Measuring Perceived Service Quality of State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan: A Case Study

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of perceived service quality of State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan (SLICP) on customer satisfaction. This research of service quality considering State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan (SLICP) is confined to the geographical territories of Bahawalpur Tehsil only. The data were gathered from the sample size of 384 customers, which was calculated by using the sample size table (Krejcie& Morgan, 1970) and sample size calculator (Del Siegle, 2000). The questionnaire is adopted from previously conducted studies by Tsoukatos & Rand (2006), and Siddiqui & Sharma (2010). Multi Co-linearity, Cronbach's alpha, Correlation Analysis, Reliability Analysis, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test techniques were used to analyze the data. Service quality dimensions are being treated as factors affecting customers' perception towards State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan. This would certainly help the service managers to focus on service quality at individual level of dimensions.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Service Quality, SERVQUAL

Introduction

Today's business environment is persistently changing and demands for malleability and adaptability among organizations tend to increase. The demands from customers, service, quality, value, technological advancements, globalization and improved customer sophistications are among the factors, which drive the need to change and consequently develop the organizations. In the same way, internationalization and liberalization in insurance, service quality has acquired the shape of significant means of differentiation and a way to obtain success in business. Such kind of differentiation occurred in service quality can play a vital role in the competitiveness of insurance companies and to be leaders in such industries as well. As the time passes by, customer demands also increase and thus resulting in more competitive and dynamic insurance sector. The theory of one for all is not being encouraged and given a go-by. Customer's demands and expectations are enormous, and technology is helping them to make comparisons thick and fast.

If we consider insurance as kind of a financial service, economic performance is closely related to customer retention. The trend in insurance companies has been shifted from product oriented to customer oriented and it has become very stiff to make comaprison of products and services and evaluating the benefits and value, as markets are getting fiercely competitive. As a result, many insurance companies in Pakistan are sooner or later targeting to achieve high customer

satisfaction by improving their services. In case of life insurance companies, mostly every company offers nearly equal terms and conditions with a variety of products and services with the intention of creating and sustaining long term growth and survival, and they believe that longterm relationships are an essential part of product or service, providing opportunity to improve customer acquisitions and retention.(Abideen, et al., 2012).

Over the period of time, we can say that quality and innovation in market offerings helps in managing competition. To gain competitive advantage, service quality is an essential part and parcel for firms like insurance firms which provide similar services where differentiation may be the solo way of uniqueness. This uniqueness results in higher rate of consumer choices, hence determining the difference between financial success and failure. Life insurance services are highly credible with a few cues which indicate quality. According to Gronroos (1982), consumers usually depend upon extrinsic cues e.g. brand image to find out perceived service quality. This element is in accordance for a "pure" service which is insurance, because of minuscule tangible representation of quality but relationally enormous, during most transactions. Customer needs and difficulty in price comparisons are the cause of existence of lack of price signals. Price cannot just be taken as the only extrinsic cue to indicate quality by the customers.

Customer satisfaction can also be realized after consumption (Mano & Oliver, 1993) or after purchase (Fornell, 1992), after selection (Westbrook & Oliver, 1991), or response, may occur during usage (Halstead, et al., 1994). According to Yi, 1990, Customer satisfaction can also be taken as an outcome or a process. Vavra (1997) explains outcome satisfaction as "The end state resulting from the consumption experience." Moreover, Vavra (1997), also presented an alternate definition of satisfaction as "a process emphasizing the perceptual, evaluative and psychological processes that contribute to satisfaction."

The importance of this study is twofolded: as it not only determines an under researched area but also helps in measuring customer satisfaction at individual dimension levels of service quality. Moreover, it also helps to explore the concept of service quality considering itself as antecedent of customer satisfaction . It also provides managerial implications and insights for development as far as State Life Inurance Corporation of Pakistan (SLICP) is concerned. By introducing a new dimension of 'technology' into the SERVQUAL metric, it now looks compatible with today's competitive and information technology (IT) enabled era and frequent interms of service quality domains and this is a very significant aspect of this study.

