An Assessment of Retail Service Quality:
An Empirical Study of the RSQS in Sri Lankan Supermarkets

R.A. Chanaka Ushantha[1] A.W. Wijeratne[2] S. Achchuthan[3*]

1. Department of Marketing Management, Faculty of Management Studies, Sabaragamuwa University
of Sri Lanka, PO box 02, Belihuloy, 70140, Sri Lanka. chanakaccc@mail.com
2. Department of Agribusiness Management, Faculty of Management Studies, Sabaragamuwa University
of Sri Lanka, PO box 02, Belihuloya 70140, Sri Lanka.
3. Department of Marketing Management, Faculty of Management Studies, Sabaragamuwa University
of Sri Lanka, PO box 02, Belihuloy, 70140, Sri Lanka.
* E-mail of the corresponding author: achchu2009@gmail.com

Abstract

In today's highly competitive business environment, service quality has become one of the major determinants of customer satisfaction. It has also become the key to sustainable competitive advantage for mainly service dominant organizations as well as for the grocery retail sector. This study attempts to measure the consumers' perception on retail service quality and its impact on customers' satisfaction in supermarkets in Sri Lanka. In order to collect primary data, 168 retail shoppers from major super market outlets in Colombo district were contacted. The Retail Service Quality Scale (RSQS), which comprised of 27 retail service quality items under five dimensions namely, physical aspects, reliability, personal interaction, problem solving and policy has been used as the data collection instrument. The results of the study were shown that the retail service quality has a positive correlation with customer satisfaction. Further, 80 percent of the variation has been found which is also in the significant level. It means that, customer satisfaction in the retail super market is determined or influenced by the retail service quality. Therefore, service quality is viewed as strategic formula in the marketing practices among retail outlets to enhance the customer satisfaction in both developed and developing countries. Before we come to the general conclusions in the Sri Lankan context, studies among retail service quality should be taken in the various service industries. Further, the concept like retail service quality should be connected with customer loyalty, customer retention and brand equity to get the more insights in the marketing practices of the retail supermarkets. Additionally, we suggested to the future researchers or scholars to carry the research on the factor analysis in order to find out the applicability of RSQS in the Sri Lankan perspective

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Service Quality, Retail Service Quality and Supermarkets.

1. Background of the Study

The growth of the Sri Lankan economy in the post war phase helped to drive the retailing sector in the country at an unparalleled level. The wholesale and retail trades are viewed as the largest sub category in the service sector in the Sri Lankan economy which accounted for 23.6% of Gross Domestic Production (GDP) with a contribution of Rs. 676 billion to the GDP in 2011. This is an increment of 12.9% compared to 2010 (Central Bank, 2011). The retail sector has performed splendidly in the year 2011/2012 by reporting a turnover of Rupees 14 billion (Richard Pieris and Company PLC, 2012) and the sector is expected to be increased from 15% currently to 30% over the next 5 year.

The retail sector in Sri Lanka can be put into two broad categories, viz., modern trade retailers and traditional trade retailers (grocery shops). Modern retailers consist of hypermarkets, supermarkets, and convenience stores. A hyper market is a very large self-service store that sells products usually sold in department stores and supermarkets. A supermarket is a self-service store, offering a wide variety of food and household merchandise, organized into departments. It is larger than a traditional grocery store and smaller than a hypermarket. Convenience store is a small-sized conveniently located store which provides limited number of merchandises and opens usually early to late-night hours. The total proportion of the supermarket trade is 15% of the retail industry in the country and the remaining percentage has been acquired by the general trade (Wanninayake and Randiwela, 2007). It is a concept that was brought to Sri Lanka during the 1980's (Gajanayake et al., 2011). There are over 300 supermarket outlets owned by various companies and some of the leading companies are Cargills (Cargills Food City), John Kells Holdings (Keells Super), and Richard Pieris (Arpico Supercenter's) etc. and other than those there are many small supermarkets chains running under the names of Magna, Laughs Sun-Up, Crystal etc. (Gajanayake et al., 2011). The supermarket trade in Sri Lanka is expected to grow 20% per annum in the years to come owing to increasing purchasing power of the consumers (Hewage, 2010. The prevailing stiff competition among Sri Lankan supermarket chains has led the companies to search for new weapons to differentiate themselves and to gain sustainable competitive advantages over their competitors. One

of the best approaches that has been proved for success in the service sector and retail businesses is delivering and maintaining the service quality in superior level (Rudie and Wansley 1985; Meltha, et.al., 2000)**.**

