Chapter 2 - Literature Review

2. Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is to present an overview of the research streams under investigation in this dissertation. The areas of customer expectation, customer perception, service effectiveness, frontline employee role performance and job role stressors are discussed in the context of frontline employees in retail services.

The study starts with investigating if there is gap between customer expectation and customer perception of the service delivered by the frontline sales personnel. The factors which are used to determine the customer expectation and customer perception are known as service effectiveness factors and the gap mentioned above is known as service effectiveness or service quality gap. For the purpose of the study this gap is called as service effectiveness gap or SERVEFF gap. Then from these service effectiveness factors, most prominent factors with respect to customer perception of service delivered by frontline employees are determined by means of factor analysis. This is followed by examining whether frontline employee role performance towards the customers is dependent on service effectiveness factors and job role stressors i.e. role conflict and role ambiguity by means of non-parametric chi-square test. Then it is further investigated whether there is negative or positive relationship among job role stressors, service effectiveness and frontline employee role performance by using Spearman rank correlation coefficient.

This chapter is organized as follows. First, the background of the retail industry, & evolution of retail in India is reviewed. Secondly the customer expectation and customer perception parameter of service delivery are reviewed the gap between which specifies the effectiveness of the service delivered by the frontline employees. This gap is termed as SERVEFF gap or service effectiveness gap for the purpose of the study. The third section presents the consequences of frontline employee role performance, namely the service effectiveness and service efficiency dimensions of service productivity. In the fourth section the two forms of employee role performance relevant to this study are
introduced (prosocial role performance & non role performance). Fifth section explains the theoretical and empirical literature on job role stressors i.e. role conflict & role ambiguity are discussed. The sixth section focuses on theories linking internal service quality to frontline employee role performance setting up the premise for the seventh section which deals with the relationship among frontline employee role performance, service effectiveness and job role stressors. This is followed by the summary.

2.1. Retail Industry

Retailing in India is presently experiencing a gradual revolution and inching its way towards becoming the next promising industry after Information technology. The entire concept of shopping has evolved in terms of format from unorganized to organized retail and consumer buying behavior, leading to a radical change in shopping in India. Modern retail has entered India as seen in extensive shopping centers, huge malls offering entertainment, quality and brand merchandise, food, customer service all at one place (Gupta et al. 2010). The Indian population is reflecting a major amendment in its demographics. Increase in number of young working population with median age of 24 years, nuclear families in urban areas, along with increasing working women population leading to changing lifestyles and emerging opportunities in the services sector are going to be the prospects of the organized retail sector in Asian nation. (Gupta et al. 2010).

Retail springs from the French word “tailor” which implies to chop off a piece or to break bulk. Supply chain management starts with the manufacturer and ends with the retailer. Therefore, a retailer is a merchant or trader who sells goods in little quantities to the final buyer i.e. the consumer (Akhter, Equbal; 2012). Retailing is the final step within the distribution of products, for consumption by the end consumers. It comprises of all activities concerned with the promoting of products and services directly to the consumers, for their personal, family or household use (Gupta, 2007). Thus the main distinctive point of any retail store is “customer satisfaction”, which in case of departmental stores is dependent on frontline employees especially sales people, who are in direct contact with the customers and in most of the cases do have an control on purchase decisions of the customers.
2.1.1 Retail Industry in India

The exceptional growth of retail in India is mirrored in the rapid increase in range of supermarkets, department stores and hypermarkets in the country (Senthilkumar S and Shivakumar P, 2011). Because of the rise in the disposable income of Indian customers shopping in India is witnessing a radical revolution with the exceptional rise and exponential progress of the retail industry, which is having employment of around 8 per cent and contributing to over 10 percent of the country's Gross domestic product (Source: www.business.mapsofindia.com). At US$ 511 billion in 2008, the entire retail business of the country is expected to rise to US$ 833 billion by 2013 and further to US$ 1.3 trillion by 2018, at a Compound Annual Growth Rate of 10 per cent. With the initiation of technological advancements, modernization of the industry is mirrored in rapid progress in sales of supermarkets, departmental stores and hypermarkets. Sales from these giant format stores have increased at commendable growth rates during the period of 2003-2008, ranging from 24 per cent to 49 per cent per year. (Ghosh et al. 2009).

The Indian retail market, that is the fifth largest retail destination worldwide, has been ranked as the most attractive emerging market for investment in the retail sector by AT Kearney's eighth annual Global Retail Development Index, in 2009. According to a report by global consultancy Northbridge Capital, it is projected to grow to US$ 700 billion by 2010. The organized business is predicted to be 20 per cent of the whole market by then. In 2008, the share of organized retail was 7.5 per cent or US$ 300 million of the entire retail market. A McKinsey report, 'The rise of Indian Consumer Market', estimates that the Indian consumer market is predicted to grow four times by 2025. Commercial real estate services company, CB Richard Ellis' findings state that India's retail market has progressed up to the 39th most well-liked retail destination in the world in 2009, up from 44 last year. India continues to be among the foremost enticing countries for global retailers.

Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows as on September 2009, in single-brand retail trading, stood at approximately US$ 47.43 million, according to the Department of
Industrial Policy and Promotion (Gupta et al. 2010). As India is a democratic country with high growth rates, consumers spending have risen sharply. The youth population (more than 33 percent of the country is below the age of 15) has seen a significant rise in its disposable income. Consumer spending increased an impressive 75 per cent in the past four years alone (Gupta et al. 2010). The Indian retail sector is witnessing a gradual revolution with the dynamic demographics and a rise in the quality of life of urban people.

In the present situation it is yet not predictable whether the Indian retail market will repeat the success stories of names such as Wal-Mart Stores, Sainsbury and Tesco but at least the developments looks to be in the direction of growth (Senthilkumar S and Shivakumar P, 2011).

Retail Sector is the most booming sector within the Indian economy the major reason being the changes in the lifestyle of Indian people. Some of the most important players of the globe are planning to enter the Indian retail industry soon. It’s on the entrance of bringing the future huge revolution after the information technology sector. There are about 300 new malls, 1500 supermarkets and 325 department stores presently being built in the cities across India (Senthilkumar S and Shivakumar P, 2011). The table 2.1 below gives an outline of literature associated with retail industry in India.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Author/Authors</th>
<th>Seminal Work</th>
<th>Key Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Dr. Shahid Akhter &amp; Iftekhar Equbal</td>
<td>Organized Retailing in India – Challenges &amp; Opportunities</td>
<td>This research paper focuses on overview of Organized retail industry</td>
<td>ZENITH, International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research Vol.2 Issue 1, pp.282-291.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Arvind</td>
<td>An overview of Indian Retail Industry</td>
<td>The findings reveal that Organized retail has potential for growth in India</td>
<td>Journal of PROlog, Vol. 4, pg.13</td>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>Sookhyun Kim and Doris H. Kincade</td>
<td>Evolution of Retail Institution Types and Consumers’ Store Patronage Behavior: A Cross-Cultural Comparison among Consumers in China, India, and the United States</td>
<td>The findings confirms that retail and other investment companies ought to acknowledge the necessity to regulate their organization’s management strategies and plan accordingly so as to enter the retail environment in China and India.</td>
<td>Journal of Shopping Center Research (2007), 14, 2, pp. 97-124.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>P K Sinha and Sanjay Kumar Kar</td>
<td>An Insight into the Growth of New Retail Formats in India</td>
<td>The research paper gives information with respect to different retail formats in India.</td>
<td>IIMA Research &amp; publications, W.P. No.2007-03-04, pp. 1-28.</td>
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</tbody>
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2.1.2 Evolution of Retailing in India

When it involves retailing, India is one of the least saturated yet most competitive markets in the globe (Kim & Kincade, 2007). With over 15 million retail stores, compared to 900,000 stores in the United States India has the highest density of retail outlets worldwide (Bhatnagar, 2004; “Coming to Market”, 2006; Sinha and Banerjee, 2004). Retailing goes back to centuries; in its nascent stage it started as a very primeval business but today has progressed tremendously. Initially people were doing businesses with their neighbors. Like in barter system goods were exchanged between them. Then for convenience people began to gather themselves at a nearby location, which serves as a geographical place to do the exchange. This not only increased the exposure of a given good but also helped a lot towards the development of a more formalized system.

Later on this common place was called a fair. With the passage of time, issues like security, transportation became a matter of concern as the number of people buying and selling in a given fair increased. This semi-formalized system then progressed to small-scale groceries, where people started to provide more assortments in their own
neighborhoods. This was known as Kirana stores. In the early 2000s, these stores which are similar to family owned stores in Western countries, accounted for 98% of the retail stores in India (Sinha and Banerjee, 2004). Indian consumers have typically patronized Kirana stores due to the convenience, personalized service and the price issue (Sinha and Banerjee, 2004). Then came the problem of selection in given product and services, options available with the customers were limited, this was the start of the conception of everything available at one place.

As time passed, joint family changed into nuclear family. Both husband and wife started working, lifestyle changes took place and are still taking place. From then instead of family owned stores organized retail stores came into existence (Akhter and Equbal, 2012). The Western department, specialty and discounts stores are called “organized stores” in India (Tewari, 2005106). In 1999, consumer expenditure in these organized retail stores valued to only 1% of total retail utilization; however, it increased to 9% (USD $23billion) in 2006 and is predicted to continue to rise (Chugh, 2006107; “Coming to Market,” 2006). Consumer spending rose an impressive 75 per cent within the past four years alone. (Gupta et al. 2010).

Although growing in numbers, the number of organized retail stores in India in 2005 were solely 2% of the total retail stores, which is very minimal compared to the United States (80%), Europe (70%), and China (15%). The number of organized stores in India has been increasing by 18-20% annually, with the increase in sales volume in these organized retail stores at 30% (Foreign Direct, 2006108). Around 96% of the organized retail stores are situated in the ten biggest cities in India (e.g., Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore) as the majority of economic growth is in urban areas (Dyson, 2006109).

Based on the ICICI Research, the Indian Retail Market evolution can be traced in the following way:
Modern Indian consumers are now experiencing a pleasant shopping environment that satisfies their lifestyle & choices. Their satisfaction, loyalty and retention is dependent on more entertainment, lifestyle-related goods, quality and branded merchandise at all price points, and most importantly responsive customer services including convenient return and exchange policies, and financing options (Chugh, 2006; Tewari, 2005). Indian consumers are taking care of their increased demands and wishes by shopping in modern organized stores and moving away from family owned stores (Bhatnagar, 2004; Sinha and Banerjee 2004). The focus of research under study is on department stores, one of the retail format in organized sector.
2.2 Customer expectations and Customer perceptions

Parasuraman et al. (1988, pp.12-40\textsuperscript{110}) states that expectation is viewed differently in both satisfaction literature and service effectiveness literature. In satisfaction literature, expectations are viewed as ‘predictions’ by customers concerning what’s possible to take place throughout a selected service interaction while in service effectiveness literature, customer expectations are considered as demands or needs of consumers, that is, what they feel a service provider ‘should’ offer rather than ‘would’ offer. According to Gronroos, (1982\textsuperscript{111}); Parasuraman et al. (1985) customer’s perception of service effectiveness relies on the relativity of their expectations (what they feel service providers should offer).

