

# The Influence of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction of the Telecommunication Companies in Tanzania: A Case Study of Vodacom Tanzania

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## ABSTRACT

Quality is commonly considered as being a key factor that influences customer satisfaction. The objective of the study was to examine the influence of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction on Telecommunication Companies in Tanzania. A case of Vodacom Tanzania. The study focused on Kinondoni District with 250 customers constituting the sample size. Service quality dimensions (reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, assurance and empathy) were independent variables while customer satisfaction was a dependent variable. Descriptive statistics comprising percentages and tables were used for data presentation and analysis. A simple random sampling was employed in the study with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 16) used for analysis. This study was measured under five dimensions of SERVQUAL model. Findings revealed that Vodacom customers contribute 50 percent of customer satisfaction indicating the strong relationship with service quality. It was also revealed that customer satisfaction with Vodacom services is affected by the four dimensions; (responsiveness, assurance, tangibility and empathy). It was recommended that policymakers can opt from a set of service quality dimensions to improve the quality of service.

**Keywords:** service quality, customer satisfaction, telecommunication industry.

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction of the Chapter

In order to remain competitive and for business to grow, service quality and customer satisfaction are key concepts. Service quality and customer satisfaction are different, but related concepts (Suresh chandar et al, 2003), but however, these two exhibit a very strong correlation. Satisfaction can be regarded as an antecedent of service quality (Carman, 1990). Thus, satisfactory experience may therefore affect customer attitude and his or her assessment of perceived service quality. Thus, satisfaction with a specific transaction may result with positive global assessment of service quality. However, other authors have argued that it is the other way round that is service quality is antecedent of customer satisfaction (Oliver, 1997). The purpose of this study was to examine the Influence of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction of the Telecommunication Companies in Tanzania weather they are satisfied with services offered by Vodacom Company. The thrust of this study was to compose a relationship of service quality and customer satisfaction in telecommunication industry in Tanzania within the context of Vodacom Company. It was also imperative to note that this study, also examined the factors that were driving service quality and customer satisfaction which in this study strictly referred to the context of Vodacom Company. Service quality and customer satisfaction are very imperative concepts to academic researchers studying evaluations and to practitioners as a means of creating competitive advantages and customer loyalty. Many industries are paying attention to service quality and customer satisfaction for numerous reasons and chief among them are increased competition and deregulation. The ever changing and competitive market environment offers challenges and opportunities to many organisations across the globe. Customers' perception of service quality always pose a great challenge which is unique than other business challenges. Excellence in service quality has become quite imperative for organisational sustainability (Lewis et al., 1994). The advances in information and communication technologies have enabled a number of organisations to provide superior

services for customers' satisfaction (Surjadjaja et al., 2003)

## 1.2 Background to the Study

The telecommunications industry in Tanzania has witnessed rapid growth, driven by technological advancements and increasing competition. Various companies, including TTCL, Airtel, TIGO, VODACOM, and Zantel, have been providing telecommunications services in the country, leading to continuous improvement in service quality (Mutula, 2002). The convergence of technology has also played a significant role in the development of common networks for multiple services and applications globally.

The expansion of business requirements and the influence of global changes have had a profound impact on the telecommunications sector worldwide (Gillwald and Mureithi, 2011). As a result, the market dynamics, customer demands, and global pressure have become crucial factors to consider in meeting customer needs and delivering quality products and services.

The telecommunications industry is growing very rapidly. The convergence of technology leading to common networks for multiple services and applications is being experienced worldwide (Mutula 2002). Telecommunications services have continued to improve over time due to the efforts of TTCL and other private companies (such as Airtel, MIC Tanzania Ltd. (TIGO), VODACOM and Zantel), which have been rendering services in Tanzania.

Advancements in the communications sectors worldwide have been highly affected by general global changes and the expansion of business requirements (Gillwald and Mureithi 2011). The growing market (customer), communications service competition and global pressure are now used as factors to determine the needs of customers and hence meet their needs by providing quality products and services.

Vodacom Tanzania, a subsidiary of Vodacom Group Ltd., entered the Tanzanian market in December 1999, offering cellular network and Public Land Mobile Network Services (PLMN). Over the years, Vodacom Tanzania has established itself as a leading player in the telecommunications market, boasting over ten million subscribers and continually expanding its customer base (Vodacom Group Limited, 2014). The company's success can be attributed to its ability to connect people in various areas and facilitate the exchange of information, in alignment with its commitment to responsible and ethical business practices.

In December 1999, Vodacom Group Ltd. began operating a cellular network as well as Public Land Mobile Network Services (PLMN) in Tanzania. Thus, Vodacom Tanzania was formed as a subsidiary company. Today, Vodacom has over ten million subscribers, and more subscribers are still getting connected as days go, making Vodacom Tanzania a leader in the telecommunication market for many reasons. The company has managed to connect people in various areas, and they share information on a day-to-day basis (Vodacom Group Limited, 2014). Vodacom's reputation in business and value is governed by "Vodacom's long-standing commitment to responsible and ethical business behaviour".

Customer satisfaction, as defined by Leisen and Vance (2001), is the personal feeling of pleasure or disappointment resulting from the evaluation of services provided by an organization in relation to individuals' expectations. Meeting customer expectations and desires is key to ensuring customer satisfaction in the telecommunications industry. Angelova and Zekiri (2011) emphasize that providers need to consistently deliver high-quality products and services to foster customer loyalty. Therefore, understanding and measuring customer expectations becomes crucial for organizations to meet and exceed those expectations.

Parasuraman et al. (1988) highlight the importance of proper service delivery from the first interaction to prevent expectations from rising. Organizations have the responsibility to fulfill their promises and provide satisfactory services to maintain customer satisfaction. The literature extensively acknowledges the strong correlation between customer satisfaction and service quality. However, the exact nature of this relationship, specifically in terms of how the two constructs are linked, remains unclear. Saravanan and Rao (2007) underline that customer satisfaction is based on the standard and approved service delivered by service providers and the experiences gained by the customers. Wicks and Roethlein (2009) emphasize the need for a strong and effective link between

service quality and customer satisfaction, highlighting the importance of customer satisfaction in defining service quality.

The degree to which communications services and products satisfy the customer's needs and desires normally measures customers' expectations of how satisfied quality products and services are offered by producers or service givers. This means that producers need to produce and offer the best quality products and services to their customers and build loyalty (Angelova and Zekiri 2011), while customer expectations are the main important factor to use for measuring.

According to *Parasuraman et al*, 1988, the literature explained that to prevent expectations from rising, the organization is responsible for performing its services properly from the first time and fulfilling the promise made.

The good connection between customer satisfactions provided in correlation with service quality has been acknowledged expansively in intellectual thinking in the last few years. The nature of the accurate connection between service quality and customer satisfaction (particularly in the way the two constructs have been equipped) is still covered with much ambiguity. Client contentment is based on the level of standard and approved service delivered/offered by the service providers (Saravanan and Rao 2007) admired by the customer's experiences gained although the complete satisfaction accomplished provided with service provided by the responsible organization. There is a need for a physically influential link between service quality and customer satisfaction, which highlights the importance of customer satisfaction when defining service quality (Wicks and Roethlein, 2009).

In summary, the telecommunications industry in Tanzania has grown rapidly due to technological advancements, increasing competition, and evolving customer demands. Vodacom Tanzania's role as a leading player in the market has been shaped by its commitment to providing quality services and meeting customer expectations. The relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction is of paramount importance in this industry, emphasizing the need for organizations to understand and exceed customer expectations to achieve customer loyalty and organizational success.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

There is an underlying problem of customer satisfaction in which companies do not effectively understand how their quality of service can either bring satisfaction to the customer or cause dissatisfaction. The research tries to examine the Influence of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction of the Telecommunication Companies in Tanzania.

Yang and Fang (2004) said, "It is important for telecommunication companies to provide service in such a way that they uncover what attributes consumers utilized in their assessment of overall service quality and satisfaction and which attributes are more important".

### **1.4 Research Objectives**

#### **1.4.1 General Objective**

The general objective of this study was to examine the Influence of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction of the Telecommunication Companies in Tanzania.