Retailing is largely intangible (Gilbert, 2003) and retail experience in supermarkets always provides consumers to deal with a combination of goods and services. Possessing a service element in a supermarket experience generally drives consumers in a difficult stance to define and assess the quality of retail experience until he or she actually encounters with it. For consumers, both product quality and service quality are equally major consideration factors in deciding the overall service quality of a supermarket. Thus the success of the retail industry and especially that of supermarkets are largely determined by the services they offer (Moraga et al., 2008) and it can be seen that the service quality provided by a supermarket is a very important key to the customer value (Arun et al., 2012).

For many organizations the ultimate objective is to build and maintain successful relationships with their customers. Nevertheless it is not as easy as it seems for many organizations. Providing customers with values, ensuring high levels of customer satisfaction, building a strong customer trust and securing customer retention probably pave the way for successful relationships between customers and organizations (Schiffman et al., 2010). Service quality could be considered as one of the solid foundations and one of the critical determinants of achieving this ultimate objective for organizations in any industry, essentially in retail sector. In order to compete successfully, firm must have an understanding of consumer perception of the quality and the way service quality is influenced (Seth et al., 2005). In fact, service quality has become the great differentiator and the most powerful competitive weapon, most service organizations possess (Berry, Parasuraman and Zeithaml, 1988; Bhaskar and Shekhar, 2011), and it also considered as indicators of business performance (Hurley and Estelami, 1988).

The retail service quality in developed countries has been examined by a number of studies, (Plooy et al., 2012). The current study is aimed at investigating the components of retail service quality in the case of supermarkets in Sri Lanka by borrowing a framework developed by Dabholkar, Thorpe and Rentz (1996). The research also explores the relationships between each of retail service quality components and the customer satisfaction in the Sri Lankan supermarkets.

2. Research Question

To what extent retail service quality influences the customer satisfaction in the retail super markets?

3. Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study is to find out the significant impact of retail service quality on customer satisfaction among retail super markets in the Sri Lankan context.

Further, the secondary objectives are; to find out significant relationship between retail service quality and customer satisfaction; finally to suggest the retail super markets to frame the marketing strategies which will enhance the retail service quality and customer satisfaction in the developing country like Sri Lanka.

4. Literature Review and development of Conceptual Framework

4.1. Service quality

Service quality is a concept that has produced significant interest and debate in the research literature (Ananth et al., 2010). It is an elusive, distinctive and abstract concept (Sachdev and Verma, 2004) that is difficult in defining and measuring (Hoffman and Bateson, 2002; Ananth et al., 2010). Concept of service quality has been defined in different ways by different scholars. Hoffman and Batesan (2010) defined service quality as 'an attitude formed by a long-term, overall evaluation of a firm's performance'. Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1985) defined service quality as 'the extent of discrepancy between customers' expectations or desires and their perceptions' and Grönroos (1984) has defined it as 'the outcome of an evaluation process, where the customers compare their expectations with the service they have received'.

Researchers have generally followed two main schools of thought to explain the nature of service quality evaluation, namely the European (Nordic) perspective coined by Grönroos (1984) and the American perspective coined by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988). Grönroos (1984) identified three components of service quality, namely technical quality, functional quality, and image. Technical quality is the quality of what

consumer actually receives as a result of his/her interaction with the firm and functional quality is how he/she gets the technical outcome. Customer's perceptions of these two dimensions are filtered through the service firm's image. Customer likely to overlooks the firm's minor errors or mistakes when he/she is having a positive image of the firm and the impact of mistakes is greater when he/she is having a negative image of the firm.

