

## Investigating the role of Service Quality and Time Management in Business Performance: Evidence from Small and Medium Enterprises (Smes) in Pakistan

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**Abstract:** This study's objective is to objectively investigate the factors that affect Pakistan's SMEs (SMEs). Investigating the connections between service quality, time management, and financial success. The relationships between the components were examined using the opinions of 510 workers at Pakistani SMEs. Using regression and correlation, the dataset was evaluated. According to the information provided, enhancing service quality and time management can increase a company's profitability. The outcomes of this study will have a tremendous impact on policymakers at SMEs who may be confronted with such conclusions. The authors of this study contend that timeliness, productivity, and corporate performance are interrelated. No research has yet examined these challenges from the viewpoint of Pakistan's SMEs (SMEs). In Pakistan, very few empirical studies on SMEs' service quality, time management, or business performance have been conducted, despite the widespread exploration of this position in other contexts.

**Keywords** Service quality, Time management, Business performance, compressed natural gas SMEs, Pakistan.

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## 1. Introduction

In today's competitive corporate environment, delivering superior service is crucial to success (Abdulla, 2006). Companies that give services to others, regardless of size, continuously seek ways to differentiate themselves from rivals (Harr & Lily, 2008).

Companies try to give outstanding care (Warrach et al., 2014). Consumer service speed was the defining characteristic of the responsiveness factor, and firms must strike a balance between providing quick responses and maintaining high standards of craftsmanship (Akanlagm, 2011). Increased customer knowledge and the ongoing evolution of client expectations make it more difficult for service providers to perform and evaluate their services appropriately (Siddiqui, Sharma & Vijaynagar, 2010).

Policyholders value punctuality, trustworthiness, and dependability (Sadeghi & Farokhian, 2011). When judging service quality, employees of various businesses have focused mainly on the service they deliver to consumers (Fisk et al., 1994). Another area where organisations must concentrate their efforts is time management (Britton & Tesser, 1991).

This research seeks to 1) increase the understanding of SME managers and 2) fill a gap in the literature by investigating the impact of service quality and time management on the commercial performance of SMEs in Pakistan.

This research expands our current understanding in three key ways. The primary assumption of this research is that providing outstanding service has a noticeable impact on business results. Considering how important service quality is to the success of enterprises, it is surprising that no studies have yet examined the veracity of company performance as it applies to SMEs in Pakistan. Second, this study seeks to explain the existing literature on time management because of its importance to the success of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in Pakistan (Britton & Tesser, 1991).

As a third point, there is a dearth of complex data regarding the success of Pakistan's SMEs. Comparatively, experts in other fields have studied the performance of their companies at length. There is a lack of conceptual and methodological breadth in the literature on SMEs in Pakistan (SMEs). Quantifying this quality will require empirical study. In order to address this knowledge gap, the present research looks into the nexus between service quality, time management, and organisational success. There is debate over whether boosting service quality and time management may improve the success of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in Pakistan. Therefore, studying these factors and learning how Pakistan workers view them is essential.

## 2 Literature Review

### *2.1 Business performance*

Numerous studies have proven a correlation between service quality and company outcomes (Maryam et al., 2014). A more innovative company can increase its performance by enhancing its core competencies and adapting to environmental changes (Garcia et al., 2007).

Attributes of corporate governance and their impact on the performance of businesses during a crisis have also attracted the interest of other academics, such as (Mitton, 2002; Lemmon & Lins, 2003; Baek et al., 2004). Erkens et al. (2012) have shown that corporate governance significantly impacts firm performance during a crisis. According to the literature (Cherrington, 1989; Kreitner & Kinicki, 2004), a corporation thrives if it can utilize its surroundings by collecting valuable resources or obtaining the production elements. A measure of a company's success is whether or not its stakeholders are satisfied.

According to several authors (Beer, 1994; Boschken, 1994;), a company's success depends on its ability to identify and categorize its most important stakeholders and evaluate and meet those stakeholders' preferences and needs. According to Uphoff (1973), who created a composite model by synthesizing numerous concepts from the literature, organizational performance (i.e., efficiency and effectiveness) and administrative procedures are fundamental to organizational performance (i.e., inputs, outputs, outcomes). According to Bititci et al. definition 's of performance management, organizational performance is linked with corporate and functional plans and objectives (1997).