#### **1.4.2 Specific Objectives**

- i. To examine customers' response to quality service provided by Vodacom Tanzania
- ii. To identify factors that affect customer satisfaction with service provided by Vodacom Tanzania
- iii. To measure the level of customers' service satisfaction provided by Vodacom Tanzania

## 1.5 Research Questions

- i. What are the customers' responses to the quality service provided by Vodacom Tanzania?
- ii. What are the factors affecting customer satisfaction with the service provided by Vodacom Tanzania?
- iii. What level of satisfaction do customers receive from the service provided by Vodacom Tanzania?

## 1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of the research study can be relevant in several ways.

First, the study is a requirement for partial fulfilment of the masters' degree of Business Administration offered by SAUT.

Second, the study could assist scholars and students in marketing as a source of information and literature review during the preparation of their own works and in the study of the area of their specialization. The study presents some key information as a continuation of research gaps that were covered in previous studies.

Furthermore, it enables scholars to gain knowledge and understanding related to the topic of concern. The study provides management of Vodacom with an understanding of how customer satisfaction relates to service quality by getting to know what their client says about the services they provide. The study adds to the number of studies conducted in the telecommunications industry in Tanzania. Finally, the study makes a significant contribution to the community level, which helps service providers increase the number of users through feedback from the company (Vodacom). Also, Wherever possible, the results of this study will help policy makers within Vodacom Company to ; implementing strategies that maintain and enhance service quality that meets and exceeds customer expectations ; To develop effective and consistent service standards to relevant stakeholders; To assist Vodacom Company to understand the importance of service quality and customer satisfaction. To assist Vodacom Company to benchmark among the state enterprise and telecommunications through effective service delivery and customer satisfaction; To understand the importance of service quality in building competitiveness and profitable customer satisfaction within the telecommunications

## 1.7 Scope of the study

This study focuses on the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in the telecommunications industry. It was conducted at Vodacom, Dar es Salaam city. However, the findings may be useful to other places apart from where the study was done.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction of the Chapter

This chapter provides the assessment of the literary work relevant to this research study and also offers the theoretical framework. The first part of the chapter will be a review of the definitions of service quality and customer satisfaction and this will be followed by literature on the dimensions of the principles of service quality and consumer satisfaction and the relationship between the two principles. It is in this chapter that the researcher demonstrates awareness of the modern state of knowledge in the research and how the research will fit in the broader viewpoint. This chapter will additionally determine what is recognized by scholars to establish the present state of affairs regarding the evaluation of service quality and customer satisfaction in businesses, in the context of Vodacom. This chapter will also figure out the driving factors behind service quality and its inherent effect on consumer satisfaction such that the researcher will additionally be able to establish the standing position of organisations in Tanzania. The research will make an evaluation of every service provided by Vodacom as a state enterprise on the theories of service quality and customer satisfaction. This literary review in this chapter will eventually assist the researcher to develop the right methodology through the recognition of the gaps that exist in the body of knowledge.

## 2.2 Definition of Key Terms

### 2.2.1 Service Quality

In order for a company's offer to reach the customers there is a need for services. These services depend on the type of product and it differs in the various organizations. Service can be defined in many ways depending on which area the term is being used. An author defines service as "any intangible act or performance that one party offers to another that does not result in the ownership of anything" (Kotler & Keller, 2009, p. 789). In all, service can also be defined as an intangible offer by one party to another in exchange of money for pleasure. Quality is one of the things that consumers look for in an offer, which service happens to be one (Solomon 2009, p. 413).

Quality can also be defined as the totality of features and characteristics of a product or services that bear on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs (Kotler et al., 2002, p. 831). It is evident that quality is also related to the value of an offer, which could evoke satisfaction or dissatisfaction on the part of the user. Service quality in the management and marketing literature is the extent to which customers' perceptions of service meet and/or exceed their expectations for example as defined by Zeithaml et al. (1990), cited in Bowen & David, 2005, p. 340) Thus service quality can intend to be the way in which customers are served in an organization which could be good or poor. Parasuraman defines service quality as "the differences between customer expectations and perceptions of service" (Parasuraman, 1988). They argued that measuring service quality as the difference between perceived and expected service was a valid way and could make management to identify gaps to what they offer as services. The aim of providing quality services is to satisfy customers. Measuring service quality is a better way to dictate whether the services are good or bad and whether the customers will or are satisfied with it. A researcher listed in his study: "three components of service quality, called the 3 "Ps" of service quality" (Haywood 1988, p. 19-29). In the study, service quality was described as comprising of three elements:

- "Physical facilities, processes and procedures;
- Personal behaviour on the part of serving staff, and;
- Professional judgment on the part of serving staff but to get good quality service. "Haywood 1988, p. 19-29).

He stated that "an appropriate, carefully balanced mix of these three elements must be achieved." (Haywood, 1988, p. 9-29) What constitutes an appropriate mix, according to him will, in part, be determined by the relative degrees of labour intensity, service process customization, and contact and interaction between the customer and the service process. From the look of things, this idea of his could be design to fit with evaluating service quality with the employee perspective.

Parasuraman et al. (1985) describes service quality as the evaluation of the general quality of services being provided to customers. Therefore, it can be noted that service quality is the differentiation between the customers is expectation and the perceptions of services delivered by organizations. Nitecki et al. (2000) describes service quality in terms of surpassing customer perceptions and expectations of service. It is therefore important for this research to concentrate on examining the relationship of service quality and its resultant impact on customer satisfaction in the context of Vodacom as a state enterprise in Tanzania.

According to Parasuraman *et al.* 1988, quality is the difference between customers' expectations of service providers' performance and their evaluation of the service they receive.

Service quality can be defined as "the difference between customers' expectations for service performance prior to the service encounter and their perceptions of the service received".

Scholars generally agree that quality is associated to the value of a product offering which could either result in satisfaction or dissatisfaction on the part of the individual. Zeithaml et al., (1990) cited in David and Bowen (2005:340) notes that service quality is, therefore, the level to which customers' perceptions of service meet and/or exceed their expectations. From the foregoing, it becomes critical for this research to discover how customers are serviced in organisations in Tanzania and appraise how it impacts their satisfaction levels.

Asubonteng *et al* (1996). Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry (1988) explain ten dimensions and criteria that can be used to assess service quality.

- i. **Reliability:** An organization to be able to accurately work towards achieving its services in time and with accordance with promises made to its clients.
- ii. **Responsiveness:** The willingness and tendency of service providers to assist clients and satisfy their needs, immediately reply to their inquiries and solve their problems as quickly as possible (Parasuraman *et al.* 1988)
- iii. **Competence:** Acquiring required information and sufficient skills to enable employees to perform their tasks properly (Parasuraman *et al.* 1988)
- iv. **Accessibility:** Granting easy accessibility to service with regards to location and through services provided via the internet, the telephone or any other means of communication. (Parasuraman *et al.* 1988)
- v. **Courtesy:** Providing good treatment to client respectfully and in a friendly polite manner, taking into account their feelings and responding to their phone calls gently. (Parasuraman *et al.* 1988)
- vi. **Communication:** This occurs when a customer listens to the client in a gentle manner and transmits information by facilitating external communication with people. (Parasuraman *et al.* 1988)
- vii. **Credibility:** credibility can be achieved through confidence and self-assurance in the service provider as well as honesty and straightforwardness. (Parasuraman *et al.* 1988)
- viii. **Security:** the service is free from risks and hazard, defects or doubts so that it provides bodily safety, financial security and privacy. (Parasuraman *et al.* 1988)
- ix. **Understanding/knowing the customer:** This can be accomplished by identifying the customer's needs and understanding their individual problems.
- x. **Tangibility:** This includes physical aspects with services such as devices and equipment, human beings, physical facilities such as buildings and nice decoration and other observable service facilities

The above mentioned ten dimensions have been integrated into only five dimensions. Researchers agree that these dimensions are appropriate because they facilitate and reveal customers' expectations and perceptions. This model is called 'SERVQUAL'. These compound words consist of the two words 'Service' and 'Quality'. These five dimensions include:

#### **i. Tangibility:**

This comprises human beings, tools, and observable facilities, including decorations and buildings. Since services are tangible, customers derive their perception of service quality by comparing the tangible associated with these services provided. It is the appearance of the physical facilities, equipment, personnel and communication materials (Zeithaml & Berry, 2006). The quality of M-Pesa Services represents tangibles. These qualities provide concrete cues for customers to evaluate the capability of the service provider.