The model proposed by Parasuraman et.al (1985) is the most well known and widely used in service quality literature (Sachdev and Verma, 2004; Shahin and Sames, 2010). They have defined the perceived service quality as 'the extent of discrepancy between customers' ex pectations or desires and their perceptions' and developed a model named as the Gap Model of Service Quality. The model was based on gap analysis and it represents five gaps, namely knowledge gap (Gap 1), standards gap (Gap 2), delivery gap (Gap 3), communication gap (Gap 4), and service gap (Gap 5). Gap 5 is the most important gap that represents the gap between customers' expectations of services and their perceptions of the service actually delivered (Hoffman and Bateson, 2002) and the Gap 5 is a function of the rest of the gaps. Parasuraman et.al (1985) proposed SERVQUAL scale for measuring Gap 5. They conducted an exploratory research and initially identified 10 dimensions in evaluating service quality, namely tangible, reliability, responsiveness, courtesy, credibility, security, accessibility, communication and understanding the customer. Finally they were simplified into five dimensions, namely, tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Reliability, tangibles and responsiveness remained identical while the remaining seven dimensions classified into two aggregate dimensions assurance and empathy. Five dimensions are defined as follows (Parasuraman et al., 1988).

Reliability: The ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately

Responsiveness: Willingness to help customers and to provide prompt services

Tangibles: Physical facilities, equipment, and appearance personnel

Assurance: Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to convey trust and confidence Empathy: Caring, individualized attention the firm provides its customer

Parasuraman, Zeithmal and Berry developed 22 item instruments to cover five dimensions of service quality and the instrument evaluates both customers' expectatio ns and perceptions by using a seven point Likert scale.

Although SERVQUAL has been widely adopted to examine the service quality in a wide range of service industries, it has been subject to criticism by several researchers (McAlexander et al., 1994; Johnston, 1995). Some of the prevalent concerns of SERVQUAL are inadequacy in conceptualization and operationalization (Cronin and Taylor, 1992), applicability across a wide variety of services (Carman, 1990; Babakus and Boller, 1992), the instrument mainly focuses on the service delivery process (Mangold and Babakus, 1991; Richar and Allaway, 1993) and does not include any measure of the technical quality dimension (Kang and James, 2004), validity of measurement (Carman, 1990; Babakus and Boller, 1992; Jain and Gupta, 2004) and questionnaire length due to measuring perception and expectation separately as different scores (Carman, 1990).

4.2. Retail Service Quality Scale (RSQS)
 Although SERVQUAL has been empirically tested in a number of studies involving "pure" service setting (e.g., banking, long-distance telephone service, securities brokerage, and credit card service), it has not been successfully adapted to and validated in a retail store environment (Dabholkar et al., 1996; Finn & Lamb, 1991; Mehta et.al., 2000).

Service quality in retailing is different from any other product/service environment (Hanjunath & Naveen, 2012; Gagliano & Hatchcote, 1994; Finn & Lamb 1991). In retail setting, especially retail stores where there is a mix of product and service, retailer are likely to have impact on service quality more than on product quality (Dabholkar, et al. 1996). Thus a need of driving a measurement with a set of items that accurately measures the quality from the perspective of services as well as goods was emerged.
Dabholkar, et al. (1996) developed a hierarchical factor structure scale that they named as RSQS to measure service quality in retail setting. The overall service quality was viewed as a higher or second order factor. Dabholkar, et al. (1996) conducted qualitative studies to construct the instrument and used phenomenological interviews, exploratory depth interviews, and tracking the customer through the store as methodologies. They found out that the scale possessed a strong validity and reliability in US. Dabholkar, et al. (1996) identified 5 basic dimensions to evaluate retail service quality and they are viz. as follows;
Physical aspects - retail store appearance and store layout

Reliability - retailers keep their promises and do the right things

Personal interaction - retail store personnel are courteous, helpful, and inspire confidence in customers

Problem solving - retail store personnel are capable to handle returns and exchanges, customers' problems and complaints

Policy - retail store's policy on merchandise quality, parking, operation hours, and credit cards.