Literature Review

Insurance sector of Pakistan is comprised of huge man power and being a service industry customer satisfaction and service quality go in side by side. Therefore, customer's satisfaction, expectations and perceived quality remains one of the primary concerns of strategic planners, top management and higher authorities. Customer's satisfaction seems to be highly associated with service quality (SERVQUAL) and it remains more relevant to service as compared to manufacturing industry/sector. As customer satisfaction increases, business and revenue increases simultaneously.

As SERVQUAL dimensions (tangibility/assurance/empathy/responsiveness/reliability/ technology) remain not properly addressed which ultimately remains unable to answer about customer's satisfaction level? The customers would be more satisfied and if their expectations and perceived quality are being met by their service provider.

For this situation, it is important to study the relations between customer satisfactions and dimensions of service quality scale (SERVQUAL).

The industry chosen is the life insurance sector of Pakistan, specifically "State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan (SLICP)" as it is the most under researched area in Pakistan and with new

added dimension i.e Technology into existing SERVQUAL model makes it more comprehensive and little bit compatible with changing and competitive hyper market. Few comprehensive studies are available in this sector with chosen model, service quality dimenions and products selected thereof. Specially, in Pakistani perspective and with respect to such corporation, literature lacks a comprehensive study. As this area has never been researched with respect to service quality according to the knowledge of the author of this study.

Service Quality (SERVQUAL)

SERVQUAL instrument was developed in 1985, refined in 1988; 1991 and then in 1994 and is used for measuring the service quality. With the passage of time SERVQUAL scale has become the most famous service quality measuring instrument. SERVQUAL dimensions represent a clear identification of the standards which customers take into account while evaluating service quality. SERVQUAL is pretty much generic and appertaining system for measurement of perceived service quality. The model got recognition and is much discussed providing a strong foundation for many researches. (Shekarchizadeh and Hon, 2011; Rodrigues, Barkur, Varambally, & Motlagh, 2011; Vaughan & Woodruffe-Burton, 2011).

The model before to SERVQUAL is 'Gap Model' by the same authors. According to the Gap model, a company should avoid 5 different gaps to provide satisfactory services. The Customer Gap, which is Gap 5, represents a specific construct measured in SERVQUAL. The earlier scripts of expectancy discomfirmation theory was made the base of SERVQUAL, which measures quality as the discrepency between Expectation (E) and the evaluation of performance (P). The results can be divided in the categorize of confirmation, disconfirmation and the outcome in the level of satisfaction (Oliver & Swan, 1989; Parasuraman, et al., 1985).

SERVQUAL constitutes of 22 Likert scale items based on perception as well as expectations levels and was formulated to measure perceived service quality as the major output variable. The first 22 items were aimed to measure what customers expect about a service (customer expectations) in a specific service industry and the other 22 were designed to evaluate the perception (perceived level) of the service provided by the particular service organization. Then by calculating the difference between both the perception minus expectation scores for service quality determination. Only current and past customers can respond to this because respondents need to have some experience and knowledge about organization. The situation where differences are greater than or equal to zero, it can be concluded as customer expectations for certain or all service attributes have been met or exceeded.

Dimensions of SERVQUAL

Tangibles: Tangibles include the appearance of physical facilities, promotional material, human resources and equipment involved in the service process like hygiene, availability of proper technical equipment required for support and entertainment (Butt & Murtaza, 2011; Sriyam, 2010 and Jensen, 2009).

Reliability: The capability to execute the promised service in a consistent and accurate way is termed as reliable (Butt & Murtaza, 2011). For example, fulfilling promises consistently and competing tasks on time. Service providers have to be proficient in performing the promised service dependably and exactly (Sriyam, 2010; Jensen, 2009; Parasuraman, 1988). It also creates organization's promotional attempt in terms of word of mouth, which can contribute to participant expectations, generally, performance at the peak standard is critical to reliability (Kabir & Carlsson, 2010). The ability involves consistently and accurately fulfilling the promised services (Randheer, et al., 2011).