#### **ii. Reliability:**

It is the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately. Reliability means that the company delivers on its promises-promises about delivery, service provision, problem resolutions and pricing (Zeithaml & Berry, 2006). Customers want to do business with companies that keep their promises, particularly their promises about the service outcomes and core service attributes. Vodacom Company needs to be aware of customer expectation of reliability. Firms that do not provide the core service that customers think they are buying fail their customers in the most direct way. The capability to offer great services according to the given specifications and conditions.

### iii. Responsiveness:

It is the willingness to help customers and provide prompt service (Zeithaml & Berry, 2006). This dimension emphasizes attentiveness and promptness in dealing with customer's requests, questions, complaints and problems. Responsiveness is communicated to customers by length of time they have to wait for assistance, answers to questions or attention to problems.

Responsiveness also captures the notion of flexibility and ability to customize the service to customer needs. Readiness of the employees to serve customers and provide timely service.

### iv. Assurance:

Feelings of trust and self-confidence in dealing with the organization. This reflects the worker's knowledge and skills to construct an assurance to the customers themselves. It means to inspire trust and confidence. Assurance is defined as employees' knowledge of courtesy and the ability of the firm and its employees to inspire trust and confidence (Zeithaml & Berry, 2006). This dimension is likely to be particularly important for the services that the customers perceives as involving high rising and/or about which they feel uncertain about the ability to evaluate. Trust and confidence may be embodied in the person who links the customer to the company, for example, the marketing department.

### v. Empathy:

It means to provide caring individualized attention the firm provide its customers (Zeithaml & Berry, 2006). In some countries, it is essential to provide individual attention to show to the customer that the company does best to satisfy his needs. Empathy is an additional plus that the trust and confidence of the customers and at the same time increase the loyalty. In this competitive world, the customer's requirements are rising day after day and it is the companies' duties to their maximum to meet the demands of customers, else customers who do not receive individual attention will search elsewhere. Understanding their needs and caring for their individuality by showing them consideration and affection while treating them as extraordinary clients.

## 2.2.2 Customer Satisfaction

**Customer Satisfaction** is client contentment for the product or service offered in pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfilment by said Oliver (1980). Customer fulfilment depends on the product's perceived performance relative to buyer's expectations. Kotler and Armstrong (2006) justify as if the product's performance falls short of expectation, the customer is dissatisfied. If performance matches expectations, the customer is satisfied. If performance exceeds expectations, the customer is highly satisfied or delighted.

Outstanding marketing companies go out of their technique to keep important customers satisfied. According to Ojo (2010) give explanation that the highly satisfied customers make repeat purchases and tell others about their good experiences with the product. The key is to match customer expectations with company performance. Smart companies aim to delight customers by promising only what they can deliver, then delivering more than they promise. Solomon (2009: 34) describes a customer as the most crucial stakeholder of an organization who provides payment in exchange for product offering provided to him/her by the organisation with a goal of satisfying a need and eventually maximising satisfaction of the same. While there is no any agreement between scholars on the definitions of a consumer and a customer, this research is will go by Solomon (2009: 34) who defines a customer as an individual who does the purchasing of a product offering as compared to the consumer who finally uses the product. It must be noted that whenever the customers and consumers are happy with either the product offering or services, it is termed satisfaction.

Satisfaction refers to the contentment that an individual feels whenever his/her desires have been fulfilled or needs, objectives or expectations have been achieved. Customer satisfaction can therefore be a measure of how delighted customers are with the services and 15 products of a telecommunication company. It's of benefit for organizations or business firms to keep their customers happy. Satisfied customers have a greater likelihood of remaining loyal, would consume more of services of the business organisation, and would recommend friends

and relatives to the service provider. Customer satisfaction can make the customers faithful to one telecommunication service provider. Earlier researchers have found that satisfaction of the consumers can assist the brands to build profitable and long relationships along with their consumers will result.

There is, however, a lack of coherence among scholars on just what constitute customer satisfaction. Suresh chander et al. (2002) concur that consumer's level of satisfaction is determined by one is cumulative understanding at the point of contact with the service provider. There is indeed a need to work out the meaning of customer satisfaction since various researchers and scholars are coming up with various definitions for the term. Hence, it becomes crucial for this research to discover away if consumer satisfaction within parastatals is determined by one is cumulative knowledge at the idea of contact.

This is client contentment for the product or service offered at a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfilment, according to Oliver (1980). Customer fulfilment depends on the product's perceived performance relative to the buyer's expectations. Kotler and Armstrong (2006) justify that if the product's performance falls short of expectation, the customer is dissatisfied. If performance matches expectations, the customer is satisfied. If performance exceeds expectations, the customer is highly satisfied or delighted.

Outstanding marketing companies go out of their technique to keep important customers satisfied. According to Ojo (2010), highly satisfied customers make repeat purchases and tell others about their good experiences with the product. The key is to match customer expectations with company performance. Smart companies aim to delight customers by promising only what they can deliver and then delivering more than they promise.

Therefore, customer satisfaction is the enjoyment obtained from consuming a service offered. Measuring the effect of service quality on the satisfaction of customers could be very difficult at times because it is an effort to determine how human being beings feel. NBRI, 2009 suggests that the probable measurements that can be used in measuring satisfaction of a consumer consist of:

- Quality of service;
- Speed of service;
- Pricing;
- Complaints or problems;
- Trust in employees;
- The closeness of the relationship with associates in the firm;
- Other kinds of services needed; and
- The positioning of the company in the minds of the customers (NBRI, 2009).

It is the goal of the dissertation to find the status quo of Vodacom with regards to customer satisfaction in terms of the dimensions identified by NBRI (2009). The literature shows that consumer satisfaction is calculated via service quality of which service quality is measured by different measurement tools developed by many researchers and chief among them are the SERVEPERF, SERVQUAL, and WEBQUAL (Kumbhar, 2011). Many studies addressed the part of customer satisfaction in service contexts but a few researches have been done in the context of state-enterprises. Literature suggests that service quality is a more specific judgement which can lead to a wide assessment of customer satisfaction (Oliver 1993; Parasuraman et al. 1985, 1988, 2005). Therefore, it is recognized that perceived service quality results in increased customer satisfaction and whenever perceived service quality is less than expected service quality this would mean that the customers will be rather 16 dissatisfied (Jain and Gupta, 2004). This view must be validated in the context of Vodacom as a company firm. Customer satisfaction has been conceptualised as transaction-specific meaning that it is based on the customer's acquaintance on a specific service encounter (Taylor and Cronin, 2002). Nevertheless, other scholars



such as Jones and Suh (2000) argue that consumer satisfaction is a construct that is significantly increasing based mostly on the assessment of the service encounter by the consumer. These deviating views show that consumer satisfaction is familiarity based and are the result of the service that is rendered to the customer by the service provider. While there is an opposing view on exactly what constitutes consumer satisfaction, another school of thought suggests that customer satisfaction is just a mindset the customer has for a service rendered (Los Angeles and Yi, 2004). This notion features has to be confirmed in the context of Vodacom as a state enterprise in Tanzania. Parasuraman et al., (1988:17) argue that more frequently there are various views whenever it comes to the expectations of the customer in both the existing satisfaction and service quality literature. Expectations on one hand are regarded as predictions by customers about what is most likely to happen during a specific deal and having said that, service quality literature see the exact same as the desires or desires the customers might have or feel as the service provider should provide or would instead provide. For the purposes of this research, the researcher will explore how service quality and customer satisfaction are defined in the operations of Vodacom and establish whether this might be based on previous experiences and information that a customer would have gotten in the past (Douglas and Connor, 2003). It is going to be crucial for this research to understand and at the same time determine the customer's expectations in order to identify any gaps in delivering services with quality that could assist Vodacom ensure satisfaction (Negi, 2009). The perceptions of customers are entirely based on just what they would have gotten from the service provider (Douglas and Connor, 2003). Therefore, this research will be based on the differences that might occur between expected service quality and perceived service from the viewpoint of the consumer. There is an urgent need in this research to understand exactly how Vodacom customers perceive service quality. Parasuraman et al. (1985) argue that there are ten determinants on exactly how organisations can assess service quality in their operations and they are; protection, competence, courtesy, access, interaction, credibility, dependability, empathy, responsiveness, and tangibles. Nevertheless, it must be noted that many of these service quality determinants calls for a customer to have previous knowledge in order to provide an assessment of the service quality of the service provider and therefore, there's need to get information from older customers of Vodacom other than getting information from possible or brand new customers.