These five dimensions were expected to be distinct, but highly correlated. Three of the five basic dimensions of RSQS have two sub dimensions each. RSQS includes 28 items which of 17 items were extracted from SERVQUAL and 11 items developed from literature review and their qualitative research.

4.3. Previous Research on RSQS

The research results of Sin and Chenug (2002) proved that the RSQS was applicable in Hong Kong, albeit some modification is required. Six service quality dimensions emerged from their research and policy was considered as the most favorable dimension while personal interaction was rated as the weakest dimension.

A study by Mehta, Lalwani and Han (2000) has proved that the scale proposed by Dabholkar, Thorpe and Rentz was slightly better than SERVPERF in measuring the service quality in supermarkets while the reverse was true in measuring service quality in electronic goods retailers in Singapore. Further the study found that the service quality in supermarkets mainly based on two factors, namely physical aspects and personal interaction. Nhat and Hau (2007) concluded that personal interaction and problem solving as the key factors impacting customer's perception on service quality. The fact was revealed by a research conducted on retail service quality in the context of supermarket in Vietnam. Further they stated that policy and physical aspects as other factors that customer concerned at supermarket.

According to a study conducted on the relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction at discount stores in India by Arun, Manjunath and Shivashankar (2012), all the dimensions of RSQS were positively related to customer satisfaction. The study was conducted on 17 items based on RSQS and then later it was reduced to five dimensions. Thenmozhi and Dhanapal (2011) applied RSQS to identify the retail service quality factors in unorganized retail outlets in India and six service quality dimensions were identified by them, namely store merchandise, access, personal interaction, problem solving, policy and physical aspects. It has also been stated by them that the most important retail service quality factors were store merchandise and access.

Kaul (2007) has conducted a research to assess the applicability of RSQS for measuring service quality in India and findings suggested that the service quality dimensions were not appropriate for measuring service quality in India. Furthermore findings of a research that was conducted to access the validity and reliability of RSQS by Parikh (2006) has also pointed out that RSQS was not supported in Indian retails. A similar view held by Singh and Singh, N. (2011). They have compared various studies on service quality by using published research papers and concluded that the RSQS was not fitted to Indian retail context. A requirement of a completely modified RSQS was evident from their study.

5. Development of Conceptual Framework
5.1. Factors Determining on Retail Service Quality
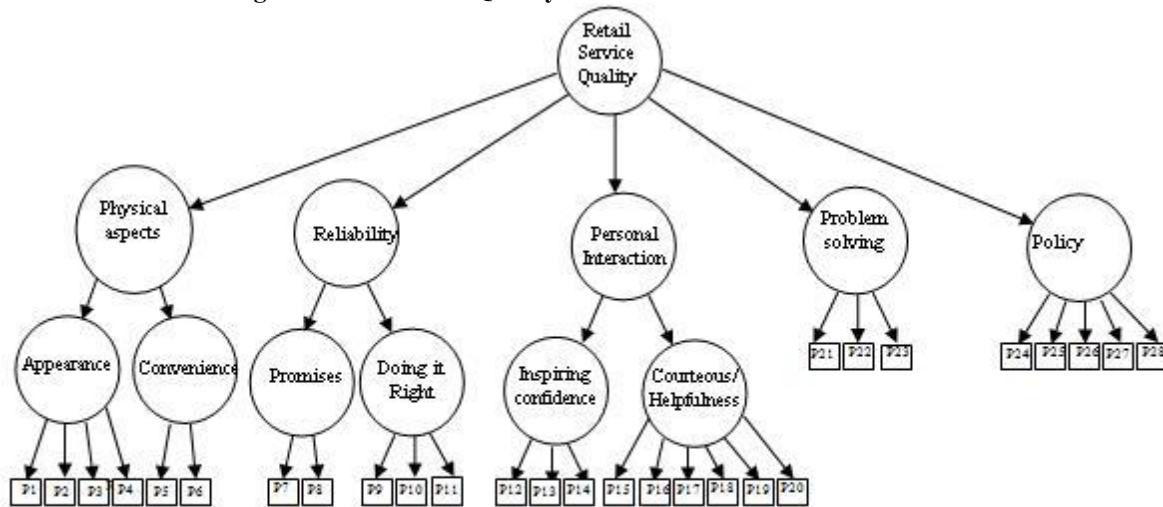
Sources: Dabholkar, et al. (1996)