2.2.1. Customer expectations of service effectiveness

“Customer expectations are beliefs about service delivery that function as standards or reference point against which performance is judged” (Zeithaml and Bitner, 1996\textsuperscript{112}). These authors believe that customers have different types of perspective of service performance depending on the type of retail service rendered (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003\textsuperscript{113}) for e.g. with respect to supermarkets where the focus is self-service approach the customer expectations are different from that in departmental stores where the focus is customer service effectiveness delivered by frontline sales personnel. Customers make relative comparisons of their perceptions of service delivery with these reference points when evaluating the service effectiveness and therefore knowing what customers expects is significant in gaining competitive advantage (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2003). Failure to understand the levels of service customers expects can mean losing a customer to competitors (Jobber, 1995\textsuperscript{114}).

2.2.2. Customer perceptions of service effectiveness

Customer perceptions are always considered in reference to expectations (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2009). Perceptions are formed through customers’ analysis of the standard of service provided by a service provider in case of analysis under study the frontline employees and whether they are satisfied with the overall service (Zeithaml and Bitner,
Zeithaml and Bitner (2003) have a viewpoint that as perceptions may shift over a period of time due to them being measured in reference to expectations and therefore it is essential for companies to continuously evaluate customer perceptions.

Customer perception has been defined as a customer’s general impression of the comparative inferiority/superiority of an organization and its services (Bitner & Hubbert, 1994). This perception is framed by many factors both tangible as well as intangible such as employees performance, amenities, price of merchandise and effectiveness of service offered etc. (Gagliano and Hathcote, 1994; Naylor & Frank, 2000; Sheinin & Wagner, 2003; Shaw & Haynes, 2004). Also, due to technological developments, prosperity and rise in educational levels, customers perceptions are greatly changing calling for organizations to have joint effort to understand these perceptions. The analysis under study concentrates on service effectiveness perception. Numerous factors contribute to service effectiveness perception.

According to Berman and Evans (2005) overall service effectiveness perception is influenced by customer service, employee performance, stress levels of the employees, store location, merchandise attributes, pricing, firm’s positioning, target market, attributes of physical facilities, shopping experience etc. Further, Berman and Evans (2005) note that a service effectiveness perception depends heavily on its ‘environment’ or the psychological feeling a customer gets when in that retail outlet, the main participant in delivering this feeling being the frontline sales personnel.

For the aim of the analysis under study, customer expectations is outlined as desires or wants of customers i.e. what customer actually wants from the particular service provider because this allows to know exactly what service providers offer and this is based on based past experience and information received by the customer (Douglas & Connor, 2003, p.167). It is important to understand and measure customer’s expectations and customer perception in order to identify any gaps in delivering services with effectiveness that could ensure satisfaction, Negi (2009). For the aim of the analysis under study customer perception is outlined as perception of the customer with respect to what they actually receive from the service encounter (Douglas & Connor,
The analysis under study is mainly based on this discrepancy of or gap between expected service and perceived service from the customer’s perspective. For the aim of the study this gap is known as SERVEFF gap or service effectiveness gap. This is in order to obtain a better understanding of how customers perceive service effectiveness in selected departmental stores.

For the measurement of gap between customer expectation and customer perception of service effectiveness delivered by frontline employees SERVQUAL model proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1985) is used as this model best meets the aim of the study i.e. to measure service effectiveness perceived by the customers which is described in details in next section and chapter 3 along with other two models namely technical quality / functional quality model proposed by Gronroos (1984) and SERVPERF model proposed by Cronin and Taylor (1992). Table 2.2 provides an summary of literature associated with customer expectation and customer perception of service delivered by frontline employees.

**Table 2.2. Customer perception and Customer expectation - An Etymological Table**

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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Seminal Work</th>
<th>Key Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Dr. Maxwell Agabu Phiri &amp; Thobeleni Mcwabe</td>
<td>Customers Expectations and Perceptions of Service Quality: The Case of Pick N Pay Supermarket Stores in Pietermartzburg Area, South Africa</td>
<td>The analysis indicate that customers have higher expectations for service quality in food retail supermarkets than is anticipated as reflected in Gap 5 of the model of service quality gap given by Parasuraman et.al, 1988.</td>
<td>International Journal of Research In Social Sciences, Vol.3, Issue 1, September 2013, pp. 96-104</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>Piyali Ghosh, Anil Kumar, Vibhuti Tripathi</td>
<td>Customer expectations of store attributes: A study of organized retail outlets in India</td>
<td>The findings reveal that there is gap with respect to certain parameters of customers expectations and customer perception of store attributes. Further the findings also reveals that major gap is found revolving around the frontline sales personnel.</td>
<td>Journal of Retail &amp; Leisure Property, Macmillan Publishers Ltd. 1479–1110, Vol. 9, pp.75-87.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>McDougal, G. and Levesque, T.</td>
<td>Customer satisfaction with services: Putting perceived value into the equation.</td>
<td>Major finding was the institution of the link between customer satisfaction (which is dependent on perceived price of the product and service quality dimensions according to this research) and future purchase intentions.</td>
<td>Journal of Services Marketing, Vol. 14 No. 5, pp. 392–410.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Gremler, D. and Brown, S.</td>
<td>The loyalty ripple effect: Appreciating the full value of customers.</td>
<td>The analysis explores the loyalty ripple effect construct and defines it as the both direct and indirect influence that customers exhibit on a firm by means of generating interest in the firm by encouraging new customer patronage or other actions or behaviors that create value for the organization.</td>
<td>International Journal of Service Industry Management, Vol. 10 No. 3, pp. 271–291.</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<td>1998</td>
<td>Sirohi, N., McLaughlin, E. and Wittink, D.</td>
<td>A model of consumer perceptions of store loyalty intentions for a supermarket retailer</td>
<td>The results indicate that strategy that is effective in acquiring new customers may not be the foremost effective in retaining current customers.</td>
<td>Journal of Retailing, pp. 223 – 245.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Anderson, Claes, Fornell, and Roland T. Rust</td>
<td>Customer Satisfaction, Productivity, and Profitability: Differences Between Goods and Services</td>
<td>The analysis indicates that there is link between customer satisfaction and productivity for industries as diverse as airlines, banking, education, hotels, and restaurants.</td>
<td>Marketing Science, 16 (2), pp.129-145.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Reichheld, Frederick F</td>
<td>The Loyalty Effect</td>
<td>The analysis indicates that even tiny enhancements in customer retention can double profits in the company.</td>
<td>Harvard Business School Press.</td>
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Table 2.2. (Continued)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
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<th>The results indicate that increased customer satisfaction could dramatically improve profitability.</th>
<th>Journal of Service Industry Management, Vol. 7 No. 4, pp. 27 – 42.</th>
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<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Hallowell, R.</td>
<td>The relationships of customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and profitability: An empirical study</td>
<td>The analysis indicates that considerable gap exists between customer expectations and customer perception with respect to following parameters - Personal Attention; Reliability; Tangibles; and Convenience. The results also indicate that service ranked third in importance behind merchandise assortment and price.</td>
<td>Journal of Services Marketing 8.1 (1994): 60-69. Web.</td>
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Table 2.2. (Continued)

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<th>Year</th>
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<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Rust, Roland T. and Anthony J. Zahorik</td>
<td>Customer Satisfaction, Customer Retention, and Market Share</td>
<td>The findings reveal which customer satisfaction elements have the greatest impact, and how much money should be spent to improve particular customer satisfaction elements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Zeithaml, V.A., Parasuraman, A. and Berry, L.L</td>
<td>Delivering quality service; Balancing customer perceptions and expectations</td>
<td>The analysis indicates that by balancing customer's perceptions of the worth of a particular service with the customer's need for that service, provides realistic theoretical view into customer expectations and service delivery.</td>
</tr>
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2.3. Service productivity

Although frontline employees play a very significant part with reference to service productivity (Hartline and Ferrell 1996; Larkin & Larkin, 1996; Rucci, Kirn, and Quinn 1998) still they are paid less, hardly trained, overworked, and highly stressed (Weatherly and Tansik, 1993). Frontline employee’s job can be seen as a three-cornered fight where customers and management are at two ends and frontline employee’s are caught in the middle (Bateson’s, 1985). This boundary spanning role may lead to job role stress and demotivation among employees leading to high turnover (Henkotf 1994; Milbank 1993). According to the conventional manufacturing related productivity concept, productivity is outlined as the ratio of outputs produced and inputs utilized,
taking into consideration that the quality of the outputs is kept stable (the constant quality assumption) (Sink 1985). In a service context, this refers to the ratio of service delivery outputs (such as the speed of delivery or the quality of the interaction) to service delivery inputs (such as labor hours, information technology, or training). Service outcomes are often considered as the variety of individuals served or the money value of services exchanged between the customer and the service provider. However, given the intangible and multidimensional nature of services, outcomes are often difficult to quantify by simply accounting for the quantity of customer transactions. Inputs are similarly difficult to quantify, as the number of labor hours or hours spent training do not provide an adequate representation of the inputs of service productivity.

When it comes to services maintaining consistency with reference to service encounter is highly dependent on frontline employees self—emotional appraisal, satisfaction and retention (Schneider and Bowen, 1995). How a particular customer perceives service effectiveness is totally situation and customer dependent, so the frontline employees should act based on that exact scenario. For example, if a specific sales person in a department store goes continuously behind the customer and suggest different apparels for the convenience and ease of service either the customer may perceive it as a discretionary behavior or nagging depending upon the personality of the customer. Thus it is essential for the frontline employee to make appropriate judgment with reference to the emotional wants of the customers and act accordingly. Otherwise rather than creating more worth for the customer, this particular input or resource can diminish customer perceived value and therefore resulting in lowered service productivity. Research understanding the link between job role stressors i.e. role conflict & role ambiguity and frontline employee service effectiveness has been hampered by a lack of a commonly applied set of outcome measures when it involves deciding service effectiveness (Pritchard et al. 1988).

This area of investigation has been vulnerable by lack of clear definition for service effectiveness (Pritchard and Watson 1992) and no standard measure of effectiveness that is suitable for services (Grönroos et al. 2004). Some studies have examined
efficiency or the connection of outcomes to inputs in terms of labor, capital, materials, and time (Anderson, Fornell, and Rust 1997; Singh 1999). Other analysis reports have targeted issues of customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, employee retention and employee satisfaction (Akin and Hopelain 1986; Sink 1985).

The productivity of a service process is linked to how effectively input resources are transformed into worth for the customer (Grönroos et al. 2004). Reicheld (1996, p. 117) refers to productivity as “the rate of employee value creation.” Conventionally, academics and practitioners alike have adopted a manufacturing perspective in measuring service productivity, by measuring the rate of quantifiable outputs to quantifiable inputs. According to Singh and Jagdip (1999) the service productivity of frontline employees can be measured by comparing quantifiable output with behavioral standards (performance productivity i.e. service efficiency) and how the service is delivered (performance quality i.e. service quality).

From a customer’s perspective, the quantity represents the efficiency of the service delivery, or how quickly the transaction is concluded, while the quality reflects the effectiveness of the service delivery, or how well the service is delivered. This dissertation proposes that service productivity is a multidimensional construct, with both qualitative and quantitative outputs also referred as service effectiveness or service quality and service efficiency or service quantity respectively with focus on service effectiveness parameter.