## 2.3 Theoretical Framework

### 2.3.1 Theory of Assimilation

The theory of assimilation, based on Festinger's theory of dissonance (1957), explores the cognitive judgment process that users engage in when evaluating a product's performance in relation to their expectations. According to Anderson (1973), if there exists an inconsistency between the anticipated expectations and the perceived performance of a product, a state of dissonance arises. This perspective on post-usage evaluation was introduced in the literature as the theory of assimilation.

In the theory of assimilation, consumers attempt to reduce dissonance by adjusting their perceptions of the product to align it more closely with their initial expectations. This adjustment can be achieved by either distorting expectations to match perceived product performance or by elevating satisfaction levels by minimizing the perceived importance of the disconfirmation experienced (Olson and Dover, 1979).

The theory assumes that consumers possess the motivation and capability to adapt their expectations and perceptions of product performance. If consumers are able to adjust either their expectations or their perceptions, dissatisfaction would not result from the post-usage process. This implies that dissatisfaction can only occur when the evaluation process starts with negative expectations from customers (Olson and Dover, 1979).

However, the theory of assimilation does have some limitations. One of its deficiencies is that while it acknowledges the relationship between expectations and satisfaction, it fails to specify how expectation disconfirmation can lead to either fulfillment or dissatisfaction. Additionally, the theory assumes that consumers are sufficiently motivated to adjust their expectations or perceptions of product performance, which may not always be the case. Furthermore, it suggests that dissatisfaction can only occur if the evaluative process begins with negative expectations from customers (Peyton et al., 2003).

Festinger's theory of dissonance (1957) forms the basis for the theory of assimilation, which states that "users

make a sort of cognitive judgment between the expectations regarding the product and its performance”. If there is an inconsistency between the prospect and the product’s perceived performance, dissonance does not fail to appear. This point of view on post usage evaluation was introduced in the literature discussing satisfaction under the form of the theory of assimilation (Anderson 1973).

According to Anderson, consumers try to avoid dissonance by adjusting their perceptions of a certain product to bring it closer to their expectations. In a similar way, consumers can reduce the tension resulting from the discrepancy between expectations and the product’s performance, both by distorting the expectations so that they can be in agreement with the product’s perceived performance and by increasing the level of satisfaction by reducing the relative importance of experimental disconfirmation (Olson and Dover 1979).

The theory presumes that consumers are motivated enough to adjust both their expectations and their product performance perceptions. If consumers adjust their expectations or product performance perceptions, dissatisfaction would not be a result of the post usage process. Olson and Dover (1979) explain that consumers can reduce the tension resulting from a discrepancy between expectations and product/service performance either by distorting expectations so that they coincide with perceived product performance or by raising the level of satisfaction by minimizing the relative importance of the disconfirmation experienced. Some researchers have discovered that control of actual product performance can lead to a positive relationship between expectations and satisfaction (Anderson 1973). Consequently, it is assumed that dissatisfaction could never appear unless the evaluation process began with the customers’ negative expectations.

Assimilation theory involves a number of deficiencies, namely, the approach assumes that there is a relationship between expectations and satisfaction, but it does not specify the way in which expectation disconfirmation can lead to fulfilment or dissatisfaction. Moreover, the theory posits that clients are motivated enough to adjust either their expectations or their perceptions about the performance of the product. Some researchers have found that controlling for actual product performance can lead to a constructive relationship between expectation and contentment. Therefore, it would appear that dissatisfaction could never occur unless the evaluative processes were to begin with negative consumer expectations. (Peyton *et al.* 2003)

In summary, the theory of assimilation postulates that consumers engage in cognitive judgment to align their expectations with perceived product performance, aiming to reduce dissonance and maintain satisfaction. However, it should be noted that this theory has certain limitations and does not provide a comprehensive understanding of how expectation disconfirmation impacts satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

### 2.3.2. Service quality (SERVQUAL) model

The SERVQUAL model is a five-gap model established to show the five dimensions of service quality and discrepancies that may exist between customers’ expected service and perceived service (Gap 5), service delivery and external communication (Gap 4), service quality specifications and service delivery (Gap 3), management perception and service quality specification (Gap 2), and customer expectation and management perception (Gap 1)

(Parasuraman *et al.*, 1988). Based on the model, Gap 5 (between customers’ expected service and perceived service) illustrates the perceived service. If the perceived service is equal to or slightly above the customer’s expectation, then there is customer satisfaction; if the perceived service is below the expectation, there is customer dissatisfaction (Leninkumar, 2017).

Scholars on this domain generally express certainty that whenever the experienced service is less than the expected service, it suggests less than satisfactory service quality; when perceived service is more than expected service, the apparent inference is that service quality will be more than satisfactory (Gupta and Jain, 2004:27). SERVQUAL best fits the analysis of service quality from the viewpoint of the customer because it compares the perceived and anticipated service. It is also a key for this research to test the elements of the SERVQUAL model in the functional context of Vodacom as an enterprise in Tanzania.

The SERVQUAL scale had been created by Parasuraman et al. (1985; 1988) to be the absolute most popular tool for calculating service quality. The scale identified five key proportions of service quality particularly empathy, tangibles, responsiveness, assurance and empathy and this research seek to rate these elements in the context of Vodacom. The SERVQUAL scale features 22 items for evaluating consumer perceptions and objectives regarding the quality of service. A level of agreement or disagreement with an offered product is ranked on a seven-point Likert scale. Outcomes are then used to determine negative and positive gaps and this research seeks to unearth the level of disagreement of the service that Vodacom provides to its customers. The gap is calculated by the distinction between perception and expectation ratings and suggests the level of service quality.

## 2.4 Theoretical Literature Review

Services play a vigorous role in the marketing program of many companies, and the superiority of the service is a part of customers' demanded package of value. Thus, in competitive free markets, some strategies, such as providing high-quality services, have absorbed many customers (Parasuraman *et al.*, 1985). In today's complicated and competitive markets, the ability to gain and maintain customers' loyalty is a critical factor for many organizations (Bendapudi & Leone, 2002).

Customer satisfaction is one of the most important key factors for customers' future purchases (Mittal & Kamakura, 2001). Those clients who have been satisfied by consuming or buying any goods or services were most likely to inform others about their great encounters; likewise, those dissatisfied customers were without any doubt communicating about their bad experience with the products or services.

Gilchrist and Stringer (1992) suggested that attending to customer satisfaction is one of the best marketing strategies of service. However, they also noted that recognizing the importance of customer satisfaction is often overlooked by service delivery organizations. According to marketing theorists, satisfaction is central to the long-term success of professional service delivery systems (Crane, 1993). Reichheld & Sasser (1990) asserted that customer satisfaction involves an equitable exchange process between the seller and consumer, with both parties perceiving that they have received something of value

### 2.4.1 Service

Gronroos (2000) states that services are a series of processes that leads to an outcome, which will solve customer problems, during partly simultaneous production and consumption processes.

Moreover, the customer often actively participates in the production process. Also Kotler (2000) defines service as any act or performance that one can offer to another that is essentially intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything. Its production may or may not be tied to a physical product.

### 2.4.2 The Basic Characteristics of Services

In order to define services clearly, many early investigations focus on finding the differences between services and consumer goods. These differences refer to the "characteristics of services". These characteristics of service also make service different from goods as described below (Woo and Ennew, 2005).