Figure 1. Factors determining on Retail Service Quality

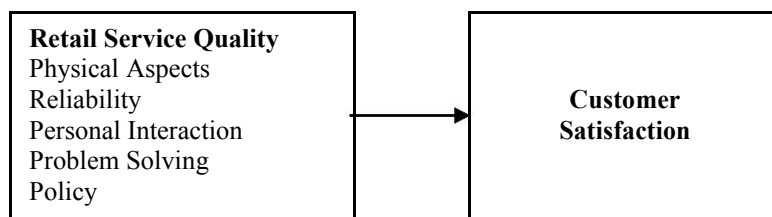### 5.2. Conceptual Framework for the study

Figure 2. Conceptual Framework for the study

5.3. Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses are formulated in this study:

H1: There is a significant impact of retail service quality on customer satisfaction

H1a: There is a significant impact of physical aspects in the retail service quality on customer satisfaction

H1b: There is a significant impact of reliability in the retail service quality on customer satisfaction

H1c: There is a significant impact of personal interaction in the retail service quality on customer

satisfaction H1d: There is a significant impact of problem solving in the retail service quality on customer

satisfaction H1e: There is a significant impact of policy in retail service quality on customer satisfaction

H2: There is a significant relationship between retail service quality and customer satisfaction

H1a: There is a significant relationship between physical aspects in the retail service quality and customer satisfaction

H1b: There is a significant relationship between reliability in the retail service quality and customer satisfaction

H1c: There is a significant relationship between personal interactions in the retail service quality and customer satisfaction

H1d: There is a significant relationship between problem solving in the retail service quality and customer satisfaction

H1e: There is a significant relationship between policy in retail service quality and customer satisfaction

6. Methodology

6.1. Research Model

Quantitative study has been focused to answerer the research question as what extent retail service quality influences on the customer satisfaction. In which, retail service quality is viewed as an independent variable and customer satisfaction is considered as the dependent variable.

$$Y_i = \beta_o + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \beta_4 X_{4i} + \beta_5 X_{5i} + \varepsilon_i$$

According to the above model, we can construct the new research model for the study.

$$CS = \beta_o + \beta_1 PA + \beta_2 RE + \beta_3 PI + \beta_4 PS + \beta_5 PO + \varepsilon_i$$

Where:

CS = Dependent Variable (Customer Satisfaction)
βo =Intercept
β1 =Population slope
β2 =Population slope
β3 =Population slope
β4 =Population slope
β5 =Population slope
PA = Independent variable (Physical Aspects)
RE = Independent variable (Reliability)
PI = Independent variable (Personal Interaction)
PS = Independent variable (Problem Solving) **PO**
= Independent variable (Policy)
εi= Random Error

6.2. Study Design and Methods

6.2.1. Sample

The population of the study is the consumers of supermarkets in the Colombo city. The most leading four supermarket brands in Sri Lanka were selected for the study data collection in Colombo city. Consumers of 14 supermarket outlets from the four above chosen brands were randomly selected to distribute the questionnaire. Systematic quasi-random sampling method was used to select the sample of the study. This sampling method was chosen because it permits analysis of possible selection bias or error (Ndubisi, 2006). The data were collected on 12th of December 2013 from 10.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. The structured questionnaire was given to two consumers in every one hour who shopped at supermarket outlets and who confirmed their willingness to response to the questionnaire. They were selected on based on systematic sampling technique. The results of Table 1 provide data on demographics characteristics of respondents in terms of gender, age, educational qualifications, occupations and income.