Responsiveness: Responsiveness is the zeal to help and satisfy customer needs (Butt & Murtaza, 2011). It is the enthusiastically helping and providing timely services to customers, which refers to ability to respond to individual customer requirements and showing unfeigned interest in solving their problems. (Sriyam, 2010; Jensen, 2009).

Moreover, it refers to the curiosity to help participants and give prompt attentiveness. The customers expect their request to be solved in a quick manner and perfectly such as quick service response, professionally handling matters and improving mistakes (Kabir & Carlsson, 2010; Randheer, et al., 2011).

Assurance: It is referred as how much the employee is knowledgeable and courteous in order to gain customer's trust (Butt & Murtaza, 2011). It also includes employee's tendency to communicate trust and credibility (Randheer, et al., 2011). Training the staff in competent, charismatic and courteous way and having a safe feeling while making transactions with the customers are also a part of assurance (Jensen, 2009).

Empathy: The individual care and interest that customers receive from the service providers is called empathy (Butt & Murtaza, 2011). It includes access and communication to customers and considering the importance of individualized attention to customers (Jensen, 2009). Empathy is taken as a very significant element which covers the level of individual considerations and understanding definite customer needs (Rodrigues, et al., 2011).

Technology: This is not a part of proposed SERVQUAL dimensions but the study at hand requires devising an instrument for measuring customer perceived service quality in the life insurance section in Pakistan.

Undoubtedly, the factors have been illuminated with five SERVQUAL dimensions apart from the technology dimension. Technology is very important factor as service providers should focus on ease of online transaction, on time complaint management, proactive information through email or SMS and it can contribute towards satisfaction and dissatisfaction towards the services (Siddiqui & Sharma, 2010). With the help of available technology and other interactive key information technology, based devices and techniques not only help the customers to better perform any given transaction but also save time and efforts. With the advent of technology and technology-based services, lot of service providers are just going to take its advantage, and in the future, technology will play a key role in success of any service-based enterprise and its presence will guarantee the survival and growth of the firm.

Customer Satisfaction

Despite plethora of research on customer satisfaction, non unanimous definitions of customer satisfaction have been developed, yet inspite of its antecedents and consequences. Many definitions are either basically or to some extent, not consistent with one another, even all of these have similar components. Customer satisfaction is considered as a response which the customers gives after evaluating and is expressed during the purchase consumption process. Customer satisfaction with respect to service quality has been found to significantly contribute to customer loyalty in service industries (Kitapci et al., 2013).

Oliver, (1997), added that "Everyone knows what (satisfaction) is until asked to give a definition. Then it seems, no body knows." Definitional issues on customer satisfaction are not considered by researchers rather focuses on testing various conceptual models (Giese & Cote, 2000). As a result it lacks methodoligical and definitional standardization (Peterson & Wilson, 1992).
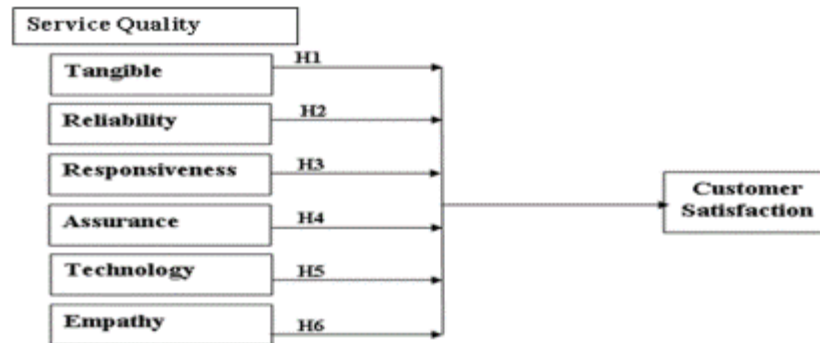
Conceptual Model

Figure 1: Conceptual Model

Research Methodology

Sample Size

This research of service quality considering State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan (Pakistan) confined to the geographical territories of Bahawalpur Tehsil only. As per data, provided by officials of SLICP (Bahawalpur Region), there are 60,000 (approximately) customers labeled as holders of life insurance policy issued by state life corporation. So, for calculation of sample size, we utilized the sample size table (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) and sample size calculator (Del Siegle, 2000). Therefore, treating 60,000 as population size, having 95% confidence level, and the error of margin as 5 %results in sample size of 384.

