERVQUAL dimensions and Customer Satisfaction and Patronage Intentions in C-Store Context

CONSTRUCT	CUSTOMER SATISFACTION	PATRONAGE INTENTIONS
Availability of Merchandize	.42	.39
Courtesy	.38	.35
Responsiveness	.30	.25
Physical Aspects	.28	.32
Assurance	.27	.24
Problem Solving	.25	.22
Store Policy	.24	.21

*significant at $p=.05$; **significant at $p=.01$

DISCUSSION

The results of this study based on SERVQUAL model in the c-store setting are somewhat consistent with the results previously reported in the retail setting. The five dimensional retail-SERVQUAL model can be useful in capturing perceived service quality of the c-store. Further, the results indicate that perceived service quality positively influence customer satisfaction and retail patronage.

The efforts to increase the perceived customer service quality by leveraging on the five dimensions of the retail-SERVQUAL model may result in positive outcomes for the store managers. The results of the study amplify the argument in previous research, which argues that for retail stores to survive and prosper, the management should tailor strategy for customers to re-purchase often, and promote relationships between the store and the customers (Zain and Rejab, 1989). However, specific attention is needed on three dimension of

service quality, namely, availability of merchandise, courtesy, and physical aspects of the c-store.

Odekerken-Schröder, De-Wulf, Kasper, Kleijnen, Hoekstra, and Commandeur (2001) contend that traditional retail stores should offer personal service, extra attention, and customized advice to augment satisfaction and patronage. In concurrence, Uusitalo (2001) argued that traditional traditional retail stores should be perceived to provide personal touch, personal attention, empathy, responsiveness, good facilities and pleasant in-store experience to the customers for continued patronage. This study corroborates the aforementioned contentions in a c-store setting by empirically examining and supporting the linkage between service quality and two outcomes, namely, customer satisfaction and patronage.

IMPLICATIONS

In the retail setting, customer service has been documented as becoming increasingly important; however, this is not the case for the convenience store industry where no previous research had explored the relationship of perceived service quality to customer service satisfaction and retail patronage. The findings of this study may aid managerial decisions in allocating resources to increase perceived service quality and consequently, customer satisfaction and retail patronage. A store manager would need to measure the levels of each of the variables related to perceived service quality, to accurately decide where improvements should be made and resources invested.

In the case of the tangibles dimension; resources should be assigned to the improvement of equipment used in stores, i.e point of sale systems, enhanced store lighting, convenient location of top ten items sold, and displaying important information such as promotions and discounts on visible ads outside the store, to attract more customers. Employee training would help the store in many dimensions, like offering prompt service, showing willingness to help customers, courtesy, knowledge of products, confidence, knowing customer

needs and acting in their best interests. Other dimensions like responsiveness, assurance and empathy would be the addressed and the perceived service quality increased.

Management should continuously strive to improve the perception that customers have of their service by delivering accurate information, keeping operating schedules (reliability dimension), and assist customers faster (responsiveness dimension) since the perceived quality of the store will be augmented by these elements.

In concurrence with Reeves and Hoyer (1993) this research contends that increasing the wide variety of products in the store that have high consumption so that customers have choices of desired products and ensuring that products are of good quality, and are in stock will increase perceived product quality of the store. Carrying brand names will contribute to this purpose as well. However, the right combination of resources to devote to each variable will depend on the current level of operations in the store; however, combining all these elements will lead to increased customer service satisfaction and, as most stores desire, better store performance.

LIMITATIONS

This study and the proposed model is based on previous research in a retail context; however, convenience stores may have many other significant variables affecting customer service satisfaction that may need further exploration. Future researchers may examine the dimensionality of service quality in a c-store setting. Further, researchers may develop a psychometric measure to capture the service quality in the c-store domain appositely. Additionally, researchers may examine the gap between the expectations and perception of service quality in c-store setting. A gap in expectation and perception of service quality may result in dissatisfaction for the customers.