Table 1: Demographic Breakdown of Customers in the Study

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender:		
Male	78	52
Female	72	48
Total	150	100
Age:		
Below 17	10	6.7
18 – 30	23	15.3
31 – 40	74	49.3
41 – 50	29	19.3
51 and above	14	9.4
Total	150	100
Educational qualifications:		
G.C.E. (O/L)s and below	22	14.7
G.C.E. (A/L)s	77	51.3
Graduates	20	13.3
Post Graduates	13	8.7
Professionals	18	12
Total	150	100
Occupation:		
Government	43	28.7
Private	70	46.7
Business	18	12
Self-employed	11	7.3
Other	8	5.3
Total	150	100
Income		
Below 25,000	38	25.3
25,001 – 50,000	75	50
Above 50,000	37	24.7
Total	150	100

Source: Study survey (2013).

6.2.2. Study Variables, Questionnaire Design and Data Collection

The RSQS questionnaire developed by Dabholkar, Thorpe and Rentz (2006) was used as the data collection instrument. The questionnaire has been slightly modified as it translated into Sinhala (mother tongue of Sri Lanka) to ensure suitability for the research context and it mainly consisted with three parts. Part A considers the respondent's personal profile and part B consists of 27 items relating to retail service quality in supermarkets and one item relating to overall customer satisfaction. One item was excluded from the original RSQS which was consisted with 28 items. The excluded item was 'store's own credit card' as it was not applicable for Sri Lankan context. The fact was proved once the questionnaire was examined for the face validity by two academics who are experts in marketing and consultancy and four store managers from each four brands of supermarket chains. Part C contained with two open ended questions, one was to know the leading reasons for consumers to shop at Sri Lankan supermarkets and the other one was to know consumers' suggestions to improve the retail service quality of Sri Lankan supermarket chains. A seven-point Likert scale from '1-strongly disagree' to '7- strongly agree' was used to measure the items. The questionnaires were distributed to 168 respondents from 14 supermarket outlets of the four leading supermarket chains in Sri Lanka. Out of 168, 150 completed questionnaires were selected for the final analysis after deleting 18 incomplete records with an effective response rate of 89.3% of the total sample.

6.2.3. The Reliability Statistics

To examine reliability of the scale dimensions, the Cronbach's Alpha was calculated, as it considered as the most widely accepted reliability measure. Table 2 provides the Cronbach's Alpha (α) for the five dimensions. As all

the vales of Cronbach's Alpha for each dimension is above 0.7, thus it can be concluded that the measures used here are consistent enough for the study.

Table 2: Retail Service Quality Dimensions and Items Used in the Study with the Reliability Measures

Items	Sub-dimension	Dimension	Cronbach's Alpha
1) This store has modern-looking equipment and fixtures.	Appearance	Physical aspects	0.766
2) The physical facilities at this store are visually appealing.			
3) Materials associated with this store's service (such as shopping bags, catalogs or statements) are visually appealing.			
4) This store has clean, attractive and convenient public areas (restrooms, fitting rooms).			
5) The store layout makes it easy for you to find what you need.	Convenience		
6) The store layout makes it easy for you to move around in the store.			
7) When this store promises to do something by a certain time, it will do so.	Promises	Reliability	0.780
8) This store provides its services at the time it promises to do so.			
9) This store performs the service right the first time.	Doing it right		
10) This store has merchandises available when you want it.			
11) This store insists on error-free sales transactions and records.			
12) Employees in this store have the knowledge to answer your questions.	Inspiring confidence	Personal interaction	0.759
13) The behavior of employees in this store instills confidence in you.			
14) You feel safe in their transactions with this store.			
15) Employees in this store give prompt service to you.	Courteous/ Helpfulness		
16) Employees in this store tell you exactly when services will be performed.			
17) Employees in this store are never too busy to respond to your requests.			
18) This store gives you individual attention.			
19) Employees in this store are consistently courteous with you.			
20) Employees in this store treat you courteously on the telephone.			
21) This store willingly handles returns and exchanges.	None	Problem solving	0.765
22) When you have a problem, this store shows a sincere interest in solving it.			
23) Employees of this store are able to handle your complaints directly and immediately.			
24) This store offers high quality merchandise.	None	Policy	0.859
25) This store provides plenty of convenient parking for customers.			
26) This store has operating hours convenient to all their customers.			
27) This store accepts most major credit cards.			