#### 2.4.2.1 Intangibility

Customers can get permanent ownership of physical and tangible objects (Lovelock and Wright, 2002). Services are an activity, an experience and not a thing. Services cannot be seen, felt, tasted, or touched as tangible goods, which can be readily displayed and easily transferred to customers (Zeithaml et al., 2006). Organizations always try to make their intangible offer as tangible as possible, while many manufactures try to create an image for their products instead of focusing on the tangible aspects of their products in advertising (Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons, 2006). Services are not a particular kind of product.

#### **2.4.2.2 Inseparability**

According to Perez et al (2007), the service is produced and consumed at the same time in most of the service industries. This kind of personal contact is referred to as “interactive consumption” and “interactive process” in the definition of services. It includes physical environment (e.g. ATM), behaviour of personnel, and the customer’s mood and needs. Inseparability of the service itself from the service provider highlights the role of people in the service transaction, and their influence on quality levels. Therefore, it is difficult for the service providers to hide mistakes or quality shortfalls of the service.

#### **2.4.2.3 Perishability**

Unlike manufactured goods, services cannot be saved, stored, resold, or returned. The degree of Perishability in the quality of service is affected by the degree of intangibility (Bruhn and George, 2006). This characteristic means that the service providers have only one way that they should provide the right service the first time, every time, and the full use of service capacity. Also this provision makes it impossible to have a quality check before the service was sent to the customers. Pricing and promotion are two of the marketing tools commonly adapted to tackle this characteristic.

#### **2.4.3 Service Quality**

Quality is the extent to which the service, the service process and the service organization can satisfy the expectations of the user. All service organizations recognize the importance of service quality because it affects customer loyalty and satisfaction. Service quality also has been suggested as a means of developing a competitive advantage (Landrum et al 2007). Lovelock and Wright (2002) define ‘quality as the degree to which a service satisfies customers by meeting their needs, wants and expectations’. This definition means that if a firm does not improve quality service to its customers, it will be able to switch its customers to another supplier who can satisfy them and its competitors will take over the market. Definitions of quality have included: a) satisfying or delighting the customer or exceeding expectations; b) product of service features that satisfy stated or implied needs; c) conformance to clearly specified requirements; and d) fitness for use, whereby the product meets the customers’ needs and is free of deficiencies (Chelladurai & Chang, 2000). Service quality forms an integral part of service marketing. Service quality is about performing the service dependably and accurately. When a company performs a service carelessly, when it makes preventable errors, when it fails to deliver on alluring promises made to attract customers, it unsettles customers’ assurance and weakens its opportunity of earning a reputation for service excellence. From the customer’s perspective, the proof of a service is its flawless performance (Berry and Parasuraman, 1991).

##### **2.4.3.1 Measures of the Service Quality**

Service quality is more difficult to measure than the quality of goods. The service quality perception depends on Intangible differences between products and intangible expectations customers have on those products (Tripathi, 2011). To define service quality, the traditional approach pays more attention on service quality perception which is a comparison of consumer expectations with actual performance (DeMoranville and Bienstock, 2003). Today, researchers on service 9 quality widely accept and apply two service theories among the various service quality opinions. One is the Gronroos’ Technical and Functional Quality framework. The other is the SERVQUAL model by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry in the 1990s (Woo and Ennew 2005). In the 1990s, Gronroos used a two-dimension model of service quality (technical quality and functional quality) to describe and measure the service quality (Perez et al., 2007). In this model, technical quality focuses on the outcome of what is the service provided and functional quality takes into account how it is delivered. Subsequently, Gronroos (2001) indicated seven specific dimensions on which service quality customers’ perceptions could be measured (professionalism and skills, reliability and trustworthiness, attitudes and behaviour, accessibility and flexibility, service recovery, servicecape, and reputation and credibility). Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry proposed a conceptual framework of service quality based on the interpretation of qualitative data from extensive explanatory research performed in four service businesses (Akbaba, 2006). Landrum et al. (2007) simplify the definition of service quality as a comparison between consumers' expectations and their perceptions of the service they actually receive. Woo and Ennew (2005), furthermore, indicate that both of the two approaches to conceptualizing the dimensions of

service quality clearly overlap.

### **2.4.3.2 Customer Perceptions of Service Quality**

The customers' perceptions of service quality have attracted quite extensive attention from researchers and practitioners. Zeithaml and Bitner (2000) describe customer perceptions as: "the subjective assessments of actual service experiences. This refers to how customers perceive services; how they assess the quality of received service; whether they are satisfied; and whether they have received good value. Therefore, customer perceptions of service are also defined as customer perceptions of quality, satisfaction and value". In short, the customers' perceptions are the way that people see something based on their experience. Everyone's perception of a situation will be at least slightly different.

### **2.4.3.3 Dimensions of Service Quality**

Silvestro (2005) states that, "the only criteria that count in evaluating service quality are those defined by the customer" According to Nowacki (2005), Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry established 10 service quality dimensions that customers use to judge the quality of the service offered in 1984. The ten dimensions are not necessarily independent of each other. There could be some overlap between the categories. As a result of a further study, Parasuraman et al (2000) combined the ten original determinants into five dimensions of quality: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance (including competence, courtesy, credibility, security) and empathy (including access, communication and understanding). These five dimensions are found relevant for various business services. Customers will use all or some of the dimensions to determine service quality perceptions. Research suggests that cultural differences will also affect the relative importance placed on the five dimensions. Tangible features, such as the personnel's or exhibition's appearance, are relatively easy to assess. However, intangible features such as safety and understanding clients' needs, may be very difficult for the professional and the client to evaluate (Zeithaml et al., 2006).

#### **• Responsiveness**

Zeithaml et al. (2006) suggest that service providers should be active and voluntary to help their customers and to provide prompt service. This dimension demands that the service provider should be more flexible in solving their customers' problems and 11 requests. Firms even should have a capacity to customize services for dealing with their customers' special needs.

#### **• Reliability**

Bebko (2000) defines reliability as "the ability to perform the promised service dependably and accurately". Reliability is a key dimension that customers can evaluate the quality between they received and the provider promised during the delivery process (e.g. service provision, problem resolution, and pricing). All firms need to be aware of customer expectations of reliability.

#### **• Assurance**

Robledo (2001) identifies assurance as "employees' knowledge and courtesy and the ability of the firm and its employees to inspire trust and confidence". This dimension consists of four original determinants: competence, courtesy, credibility and security.

#### **• Empathy**

The basic target of the dimension is to afford more facilities for the current or potential customers and enhance the services capacity, through personalized or customized service. Curry and Sinclair (2002) describe empathy as the caring, individualized attention that the firm provides its customers.

#### **• Tangibles**

Tangibles are related to 'the appearance of physical facilities, equipment, personnel, and communication

materials' (Robledo, 2001). Since the tangible and visual elements of the site will be critical to efficiency as well as to overall perceptions of the firm and the brand, service companies are likely to use tangibles to enhance their image and convey quality service to customers. Most companies also combine tangibles with another dimension to create a service quality strategy for the firm (Zeithaml et al., 2006).

#### 2.4.3.4 SERVQUAL

Measurement Theory Over the past two decades, numerous researchers attempt to create models in measuring service quality for survival and success of service companies. One of the most influential models is the SERVQUAL (SERVices QUALity) measure, which originally developed in 1985 by Parasuraman et al. and refined in 1988, 1991 and 1994 (DeMoranville and Bienstock, 2003). SERVQUAL is based on the "GAP model" of service quality (Landrum et al., 2007), which facilitates quantification of the gap between customers' expectations of a service and their perceptions of the actual service delivered.

Every gap in SERVQUAL has a unique role as follows:

- Gap 1: Difference between consumer expectations and management perceptions of consumer expectations.
- Gap 2: Difference between management perceptions of consumer expectations and service quality specifications.
- Gap 3: Difference between service quality specifications and the service actually delivered.
- Gap 4: Difference between service delivery and what is communicated about the service to the consumer.
- Gap 5: Difference between consumer expectations and perceptions.