Research Instrument

The questionnaire is adopted from previously conducted studies by Tsoukatos & Rand (2006), and Siddiqui & Sharma (2010). The questionnaire has three separate but related areas i.e., demographics, service performance & quality perceptions and lastly customer satisfaction. The 25 items have been adopted from SERVQUAL scale previosuly used by Tsoukatos & Rand (2006). Customer satisfaction was considered as a one-dimensional construct (Meyer and Westerbarkey, 1996) and was measured by a 10-point Likert scale (1-Not at all satisfied, 10-Absolutely Satisfied). Certain researchers consider the construct in terms of a number of dimensions. Treating customer satisfaction in terms of more dimensions, the results would be different due to the links in the model and the effects of culture on customer satisfaction.

Data Analysis

Multi Co-linearity

We have used multi Co-linearity of the independent variables to determine whether the variables are correlated or not? As we have one independent variable but due to their six individual dimensions, we are treating each dimension as an individual and separate independent variable.

Table 1: Multicolinearity of Independent Variables

Variables	Co-linearity Statistics	
	Tolerance (TOL)	Variation-Inflation Factor (VIF)
Technology	.915	1.092
Empathy	.918	1.090
Assurance	.718	1.392
Responsiveness	.665	1.503
Reliability	.515	1.941
Tangibility	.499	2.004

The outcome of the Multi co-linearity can be seen in the table 1 above. To evaluate Co linearity two factors are used, the tolerance (TOL) and variation-inflation factor (VIF). If TOL is less than 0.2 and the VIF is more than 5, this results in Co linearity (Belsely, 1991). As we know that 5 is regarded as the standard of multi co-linearity issue (Bensely, 1991), according to the results in the table above, maximum VIF is 2.004, which is quite less than 5 and TOL is 0.499, which is greater than 0.2, so we can conclude that the results hold up the lack of existence of multi co linearity in the data. The results of the regression analysis can be interpreted with a high degree of confidence.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation is a statistical tool used to determine the strength and direction of relationship between variables. The value of correlation ranges from +1 to -1 and both these values show strong positive and negative relationships respectively whereas the value 0 shows no relationship. The association between two continuous variables without establishing directional causality is known as bivariate correlation (Tabachnick and Fidel, 2001). Correlation is used to check the relationship of variables with each other and if any observed variable has perfect covariance with any other variables, which are observed in the study.

All relationships were found significant at p-value of 0.00. These relationships show a positive and moderate to strong relationships. Results propose that all the variables are positively correlated with customer satisfaction. The most correlated variable is tangibles, with correlation value of 0.761 (r = .761, p< .05). It is followed by empathy having correlation value of 0.701 (r = .701, p< .05). Assurance and technology come third and fourth with correlation values of 0.680 (r = .680, p< .05), and 0.645 (r = .0.645, p< .05) respectively. Responsiveness and reliability are placed at fifth and sixth spot with 0.640 (r = .640, p< .05) and 0.527 (r = .527, p< .05) correlation values respectively. The correlations mentioned in this discussion are significant and demonstrate the relationships between variables are strong.

Cronbach's alpha technique is used to ensure the internal reliability of the tool. The standard value of Cronbach's Alpha is 0.70 (Nunnally 1978), and we obtained 0.763, which is greater than the standard value. This shows the internal reliability of research instrument and different statistical tests can be applied and results can be inferred with confidence.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test

The table 2 given below shows the suitability of our data for further analysis. The two tests: Kaiser- Meyer-Olkin (KMO) for sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of spherecity display provide satisfactory results. The KMO value is 0.866 which is greater than 0.7, showing that the data set seems suitable analysis. On the other hand, the Bartlett's test of spherecity yields significance value of 0.00 which is less than 0.05 making is appropriate for analysis.