REFERENCES

- Alba, Joseph, John Lynch., Barton Weitz, Chris Janiszewski, Richard Lutz, Alan Sawyer, and Stacy Wood (1997), "Interactive Home Shopping: Consumer, Retailer, and Manufacturer Incentives to Participate in Electronic Marketplaces", *Journal of Marketing*, 61(3), 38-53.
- Anderson, Eugene W., Claes Fornell, and Roland T. Rust (1997), "Customer Satisfaction, Productivity, and Profitability: Differences between Goods and Services", *Marketing Science*, 16(2), 129-145.
- Anderson, Eugene W., and Mary W. Sullivan (1993), "The Antecedents and Consequences of Customer Satisfaction for Firms", *Marketing Science*, 12(2), 125-143.
- Anderson, James C., and David W. Gerbing(1988), "Structural Modeling in Practice: A Review and Recommended Two-Step Approach", *Psychological Bulletin*, 103 (3), 411-23.
- Anonymous (2005), "Seven-Eleven Ranks Highest in Japan Convenience Store Customer Satisfaction for a Second Consecutive Year", retrieved from <http://www.jdpower.com/corporate/news/releases/pressrelease.asp?ID=2006042>.
- Armstrong, J. Scott, and Terry S. Overton (1977), "Estimating nonresponse bias in mail surveys", *Journal of Marketing Research*, 16 (August), 396-402.
- Babakus, Emin; Carol C. Beinstock, and James R Van Scotter (2004), "Linking Perceived Quality and Customer Satisfaction to Store Traffic and Revenue Growth", *Decision Sciences*, 35 (4), 713-737.
- Babakus, Emin, and Gregory W. Boller (1992), "An Empirical Assessment of the SERVQUAL Scale", *Journal of Business Research*, 24: 253–268.
- Bagozzi, R. P., & Yi, Y. 1988. "On the evaluation of structural equation models." *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 16(1): 74-94.
- Baker, Julie A. (1998), "Examining the Informational Value of Store Environments," *Servicescapes: The Concept of Place in Contemporary Markets*, Chicago: American Marketing Association, 55–80.
- Baker, Julie, Dhruv Grewal, and A. Parasuraman, (1994). "The Influence of Store Environment on Quality Inferences and Store Image", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 22(4), 328-339.
- Bitner, Mary Jo (1992), "Servicescapes: The Impact of Physical Surroundings on Customers and Employees", *Journal of Marketing*, 56, 57-71.
- Bitner, Mary Jo, Bernard H. Booms, and Lois A. Mohr (1994), "Critical Service Encounters: The Employee's Viewpoint", *Journal of Marketing*, 58, 95-106.
- Bitner, Mary Jo, and Amy R. Hubbert (1994). "Encounter Satisfaction Versus Overall Satisfaction Versus Quality: The Customer's Voice", *Service Quality: New Directions in Theory and Practice*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 72-94.

- Bolton, Ruth N. and James H. Drew (1991), "A Longitudinal Analysis of the Impact of Service Changes on Customer Attitudes", *Journal of Marketing*, 55, 1-9.
- Byrne, Michael D. (2001), "ACT-R/PM and menu selection: Applying a cognitive architecture to HCI", *International Journal of Human-Computer Studies*, 55, 41-84.
- Chaganti, Radha and Rajeswararao Chaganti, (1983), "A profile of profitable and not so profitable small business," *Journal of Small Business Management* 21, 45-50
- Chanil, Debra and Don Longo (2005), "Ethnic Merchandising: Latin Lessons," *Progressive Grocer*, Retrieved from <http://www.allbusiness.com/retail-trade/food-stores/4268358-1.html>
- Chanil, Debra (2004), "C-Store Saturation Study," *Convenience Store News*, 40(5), 27-44
- Churchill, Gilbert A. and Carol Surprenant (1982), "An investigation into the determinants of customer satisfaction", *Journal of Marketing Research*, 19, 491-504.
- Clarke, Ian (2000), "Retail power, competition and local consumer choice in the UK grocery sector", *European Journal of Marketing*, 34 (8), 975-1002.
- Cronin, Joseph J., and Steven A. Taylor (1992), "Measuring Service Quality: A Reexamination and Extension", *Journal of Marketing*, 56, 55-68.
- Cronin, Joseph J., and Steven A. Taylor (1994), "SERVPERF versus SERVQUAL: Reconciling Performance-Based and Perceptions-Minus-Expectations Measurement of Service Quality", *Journal of Marketing*, 58 (1), 125-131.
- Danes, Sharon M., Johnben Teik-Cheok Loy, Kathryn Stafford, (2008) Business planning practices of family-owned firms within a quality framework. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 46(3), 395-421.
- Darden, William R. (1980), "A patronage model of consumer behavior", in Stampfl, RW & Hirschman, E (eds). 1980. *Competitive structure in retail markets: The department store perspective*. Chicago. American Marketing Association.
- Dabholkar, P. A., Thorpe, I. D., and Rentz, J. O. (1996) "A Measure of Service Quality for Retail Stores: Scale Development and Validation," *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Sciences* 24(1), 3-16.
- Dabholkar, P., Shepherd, D., and Dayle Thorpe (2000). "A Comprehensive Framework for Service Quality: An Investigation of Critical Conceptual and Measurement Issues Through a Longitudinal Study," *Journal of Retailing*, 76(2), 139-173.
- Dick, Alan S., and Kunal Basu (1994), "Customer loyalty: Toward an integrated conceptual framework", *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 22, 99-113.
- East, Robert (1997), "Consumer Behaviour: Advances and Applications" *Marketing*, London: Prentice Hall.