#### Gap 1: Customer Expectation vs. Management Perception Gap

According to (Kumar et al, 2009) service providers may perhaps not comprehend what features a service must have in order to meet the needs of a customer and to what extent the overall performance on those functions are required to deliver high service quality. Gap 1 is developed whenever the management does not comprehend exactly what their customers want. Sometimes business professionals may fail to comprehend just what customers anticipate in a service and which functions are required to deliver high-quality service. Numerous businesses conduct pilot studies to figure out just what their market wishes, but later on become internally-focused, oblivion to the fact that customers' need could have changed over time.

#### Gap 2: Management Perception versus Service Quality Specifications

Whenever the management understand just what their customers want, but are not in a position or are not ready to develop systems which would deliver it, this results in a Gap 2 situation. A number of reasons have been specified for this gap, for instance inadequate commitment to quality of service, shortage of perception of feasibility, inadequate task standardizations and the lacking of goal-setting (Kumar et al, 2009). Because some organizations may look for short-term earnings, they are reluctant to spend in people or in equipment. This gap arises as soon as the business identifies the desires of the customers, but without the means to deliver the expectations. Other factors that impact this gap are resource limitations, market conditions and management indifference. These could impact service quality perception of the customer (Kumar et al, 2009).

#### Gap 3: Provider Quality Specs versus Service Delivery

Under service quality specifications, service delivery gap propounds that organizations could have manuals for doing service well and dealing with customers properly, but these do not necessarily mean that the best overall performance is assured. Employees perform a crucial part in assuring great service quality perception and their overall performance cannot be standardised. This impacts the delivery of service which has an effect on the way customers perceive service quality. A Gap 3 situation is often referred to as 'the service-performance gap'. It happens whenever the management understands just what needs to be delivered and proper specifications have

been developed, but it is the employees who are not in a position or perhaps not ready to deliver the service. A Gap 3 situation, therefore, results from the interaction of the employees and customers (Kumar et al, 2009). Service operations that use devices to deliver service are unlikely to have Gap 3 errors, for instance, ATMs in the banking sector and E-ticketing in the airline sector. This is due to the fact that machines are not associated with human errors, while consumers anticipate less from machines. Thus internal marketing programmes and the management of the human resource function can be used to minimize Gap 3 errors. These human resource functions include training, monitoring working conditions, hiring and developing reward systems (Kumar et al, 2009).

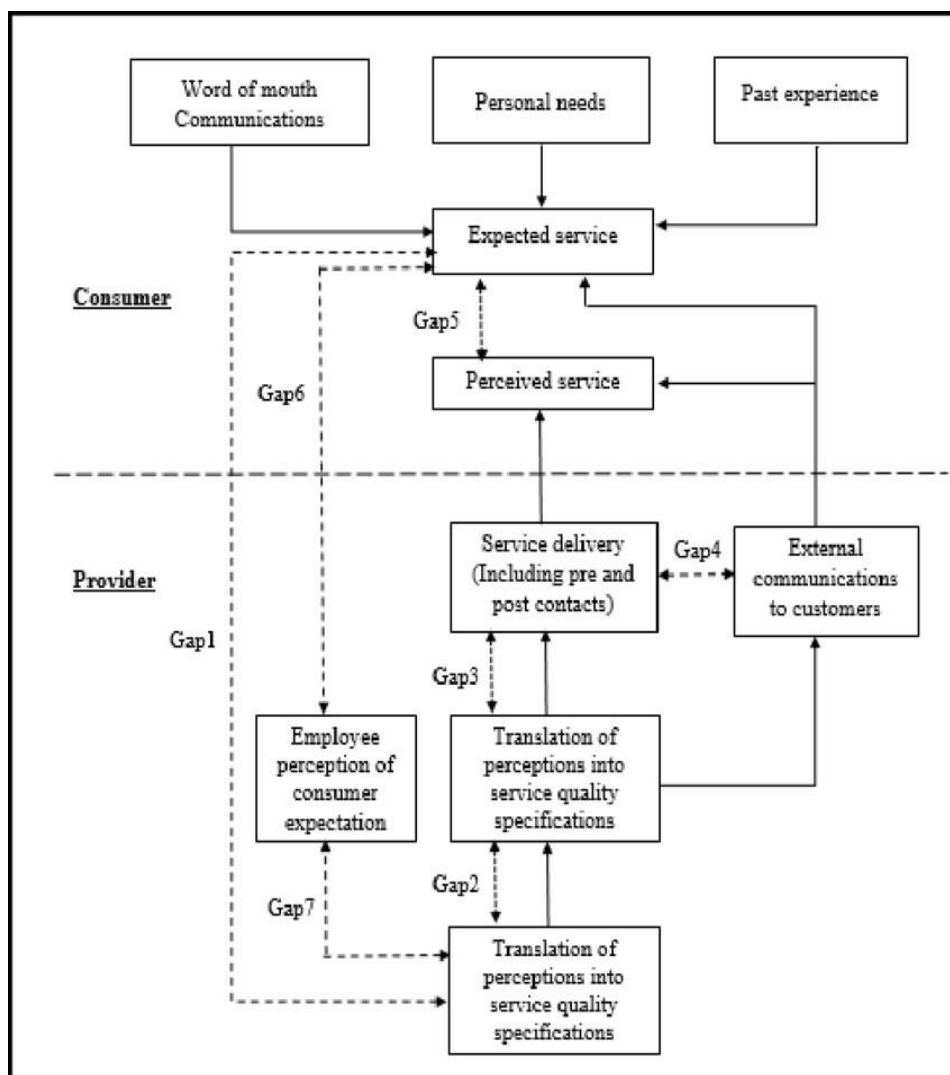
#### Gap 4: Service Delivery – External Communications Gap

External communications impacts not just the expectations of consumers, but also, the perceptions of the consumers from the delivered service. Organisations can neglect to notify customers of unique efforts to guarantee quality that are perhaps not noticeable to them and this could affect service quality perceptions by customers (Kumar et al, 2009).

#### Gap 5: Expected Service – Perceived Service Gap

From their research, it revealed that one of the keys to making sure great service quality is achieved or exceeded relies on how customers perceive the general performance in the context of what they expected (Kumar et al, 2009).

Figure 2.1: SERVQUAL Gap Analysis



Source: Parasuraman et al, 1985.

#### **2.4.4 Customer Satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction measures how well a company's products or services meet or exceed customer expectations. These expectations often reflect many aspects of the company's business activities including the actual product, service, company, and how the company operates in the global environment. Customer satisfaction measures are an overall psychological evaluation that is based on the customer's lifetime of product and service experience (Smith, 2007). According to Oliver (1997, 2010), customer satisfaction is defined as a judgment that a product or service provided a pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfilment. Also there are two levels of individual consumers' satisfaction: transaction-specific satisfaction and cumulative satisfaction. Transaction-specific satisfaction or encounter satisfaction is identified as a fulfilment response to a single transaction or encounter, whereas cumulative satisfaction is a judgment based on many occurrences of the same experience and not just one-time experience. For both cases i.e. encounter satisfaction and cumulative satisfaction, satisfaction is either defined as an overall judgment of satisfaction or decomposed into satisfaction with performance or quality attributes (Cronin and Taylor 1992).

##### **2.4.4.1 Importance of Customer Satisfaction**

Satisfying customers is one of the main objectives of every business. Businesses recognize that keeping current customers is more profitable than having to win new ones to replace those lost. Management and marketing theorists underscore the importance of customer satisfaction for a business's success (McCull-Kennedy & Schneider, 2000). Smith, (2007) came with his explanation that, effective marketing focuses on two activities i.e. to retain existing customers and adding new customers. Customer satisfaction measures are critical to any product or service company because customer satisfaction is a strong predictor of customer retention, customer loyalty and product repurchase.

##### **2.4.4.2 Measuring Customer Satisfaction**

Measuring customer satisfactions are beyond the constitution happy customers. Measuring customer satisfaction is about profit and competitive advantage. To achieve long term success in the market, firm should monitor the customer satisfaction signals regarding product, service and relationship. Measuring customer satisfactions provide a comprehensive insight to the customer pre and post purchase behaviour. Without this approach understanding, improving and developing better customer services could not be possible. Thus, business consultants, corporations and others have worked to identify the characteristics of organizations that consistently please their customers, to develop tools for monitoring customer satisfaction, and to build continuous, quality improvement systems that respond to consumer feedback (Nicholas, 2007).