2.3.1 Service Efficiency

Service efficiency is explained as the ratio of outputs produced and inputs utilized, taking into consideration that the quality of the outputs is kept unvarying (the constant quality assumption)(Sink 1985). According to Saxe and Weitz, 1982, service efficiency requires the sales personnel to be selling-oriented and concentrate their efforts on short-term goals such as sales which are counter to the basic tenants of service quality or service effectiveness.
2.3.2 Service Effectiveness

When it comes to measurement of service effectiveness there is little accord of opinion and much disagreement, Robinson (1998). Service effectiveness is measured taking under consideration customer’s expectations of service i.e. what customers expect from the service and customer’s perception of service i.e. what customers perceive their experience. According to Harris et al. 2005; Saxe and Weitz, 1982 service effectiveness basically requires salespeople to concentrate on meeting customers’ needs, solving their procurement issues, and gaining their loyalty.

According to Anderson et al. (1994); Reichheld and Sasser(1990); Rust et al.(1995) service effectiveness have gained strategic importance because now a-days due to advent of information technology it’s easier to have access to products of same features but what differs one service supplier from alternative is the service effectiveness perceived by the customer. Thus there is increase in recognition of service quality perceived by the customer as a major determinant of business performance in terms of economic returns. But implementation of this strategy depends on frontline employee’s performance as they are responsible for incorporating strategy into operation in their service encounters with customers in retail outlets.

According to Wharton, a Canadian Consulting firm customer perception of stressed and demotivated frontline sales personnel led to more loss of business due to negative word of mouth. Thus it is significant to have deep knowledge about the factors that enhance or impede the service interaction between frontline employees and customers to keep profitability of business in check (Mangold and Babakus, 1991).

The “Nordic” perspective (Grönroos 1983) of service quality suggests that service quality can be best identified using overall categorical descriptors (functional quality and technical quality). Functional quality reflects how service is delivered, or customer perceptions of the service delivery process. Technical quality represents the end result of the service interaction, or what the customer receives in the service act (Brady and Cronin, 2001). Rust and Oliver (1994) propose a three-component model: the
service product (i.e., technical quality), the service delivery (i.e., functional quality), and the service environment. Adopting Rust and Oliver’s (1994) conceptualization, Brady and Cronin (2001) found empirical evidence suggesting each of the primary dimensions of service quality (encounter, outcome, and environment) has three sub-dimensions that define the basis of service quality perceptions: interaction quality (attitude, behavior, and expertise), outcome quality (waiting time, tangible elements, and valence of the outcome), and environment quality (ambient conditions, design, and social factors).

In addition, they recommend that for each of these sub dimensions to contribute to improved service quality perceptions, the service received by customers must be perceived to be trustworthy, receptive, and compassionate. The two dimensions directly under the service supplier’s control, interaction and outcome, are of particular interest for the study for understanding the consequences of job role stressors and frontline employee role performance towards the customers on service effectiveness delivered by frontline employees.

For measuring the service effectiveness in this study SERVQUAL model proposed by Parasuraman et al. (1985) is used as this model best meets the objective of the study i.e. to measure the gap between customer expectation and customer perception of service effectiveness delivered by the frontline employees which is described in details in chapter 3 along with other two models namely technical quality / functional quality model proposed by Gronroos (1984) and SERVPERF model proposed by Cronin and Taylor (1992), (Naik and Srinivasan, 2015). One service effectiveness measurement model that has been applied widely is the SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985, 1986), Zeithaml et al. (1990). It measures the service effectiveness by measuring the customers' expectations before a service interaction and their perceptions of the actual service delivered and then finding if there is any significant gap between the two. (Gronroos, 1982; Lewis and Booms, 1983; Parasuraman et al. 1985).
The SERVQUAL model has five generic dimensions as stated above (Parasuraman et al. 1988)

Tangibles: Physical amenities, tools and appearance of recruits.
Reliability: Dependability and accuracy with which service is performed.
Responsiveness: Eagerness to help customers and provide timely access, contact and understanding the customer: It includes consideration and individualized attention that the firm provides to its customers.
Assurance (including proficiency, politeness, trustworthiness and safety): Knowledge and courtesy of employees and their ability to inspire trust and confidence.
Empathy (including access, announcement, taking care of the customer demands): Caring and personal attention that the firm caters to its customers (Naik and Srinivasan, 2015)

In the SERVQUAL instrument, 22 statements quantify the performance across these five dimensions, using a seven point likert scale measuring both customer expectations and perceptions (Gabbie and O'neill, 1996). These 22 statements are modified to 15 statements for the purpose of the analysis under study after in-depth discussions with the
human resource managers of the selected department stores and secondary data. These 15 statements are measured across these five dimensions using a seven point likert scale measuring both customer’s expectations and perception.

The 15 indicators or service effectiveness factors include: • Physical ambience • Employee appearance • Timeliness • Problem solving attitude • Extra – assistance beyond job responsibilities • Prompt service • Behavior instills confidence & safety • Accuracy of service • Knowledge of products • Politeness • Willingness to help customers • Multitasking attitude • Ease of service • Consistent service • Availability of staff

The in brief explanation of other two frameworks is as follows. The SERVPERF framework (Cronin and Taylor, 1992) is derived from Parasuramen et al.’s (1985) SERVQUAL framework. The same five dimensions of service quality are used; however, the survey items employed to measure the dimensions use a different anchoring system. Instead of asking two questions for each item within a dimension, only one question would be used and it would simply ask the customer to rate the performance of the service provider on a particular dimension. For e.g. one survey item within the empathy dimension that could be used is “Employees at XYZ store provide superior individualized attention.” Again, the customer could use a 7 point likert scale to indicate their response.

The third service quality framework includes technical quality / functional quality framework proposed by Gronroos (1984). Technical quality refers to the technical outcome of the service, that is, “what the buyer receives as a result of his interactions with a service firm.” The hotel guest will receive a room; the restaurant customer will get a meal, etc. Functional quality corresponds to intangible part i.e. the expressive performance of a service, that is, how the service is performed. The customers in a departmental store would not only like attractive store layout but would conjointly like the sales personnel to be friendly and courteous. The consumer will combine his impression of the technical and functional quality to form total impression of the overall quality level of the service provider. Technical quality is also known as product quality
& functional quality is also known as service quality. The three service frameworks have been linked to many different performance measures both customer oriented for e.g. perceived value and business oriented for e.g. profitability.

The focus of this research is on customer oriented measure i.e. perceived service effectiveness. Thus perceived service effectiveness is very important determinant having impact on buying behavior of the customer. The analysis under study concentrates on understanding whether there is gap between the expectations of customers and perception of customers with respect to service effectiveness delivered by sales personnel working in selected department stores. Table 2.3 provides a summary of literature associated with service effectiveness, one of the important parameters of service productivity.

**Table 2.3. Service effectiveness - An Etymological Table**

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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Author/Authors</th>
<th>Seminal Work</th>
<th>Key Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Grönroos, Christian and Katri Ojasalo</td>
<td>Service Productivity: Towards a Conceptualization of the Transformation of Inputs Into Economic Results in Services</td>
<td>The findings reveal that the vital aspects of service productivity include service efficiency, service effectiveness and capacity efficiency i.e. how effectively the capacity of the service process is utilized.</td>
<td>Journal of Business Research, 57 (4), pp. 414-423.</td>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
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<td>Citation</td>
<td>Analysis</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>Douglas, L. &amp; Connor, R</td>
<td>Attitudes to service quality-the expectation gap</td>
<td>Nutrition &amp; Food Science, Vol. 33 Number 4, pp.165-172.</td>
<td>The analysis indicates that there is a gap between managers’ view point of consumers’ expectations and actual consumers’ expectations. The main implication for the hospitality industry is for managers to design strategies which will meet consumers’ expectations of service quality.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Van Iwaarden, J., van der Wiele, T., Ball, L., and Millen, R.</td>
<td>Applying SERVQUAL to websites: An exploratory study</td>
<td>International Journal of Quality &amp; Reliability Management, Vol.20, No.8, pp. 919-935.</td>
<td>The analysis indicates that the quality dimensions found applicable in the service sector are also relevant to Web sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Paper Title</td>
<td>Summary</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>Kamurka, W., Mittal, V., de Rosa, F. and Mazzon, J</td>
<td>Assessing the Service Profit Chain</td>
<td>The analysis indicates that superior customer satisfaction alone is not an unconditional guarantee of profitability; it should be translated into purchase behavior and actions involving creating good brand of the organization.</td>
<td>Marketing Science, Vol. 21 No. 3, pp. 294 – 317.</td>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>Authors</td>
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<td>1999</td>
<td>Meyer, A., Chase, R., Roth, A., Voss, C., Sperl, K. Menor, L. and Blackmon, K.</td>
<td>Service competitiveness: an international benchmarking comparison of service practices and performance in Germany, UK and USA</td>
<td>The analysis indicates that services management practices and performance and, more specifically the service quality performance is dependent on environment and market dynamics of the service sector within the individual countries.</td>
<td>International Journal of Service Industry Management, Vol. 10 No. 4, pp. 369 – 379.</td>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
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<td>1998</td>
<td>Robinson, S.</td>
<td>Measuring service quality in the process of delivering a simulation study: The customer’s perspective.</td>
<td>The paper focuses on exploring the SimQual instrument that has been developed to assess the standard of a simulation study in which the customers are extremely concerned. The analysis indicates the results of empirical tests with the instrument and discussing its application as well as areas for further research.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Heskett, J., Sasser, W. and Schlesinger, L</td>
<td>The Service Profit Chain</td>
<td>The results indicate that profit and growth are not only linked to customer loyalty and satisfaction, but also to employee loyalty, satisfaction, and productivity.</td>
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Free Press, New York, NY.
2.4 Employee role performance

According to Surprenant and Solomon, 1987 personal encounter between frontline employees and the customers is the most important aspect of the services. Frontline employees can be perceived as source of differentiation and competitive advantage in service industry (Pfeffer, 1994). This service encounter can influence the satisfaction levels of customers as delivery of service happens during the same (Schneider and Bowen, 1995). Service quality, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty are often based on the service encounter between the frontline employees and customers (Bitner et al. 1990; Keaveney 1995147; Parasuraman et al. 1988; Schneider and Bowen 1993148).

Over recent decades, industrial reformation in India has witnessed a significant shift of employment from agriculture and mechanized industries to the services sector. This shift has led to an increase in one to one interaction both physical and virtual in such occupations.

From a customer services representative in a call centre to a teacher or a retail store salesperson, the emotional demands of any job have increased. In general in service industry and particularly in retail industry, being responsive or nice to people is a value-added part of the product that employees provide (Schneider and Bowen, 1993). It has been found by the researcher that personal interactions between the frontline employees and customers help in customer retention when service offerings between service providers are identical (Rust and Zahorik, 1993149). In an attempt to better understand the reason of service encounter behaviors, practitioners and researchers have investigated the areas of role expectations (Bitner et al. 1990), role conflict and ambiguity (Hartline and Ferrell 1996; Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman 1988), change management, (Gremler, Bitner, and Evans 1994150), role stress and performance (Babin and Boles 1998151; Singh 1999; Singh, Goolsby, and Rhoads 1994152), behavior and customer orientation (Brown, Mowen, Donavan, and Licata 2002153), organizational climate (George 1998154), and behavior-based performance assessment and ownership (Hartline and Ferrell 1996).
Decisions to exhibit any behavior, be it negative or positive, are made by frontline employees. However, in recognizing the vested interest and significant role that firms have in influencing employee attitudes and behaviors associated with employee performance and service productivity, a more complete understanding may be obtained by exploring the relationships among service effectiveness, frontline employee role performance and job role stressors i.e. role conflict and role ambiguity. Frontline employee for the purpose of this study is restricted to sales personnel employed in selected department stores.