- Finn, David, and Charles Lamb (1991), "An Evaluation of the SERVQUAL Scales in a Retailing Setting", *Consumer Research*, 18(1), 483-490.
- Fisk, Raymond P., Stephen W. Brown, and Mary Jo Bitner (1993), "Tracking the evolution of the services marketing literature", *Journal of Retailing*, 69, 61-103.
- Freeman, Kim D., and Jack Dart (1993), "Measuring Perceived Quality of Professional Business Services", *Journal of Professional Services Marketing*, 9(1), 27-47.
- Gomez, Miguel I., Edward W. McLaughlin, and Dick R. Wittink (2004), "Customer satisfaction and retail sales performance: an empirical investigation", *Journal of Retailing*, 8(4), 265-278.
- Gotlieb, Jerry B., and Dan Sarel (1991) "Comparative advertising effectiveness: the role of involvement and source credibility", *Journal of Advertising*, 20, 38-45.
- Grayson, Kent (1998), "Customer responses to emotional labor in discrete and relational service exchanges", *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 9, 126-54
- Gremler, Dwayne D., and Kevin P. Gwinner (2000), "Customer-employee rapport in service relationships," *Journal of Service Research*, 3, 82-104
- Gronroos, Christian (1988), "Service Quality: The Six Criteria of Good Perceived Service Quality", *Review of Business* 9, 10-13.
- Gutman, Jonathan, and Scott D. Alden (1985), "Adolescents' Cognitive Structures of Retail Stores and Fashion Consumption: A Means-end Chain Analysis of Quality", pp. 99-114 *Perceived Quality: How Consumers View Stores and Merchandise*, Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
- Haynes, Janice L., Alison L. Pipkin, William C. Black, and Rinn M. Cloud (1994), "Application of a choice sets model to assess patronage decision styles of high involvement consumers", *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 12(3), 22-31.
- Hummel, John W., and Ronald Savitt (1988), "Integrated Customer Service and Retail Strategy," *International Journal of Retailing*, 3 (2), 5-21.
- Hutcheson, Graeme D., and Luiz Moutinho (1998), "Measuring Preferred Store Satisfaction Using Consumer Choice Criteria as a Mediating Factor," *Journal of Marketing Management*, 14(7), 705-720.
- Iacobucci, Dawn, Amy Ostrom, and Kent Grayson (1995), "Distinguishing Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction: The Voice of the Consumer", *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 4(3), 277-303.
- Jeter, Lynn, (2006), "Businesses returning to Customer Service 101", *Mississippi Business Journal 2008*, 28(30), 3.
- Johnson, Eric J. and J. Edward Russo (1984), "Product Familiarity and Learning New Information," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 11 (6), 542-550.

- Jones, Michael A., David L. Mothersbaugh, and Sharon E. Beatty (2003), "The Effects of Locational Convenience on Customer Repurchase Intentions across Service Types", *Journal of Services Marketing*, 17 (7), 701-12.
- Kahneman, Daniel, and Amos Tversky (1982), "The Psychology of Preferences", *Scientific American*, 246, 160–73.
- Kendall, Elizabeth, and George B. Sproles (1990) "Consumer Decision-Making Styles as a Function of Individual Learning Styles", *Journal of Consumer Affairs* 24 (1), 134–147.
- Kettinger, William J., and Choong C. Lee (1994) "Perceived Service Quality and User Satisfaction with the Information Services Function", *Decision Sciences* 25(5, 6), 737-766.
- Kirkup, Malcolm, Ronan De Kervenoael, Alan Hallsworth, Ian Clarke, Peter Jackson, and Rossana P. Del-Aguila (2004), "Inequalities in Retail Choice: Exploring Consumer Experiences in Suburban Neighbourhoods", *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 32 (11), 511-522.
- Kuratko, Donald F., John C. Goodale, and Jeffery S. Hornsby (2001), "Quality Practices for a Competitive Advantage in Smaller Firms," *Journal of Small Business Management* 39(4), 293-311.
- LaForge, Raymond W., Richard M. Reese, and Wilbur W. Stanton, "Identifying and Attracting Consumer Outshoppers," *Journal of Small Business Management*, January, 22-29
- Lam, Alice (1997) "Embedded Firms, Embedded Knowledge: Problems of Collaboration and Knowledge Transfer in Global Cooperative Ventures", *Organization Studies*, 18 (6), 973-996.
- Lee, Jungki (2005) "Measuring Service Quality in a Medical Setting in a Developing Country: The Applicability of SERVQUAL", *Services Marketing Quarterly*, 2005, 27(2), 1-14.
- Lee, Ming Chang, and Ing San Hwan (2005), "Relationships among Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction and Profitability in the Taiwanese Banking Industry", *International Journal of Management*, 22 (4), 635-648.
- Levesque, Terrence, and Gordon H.G. McDougall (1996) "Determinants of Customer Satisfaction in Retail Banking", *International Journal of Bank Marketing*, 14 (7), 12–20.
- Lichtenstein, Donald R., Scot Burton, and Eric J. Karson (1991), "The Effect of Semantic Cues on Consumer Perceptions of Reference Price Ads", *Journal of Consumer Research* 18, 380–391.
- Lisanti, Linda. (2006), "Back to Basics", *Convenience Store News*, 42(11), 80-81.
- Lisanti, Linda. (2006), "Happy Employees, Happy Customers", *Convenience Store News*, 42(11), 97.