Mandal, Roychowdhury, and Biswas (2016) believe that in order to improve their performance, Indian ports must adapt to a challenging environment; hence, ports need to meet performance benchmarks in order to ensure their continued development. Quickly adapting to changing conditions is crucial to establishing a competitive business (Hossain & Prybutok, 2016).

Attia (2016) claims that quality management systems do not improve business operations or the efficiency of the supply chain. In their 2016 article "Trends in the Development of Concepts and Models for Performance Measurement in Organizations," Carneiro-da-Cunha, Hourneaux, and Correa identified the following possible directions that the field of performance measurement in organizations could take: (moving away from a pure transaction focus, the transition from performance measurement to performance management, and the propensity to incorporate multidimensionality into the models, to the detriment of the traditional financial focused model).

The ability to innovate helps moderate the connection between creativity-related talents, expertise in one's sector, and the success of one's organization. Furthermore, there is empirical support for the idea that innovation capability acts as a mediator between the connections between intrinsic motivation and organizational effectiveness (Verma & Rao, 2016).

Doligalski, Zaborek, and Sysko-Romanczuk chart internet enterprises' adoption of value proposition techniques and their effects on business success (2015). Lodorfos, Kostopoulos, and Kaminakis (2015) have confirmed that "effectiveness of coordination," "effectiveness of role performance," and "effectiveness of process control" all positively impact perceived service quality.

## *2.2 Service quality*

Quality is the standard by which anything is compared to others of its kind, its degree of quality, whereas service is the act of assisting or working for another individual. The phrase "service quality" relates to a consumer's satisfaction with the service received (Zeithaml et al., 1988).

When evaluating the quality of service, one could employ the SERVQUAL framework developed by (Parasuraman et al., 1988). It is evaluated based on its dependability, quickness of reaction, empathy, confidence in the service, and tangibles. The SERVQUAL model provides definitions of the above-stated factors. To be dependable, a service must continuously deliver the promised results.

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Responsiveness refers to an organization's propensity to assist its clientele quickly and efficiently. The ability to empathize is seen when a business goes above and beyond to meet the needs of its clients. Confident employees have the skills and demeanour to gain the trust of their superiors. Buildings, machines, and people are all examples of tangibility, as are written and spoken words. Perceived quality, in the context of services, is a measure of how satisfied a potential customer is with a service before they buy it (Barbara, 2010). Because of the importance of employees to the success of the service business and the maintenance of long-term client connections in service markets, HRM plays a pivotal role in the service sector (as documented by Wong & Sohal, 2003). Reference: (Santos Vijande et al., 2012).

Quality of service and commitment to a particular activity was studied by Backman and Veldkamp (1995). The researchers discovered no statistically significant differences between the five measures of service quality and the different types of loyalty (reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance and tangibility). Satisfied customers, high-quality service, and repeat purchases were all found to be related in the context of a department store by Sivadas et al. (2000).

Customer focus, service quality, and repeat business in call centres: Dean (2002) elaborates. Customer loyalty was studied by Lei and Mac (2005), who found a connection between high-quality service and satisfied clients. They learned that client loyalty in the transportation service sector is built on certainty, tangibles, responsiveness, and empathy. According to Ehigie (2006), customer loyalty among Nigerian bank customers is primarily affected by customer satisfaction, followed by customer expectations and perceptions of service quality. A mediation model has been established between service quality and client loyalty via satisfaction. Client satisfaction was shown to have a moderating function between service quality and customer loyalty, and Caruana (2002) validated this finding. Consumer opinions on the service quality of public and private sector banks were compared and contrasted in a 2009 study by Hazra et al. They found no defining features shared by the two categories of establishments. Based on their research, Vanniarajan and Gurunathan (2009) concluded that customers are more loyal if they are satisfied with the most fundamental aspects of service. Many factors contribute to a company's success, including its reputation, the distinctiveness of its customer service, the efficacy of its internal communications, the accuracy with which its employees evaluate their positions, and the extent to which they are empowered to make decisions (Joonas, 2013).