Role performance refers to the behaviors performed by employees with the intention of benefiting the organization, group, or individual at whom these behaviors are directed (Brief and Motowidlo 1986). Role performance is characterized as the degree, to which employees execute tasks, responsibilities, and assignments (Wetzels et al. 2000). According to Kaplan and Jones (1998) job performance of retail frontline employees is of utmost importance to their employers as evidenced by the financial resources invested in developing a well-trained workforce. In the manufacturing sector, job performance often refers to a single measurable end result that focuses on immediate results such as sales volume. Bush et al. (1990) are of the view point that in case of service sector like organized retail sector front line employees job performance evaluations should include multiple dimensions like service efficiency that is sales volume and service effectiveness (e.g. customer orientation) i.e. behavior. Service effectiveness mainly focuses on service quality rendered, an important aspect of service productivity which affect profitability of any retail store (Heskett et.al., 1994, 1997155) Employee role performance for the purpose of this study refers to behaviors of frontline employees towards the organization, individual and group that can be broadly categorized as – prosocial role performance & non-role performance (Bettencourt and Brown 1997).

2.4.1 Prosocial role performance

Prosocial role performance can be perceived as helpful behaviors of employees directed towards the organization or toward other individuals (Bettencourt and Brown 1997). Frontline employee role performance may be directed towards either co-workers or
customers (Brief and Motowidlo 1986; George and Bettenhausen 1990). Co-worker directed prosocial behaviors are organizational citizenship behaviors directed toward co-workers and performed by employees. Customer-directed prosocial behaviors or the prosocial role performances are directed towards and perceived by the customer. These behaviors are of particular interest in this study as this behaviors enable to understand the impact of service effectiveness perceived by the customers in other words it enables to understand whether there is gap between the customer expectations & customer perception of service delivery rendered by frontline employees. For the purpose of the study the customer –directed prosocial behaviors will be called as “frontline employee role performance towards the customers”.

2.4.1.1. Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB)

Organization citizenship behaviors are defined as the non-compulsive, helpful, and constructive behaviors exhibited by frontline employees and directed towards the organization or its members (Organ 1988\textsuperscript{156}, Podsakoff et al. 2000\textsuperscript{157}). Organizational citizenship behaviors can be comprised of acts such as volunteering for tasks that are not required, helping others who have heavy workloads, helping others who have been absent, trying to create brand image of the organization by talking favorably about the organization to outsiders or offering suggestions for organizational improvements (George and Bettenhausen 1990; Smith, Organ, and Near 1983\textsuperscript{158}). According to Borman and Motowidlo (1993\textsuperscript{159}) Organizational Citizenship Behaviors is the performance done with the motive of promoting the welfare of the firm. According to Bettencourt and Brown (2003) taking individual initiative to improve service delivery includes Organizational Citizenship Behaviors. Organizational Citizenship Behaviors requires following components (1) confidence in and recognition of the organization's objectives and values, (2) a readiness to exert considerable effort for the organization and (3) a strong aspiration to sustain membership of the organization (Mowday et al.1979\textsuperscript{160},1982\textsuperscript{161}).
2.4.1.2. Frontline employee role performance towards the customers

Frontline employees for the purpose of study include the employees walking the floor i.e. the on floor sales personnel who own a large measure of control over the customer experience (Anderson and Mittal, 2000). Customer-directed prosocial behaviors, or the prosocial role performances that are directed towards and perceived by the customers, are called as “Frontline employee role performance towards the customers”. They are of particular interest in this study as they have direct implications for customer perceptions of service effectiveness. Two types of frontline employee role performance towards the customers can be viewed as being beneficial to the firm: role-prescribed performance and extra-role performance (Bettencourt and Brown 1997). First, role-prescribed performance refers to expected employee behaviors during provision of service to the customers or behaviors specified as a formal part of an individual’s role or job (Bettencourt and Brown 1997; Brief and Motowidlo 1986). According to Borman and Motowidlo, 1993 these behaviors can also be known as employee in role performances. It comprises of core job responsibilities of the employees included in employee’s formal job description. For e.g.: (1) having knowledge about the firm, firm’s and competitors products and services and the customers (2) performing in-role tasks as specified in formal job description, such as proper processing of customers orders and conducting mandated checkout procedures (3) conducting proper product displays, store signage and opening/closing procedures. Expectations of these behaviors may be derived from implicit norms present at the workplace or from explicit duties expressed in such documents as job descriptions, company mission, vision, or performance appraisal forms (Brief and Motowidlo 1986; Puffer 1987). Role-prescribed performance has been operationalized in various forms across studies. George (1991) defined role-prescribed performance as customer-service behavior, with each item of the scale reflecting a helpful behavior a salesperson might display in relation to a customer. Kelley and Hoffman (1997) utilized measures developed by Saxe and Weitz (1982) to assess the customer-oriented behavior of salespersons, which involves the salesperson’s fulfillment of customer needs in the customer’s best interest.
Bettencourt and Brown (1997) developed a scale that assesses the extent to which the service provider fulfills all of the responsibilities to customers as specified in their job description. The marketing literature reinforces the importance of similar behaviors for service quality perceptions, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, retention and sales performance (George 1991; Keaveney 1995; Kelley et al. 1992).

Extra-role performance refers to the discretionary behaviors in which employees engage that benefit the firm in some way and when such performance are targeted towards the customers they are called as extra-role performances towards the customers (ERPC) (Borman and Motowidlo, 1993).

According to Bettencourt et al. (2001) extra-role performance towards the customers includes participation and service delivery. Participation means voluntary initiatives that add on to service while communicating with the customers and service delivery means extra efforts to respond to customer queries. For this research extra-role performance towards the customers can be defined as the extra efforts taken by the employee to meet the needs of customers during employee-customer interface. It’s an employer’s belief that customers will stay loyal when they are given personal attention in this mass customer market driven technology (Brief and Motowidlo, 1986). Extra-role service behavior of employees is dependent on the self-emotional appraisal of the employees and employees control of emotional responses of the customer (Tsai, 2009).

The study of job role stressors in organizational settings enables to explore the extra-role performance towards customers (Gremler et al. 1994). When customer contact personnel shares a set of common objective aimed at one common intention, a specific kind of commitment is required which is affected by job role stressors (Enis, 1990). Providing service effectiveness during service encounter can be viewed as an example of such a common purpose (Hartline and Ferrell, 1996). Such acts are situation and customers based and are not specifically delegated to individuals as activities to be performed as part of the job (Brief and Motowidlo 1986).
Recent marketing literature highlights the importance of frontline employees in providing memorable service encounter to the customers by their exceptional service, influencing the customer satisfaction and loyalty (Bitner et al. 1990; Gremler et al. 1994). For example, a sales personnel suggesting which apparel looks good on you illustrates extra-role customer service. The act is not mandated by company policy, but rather reflects the discretionary behavior of the individual. In general, this category of prosocial service behavior recognizes that in some situations contact employees contribute to making service encounter memorable for the customer by going beyond the formal job role leading to service excellence. Table 2.4 provides an summary of literature associated with frontline employee role performance towards the customers.

**Table 2.4. Frontline employee role performance - An Etymological Table**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Author/Authors</th>
<th>Seminal Work</th>
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<td>Year</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Study Details</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Harris, E.G., Mowen, J.C. and Brown, T.J.</td>
<td>Re-examining salesperson goal orientations: personality influencers, customer orientation, and work satisfaction</td>
<td>The analysis indicates that a salesperson's customer orientation completely dictates the link between company customer orientation and salesperson performance. Thus, the influence of a company's customer orientation on salesperson performance acts through the customer orientation of the salespeople.</td>
<td>Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, Vol. 33 No. 1, pp. 19-35.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Thomas S. DeWitt</td>
<td>Service Role performance as a Workgroup Phenomenon: Customer Contact Employee Role Performance effects on Service Productivity</td>
<td>The analysis indicates that role-prescribed and extra-role performance is largely influenced by task-based cohesion and workgroup customer orientation, while non-role performance is a product of workgroup inequity, social cohesion, and task-based cohesion.</td>
<td>The Florida State University College of Business</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<td>Karatepe, O. and Avci, T</td>
<td>affective and performance outcomes.</td>
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<td>S., Rexwinkel, B., Lynch,</td>
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<td>P. and Rhoades, L</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>Frayne, C. and Geringer, M</td>
<td>Self-management training for improving job performance: A field experiment involving salespeople</td>
<td>The analysis indicates that, compared with a control condition (n = 30), coaching in self-management skills to experimental cluster considerably improved job performance as evaluated through both objective and subjective measures. Performance improvement continued with time, and increases were sustained across 12-month period post training. Later subsequent coaching of the control cluster resulted in similar increases in self-efficacy, outcome expectancies, and work performance.</td>
<td>Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol. 85 No. 3, pp. 361 – 372.</td>
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<td>Year</td>
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<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Babin, Barry J. and James S. Boles</td>
<td>Employee Behavior in a Service Environment: A Model and Test of Differences Between Men and Women</td>
<td>The analysis indicates similarities and differences across gender with respect to perception of role stress and job satisfaction with service environment. The results indicate that role stress has more negative impact on female service providers' job performance males', and that job satisfaction leads to more attrition among males than females.</td>
<td>“Weighing online marketing’s benefits”, Multichannel News, New York: May 23, Vol. 26, No 21, pp. 91</td>
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</table>
2.4.2 Non role performance

If the employees are underpaid, if they face ambiguity with respect to their job responsibilities, if there is conflict with respect to their job expectations, the result is the prevalence of harmful outcomes such as demotivation, absenteeism etc. (Johns 1997) and this leads to indulgence in behavior (Kidwell and Bennett 1993; Kidwell and Robie 2003) that may violate work norms and perceptions of service effectiveness, and therefore be considered non-role performance (Robinson and Bennett 1995). While the focus of role-prescribed and of extra-role performance concern employee efforts that are beneficial to both the employee and the organization, the focus of non role performance is on how and why employees indulge in behavior that are not directed towards providing quality service. Non-role performance or withholding effort has been studied in various forms across disciplines. For this study the focus will be on frontline employee role performance towards the customers.

2.5. Job role stressors

It can be seen that over a previous couple of years India has been experiencing a revolution in retail market. Retail is one of the extremely workforce intensive industries. According to (Budhwar et.al. 2009) estimations 8 million people will be required in organized retail by 2011. But so far, the human resource management factors in retail management are mostly unnoticed (Aneja, 2006). The issues of job role stress and its impact on performance and thus service effectiveness which leads to customer loyalty resulting in profit for any retail outlet were neither discussed nor investigated in details in organized Indian retail sector. According to Heskett et al. (2003) front line employee’s attitude and perception affects the customer satisfaction and intent of buying behavior which in turn have impact on store productivity. Retailers over the years have developed and used various methods to quantify the performance. Retail productivity is one of them and probably rather significant too (Sink, 1985). The analysis under study is concentrating on service effectiveness one of the qualitative dimension of service productivity which is core dimension for customer satisfaction and
loyalty especially in service sector. Most of the service sector employer's demand that employees should appeal to the senses of customers and at the same time requires the employees to comply with the targets set at the workplace which adds to the stress of the employees due to the boundary spanning role (Bitner, 1990).