- Maruyama, Masayoshi and Trung, Le Viet (2007), "Traditional bazaar or supermarkets: A profit analysis of affluent consumer perceptions in Hanoi," *International Review of Retail, Distribution & Consumer Research*, 17(3), 233-252.
- Mazursky, D, and Jacob Jacoby (1985), "Forming Impressions of Merchandise and Service Quality", *Perceived quality: How consumers view stores and merchandise*, Lexington, MA: Lexington Books.
- McKenna, Terry (2006), "How to Sustain a Customer Service Strategy", *National Petroleum News*, 98(3), 16.
- Mehta, Subhash C., Ashok Lalwani and Soon Li Han (2000), "Service quality in retailing: relative efficiency of alternative measurement scales for different product-service environments," *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 28 (2), 62-72
- Mittal, Vikas, and Wagner A. Kamakura (2001), "Satisfaction, Repurchase Intent, and Repurchase Behavior: Investigating the Moderating Effect of Customer Characteristics", *Journal of Marketing Research*, 38(2), 131-142.
- Morganosky, Michelle A. (1997), "Retail Market Structure Change: Implications for Retailers and Consumers", *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 25 (8), 269–274
- Moutinho, Luiz, and Mark Goode (1995), "Gender Effects to the Formation of Overall Product satisfaction: A Multivariate Approach," *Journal of International Consumer Marketing*, 8 (1), 71-90.
- Mullainathan, Sendhil and Richard Thaler (2001), "Behavioral Economics," *International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences*, Pergamon Press, 1st edition, 1094-1100
- Odekerken-Schröder, Gaby, Kristof De Wulf, Hans Kasper, Mirella Kleijnen, Janny Hoekstra, and Harry Commandeur (2001), "The Impact of Quality on Store Loyalty: A Contingency Approach", *Total Quality Management*, 12 (3), 307-322.
- Oliver, Richard L. (1981), "Measurement and Evaluation of Satisfaction Processes in Retail Settings", *Journal of Retailing* 57(fall), 25-48.
- Zain, Osman M. and Ismail Rejab (1989), "The Choice of Retail Outlets among Urban Malaysian Shoppers", *International Journal of Retailing*, 4 (2), 35-45.
- Parasuraman, A., (2002), "Service Quality and Productivity: A Synergistic Perspective", *Managing Service Quality*, 12(1), 6-9.
- Parasuraman, A., Leonard L. Berry, and Valarie A. Zeithaml (1991), "Refinement and Assessment of the SERVQUAL", *Journal of Retailing*, 67(4), 420-49.
- Parasuraman, A., Valarie A. Zeithaml, and Leonard L. Berry (1985), "A Conceptual Model of Service Quality and Its Implications for Future Research", *Journal of Marketing*, 49, 41-50.