Table 2: Hypothesis Testing using Linear Regression

Hypothesis	Variables	R Square	t-value	Co-efficient	p-value	F- value
One	Tangibles	0.579	21.089	0.761 (0.687)*	0.000	444.746
Two	Reliability	0.758	22.172	0.782 (0.712)*	0.000	491.58
Three	Responsiveness	0.671	19.551	0.652 (0.613)*	0.000	382.25
Four	Assurance	0.712	25.762	0.621 (0.617)*	0.000	663.68
Five	Technology	0.766	29.121	0.734 (0.701)*	0.000	848.033
Six	Empathy	0.782	30.122	0.742 (0.710)*	0.000	907.34

*Unstandardized Beta Coefficients in parenthesis

First Hypothesis

This hypothesis postulates that tangibles (dimensions of service quality) of State Life Insurance Corporation (SLICP) of Pakistan have relationship with customer satisfaction. Hypothesis developed is as under:

H1: Greater the investments on the Tangibility dimension by the service provider, greater the satisfaction experienced by the customer.

The value of R square is 0.579 (explaining positive and moderate to strong linear relationship), which shows that 57.9% of the variance in variable customer satisfaction of SLICP is accounted by predictor variable tangibles. A regression analysis, predicting customer satisfaction from tangibles score is statistically significant (F= 444.74, p< .05). Hence, our H1 is accepted and we conclude that tangibles of SLICP services have a positive impact on customer satisfaction (t = 21.089, Beta=0.761, p=.000 < 0.05).

Second Hypothesis

The hypothesis postulates that reliability (dimensions of service quality) of State Life Insurance Corporation (SLICP) of Pakistan has relationship with customer satisfaction. Hypothesis developed is as under:

H2: Greater the investments on the Reliability dimension by the service provider, greater the satisfaction experienced by the customer.

The value of R square is 0.758, which shows that 75.8% (explaining positive and strong linear relationship) of the variance in customer satisfaction of SLICP is accounted by predictor variable reliability. A regression analysis predicting customer satisfaction from reliability dimension was statistically significant with (F= 491.58, p< .05). Hence, our H2 is accepted and we can conclude that reliability of SLICP services has a positive impact on customer satisfaction with (t = 22.172, Beta=0.782, p=.000 < 0.05).

Third Hypothesis

The hypothesis postulates that responsiveness (dimension of service quality) of State Life Insurance Corporation (SLICP) of Pakistan has relationship with customer satisfaction. Hypothesis developed is as under

H3: Greater the investment on the Responsiveness dimension by the service provider, greater the satisfaction experienced by the customer.

It is cleared that the value of R square is 0.671 (a strong, positive, linear relationship) which shows that 67.10% of the variance in customer satisfaction of SLICP is accounted by predictor variable responsiveness. A regression analysis, predicting customer satisfaction from responsiveness score is statistically significant with (F= 382.25, p< .05). Hence, our H3 is accepted and we can conclude that responsiveness of SLICP has a positive impact on customer satisfaction (t = 19.551, Beta=0.652, p=.000 < 0.05).

Fourth Hypothesis

The hypothesis postulates that assurance (dimension of service quality) of State Life Insurance Corporation (SLICP) of Pakistan has relationship with customer satisfaction. Hypothesis developed is as under:

H4: Greater the investment on the Assurance Responsiveness dimension by the service provider, greater the satisfaction experienced by the customer.

It is evident that the value of R square is 0.712 (a strong and positive linear relationship) which shows that 71.20% of the variance in customer satisfaction of SLICP is accounted by predictor variable assurance. A regression analysis, predicting customer satisfaction from assurance score is statistically significant with (F= 663.68, p< .05). Hence, our H4 is accepted and we can

conclude that assurance dimension of SLICP has a positive impact on customer satisfaction (t = 16.672, Beta=0.621, p=.000 < 0.05).

Fifth Hypothesis

The hypothesis postulates that technology (dimension added in service quality) of State Life Insurance Corporation (SLICP) of Pakistan has relationship with customer satisfaction. Hypothesis developed is as under:

H5: Greater the investment on the Technology dimension by the service provider, greater the satisfaction experienced by the customer.