Freud (1978\textsuperscript{170}) gave first theory of stress. According to him, stress is a state where in there is reduced discharge of libidinal energy, either due to external obstacles or due to internal ones. According to cognitive approach (1960) stress is created when the individual is not capable or perceives that he/she is not capable of meeting the demands of a certain situation, and that these situations are a threat to the individual’s health. A study of 700 Personnel and Human resource Directors by the Industrial Society reported stress as one of the factor leading to decreased productivity, poor decision making ability, poor effectiveness, poor customer relationship maintenance, high personnel turnover, low morale and increased accidents. This is backed up by the health in England survey conducted in 1996 with 4600 people which found that 69 percent of women and 62 percent of men had experienced moderate and excessive stress in the last year.

Aldwin (1994\textsuperscript{171}) states that stress refers to the experience created as a result of the interaction between the individual and the organizational context. This interaction may lead to mental and physiological tension. Selye (1964\textsuperscript{172}) explains stress as the natural falling apart of the body and as the non-specific response of the body to any demand placed on it. Selye also explained the term positive stress, which not only does not cause deterioration and malfunctions, but can also act as a productive factor and as a factor of development and creation. Karasek (1979\textsuperscript{173}) proposed a theoretical model, where the primitive factors that cause stress to the employee are: (1) The assignments that the employee is assigned to complete. (2) The limits of discretionary behavior exhibited by the employee and the autonomy given to the employee (3) Social relations with seniors, peers and subordinates. The presence of just one of these three factors is not enough to lead to stress. All three together, however, definitely affect the employee.
According to Warr (1990), the basic factors causing stress to aggravate are decision-making, confusion and the factors that reduce the impact of stress include the development of knowledge, competencies of the employees, satisfactory compensation, tasks that are not monotonous, physical safety, realistic targets, social acceptance and the potential for interpersonal communication. Also according to Herzberg’s (1959) theory there are two different kinds of factors, motivators and hygiene factors, which are related to work satisfaction. Motivators are the factors that lead to work satisfaction and hygiene factors are the factors that may not lead to satisfaction if present but may lead to dissatisfaction if absent.

According to Herzberg, motivators are the positive stances towards work which lead to satisfaction and are related to the work content, e.g. achievement, recognition, development potential, and the nature of the work. These factors were named motivators as they drive the individual towards greater performance and effort. On the other hand, hygiene factors include negative stances that lead to dissatisfaction. These are connected to the framework of the organization, such as management, supervision, compensation, interpersonal relationships. These factors if not present can result in job role stressors role ambiguity & role conflict creating stressful situations leading to dissatisfied workforce. The management of frontline employees has been extensively researched in the services marketing literature (e.g., Bettencourt and Brown, 1997; Singh & Smith, 2002). However, comparatively very little analysis has considered how employees’ experience of work stress influences their role performance towards the customers & service effectiveness, despite the accumulated validation that frontline employees are often highly stressed (Hartline and Ferrell 1996).

Taking into account the present social and market scenario comprising of intensive technology, high speed, global competition and consumerism, stress is on rise and having adverse effects on the physical and mental health of the individuals, which in turn is having impact on employee performance and thus productivity of an organization. (Sharma, Devi 2011). The prediction of The World Health Organization Global Burden of Disease Survey reflects that mental health sickness, including stress-
related sickness, will be the second leading cause of disabilities by the year 2020 (Kalia, 2002). According to Kahn et al. (1964) job role stress related to role performed by the employee is one of the important determinant of employee performance and service productivity. The outcome of this has been found to have detrimental effect on the organization (Fisher and Gitelson, 1983). According to Caplan, (1985); Parasuraman et al. (1981); Pal & Vasudeva (1989); Ivancevich et al. (1982) a number of dimensions of working life have been linked to stress which leads to have direct relationship with the evaluation of the demands on the physical and mental well-being of the employees. Presence of job role stressors may further lead to health problems, anxiety, dissatisfaction and hopelessness amongst employees. The stress at work place does not only have ill effect on health but also may hinder employees’ capability of customer complaints and subsequent service effectiveness (Elfering et al. 2005; Jonge et al. 2001).

Researchers have applied role-theory to understand issues arising due to presence of stress at work and to investigate how job role stressors contribute to occupational stress (Gupta and Adhikari, 2008). Many practitioners and researchers have and are of the viewpoint that role occupied by an employee in the organization may lead to situations that create stress having an influence on their service productivity. According to Dubinsky et al. (1984) such organizational role stress has been established to be negatively related to managerial effectiveness. A number of role stressors such as lack of authority, role ambiguity, personal inadequacy and role conflict (Burke, 1988; Nelson and Burke, 2000) can be stressful. Role burden, lack of senior level guidance, absence of teamwork, inequity at workplace, role stagnation, resource and personal inadequacy, status quo etc. lead to stress at workplace (Kumar, 2006; Driscoll, 1994; Sharma & Devi, 2011).

In special context to employees in the service sector, who are intensively involved in direct interactions with the customers, wherein self emotional appraisal is highly essential role stress has been found to be very important in determining their commitment to the organization, their relationship with supervisor and their intention to
leave the firm (Dubinsky et al. 1984). While studies related to trends of role stress among other professionals and in other work context are comparatively well documented (Rutter et al. 2002; Voss et al. 2007) on front line employees role performance towards the customers is still at nascent stage in department store setting with respect to organized retail sector in India.

In most of the complex organizations every individual belongs to more than one group and thus have to play multiple roles (Katz and Kahn, 1978). The term role has many definitions. According to Biddle & Thomas (1966) role is defined as “the set of prescriptions defining what the behavior of position member should be” (p.29). Role concepts in the organizations can be used as the means of linking individual and organizational levels of research & theory, it can be considered as building blocks of social system and composite of requirements with which such complex structures consider their members as individuals (Katz and Kahn, 1978).

Roles are created so that they can be functional for both organization as well as individuals but sometimes they can be extremely dysfunctional (Gross, Mason and McEachern 1958; Kahn et al. 1964). Role conflict & role ambiguity are the dysfunction outcomes of job role concept. The stress related to role performed by the employee at the workplace is the most important determinant of performance of the employee (Sharma, Devi 2011). According to Pareek (1993) the performance of employee in the organization can lead to conflict, which can result in stress among the employees. Such stress can have negative impact on employee performance along with many other dysfunctional outcomes (Behrman and Perrault, 1984). In such circumstances, efforts to sustain a high performance linked job environment for a long term can be a complex task for organizations as well as employees which in turn will affect the organizational productivity.

According to Dubinsky et.al (1984) role stress is very important determinant of employee’s loyalty to the organization and hence his/her intention to leave the organization, especially in case of employees in service sector who are in direct interaction with the customers. According to Wheatherly and Tansik (1993) employees
have to deal with the directions from superiors as well as the needs and wishes of customers. Because of such multiple roles, the retail frontline employees are in confusion whether to adapt the retail services as per customers demands and wishes or to obey the organizational guidelines and procedures (Bitner, 1990; Bitner et al. 1990; Goodwin and Radford, 1993). This dilemma often leads to job role stress. According to Goodwin and Radford (1993) job role stress is particularly relevant in retail services because there is high level of customer participation and frontline employees are bound by organizational rules and regulations. Since role stress may severely impede a retailer’s mission of providing service delight, it is essential to assess the impact of job role stressors on frontline employee’s performance and thus service effectiveness. The research focuses on two important dimensions of job role stressors reviewed in the following section namely role conflict and role ambiguity. Table 2.5 provides a summary on literature associated with job role stressors with respect to service industry.

**Table 2.5. Job role stressors – An Etymological Table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Author/Authors</th>
<th>Seminal Work</th>
<th>Key Points</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Hashemi, S. M., Jamil Jusoh, Kiumarsi, S. and Shno Mohammadi</td>
<td>Exploring The Role of Stress On Organizational Commitment Among Employees In Hospitality Industry: The Mediating Role of Job Satisfaction</td>
<td>The conceptual framework developed in this study can be used to analyse the direct effect of the link between role stress and organizational commitment in the hospitality industry and indirect effect of job satisfaction on the link between role stress and commitment.</td>
<td>International Journal of Information Research and Review Vol. 2, Issue 9, pp.1144-1150, September, 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Authors</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Vidya Patwardhan, Dr Suresh Mayya, Dr H.G. Joshi</td>
<td>Organizational Role Stress among Managers in the Indian Hospitality Industry</td>
<td>The analysis indicates that role stress was experienced at temperate to high levels among women managers and the major stressors were inter role distance, role erosion, role stagnation and role overload.</td>
<td>International Journal of Business and Management Invention Vol. 3 Issue 9, September 2014 ,pp.13-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Jyoti Sharma and Arti Devi</td>
<td>Role stress among employees: An empirical study of commercial banks</td>
<td>The analysis indicates that issues like role stress do exist at commercial banks level. To deal with such issues strategic planning is essential.</td>
<td>Gurukul Business Review (GBR), Vol. 7, pp.53-61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>Bettencourt, L. A., S. Brown</td>
<td>Role stressors and customer-oriented boundary-spanning behaviors in service organizations</td>
<td>The findings reveal that if job satisfaction and organizational commitment are impaired it will result in negative impact of job role stressors i.e. role conflict and role ambiguity on customer-oriented boundary spanning behavior in service organizations. This negative impact of the role stressors is more prominent on external representation and internal influence behaviors.</td>
<td>Journal of Academic Marketing Sci. 31(4) pp.394–408.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>Varca, P.</td>
<td>Work stress and customer service delivery</td>
<td>The findings reveal that the high performance group reported low levels of job stressors among frontline employees. This reflects that perceptions of job stress can relate to quality of service.</td>
<td>The Journal of Services Marketing, Vol. 13 No. 3, pp. 229 – 241.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Author(s)</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Abramis, D. J.</td>
<td>Psychological Reports, Vol. 75, pp.1411–1433.</td>
<td>The analysis indicates that role ambiguity is significantly and negatively related to satisfaction and to performance. The results also reveal that role ambiguity is a valid construct in organizational research and that it is usually associated with lower job satisfaction.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Wheatherly, K.A., Tansik, D.A</td>
<td>International Journal of Service Industry Management pp.4, 4-17.</td>
<td>The analysis indicates that with respect to frontline employees a link exists between job satisfaction and attributes of performance based on tactics used by them to control the environment.</td>
<td></td>
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Table 2.5. (Continued)

<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Author(s)</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
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</table>

2.5.1. Role Conflict

Role conflict is defined as “The simultaneous occurrence of two (or more) sets of pressures such that compliance with one would make more difficult compliance with the other” (Kahn et al. 1964, p. 19). For frontline employees with multiple roles expectations of different stakeholders of the organization like management, customers might be perceived in conflict with each other. For example, when a superior expects that an employee serves as many customers as possible, a customer at the same time may demand personal attention. According to Pareek (1993) due to the boundary spanning role of frontline employees in the organization there is potential for conflict leading to job role stress. Such stress can contribute to various dysfunctional end results for the organization like demotivation, job dissatisfaction, reduced performance, etc. (Behrman and Perreault, 1984). In such circumstances, efforts to maintain a high level of work performance environment for long term can be a tedious task for organizations as well as
employees. When two or more employees have different perception regarding their work which makes them experience conflicting demands and expectations, and lead them to make decisions which are not compatible, a situation of role conflict exists. Rizzo et al. (1970192) stated that role conflict results when an individual is faced with competing or conflicting sets of expectations and directions in the organization, or when the principle of chain of command or the principle of unity of command is violated. The frontline employee may be caught in the three cornered fight between two supervisors or the needs of two functional groups (Jones, 2007193).