- Parasuraman, A., Valarie A. Zeithaml, and Leonard L. Berry (1988), "SERVQUAL: A Multiple-Item Scale for Measuring Consumer Perceptions of Service Quality", *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 12-40.
- Pariseau, Susan E., and J. R. McDaniel (1997), "Assessing Service Quality in Schools of Business", *The International Journal of Quality and Reliability Management*, 14(3), 204-215.
- Patterson, Paul G., and Lester W. Johnson (1993), "Disconfirmation of Expectations and The Gap Model of Service Quality: An Integrated Paradigm", *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behaviour*, 6, 90-99.
- Pressey, Andrew. D. and Brian P. Mathews, (1998), "Relationship marketing and retailing: comfortable bedfellows?" *Customer Relationship Management*, 1(1), 39-53.
- Piercy, Nigel F. (1994), "Customer Satisfaction and The Internal Market", *Journal of Marketing Practice Applied Marketing Science*, 1 (1), 22-44.
- Rafaeli, Anat, and Robert I. Sutton (1988), "Untangling the Relationship between Displayed Emotions and Organizational Sales: The Case of Convenience Stores", *The Academy of Management Journal*, 31(3), 461-487.
- Rafaeli, Anat, and Robert I. Sutton (1990), "Busy Stores and Demanding Customers: How Do They Affect the Display of Positive Emotion?" *The Academy of Management Journal*, 33(3), 623-637.
- Employee Perceptions of Management Commitment and Customer Evaluations of Quality Service in Independent Firms
- Reeves, Carol and Frank Hoy (1993), "Employee Perceptions of Management Commitment and Customer Evaluations of Quality Service in Independent Firms" *Journal of Small Business Management*, 31(4): 52-59.
- Rust, Roland T., and Richard L. Oliver (1994), "Service Quality: Insights and Managerial Implications from the Frontier", *Service Quality: New Directions in Theory and Practice*, Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Rust, Roland T., and Anthony J. Zahorik (1993), "Customer Satisfaction, Customer Retention, and Market Share", *Journal of Retailing*, 69(2), 193-215.
- Saleh, Farouk, and Chris Ryan (1991), "Analysing Service Quality in the Hospitality Industry Using the SERVQUAL Model", *The Service Industries Journal*, 11,324–343.
- Salomann, Harold, Lutz Kolbe, and Walter Brenner (2006), "Self-Services in Customer Relationships: Balancing High-Tech and High-Touch Today and Tomorrow", *e-Service Journal*, 65-84.
- Shim, Soyeon, and Antigone Kotsiopulos (1992), "Patronage Behavior of Apparel Shopping: Part I. Shopping Orientations, Store Attributes, Information Sources, and Personal Characteristics. Clothing and Textiles", *Research Journal*, 10, 48-57.

- Sivadas, Eugene, and Jamie L. Prewitt-Baker (2000), "An Examination of the Relationship between Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, and Store Loyalty", *International Journal of Retail and Distribution Management*, 28 (2), 73-82.
- Stank, Theodore P., Thomas J. Goldsby, and Shawnee K. Vickery (1999), "Effect of Service Supplier Performance on Satisfaction and Loyalty of Store Managers in the Fast Food Industry", *Journal of Operations Management*, 17(4), 429–447.
- Taylor, Steven A., and Thomas L. Baker (1994), "An Assessment of the Relationship Between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction in the Formation of Consumers' Purchase Intentions", *Journal of Retailing*, 70(2), 163–78.
- Teas, R. K., (1993), "Expectations, Performance Evaluation and Consumer's Perception of Quality," *Journal of Marketing*, 57(4), 18-34.
- Terasaka, A. (1998). "Development of new store types: the role of convenience stores in Japan." *GeoJournal* 45(4): 317-325.
- Tribe, John, and Tim Snaith (1998), "From SERVQUAL to HOLSAT: Holiday Satisfaction in Varadero, Cuba", *Tourism Management*, 19(1), 25-34.
- Upton, Nancy, Elisabeth J. Teal, and Joe T. Felan (2001), "Strategic and Business Planning Practices for Fast Growth Family Firms," *Journal of Small Business Management* 39, 60-72.
- Uusitalo, Outi (2001), "Consumer perceptions of grocery retail formats and Brands", *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 29, (5.), 214-225.
- Wakefield, Kirk L., and Jeffrey G. Blodgett (1999), "Customer Response to Intangible and Tangible Service Factors", *Psychology & Marketing*, 16(1), 51-68.
- Walker, Rob (2006), "Convenience Cult?" *New York Times Magazine*, 155(53656), 15.
- Wesley, Scarlett, Melody LeHew, and Arch G. Woodside (2006), "Consumer Decision-Making Styles and Mall Shopping Behavior: Building Theory Using Exploratory Data Analysis and The Comparative Method", *Journal of Business Research*, 59(5), 535-48.
- Westbrook, Robert A. (1981), "Sources of Consumer Satisfaction with Retail Outlets", *Journal of Retailing*, 68-85.
- Wong, Amy, and Amrik Sohal (2003), "Service Quality and Customer Loyalty Perspectives on Two Levels of Retail Relationships", *Journal of Services Marketing*, 17, 495-513.
- Zeithaml, Valane A., Leonard L. Berry, and A. Parasuraman (1996), "The Behavioral Consequences of Service Quality", *Journal of Marketing*, 60 (April), 31–46.