The value of R square is 0.766 (showing a strong and positive linear relationship) which shows that 76.60% of the variance in customer satisfaction of SLICP is accounted by predictor variable technology. A regression analysis, predicting customer satisfaction from technology score is statistically significant with (F= 848.033, p< .05). Hence, our H5 is accepted and we can conclude that technology of SLICP can have positive impact on customer satisfaction. So, greater the investments on technology based services and facilities, greater the customer satisfaction (t = 29.121, Beta=0.734, p=.000 < 0.05).

Sixth Hypothesis

H6: Greater the investment on the Empathy dimension by the service provider, greater the satisfaction experienced by the customer.

The hypothesis postulates that empathy (dimension of service quality) of State Life Insurance Corporation (SLICP) of Pakistan has relationship with customer satisfaction. Hypothesis developed is as under:

The value of R square is 0.782 (showing a strong positive linear relationship) which shows that 78.20% of the variance in customer satisfaction of SLICP is explained by predictor variable empathy. A regression analysis predicting customer satisfaction from empathy score is statistically significant with (F=907.34, p< .05). Hence, our H6 is accepted and we conclude that empathy of SLICP has a positive impact on customer satisfaction (t = 30.122, Beta=0.742, p=.000 < 0.05).

Results and Discussion

Customer organizations operating where service quality attributes such as reliability dimension which consists of the capability to execute the promised service consistently and accurately service company has to be proficient to perform the promised service dependably and of supplier organization SLICP is seen to have less influence on customer satisfaction. This aspect of SLICP needs to improve, as they are not contributing towards the satisfaction level of customers, because people of Pakistan and customers of SLICP belong to such a demographic and socio economic and cultural profile that people want recognition as a customer. Although there are, many cultural based differences and religion also play a key role while making purchase decision of any product/service or financial product involving interest factor.

When they are investing, they tend to develop instincts to have more specialized attention and care. As a result, agents, brokers, or management has to take care in a more reliable manner. Another element is that the technology dimension needs to be added on improved basis and as a vital and necessary element rather than point of advantage in the arsenal of service quality of SLICP as there is no offering of such service quality. As the hypothesis related to technology dimension positively states that greater the investment on technology based services, greater the increase in customer satisfaction. Therefore, technology will further enhance the customer satisfaction, and SLICP can use latest technology and equipment available to meet expected quality and deliver better services. In the same way, it can differentiate itself from other competitors.

Therefore, State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan has to make serious efforts in order to meet this level. Furthermore, this technology dimension is not the part of original dimensions of SERVQUAL, but the researcher added it after carefully analyzing the modern trends in technological advancements and with the boom in internet age. Technology is also now and then utilized to facilitate the delivery of some service product components in these settings while simultaneously reducing labor costs (Rauch etal, 2015).

This dimension was added in the model to make better understanding that whether, greater investments by the firm will lead to greater customers satisfaction as far as SLICP is concerned and analysis showed that most of our respondents are educated, and like to be in touch with SLICP regarding time to pay their premiums, last date for payment, inquiry, current status of the application, if applied for some sort of loan etc., through modern information and communication technologies available.

As respondents are educated and well sophisticated, so they warmly welcomed this dimension to improve customer satisfaction in terms of technological aspects of ensuring easy online transactions, on time complaint management and online availability of proactive information through email or SMS. Moreover, other dimensions show that SLICP is providing other aspects of service quality such as tangibles, responsiveness, assurance and empathy in a proper way. Analysis shows that with respect to tangibility as far as SLICP is concerned; customers are happy and satisfied with the appearance of physical amenities, communication materials, personnel and equipment involved in the service process, like hygiene, availability of appropriate technical equipment for support and entertainment and appearance of the staff. These are about the physical facilities, equipment, and appearance of individual and presence of users, it is significant for creating a good quality environment, and SLICP is doing well on this particular dimensions.

In the same way, SLICP is also doing fine on reliability dimension as analysis is also confirming the same. As they execute the promised service in a consistent and accurate way. The officials are proficient in performing the promised service dependably and exactly. As, it also creates and fulfill organization's promotional attempt in terms of word of mouth, which can contribute to participant expectations, generally, performance at the peak standard. As for as this dimension is concerned, SLICP is doing really fine and these factors affect the customers' perceptions towards SLICP and ultimately towards its products and services.