Role conflict results when it is perceived by the employee that every stakeholder have conflicting sets of demands and there is no way to satisfy all the stakeholders (Onyemah, 2008194). Individuals in the organization are playing multiple roles for e.g. subordinate, superior, colleague etc. so balancing their roles to the team of which they are apart at a given time leads to role conflict. They read their job descriptions, get inputs from their manager, and watch what their coworkers do. But when it actually comes to delivering the role performance situation based behavior is desired. When that individual is confronted by different role expectations, he or she perceives role conflict. (Robbins and Coulter, 2003, pg. 372195). Facets of role conflict include being caught between the conflicting demands from a supervisor and customers and being required to control the emotional responses of the client (Ivanceivich, 2008, p.227196).

Up to a certain point role conflict can be functional, but beyond that point, conflict may become dysfunctional or even destructive. Conflict can be positive when it overcomes organizational inactivity and leads to organizational development. After a certain point, however, conflict can lead to organizational ineffectiveness. There are many stress management strategies that can be considered by management to reduce job stressors, such as creation of a supportive organizational climate, job enrichment, providing role clarity, planning career paths and providing coaching and mentoring since individuals are left to decide career plans on their own or get guidance once in a while from a supervisor (Luthans, 1989197).
2.5.2. Role Ambiguity

Kahn et al. (1964), Walker et al. (1975) mentions that role ambiguity occurs when employee does not have sufficient information about the job to be performed. (Chenet, Tynan, and Money, 2000; Sutherland, and Cooper, 1991). In case during induction or promotion or transfer if newcomer's/employees roles were not defined in a clear way, these newcomers/employees might face role ambiguity. This situation might lead to misinterpretation of job requirements, norms, policies, and procedures. Since employee needs to understand clearly what his or her role is, not having clarity about one’s role may lead to higher levels of job stress and also directly lead to lower levels of job satisfaction (Slattery et al., 2008). Role ambiguity is perceived as the situation where an individual does not have clarity with respect to the expectations of their role in the job or organization (Rizzo et al., 1970). It results when a person's responsibilities or authority are not clearly defined and the person fears to act on or take liability for anything (Jones, 2007). Role ambiguity is the perception that one does not have adequate information to perform a job or task, due to which the perceiver feels helpless. It is an employee’s uncertainty about the expectations of different stakeholders in his or her role set (Onyemah, 2008). Each formal position in an organization should have clarity with respect to task requirements to minimize ambiguity and increase output, but in some structures task requirements are ambiguous (Hamilton, 2002). Role ambiguity is a result of inadequate information or knowledge to do a job. This ambiguity may be due to absence of frequently updated training and development programs, distorted communication, or the purposely withholding of information by a colleague or supervisor (Luthans, 1989).

2.5.3. Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity indicators

Role conflict is measured using a scale adapted from Rizzo, J. R., House, R. J., & Lirtzman, S. I. (1970). Scale items are adapted to accommodate the retail format selected i.e. department store. Employees are asked to evaluate the level of role conflict faced by them by using seven - items depicting level of role conflict measured by means of seven –point Likert scales from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).
Role ambiguity is measured using a scale adapted from Rizzo, J. R., House, R. J., & Lirtzman, S. I. (1970). Scale items are adapted to accommodate the retail format selected i.e. department store. Employees are asked to evaluate the level of role ambiguity faced by them by using seven - items depicting level of role ambiguity measured by means of seven –point Likert scales from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Role Conflict is measured by using following parameters:

- Job responsibilities are situation based
- Inadequate resources to complete the assignment
- Work-group conflict
- Flexibility of rule & policy
- Incompatibility of orders
- Clash of Job responsibilities
- Importance of job done

Role Ambiguity is measured by using following parameters:

- Clarity of authority
- Clarity of objectives
- Time Management
- Clarity of responsibilities
- Clarity of expectations from management
- Clarity of communications
- Training provided

Following 8 dimensions of internal service quality (Stodnick, 2005) mentioned in Heskett & colleagues framework (1994, 1997) are reviewed to empirically validate the above mentioned measures of role conflict & role ambiguity.
2.5.3.1. Training

Employee training is one of the most widely researched human resource practices in the service segment. In case of frontline employees especially in service sector training is required throughout the employment tenure because these employees have to control the emotional needs of the customers which is not a scripted task but on other hand requires situation based reactions to the needs of the customers (Huselid, 1995; MacDuffie, 1995; Babakus et al., 2003).

The main focus of the frontline employee training should be on interpersonal & behavioral training along with the emphasis on service processes. The resultant outcome of training as predicted by the service profit chain model: increased job satisfaction (Ulrich et al., 1991; Hallowell et al., 1996), increased loyalty (Havlovic, 1991; Wayne et al., 1997; Silvestro and Cross, 2000), increased ability to meet customer needs (Wayne et al., 1997; Kamakura et al., 2002), improved service quality (Silvestro and Cross, 2000; Kamakura et al., 2002), increased customer satisfaction (Tornow and Wiley, 1991; Rogg et al., 2001) and improved business performance (Tornow and Wiley, 1991; Huselid).

If employees receive efficient training then they are more capable to carry out their job with confidence and minimum amount of mistakes, resulting in employee motivation and improvement of productivity as they get more clarity with respect to their job responsibilities. Furthermore, employee knowledge about products, processes and customer needs helps to create organizational capabilities that are difficult to imitate and cannot be readily substituted by technological advancements (Silvestro and Cross, 2000).

Two recent trends are emerging in training literature which is in line with the research under study. The first is a shift towards research exploring the interaction of training and service failures (Hart et al. 1990). A study by Bitner et al. (1990) shows that more than 40% of unsatisfactory service encounters result from employees’ inability to respond to service failures – this inability results due to lack of proper training. Allen
et.al. 2003\textsuperscript{212} demonstrate that employees who do not possess the requisite job skills, skills developed through training, fail to provide satisfactory service when dealing with customer complaints. As service recovery and failure analysis gains more attention in both academic circles and business practice, research into the effect of training on employees’ service capability will continue to grow exponentially. A more recent development in training literature is the impact training programs have on team performance as said before in service sector, interpersonal and behavioral training plays a very significant role. Frayne and Geringer (2000\textsuperscript{213}) find that training and job rotation positively influence team performance in an insurance setting.

Responses to some of the parameters used in the study to measure role conflict, role ambiguity, service effectiveness & frontline employee role performance towards the customers like job responsibilities are situation based, time management, work group conflict, multitasking attitude etc. focus on the quality of training programs delivered to sales personnel in the selected departmental stores. Only delivering of training programs is not the objective but the quality of these training programs delivered is what makes the difference (Babakus et al., 2003)

2.5.3.2. Goal alignment

Clarity of organizational objectives is very essential so that there is no ambiguity with respect to the objectives to the achieved by the individuals as well as teams in the organization. (Heskett et al.; 1994, 1997). Employees who understand their organizational values are more likely to perform the role prescribed as well as extra role performance towards the customers exceptionally well. Vice versa employees who do not have goal clarity may also lack role clarity resulting in role conflict & role ambiguity decreasing the employee satisfaction and increasing employee turnover (Rogers et al., 1994\textsuperscript{214}, Varca, 1999\textsuperscript{215}).

Organizational goal setting and management have been positively linked to immediate employee measures as well as long term business performance. Havlovic (1991) and Huselid (1995) show that goal management can increase employee loyalty. Tornow and Wiley (1991) and Arthur (1994\textsuperscript{216}) demonstrate a positive association of goal alignment
with employee productivity. Zeithaml et al. (1988) and Schneider and Bowen (1993) illustrate the positive link between goal management and customers’ perceptions of service quality. Meyer et al. (1999) and Rogg et al. (2001) both demonstrate the importance of goal management and leadership in positively influencing customer satisfaction measures. Taking the analysis a step further, Silvestro and Cross (2000) and Kamurka et al. (2002) show how goal management can affect business performance. However, employees having goal clarity is not enough; the goals of the company should be flexible enough so that they can be aligned with ever changing customer needs (Hallowell et al., 1996).

Responses to some of the parameters used in the study to measure role conflict & role ambiguity like flexibility of rule & policy, incompatibility of orders, clash of Job responsibilities, importance of job done, clarity of authority, clarity of objectives, clarity of responsibilities, clarity of expectations from management, clarity of communications etc. focus on goal alignment aspect of sales personnel in the selected departmental stores.

2.5.3.3. Team work

Team work is the key mantra for most of the organizations today due to requirement of all time availability of the staff either virtually or physically. The past fifteen years have seen a splurge not only in academic research of work teams but also in practical implementations of the teaming model. One reason for this increase is that work team structures is the backbone in emerging and advanced business practices such as total quality management, just-in-time production, lean manufacturing, business process reengineering, etc. (Wisner and Feist, 2001).

Teaming, often combined with cross-training, creates elasticity for an organization, especially in retail environments where demand and the need for customer service are dynamic. The use of work teams has been positively linked to employee measures such as satisfaction (Rucci et al., 1998; Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002), productivity (Schlesinger and Zornitsky, 1991; Sheridan, 1992) and loyalty (Havlovic, 1991;
Arthur, 1994). Teaming has also been linked to intermediate performance measures such as external quality (Zeithaml et al., 1988; MacDuffie, 1995) and customer satisfaction (Silvestro and Cross, 2000; Rogg et al., 2001). Finally, overall business performance has also been shown to be positively related to the use of work teams (Lau, 2000; Kamurka et al., 2002).

Responses to some of the parameters used in the study to measure role conflict, role ambiguity, service effectiveness & frontline employee role performance towards the customers like incompatibility of orders, clash of job responsibilities, expectations from management, clarity of communications, work group conflict, availability of staff etc. focus on teamwork aspect of sales personnel in the selected departmental stores.

2.5.3.4. Empowerment

Empowerment has been defined in many different ways, but one common line running through all the definitions is that it involves giving employees autonomy and discretion either over certain task-related activities or the entire job role (Schlesinger and Heskett, 1991; Bowen and Lawler, 1992; Rafiq and Ahmed, 1998; Babakus et al., 2003).

In retail environment the employee–customer interaction is more due to it being a service sector resulting in high level of participation of the customer. This high level of participation of customer in the service delivery process demands situation based behavior on the part of employee thus here in scripted job descriptions are not that useful. The main role of employee during the service encounter is controlling the emotional needs of the customer. Thus due to lack of control over the external environment it is essential for the organization to empower the employees to make them more productive.

Many customers will have unique needs that cannot be fulfilled by scripted responses from employees. Employees must be capable of handling these situations when they arise. Moreover, customers may find it tiresome and time consuming if every request they have is to be referred to the manager by the employee before meeting the same. Empowerment is especially important when service failures occur (Bitner, 1990; Bowen
and Lawler, 1992; Spreng et al., 1996). Because of their boundary-spanning roles, front line employees can provide quick, appropriate and situation based responses to dissatisfied customers if empowerment is existing (Babakus et al., 2003).

Empowerment has been linked to a wealth of outcomes, behavioral and business alike. There is substantial evidence that empowerment leads to increased employee satisfaction as employees tend to feel more important in their jobs (Zeithaml et al., 1988; Niehoff et al., 1990; Spreitzer et al., 1997). Lau (2000) demonstrates that higher levels of empowerment increase employee productivity and loyalty and it may also enable to reduce job role stressors i.e. role conflict & role ambiguity.