**Hypothesis 1:** Service quality have influence on business performance.

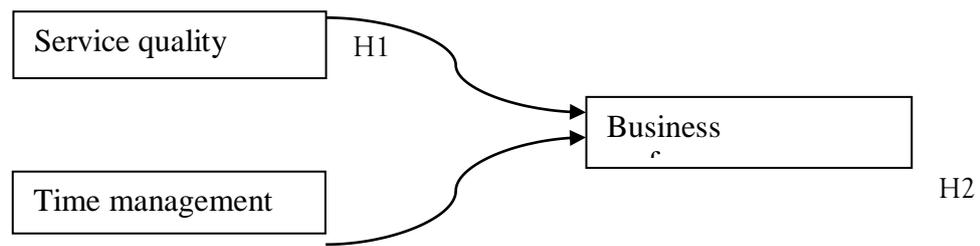
### *2.3 Time management*

Time management is the process of planning and changing the amount of time spent on different tasks in order to increase productivity. Therefore, good time management is essential to the success of every business. Britton and Tesser (1991) discovered an association between the time management skill of short-term planning and academic success. Customers' demand for rapid pleasure makes time management vital (Maingam & Muller, 1995).

To achieve a healthy balance between their professional and personal life, employees must effectively manage their time and the professional responsibilities assigned to them by their employer. This implies that employees' obligations must be managed to ensure timely completion, and they should not be required to spend time on unnecessary or inconsequential activities to achieve the organization's goals.

**Hypothesis 2:** Time management have influence on business performance.

Figure 1: Conceptual frame work



According to the model depicted in Figure (1), successful business performance is contingent upon excellent service quality and effective time management.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Sample & Population

In Pakistan, 3,310 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are currently operating (oil and gas regulatory authority, 2017). Six hundred surveys were distributed to employees of small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) in Pakistan, and 510 questionnaires were returned with responses. Consequently, 85 per cent of individuals responded to the poll. Using a random sampling technique, data for a cross-sectional study were collected from a group of Pakistanis and then analysed using software created specifically for social science research (SPSS).

#### 3.2 Measure

The survey questions were derived from interviews with Pakistani SME employees. Before the final survey was distributed, a pilot test and pre-tests were conducted to create the content rationale for the original survey instrument.

The first survey instrument was evaluated for content validity in two stages. The initial stage was to have four SME employees evaluate the instrument to ensure that it fulfilled standards and that all pertinent constructs were included in the analysis.

The second stage was to have a manager representative of SMEs analyse and provide input on the survey questions. Participants in the pilot study were allowed to comment on any classification-related statements they found unclear or problematic.

Based on the pilot study results, modest modifications to the questionnaire were made, such as updating the wording and adding explanations where necessary. The survey was initially developed in English. However, it has since been translated into Urdu.

The level of service satisfaction was measured using a 5-point Likert scale that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (extremely satisfied) (strongly agree). The five-point service quality rating contains comments such as "SMEs appear to have well-maintained physical premises, equipment, personnel, and communication materials." Small and medium-sized enterprises offer individualised services to each customer. Small and medium-sized businesses are frequently lauded for their "service to consumers and speed of service" and "client knowledge, courtesy, and ability to inspire confidence and trust." The research sample alpha value for this scale was .878.

On five-point Likert ratings ranging from (strongly disagree) to (strongly agree), respondents' time-management skills were evaluated (strongly agree). The three components of the scale for measuring time management are: Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) can adequately manage their

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workload to meet all their deadlines continuously. Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) adhere to their plans to achieve their objectives on time, prioritising completing one task before beginning the next. In this study, the Time management scale's alpha coefficient was 0.886.

On a five-point Likert scale ranging from (strongly disagree) to (strongly agree), the company's performance was measured (strongly agree). One of the three elements determining a company's success or failure is "My small and medium-sized companies (SMEs) have good business performance due of." My small and medium-sized enterprises are successful due to the high quality of services I provide. This analysis has determined the reliability of this scale. 908.

On a 5-point Likert Scale, which ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), survey respondents were asked to express their level of agreement or disagreement (strongly agree).

The averages for the items are shown in table (1). The quality of the given service is the first of our five considerations. The average rating for the third item in this category, "SMEs deliver care and specialised attention to their consumers," was 4.9 based on respondents' high criteria.