#### **2.4.5 Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction**

Lovelock and Wright (2002) define customer satisfaction as a sort of emotional reaction that arose from an actual experience. Metters et al. (2006) also indicate that satisfaction is the consumer's fulfilment response. Satisfaction is the customer's evaluation of a product or service in terms of whether that product or service has met the customer's needs and expectations (Bruhn and George, 2006). According to Truong and Foster (2006), customer satisfaction takes place in two situations. One is the result of a product or actual service meets the customer's expectations. The other is the result exceeds the expectations. Dissatisfaction will occur when the actual service is below the expected level. So, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are the outcome of a subjective evaluation process. The relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction is still a mystery, whether customer satisfaction is an antecedent of service quality or vice versa. Several researchers suggest that customer satisfaction leads to service quality (Lee, and Yoo, 2000). However, an approach most frequently applied in the commercial sector suggests that customer satisfaction with a service is related to the perceived discrepancy between actual and ideal levels of service delivery. If experience of the service greatly exceeds the expectations that clients had of the service, then satisfaction will be high and vice versa (Mori, 2002). This should not, of course, be taken by service providers as license to drive down expectations to achieve surprise and concomitant customer satisfaction with moderate service quality: service quality is seen as an antecedent of customer satisfaction (Brady et al, 2002).



#### **2.4.6 Association between Satisfaction Levels and a Firm's Financial and Market Performance**

It was found that there are significant and moderate-to-strong associations between satisfaction levels and a firm's financial and market performance. More specifically, there are strong links between customer satisfaction, and retention, revenue, earnings per share and stock price (Williams & Neumann, 2011).

#### **2.4.7 Relationships among Perceived Service Quality, Corporate Image, Overall Satisfaction, and Loyalty**

There is much previous research exploring the quality-satisfaction-loyalty (QSL) relationship. It is generally believed in marketing and service industries that (1) good service quality results in customer satisfaction, (2) good service quality attracts customers and hence leads to customer loyalty and (3) high satisfaction level is likely to create customer loyalty. However, it has also been reported that satisfaction may not be adequate enough to lead to loyalty, though loyal customers are almost typically satisfied (Cronin and Taylor 1992; Cronin et al 2000). Furthermore, corporate image is also found to affect customer satisfaction and loyalty. Customers who develop a positive image towards a company will tend to have high customer satisfaction through a halo effect. Hart and Rosenberger (2004) reported that image has a "marginally significant" direct effect on customer loyalty, but a substantial effect mediated by customer satisfaction. Therefore, image can affect loyalty directly and indirectly.

### **2.5 Empirical Literature Review**

Negi (2009) conducted a study on users' perceived service quality of mobile communications in Ethiopia. The study explores the causal relationship between service quality dimensions and overall service quality and identifies service quality gaps as experienced by the subscribers of

ETC mobile services. Stratified random sampling was used to measure seven dimensions of SERVQUAL, namely, empathy, tangibles, reliability, convenience, responsiveness, network aspect, and assurance, which were used to measure customers' perceptions and expectations. The result was below average by over half of the respondents, followed by less than one-third who mentioned it as average and approximately one-fifth as above average. Convenience was reported to be lowest, and the network aspect was regarded as the highest dimension of service quality. Reliability and network aspect dimensions have been predicted on overall service quality by using two regression models.

Ojo (2010) examined the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in the telecommunications industry in the case of the Mobile Telecommunication Network (MTN) in Nigeria. Descriptive statistics, the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient and regression analysis were employed in the methodology. The study shows that service quality affects customer satisfaction, which leads to a positive relationship between them. The organization should focus on service quality because of its effect on customer satisfaction. To ensure that the customer satisfaction level is high, organizations must know the expectations of customers and how they can meet such expectations. Commonly, it costs attracting new customers rather than retaining existing ones.

Mushi (2013) observes the influence of service quality on customer satisfaction in the transport service industry, Dar Express passengers in Tanzania. The methods used in collecting the required information for the study were questionnaires, interviews and observations, and the data were analysed by using descriptive, correlation and regression analyses. As a result, passengers are satisfied with the transport services provided by the Dar Express Bus. The responsiveness, assurance and tangibles dimensions had a significant effect on passenger satisfaction. In other words, these dimensions were found to be good predictors of customer satisfaction.

Temba (2013) assessed customer satisfaction and service quality using the SERVQUAL model within the TTCL. The study evaluates customer satisfaction and service quality by using the SERVQUAL model. Convenience sampling was used to collect data through a questionnaire for TTCL customers. The analysis shows that the overall service quality perceived by customers was not acceptable, meaning that customers' vision exceeded their perceptions. Additionally, the analysis revealed that TTCL customer care, network coverage, voucher availability, handset flexibility and airtime charges are the critical factors that hinder satisfaction. The findings

reveal that the SERVQUAL model is not the best tool to use in measuring service quality for TTCL because the dimensions were negative gaps, whereby the study contributes to the existing studies examining service quality within TTCL using the SERVQUAL model.

*Foya et al.* (2015) evaluate the consequence of technology-based CRM on service quality in the telecommunication industry in Arusha, Tanzania. The study involves theories of technology and customer service relationship management. Data were obtained through a predetermined questionnaire and analysed by descriptive and inferential statistics. Multiple linear regressions were used to test the four hypotheses. The study uses a descriptive survey design of the populations of four telecommunication companies in Tanzania, namely, Airtel, Tigo, Vodacom and Zantel, with their respective distributors and subscribers. As a result, mobile phone companies use technology-based CRM to a good point to support their business activities towards delivering services to customers.

Tulu (2015) conducted a study on service quality and customer satisfaction in a case of Ethiotelecommunications in Ambo town, Ethiopia. Tulu uses a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches to determine the consequences of telecommunication service quality on customer satisfaction. Primary and secondary information is taken from documents and brochures. A sample of the total population was selected through simple random sampling. The research design employed is descriptive and uses charts and frequency tables for output. Therefore, the study revealed that mobile phone users incur many problems, such as network busy, error in connection, rundown network coverage, slow mobile internet service and expensive price of the service.

## 2.6 Research Gap

Several authors try to examine the telecommunications industry in the areas of service excellence, client satisfaction and relationship management. Different researchers use different studies but on the same sector (Negi (2009), Temba (2013), *Foya et al.*, (2015 Tulu (2015)

Mushi (2013), Temba (2013) and *Foya et al.* (2015) of Tanzania as the area of study in different studies. Ojo (2010) Observe the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in Telecommunication industry in Nigeria

## 2.7 A summary of Empirical literature Review

Table 2.1 a summary of Empirical literature review

Author (Year)	Title (Country)	Methodology	Findings
Negi (2009)	User's perceived service value of mobile communications: Experience from Ethiopia	Stratified random sampling and two regression models	The result was below standard by over half of the respondents followed by less than one-third who mentioned it as average and about one-fifth as above average. Expediency was reported to be lowest and network aspect regarded as the highest measurement
Ojo (2010)	The relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in the Telecommunication Industry, Nigeria	Descriptive statistics, regression analysis person moment correlation and product coefficient	The study shows service quality has effects on customer approval which lead to the constructive connection between them.
Mushi (2013)	Service quality and customer satisfaction in Transport service industry in Tanzania	Descriptive, correlation and regression analyses	The finding specify that passengers are pleased with the transport service provided with Dar Express Company ltd. Responsiveness, assurance and

			tangible dimensions proved to have significant effect in passenger satisfaction.
Temba (2013)	The assessment of service quality and customer Satisfaction using SERVQUAL model: Tanzania Telecommunication Company Limited from Tanzania	Convenience sampling	The study exposes that SERVQUAL model is not the most excellent instrument to use in measuring for TTCL because dimensions were unconstructive gap.
Foya et al (2015)	Relating Technology Based CRM to service quality in the Telecommunication industry in Arusha City, Tanzania.	Descriptive, inferential statistics and Multi linear regression	The mobile phone companies use expertise based CRM to a good location so as to support their business activities towards delivering services to customers.
Tulu (2015)	Service quality and customer satisfaction: a case of Ethio-Telecommunications, in Ambo town, Ethiopia	Descriptive, simple random sampling, qualitative and quantitative approaches	The study revealed mobile phone consumer incurs many problems like network busy, error in connection, poor network coverage, slow mobile internet service and expensive price of the service.