Using more of a customer oriented framework, other researchers also show that empowerment can lead to increased service quality (Zeithaml et al., 1988; Silvestro and Cross, 2000), customer satisfaction (Rafiq and Ahmed, 1998) and business performance (Kamurka et al., 2002). These latter findings result from empowered employees being able to respond quickly to unique customization needs often required in service settings. Empowerment, much like teamwork and training, is also a fundamental cornerstone of modern business practices such as just-in-time production, total quality management and lean manufacturing. As such, it has been indirectly tied to operational outcomes over the past twenty years in these respective streams of research.

Responses to some of the parameters used in the study to measure role conflict & role ambiguity like flexibility of rule & policy, incompatibility of orders, clash of Job responsibilities, importance of job done, clarity of authority, clarity of objectives, clarity of responsibilities, clarity of expectations from management, clarity of communications, job responsibilities are situation based etc. focus on empowerment aspect of sales personnel in the selected departmental stores.

2.5.3.5. Work design

In this study work design is focusing on technical aspects of managing the job activities to form job task and lead to the clarity of the job activities which may have an impact on behavioral & attitudinal aspect of frontline employees. Improper work design may lead
to stress, ambiguity, tension and conflict which may result in reduced employee satisfaction, productivity and loyalty in turn having an impact on customer satisfaction (Rogers et al., 1994; Spreitzer et al., 1997; Varca, 1999). One common work design model is proposed, and validated empirically, by Rogers et al. (1994), see Figure 2.3

**Figure 2.3. Work Design Model (Roger et al.'s, 1994)**

According to the above model when employees have clarity about their work design, they become more competent in the task which they are accomplishing resulting in increase in satisfaction, loyalty, productivity and even customer satisfaction (Kamakura et al., 2002).

Responses to some of the parameters used in the study to measure role conflict & role ambiguity like flexibility of rule & policy, incompatibility of orders, clash of Job responsibilities, importance of job done, clarity of authority, clarity of objectives, clarity
of responsibilities, clarity of expectations from management, clarity of communications, job responsibilities are situation based etc. focus on clarity of work design aspect of sales personnel in the selected departmental stores.

2.5.3.6. Support from Management

The support that employees perceive they receive from management and the organization is very helpful for the employees to feel they are working in a stress-free environment. Two theories hold up this thought – perceived organizational support and leader-member exchange theory. The earliest work shows that perceived organizational support can increase employee satisfaction and productivity while also decreasing employee attrition and absentee rates (Eisenberger et al. 1986). According to leader-member exchange theory, leader form high quality of relationship with some subordinates but not with others. The quality of leader–subordinate relationship can have impact on number of workplace outcomes such as role stress faced by the employee, employee performance, employee satisfaction etc. (Linde, R and Maslyn, J. 1998; Kacmar et al., 2003).

Responses to some of the parameters used in the study to measure role conflict, role ambiguity, service effectiveness & frontline employee role performance towards the customers like incompatibility of orders, clash of Job responsibilities, expectations from management, clarity of communications, work group conflict, availability of staff, extra-assistance, etc. focus on support from management aspect of sales personnel in the selected departmental stores.

2.5.3.7. Support tools

According to Heskett et al. (1994, 1997) it would be daunting for the employees who are willing to serve the customers but are provided with inadequate resource to do so. In these instances employees may feel stressed out resulting in delivery of poor service quality to the customer. Schneider et al. (1980) validate this theory in their study of employee support services in bank branches. Employees who felt that the organization
did not give them the appropriate tools required to carry out their job experienced less job satisfaction and thus the organization itself suffered a higher degree of turnover.

Responses to some of the parameters used in the study to measure role conflict and role ambiguity, like availability of resources, flexibility of rules and policies in the organization, work group conflict, etc. focus on support tools aspect of sales personnel in the selected departmental stores.

2.5.3.8. Rewards and recognition

Compensation management is one of the most widely explored topics within human resource management literature; it is especially widespread within service frameworks (Wright and Boswell, 2002235). Both the monetary and non-monetary reward systems used by organizations are examined by the researchers. Within the monetary categories, most studies focus on wage rates, pay for performance, bonus pay, incentive pay and/or merit raises. Non-monetary reward systems generally focus on recognizing outstanding employees with non-financial awards. The awards can be either formal programs, such as employee of the month, challenging international assignments or informal, vacation off with family etc. Brown and Peterson (1993236); Bowen and Johnston (1999237); have positively linked both of these dimensions to job satisfaction and loyalty. They have also been linked to external measures such as service effectiveness (Bowen and Johnston, 1999) and customer satisfaction (Tornow and Wiley, 1991; Kamurka et al., 2002).

The background information of the sales personnel in questionnaire mentioned in the appendix focuses on compensation aspects of the selected sample under study.

2.6. Theories linking internal service quality to employee performance

The two theories that can be studied to understand the relationship between internal service quality and employee satisfaction, include social exchange theory and the inducements/contributions framework. The reason to understand these theories before reviewing the relationship of job role stressors with performance and service effectiveness is that they help to establish relationship between internal service quality & employee satisfaction. Internal service quality can be defined feelings that employees
have towards their jobs, colleagues, and organization (Heskett et al., 1994). Thus outcome of inefficient internal quality can be job role stress. So reviewing these two theories after job role stressors will give better understanding of the same. Both the theories originate in social psychology where they were used to explain relationships among individuals; over the last forty years, they have found their way into economic and business management literature as methods of understanding the relationships between individuals and business organizations. (Naik and Srinivasan, 2015)

2.6.1 Social exchange theory

Social exchange theory primarily explained the motivation behind the attitudes and behaviors exchanged between individuals (Homans, 1961\textsuperscript{238}; Blau, 1964\textsuperscript{239}). Later on this theory was extended to explain the relationship between the individuals and the organizations which they work for by Eisenberger et al. (1986).

The basic learning from the social exchange theory is that human behavior in essence is an exchange of social and material resources; to put it in economic terms, social interaction is as a result of exchange of costs and rewards. In judging a particular relationship, humans develop a perception of the outcome level of their relationship with another individual. This cost benefit analysis of the outcome is generally done in two ways: a comparison level and a comparison level of alternatives. Comparison level is an absolute judgment as to whether the social exchange (i.e. the relationship) provides benefits that outweigh costs. Comparison level of alternatives considers the best payoffs available outside of the current relationship.

Regardless of which method is used for the evaluation of the outcome level, humans will strive to minimize costs and maximize rewards resulting in a positive ‘balance of trade’. An individual will seek to establish and sustain a relationship whose outcome is positive. The exchange between two individuals will continue indefinitely as long as both individuals have positive outcome levels. If an individual has a negative balance of trade, they will quickly look to end the exchange. Clearly there are direct parallels to modern economic theory – power aside, trade between two parties will occur when both
parties benefit from the trade itself i.e. there is positive balance or trade or else the parties will try to end the trade.

In the above mentioned manner employees employed in organization also try to judge their relationship with the organization by taking into consideration the balance of trade or by doing cost benefit analysis (Eisenberger et al. (1986). According to psychology and organizational behavior literature, employees form general perceptions about the intentions and attitudes of the organization that employs them from the policies and procedures that directly affect the employees themselves. In effect, employees try to attribute human-like characteristics to their employing organization on the basis of the treatment they receive (Levinson, 1965). Eisenberger et al. (1986) predict that favorable actions directed at employees by the organization and/or its representatives will increase the chances of reciprocal benefit flow from individual back to organization. Moreover, the gain to employees need not be strictly monetary in the form of salary packages and fringe benefits. Benefits could include policies and practices that lead to personal & career growth, including challenging assignment, training and empowerment, job enrichment career advancement plans etc.

When employees perceive the positive balance of trade with their organizations they will feel obliged to return something in order to maintain the relationship resulting in employees being productive and loyal. Wayne et al. (1997) suggest that a pattern of reciprocity develops over time between the employee and the organization; sometimes this pattern is referred to as the norm of reciprocity. Trying to connect this back to the service profit chain perspective, organizations that provide favorable benefits to the employees by improving internal service quality (positive benefit to employees) will in return see increase in employee loyalty, employee productivity and service levels (positive benefit to the organization) (Heskett et.al., 2003)

Relating this concept to the research under study the employee on the other hand will perceive that there is negative trade of balance if the organizational environment comprises of job role stressors i.e. role conflict & role ambiguity existing within the organization due to lack of role clarity, stressed out interpersonal relationships ,presence
of inadequate resources etc. This may result in an outcome wherein employee performance may deteriorate as he/she will try to terminate the relationship with the organization reducing the productivity of the employee and increasing the chances of employee turnover. The research under study is focused on understanding the significance of service effectiveness and job role stressors with respect to sales personnel working in departmental stores in India.

2.6.2. Inducement contribution theory

The premise established in social exchange theory is consistent with the inducements contributions framework of voluntary turnover, proposed by March and Simon in 1958. The inducements-contributions theory serves as a framework for the establishment of modern turnover theory (Hom and Griffeth, 1991; Allen et al., 2003). March and Simon, 1958 suggest that an employee’s decision to continue participation in an organization is based on the balance between the inducements offered by the organization and the contributions expected of the employee.

An employee who perceives greater inducements is less likely to conclude the working relationship. Again, an organization that offers benefits to the employee in the form of better internal service quality may be viewed as offering an inducement to the employee. In return employees try to maintain the relationship with the organization by willingly increasing their contributions. Again connecting this to the research under study on the other hand if the organization provides stressful working conditions then the employees will not be motivated, but dissatisfied which may lead to reduction in their productivity, resulting in provision of poor service effectiveness to customers resulting in drop in the profitability of the organization.

2.7. Employee role performance, Service effectiveness and Job role stressors

The following subsections will explain the relationship among frontline employee role performance towards the customers, service effectiveness and job role stress.
2.7. 1. Service effectiveness and Employee role performance

While services research has traditionally adopted a manufacturing or efficiency based measure of productivity, this dissertation examines the qualitative (service effectiveness) dimension of productivity. Though frontline employee role performance towards the customers may elicit strong customer responses by increasing levels of service effectiveness, the extra time and effort required to engage in extra role performance may result in lower levels of service efficiency (Dewitt, 2004).

According to Dewitt, 2004 employee role prescribed performance is expected to have a positive influence on service efficiency. The overall efficiency of the frontline employee is expected to be maximized when they are performing the tasks for which they were hired and trained to do. Frontline employee extra-role performance towards customers is expected to have a positive influence on the service effectiveness dimension of productivity and a negative influence on the service efficiency dimension of productivity with respect to banking and other service industries but when it comes to retail industry in India there is lack of research on this aspect. Considerable attention in the academic literature has been given to the need to exceed customer expectations especially in service industry in an attempt to create heightened levels of customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Oliver, Rust and Varki; 1997). The dilemma here is “Cost benefit analysis between service efficiency and service effectiveness”

While organizations may believe that it is clever to pursue a strategy that emphasizes both service effectiveness and service efficiency, there is reason to believe that these two goals are not necessarily compatible. When it comes to manufacturing and other similar industries where in customer participation is the least service efficiency is of utmost importance but when it comes to service industry where in there is high level of customer participation service effectiveness is very important for long term sustainability of profitability as it leads to customer loyalty and retention in long term (Sink, 1985)
An increase in service efficiency (e.g., customers served per employee) may increase overall productivity in the short term, but future profitability may be threatened if perceived service quality and customer satisfaction are dependent on provision of customized service by contact service employees. Increasing volume (e.g., tables per waiter, guests checked in per front desk clerk, and clients attended per salesperson) may also lower customer satisfaction.