As far as responsiveness dimension is concerned and as per data analysis, it can be concluded that staff and officials at SLICP have eagerness to help customers with interest in order to satisfy their needs. As they help customers, provide them timely service, show sincere interest in solving their problems thus resulting in meeting customer's requirements. Customers at SLICP believe that their requests are properly handled in a time-based manner, and there is professionalism in handling and recovering from mistakes.

Factors affecting customers satisfaction towards SLICP on assurance dimension and analysis depicts that employees have knowledge and courtesy in order to gain the customers trust, they have aptitude and show courtesy to employees. Employees of SLICP have proper training to make them competent, courteous and feeling of safety in the transactions with the customers. Similarly, data analysis on empathy dimension show that employees do care of customers, pay interest to their needs, communication to customers, understand them and deliver them individualized attention. Thus, this dimension shows greater confidence and level of individual and personal considerations and the understanding of definite customer needs. Investigating further in the causal direction, it is viewed that service quality seems to an antecedent of customer satisfaction. The six service quality dimensions have a marginally stronger correlation they have with customer satisfaction is

supporting the observation of service quality being an ancestor of customer satisfaction (i.e. Average, r = 0.660).

Cronin and Taylor (1992 &1994) and Parasuraman, et al., (1993 & 1994) observed the similar findings and investigated service quality in business to consumer context. According to Cronin and Taylor (1992), service quality acts as an antecedent of customer satisfaction which in return exerts a greater influence on purchase intention. (Parasuraman, et al.), initially presented a point that incident of consumer satisfaction ends up effecting the perception of service quality, but later acknowledged service quality as an antecedent of consumer satisfaction (Parasuraman, et al., 1994).

Thus, service quality dimensions are being treated as factors affecting customers' perception towards State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan.

This research helped in the development of a reliable and a valid instrument for the inspection of customer perceived service quality in the life insurance sector of Pakistan where the service quality needs to be measured at six- dimensional level.

The improvement in all the five dimensions of the service quality is required as the expectations found to higher in all the five dimensions as compared to the perceptions (Ahmed et al., 2015). This would certainly help the service managers to focus on service quality at individual level of dimensions.

Research and Managerial Implications

As mentioned, this study mainly focuses State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan and thus provides managerial insights for them. Management of SLICP needs to focus nearly all dimensions but especially on tangibility as discussed in detail about this service quality dimension. Moreover, technology enhancements are very much important considering the advancement of technological arena and educational demographic aspects of their customers.

However, keeping in view that the stability in the service industry is a bit difficult to manage.

Services tend to vary country to country and/or through time. On the other hand, service quality is also varying. In such situations the use of generic SERVQUAL, without customizing the metric, may result in the loss of important information on the issues like quality of the industry under consideration. Customizing to the extremes might limit the comparability and generalizability of the results. So we can say, SERVQUAL type metric should be constructed to include the customization within the general frame of the SERVQUAL scale.

In case of State Life Insurance Corporations of Pakistan (SLICP), the findings from testing the metric will contribute to the existing knowledge on the dimensionality of SERVQUAL metric and offer support as industry and or cultural specific (Asubonteng, et al., 1996). This research also states that increased customer satisfaction is a result of improvements in service quality. The research findings on customer satisfaction and service quality dimensions are important contribution to knowledge, thus resulting in better understanding of the factors affecting the customers' perception towards the service quality of State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan (SLICP).

Recommendations for Future Research

There is some scope of further research. Future studies in this area should consider impact of reputation and image of service provider on customer satisfaction and may consider the cultural aspects in detail as culture plays a very important role in determining satisfaction level. The usefulness of segmenting customers on the basis of demographics is worth exploring.

The future research might include whether the well-defined, identifiable service quality segments exists on the basis of customer demographics will be valued by the service marketer's view point. The study can be extended to find the causal relationship among variable like service

quality, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. This study will surely help in enhancing the level of understanding for managers as well as academicians.

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