The third item, such as "SMEs seek to complete one work before moving on to the next," has the highest average score of 4.4 out of the three items comprising the second variable, "time management." The third and final component is business performance, and the item with the highest average value is "SMEs enjoy good business success due to good service quality."

Tables 1 summarize the items.

**Table: 1 Items with Average values.**

S.No	Items	Average
	<b>Service quality</b>	
1	<i>Reliability</i> SMEs employees have the ability to perform the promised service accurately.	4.8
2	<i>Tangibility</i> SMEs appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication materials are in good condition.	4.7
3	<i>Empathy</i> SMEs employees show caring and individualized attention for its customers.	4.9
4	<i>Assurance</i> SMEs employees have Knowledge and courtesy of customers and convey trust and confidence.	4.8
5	<i>Responsiveness</i> SMEs employees help customers and provide prompt service.	4.6
	<b>Time management</b>	
1	SMEs employees organize work to meet deadlines in good time.	4.3
2	SMEs employees keep to schedule so that to achieve objectives on time.	4.2
3	SMEs employees complete one task before going on to the next.	4.4
	<b>Business performance</b>	
1	SMEs employees managed their time.	4.4
2	SMEs employees offer good service.	4.6
3	SMEs employees achieve their pre-selected goals.	4.5

Five questions assess service quality, three items measure time management, and three indicate company success, all obtained above-average alpha coefficients. 878 (Table 2), although their alpha coefficients were all below. 908 (Table 2).

**Table: 2 Reliability Statistics**

Variables	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Service quality	5	.878
Time management	3	.886
Business performance	3	.908

3.3 Statistical Analysis

The tables (3) (4) and (5) showed the statistical analysis outcomes.

**Table 3. Correlation Matrix**

Variables	1	2	3
Service Quality	1		
Time management	.469**	1	
Business performance	.701**	.813**	1

**Table 4. Regression analysis.**

Independent variables	Beta	t-value	P-value
Service quality	0.410	3.105	0.000
Time management	0.621	3.184	0.000

R2 = 0.793; Adjusted R2= 0.733; F = 13.368; Sign F = 0 .000;

**Table 5. Variance Inflation Factors.**

S.No	Variables	Variance Inflation Factors (VIF)
1	Service quality	1.28
2	Time management	1.28

**3.4 Results and discussions**

The correlation coefficients for the independent variables are shown in table (3). There is a positive association between service quality and business outcomes ( $r=0.701^{**}$ ) and between time management and business results ( $r=0.813^{**}$ ) in this Table.

The results of a regression test to establish the significance of a link between an independent variable and company performance are presented in Table (4). The Regression Table illustrates the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable (4). The high R Square value indicates a positive

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correlation between the independent components and the dependent variable (0.793). All probability estimates are extremely low (p0.0001).

The beta values are 0.410 (related to service quality) and 0.621 (relative to overall variability) (time management). All beta values demonstrated a positive relationship between service quality and financial results. Table 5 displays the variance inflation factors (VIFs) results. (VIF) indicates if the model has multicollinearity or not. The correlation above Table is not affected by this issue. These results support the hypotheses (H1 and H2) that service quality and time management influence organisational success.

### 4. Conclusion

The primary purpose of this inquiry was to examine the effects of service quality (as defined by Lei and Mac, 2005) and time management (as described by Britton and Tesser, 1991) on the success of small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) in Pakistan. The findings of this study indicate that service quality and time management significantly impact enterprises' performance. Since this is the first empirical study that blends business performance with other variables based on the perspectives of SME employees in Pakistan, quantifying the impact of time management on company success is the most essential and noteworthy finding.

Small and medium-sized businesses in Pakistan were successful due to their prompt services and high-quality work. This study supports that an organization's success can be enhanced by focusing on service quality and time management. These insights will prove helpful for SME policymakers who may be required to address these implications.

### 5. Limitations and future directions

Because this study was conducted in Pakistan, the findings may not apply to other nations; additional research should be conducted to widen the findings by utilising other samples in various regions. Even though this study relied on snapshots of time, future studies could benefit from longitudinal data to further establish the relationship between variables. To gain a deeper understanding of the factors that affect business success, it would be advantageous to apply the conceptual framework utilised in this study to other industrial settings and service organisations in countries with opposing cultures.

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