PREFACE

In the present study an attempt has been made to explore, examine and verify the relationship between Service quality and Customer Satisfaction in Insurance Sector. The study used a survey of LIC and HDFC Life customers in the four towns of Himachal Pradesh namely Shimla, Kullu, Mandi and Dharamsala for a comparative analysis of the Service quality and Customer satisfaction of Public and Private Sector Insurers. The study has been presented in seven chapters.

Chapter one provides an overview of the study in terms of justifying service quality and customer satisfaction as an important organizational objective, raising issues related to the current Indian service and Insurance sector and further establishing the significance and contribution of the current study.

Chapter two presents the purpose of the study and provides a conceptual framework and literature in support of the Service quality models its dimensions and Customer Satisfaction. This is the foundation of the research.

The third chapter explores the literature in which various studies related to service quality and customer satisfaction have been carried out. The studies on various dimensions of service quality, its relationship with customer satisfaction and the effect of demographic factors on them have been reviewed.

Chapter four of the thesis relates to the research methodology, development of the research instrument, sampling and data collection methods and the techniques used for data analysis.

The fifth chapter exhibits the results of the data collected from the field study. It represents the results in the form of tables and tests the hypothesis for its acceptance or rejection using t-test, ANOVA, correlation and regression analysis.
Chapter six and seven discusses the findings in context of the relevant literature and links it with other researches elsewhere and mentions new contributions and questions raised after this study. This chapter discusses the outcomes of the hypotheses tested in Chapter five. Overall this chapter concludes by examining the findings in relation to the objectives of the research, limitations of the study and future research possibilities.

In summary, based on the customer feedback, the present research has found that the service quality dimensions influence the overall customer satisfaction directly. It was also observed that service quality has a positive relationship with overall customer satisfaction. The results revealed that the service quality dimensions of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy significantly influencing the customers overall satisfaction. It has been observed that this relationship is significantly affected by various demographic factors. The gender, age, income and other demographic profiles of the customers had varying impact on the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction.

Thus, the present study would enable the managers in both the sectors to recognize the need for periodically assessing and monitoring the service quality, so as to identify where improvements are needed from the customers' viewpoint in order to raise the overall customer satisfaction.