Source: Study survey (2013).

7. Results and Analysis

7.1. Correlation Analysis

Table 3. Correlation Analysis

		Physical Aspects	Reliability	Personal Interaction	Problem Solving	Policy contexts	Retail Service Quality	Customer Satisfaction
Physical Aspects	Pearson Correlation	1	.491**	.600**	.621**	.498**	.818**	.709**
	Sig .Level		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Reliability	Pearson Correlation	.	1	.622**	.580**	.322**	.784**	.716**
	Sig. Level			.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
Personal Interaction	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)			1	.748**	.222**	.830**	.816**
					.000	.006	.000	.000
Problem Solving	Pearson Correlation				1	.220**	.839**	.767**
	Sig. Level					.007	.000	.000
Policy contexts	Pearson Correlation					1	.578**	.420**
	Sig. Level						.000	.000
Retail Service Quality	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed)						1	.891**
								.000
Customer Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation							1
	Sig. Level							

Purpose of the correlation analysis is to find out the significant relationship between retail service quality and customer satisfaction. Further, it is utilized to find out the relationship between the dimensions or factors influencing on retail service quality as physical aspects, reliability, personal interactions, and problem solving & policy and customer satisfaction.

According to the analysis, retail service quality is positively associated with customer satisfaction, further, strong positive association has been found, which is also in the significant level (P < 0.05). Meantime, all the dimensions which have been taken as the factors influencing on the retail service quality as physical aspects, reliability, personal interactions, problem solving & policy are also positively correlated. Except policy in the retail service quality, others factors have strong positive correlation with customer satisfaction.

7.2. Regression Analysis

Table 4. Regression Analysis

Variable	Beta Value	T- Value	P - Value			
				Adjusted R- Square	F- Value	Sig. Level
Constant		**-2.232**	**.027**			
Physical Aspects	**.168**	**3.144**	**.002**			
Reliability	**.228**	**4.740**	**.000**			
Personal Interaction	**.384**	**6.497**	**.000**			
Problem solving	**.214**	**3.679**	**.000**			
Policy contexts	**.130**	**3.068**	**.003**	**0.809**	**127.180**	**0.000**

In this study, regression analysis has been utilized to find out the significant impact of retail service quality on customer satisfaction. Generally regression analysis is used to answer the question as what extent independent variables influence on the dependent variable. In this context, research question as what extent retail service quality influences on the customer satisfaction in the retail super markets is answered.

According to the analysis, 80 percent of the variation has been found which is in the significant level. It means that, customer satisfaction in the retail super market, Sri Lanaka is determined or influenced by the retail service quality. Further, customer satisfaction among retail super markets is also influenced by physical aspects, reliability, personal interactions, problem solving & policy in the retail service quality significantly.