Considerable time and attention in the services literature has been given for examining the organizational and individual antecedents of frontline employee role performance (Brady and Cronin 2001; Donavan, Brown, and Mowen 2004; Kelley and Scott 1992; Kelley and Hoffman 1997). Similarly, managers have taken initiatives to ensure positive employee role performance by carefully screening job candidates, developing structured training programs, and conducting company-wide campaigns to develop a customer focus (Dewitt, 2004).

For most customers, interactions with the frontline employee and perceptions of employee role performance represent their view of the firm. Grönroos and Ojasalo (2004) offer perhaps the most comprehensive model of the service productivity process to date. The authors propose that from a productivity perspective, the service production process can be divided into three separate processes: (1) the service provider producing the service in isolation (2) the service provider and the customer producing the service in interactions, and (3) the customer producing the service in isolation from the service provider.

The critical element on which service effectiveness is dependent is the input provided by the frontline employee role performance. The more efficiently the service firm uses its own resources as input into the processes, the better the internal efficiency of the service process will be. The outputs of the service process include: (1) quantity of output (volume), and (2) quality of output (process and outcome). Grönroos and Ojasalo (2004) also propose the quality of the outputs or service effectiveness is manifested both in the process (interaction-induced quality) and in the outcome of the process (outcome-induced quality). The greater the perceived quality that is produced using a given
amount of inputs (provided by both the service provider and the customer), the greater is the service effectiveness and therefore overall service productivity. Alternatively, if perceived service effectiveness is not up to the customer standards because the inputs are functioning in a less customer-oriented way lower perceived service effectiveness is likely experienced for the customer. This in turn will have a negative impact on service productivity. In summary, Grönroos and Ojasalo (2004) propose that the service productivity is dependent on minimizing costs (efficiency) by balancing supply with demand and maximizing revenues (effectiveness) by ensuring customer loyalty.

2.7.2. Job role stressors and Employee role performance

According to Hochschild, 1983; Mohr et al.2007 job role stress is uni-dimensional construct exclusively concerned with the intensity and frequency of emotional displays which have impact on employee performance and others like Kruml and Geddes, 2000,245; Morris and Feldman, 1997,246; observed it as a multi-dimensional construct. Kahn et al. (1964) define role stress as a composite construct consisting of two role stressors which include role conflict and role ambiguity. There have been many studies conducted on relationship between role ambiguity, role conflict and many other correlates since the first introduction of theory of organizational dynamics ((Kahn et. al. 1964). Most of the studies indicates that role stress is accompanied by anxiety and nervousness and affects job performance(Behrman & Perreault, 1984).

According to Dubinsky and Mattson (1979,247) and Abramis (1994,248) there is a negative relationship between role stress and job performance. According to Yousef (2000,249) who investigated 397 employees from several manufacturing and service organizations in the United Arab Emirates, found that low perceptions of both role conflict and role ambiguity would predict better job performance.

Behrman and Perreault (1984) found a negative relationship between role ambiguity and job performance and a positive relationship between role conflict and job performance (see also Michaels, Day, & Jaochimsthaler, 1987,250). Thus it can be seen that there is
inconsistencies in impact of job role stressors on employee performance (Schuler, 1975).

Though, substantial numbers of empirical studies (Hochschild, 1983; Kahn, 1993; Morris and Feldman, 1996) so far were able to demonstrate negative effects of job role stressors but few other studies exhibited different results. Adelmann (1995) carried out a study on table servers and found no relationship between job role stressors and job outcomes while Kahn, 1993 found an independent effect of job conditions and job role stressors on job strain, job satisfaction and psychological distress. Van Maanen and Kunda (1989) focused on the constraining consequences of being employed at Disneyland, whereas Shuler and Sypher (2000) mentioned the positive aspects of job role stress. Hochschild (1983) mentioned that high-emotional demands had negative effects on psychological and physical health. Rutter and Fielding (1988) reported that job role stress is negatively associated with job satisfaction. However, other studies did not uniformly find these negative effects, and some even found positive effects of job role stressors.

According to Putnam and Mumby (1993), job role stress reduces the discretion exercised by the workforce in performing their jobs, whereas, stress free environment enable them to manage their emotions so as to enhance organizational effectiveness (Van Maanen and Kunda, 1989). Further, it was disclosed by Wharton (1999) that the consequences of job role stressors may be highly contingent upon other characteristics of the job and the organization. Pugh (2001) found that the display of positive emotions was related to customer satisfaction and customers’ positive affect which may be indicators of successful service interactions. These processes may contribute to feelings of personal accomplishment. Wharton (1993) found a positive relation between job role stress levels and employee performance. Kruml and Geddes (2006) contended that job role stressors can benefit an employee depending on the employee strategy utilized.

But there is hardly any previous research focusing on impact of job role stressors on frontline employee role performance towards the customers and service effectiveness.
from the frontline employee perspective who are the actual service providers in department store setting of organized Indian retail sector. To fill this major gap the research is undertaken.

2.7.3. Service effectiveness and Job role stressors

Retail salespeople are play multiple roles; they must endeavor to meet the needs of customers while attempting to fulfill expectations of managers, often simultaneously i.e. they have to provide efficient as well as effective service. Attempting to meet conflicting demands often leads to role stress (Wetzels et al. 2000), which can have impact on both service efficiency and service effectiveness resulting in overall impact on service productivity (Flaherty et al. 1999).

Role stress has been shown to have a negative impact on organizational commitment, sales personnel's commitment to quality and eventually perceived service effectiveness (Behrman and Perreault, 1984; Goolsby, 1992; Jackson and Schuler, 1985; Johnston et al. 1990; Micheals et al. 1987; Rizzo et al. 1970; Sager, 1994; Wheatherly and Tansik, 1993; Zeithaml et al. 1988).

Meanwhile, the job role stressors impact on employee role performance has gone relatively unnoticed by academics and practitioners alike. This study proposes that the performance of frontline employees is reflection of the job role stress in which the employees live and work, with the role conflict & role ambiguity being the most prominent stressors (Behrman & Perreault, 1984). In examining the job role stress antecedents of employee performance, this dissertation hopes to lay the groundwork for future research on job role stress related phenomenon in the services literature, while also offering practical recommendations to managers on how to bring optimization of service effectiveness by understanding impact of job role stressors on service effectiveness.

Till the discovery of the new theory defensive marketing (Fornell and Wernerfelt, 1987) priority of most service firms has been to target most of their investments and resources towards acquiring new customers in hopes of expanding market share.
Defensive marketing theorists make an observation that in the focus on solely gaining new customers the current customers feel neglected and have a much higher risk of shifting the patronage to competitor. Reichheld and Sasser (1990) support this thought in their work on customer defections. They believe that quality of market share, measured in terms of customer loyalty, is a far better predictor of future business success than quantity of market share. Their analysis shows that a 5% increase in customer loyalty can lead to profitability increases of between 25% and 85%.

Numerous reasons have been given in justifying the link between customer loyalty and profitability. The most prominent reasons predict that increased customer loyalty leads to: decreased advertising costs (Gremler and Brown, 1999; Anderson and Fornell, 2000), increased referrals (Anderson et al., 1997; Gremler and Brown, 1999; McDougal and Levesque, 2000), more frequent purchases (Anderson et al., 1994; Sirohi et al., 1998) and reduced transaction costs (Potts, 1988; Anderson et al., 1994; Anderson et al., 1997, Mittal and Lasser, 1998).

According to Heskett et al. (1994) the best way to increase customer loyalty is to create “apostles” – customers that are so satisfied that they not only continue buying from an organization but they also “convert the amateur”. Based on many studies conducted customer satisfaction can be said to be the best predictor of customer loyalty (e.g. Soderlund, 1998). A study carried out at Xerox corporation showed that when surveyed, customer who answered a perfect score of “5” on a satisfaction question where six times more likely to repurchase Xerox equipment than those who answered “4” (Heskett et al., 1994).

Customers today are more demanding & quality conscious than they ever have been in the past (Patterson and Spreng, 1997). They now emphasize more on cost benefit analysis giving away the traditional definition of value. The benefits received can come in the form of product quality, friendly service, ease of service, physical ambience, time management etc. (Srinivasan and Srivastava, 2010). Customer investment in a product or service includes not only direct costs, such as price, but also indirect costs, such as time.
Companies such as Progressive Insurance have become leaders known for having extraordinarily high levels of customer satisfaction based on the value they deliver to their customers – in their case, Progressive’s CAT (catastrophe) team provides rapid handling of all accident claims (Heskett et al., 1994). This customer satisfaction is dependent on the service effectiveness parameter of service productivity which is the main focus of research under study. It is the role of frontline employees to provide the service excellence which is dependent on the internal service quality experienced by the employee on which employee satisfaction is dependent (Heskett et al., 1994). Internal service quality is affected by the presence of job role stressors; hence one of the objectives of this research is focused on examining the presence of job role stressors and investigating the direction of relationship between service effectiveness and job role stressors. Further employee satisfaction may lead to employee loyalty. An employee who is loyal to the firm will be more productive resulting in better employee role performance and thus providing service excellence to maintain the positive trade of balance according to the social exchange theory (Sheridan, 1992; Wayne et al., 1997; Eisenberger et al., 2001).  

2.8. Summary

This chapter reviewed literature on retail industry & evolution of retail in India to give background for the research. The next sections illustrated a review of several aspects of literature that afford a foundation for the development for hypotheses, research methodology and execution of the empirical study.

Literature on customer expectation and perception along with service effectiveness was reviewed first. This enabled to differentiate between expectation and perception of customer and also to understand the importance of service effectiveness with respect to service productivity. Literature on frontline employee’s role performance was reviewed next. The review of employee prosocial performance (role prescribed & extra role performance towards the co-workers & customers) and the non role performance illustrates the importance that such performances have in influencing customer perceptions of service effectiveness and customer loyalty. Further review of literature
connected to job role stressors i.e. role ambiguity and role conflict was also carried out along with the service productivity dimensions i.e. service efficiency and service effectiveness. The review on social exchange & inducement contribution theories were used for better understanding of job role stressors i.e. role conflict & role ambiguity and its relationship with frontline employee role performance towards the customers and service effectiveness.

The review suggest that while job role stressors may endanger certain relational benefits it may do so at the cost of customer perception of service effectiveness as it may have negative impact on frontline employee role performance towards customers. Therefore it is essential to encourage managers to reduce negative effects of job role stressors if any on employee role performance towards the customers which in turn may help to reduce the significant difference between customer expectation and customer perception of service quality. This in result will enable to increase customer satisfaction & loyalty resulting in increase in organizations profitability. The last two section deals with the relationship between ‘service effectiveness and frontline employee role performance towards the customers’, ‘job role stressors and frontline employee role performance towards the customers’ and ‘job role stressors and service effectiveness’.

The next chapter introduces different research models taken as base models to develop proposed model by understanding the constructs of these base models & integrating the same. Descriptions of the constructs in proposed model will be provided and research hypothesis will be presented as well in the third chapter.