Table 5. Co linearity Statistics

Model	Correlation Statistics			Co linearity Statistics	
Constant	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
Physical Aspects	**.709**	**.253**	**.113**	**.447**	**2.235**
Reliability	**.716**	**.367**	**.170**	**.552**	**1.811**
Personal Interaction	**.816**	**.476**	**.233**	**.367**	**2.723**
Problem solving	**.767**	**.293**	**.132**	**.378**	**2.648**
Policy contexts	**.420**	**.248**	**.110**	**.710**	**1.408**

Two major methods were utilized in order to determine the presence of multi-co linearity among independent variables. These methodologies involved calculation of a Tolerance test and variance inflation factor (VIF) (Velnampy and Achchuthan, 2103). Test of Co linearity, none of the tolerance level is < or equal to 1; and also VIF values are perfectly below 10. Thus the measures selected for assessing independent variable in this study do not reach levels indicate of multi-co linearity and also the acceptable Durbin Watson range is between 1.5 and 2.5.

7.3 Hypotheses Testing

Table 6. Hypotheses Testing

Series	Hypotheses	Results	Tools
H1	There is a significant impact of retail service quality on customer satisfaction	Accepted	Regression
H1a	There is a significant impact of physical aspects in the retail service quality on customer satisfaction	Accepted	Regression
H1b	There is a significant impact of reliability in the retail service quality on customer satisfaction	Accepted	Regression
H1c	There is a significant impact of personal interaction in the retail service quality on customer satisfaction	Accepted	Regression
H1d	There is a significant impact of problem solving in the retail service quality on customer satisfaction	Accepted	Regression
H1e	There is a significant impact of policy in retail service quality on customer satisfaction	Accepted	Regression
H2	There is a significant relationship between retail service quality and customer satisfaction	Accepted	Correlation
H2a	There is a significant relationship between physical aspects in the retail service quality and customer satisfaction	Accepted	Correlation
H2b	H1b: There is a significant relationship between reliability in the retail service quality and customer satisfaction	Accepted	Correlation
H2c	There is a significant relationship between personal interactions in the retail service quality and customer satisfaction	Accepted	Correlation
H2d	There is a significant relationship between problem solving in the retail service quality and customer satisfaction	Accepted	Correlation
H2e	There is a significant relationship between policy in retail service quality and customer satisfaction	Accepted	Correlation

8. Conclusions and Recommendation

According to the results of the study, retail service quality in Sri Lankan supermarkets is positively associated with customer satisfaction. Further it revealed that all the dimensions have a strong positive correlation with customer satisfaction. It was also found that customer satisfaction among supermarkets in Sri Lanka is significantly influenced by the retail service quality.

Policy in the retail service quality is measured by the measurements as high quality merchandise, convenient parking facilities, convenient operating hours and credit card acceptance. Especially, in the Colombo city, customers in the retail supermarkets have to face the difficulties in terms of parking facilities and convenient operating hours. For these reasons, customer perception towards policy in retail service quality is in the moderate level comparing with the customer perception towards physical aspects, reliability, personal interaction and problem solving in the retail service quality. Importantly, customer perception towards employees' kno wledge & behavior, prompt service, individual attention, and complaint handling is in the highest level among the retail customers in the Colombo city, Sri Lanka. Due to that, retail service quality influences the customer satisfaction in the Colombo city significantly. Further, the standard of living among the people in Colombo district is in peak level comparing with the people in other districts. Due to that, investments on the retail supermarket aid to gain the return on investment and equity. When the government frames the polces regarding to the fiscal and monetary, modern supermarkets should be considered through the concessions and other benefits.

The customers in the Colombo city have been focused through this study. Colombo is the commercial capital of Sri Lanka. People in the Colombo city hold the better conditions in terms of demographic factors as income, social status, and life pattern etc. Studies in the different districts in Sri Lanka might give the different findings. Before we come to the general conclusion in the Sri Lankan context, studies among retail service quality should be taken in the various service industries, provinces and districts. Further, the concept like retail service quality should be connected with customer loyalty, customer retention and brand equity to get the more insights in the marketing practices of the retail supermarkets. Additionally, we suggested to the future researchers or scholars to

carry the research on the factor analysis in order to   find out the applicability of RSQS in the Sri Lankan
perspective.

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