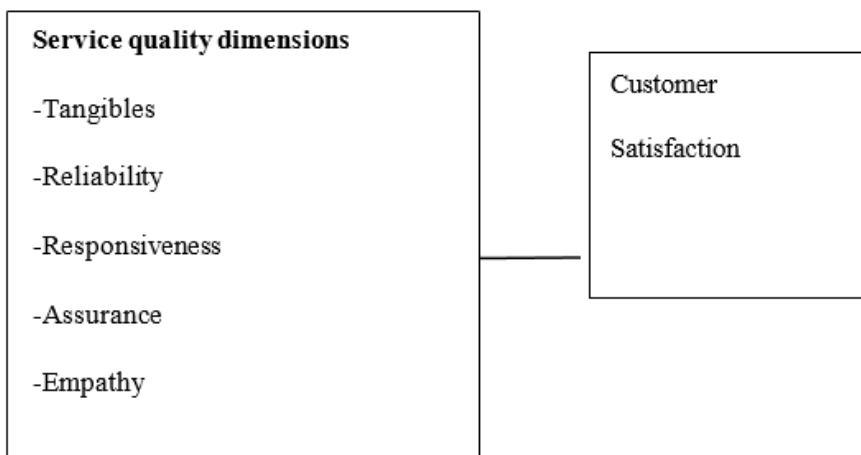
Source: Author (2023)

## 2.8 Conceptual Framework

The study seeks an examination of the Influence of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction of the Telecommunication Companies in Tanzania taking Vodacom as a case study, as presented in figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2 Conceptual Framework

### Independent variable Vs Dependent variable



## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.0 Introduction

This chapter of the research outlines the research design and methodology used in collecting data for this study. The research instruments that were employed by the researcher in collecting data are also clarified in this chapter.

In this chapter the researcher looked at a number of research variables such as research design, population, sample procedure, sample size, instruments used for data collection, personal interviews, presentation and data analysis, summary. It is also the objective of this chapter to make an outline of how the research instruments used were administered. The chapter describes also the research population and how the sample for the study was drawn.

### 3.1 Research Design

A research design provides the framework that defines the data collection and analysis procedures, and it indicates who or what is involved, and where and when will the study take place (Du Plooy, 2007). The choice of a research design reflects decisions about the priority being given to the connections between variables, and the size of the under investigation. The purpose of a research design is to state what is to be achieved by the research and how the results can be used. Oppenhain (1992) defined research design as a basic plan or strategy of the research study and the logic behind it that makes it possible and valid to draw more general conclusions from it. Design refers to the format and theoretical structure under which the study would be carried out, that is how the worthiness and contribution of certain elements are. Walliman and Kumar (2006) agreed by stating that a research design is generally a basic plan of strategy of a research and logic behind it, which then makes it possible and valid to make more general conclusions. Thus, a research design is more like a strategic plan, without it, it would be impossible to carry out the research successfully.

This study used a descriptive and cross-sectional study design. The purpose of descriptive design was to observe, describe, and document aspects of situations naturally as they occur in a given population. A cross-sectional design was conducted in this study to examine what currently exists and is fundamentally characterized by the fact that all data are collected at one particular time.

### 3.2 Research Approach

The research approach is defined as an approach that differentiates the distractive approaches to research for the purpose of understanding (Krishna swami, 2003). In this study, the researcher used a quantitative research approach. The qualitative method research approach seeks to answer questions and involves the collection of evidence. By using qualitative research methodology, researchers want to collect richer information and obtain a more detailed picture of issues, cases or events (Arora & Stoner 2009). This approach was used in the study to help the researcher explore the why and how of a situation, not only what, where and when.

### 3.3 Area of Study

The term research study area describes the geographical, national, or cultural region where the study is going to be conducted or limited (Babbie, 2001). The study was conducted in the city of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Dar es Salaam is a populated city in Tanzania with an average population of 4,364,541 people (2012 census). Dar es Salaam is located at 6°48' 30 south, 39°17' East in Tanzania and covers approximately 1,590.5 sq. km, it is surrounded by the coastal region in the northern, western and southern parts, and east, it is bordered by the Indian Ocean (NBS,

2012). The researcher chooses Dar es Salaam city because the institution's headquarters are in the city and easy access to the large number of users available.

### 3.4 Target Population

Population refers to the total number of people living in a particular demographic area at a certain point in time. Target population is defined by Hammond (2005; 105) as "the total number of individuals, items, or data from which the results of a study are intended to relate and from which those individuals selected to participate in the study are drawn". McDaniel 38 and Gates (1993: 457), define population as the total group of people from whom information is needed. Burns and Grove (1993:779) define a population as all elements (individuals, objects, and events) that meet the sample criteria for inclusion in the study.

Recent statistics show that Vodacom Tanzania has over six million customers and is the largest wireless telecommunications network in Tanzania (Vodacom 2014). The study population of this survey consisted of all customers coming to seek various services at the centre. The study is expected to be conducted in Kinondoni District. Vodacom Limited has a number of customer centres in the district; however, for this specific study, Mlimani City Vodacom was chosen.

### **3.4.1 Inclusion Criteria**

In this particular study inclusion of the participants was based on those who have been using Vodacom services for at least 6 months prior to the day of the survey. In addition to that all of them were residents of Kinondoni district and were above 18 years of age because according to government regulation, any person above 18 years is able to consent without the presence of the guardian.

### **3.4.2 Exclusion Criteria**

Participants who have not been using Vodacom services for at least 6 months prior to the day of the survey were not included in this study. Non residents of Kinondoni district and those who are below 18 years of age were not included in the survey.

## **3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques**

### **3.5.1 Sampling Techniques**

A structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions was prepared to capture demographic, cultural, and historical factors associated with service quality and customer satisfaction. Both closed- and open-ended questions were included to capture all dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction. Furthermore, in some questions, respondents were asked to clarify the reasons behind certain responses.

### **3.5.2 Sample Size**

Sample size refers to the number of objects, things, stuff, and items to be nominated from the population to establish a sample (Cooper & Schindler, 2008). According to the study by Memon (2020) & Morgan (1970) on sample size determination among behavioral and social science researchers. The study by Memon (2020) & Morgan (1970) suggested that a sample of 384 is sufficient for a population of 1,000,000 or more. For this reason, 384 has been regarded as the 'magic' number in research and has consequently been used in hundreds and thousands of articles and theses thus far.

The population of Vodacom was too large. Therefore, it was going to be expensive and time consuming to collect data from each member of such a large population. The sample selected was large enough (250 respondents) to make it possible to use statistical techniques to show the probability that the characteristics of the sample would also be found in the rest of the population. A convenient sample of 250 subjects was selected from the study population. Mouton (1996: 132) defines a sample as a subset of the population, representative number of respondents whose overall viewpoint reflects the viewpoint of the population. There was no explicit criterion used in selecting the 250 subjects that participated in this study, the selection was done randomly and based on approval especially from organisational and individual customers.

These were Vodacom clients or users in Dar es Salaam. Participation in the study was based on the voluntariness and readiness of the respondents.

## **3.6 Data Collection Methods**

A structured questionnaire with closed-ended questions was prepared to capture demographic, cultural, and historical factors associated with service quality and customer satisfaction. Both closed- and open-ended questions were included to capture all dimensions of service quality and customer satisfaction. Furthermore, in some questions, respondents were asked to clarify the reasons behind certain responses.

### 3.7 Variables and Measurement Procedures

#### 3.7.1 Independent Variable

Service Quality was based on modified version of SERVQUAL as proposed by Parasuraman *et al.* (1988) which involve five dimensions of service quality which consist of 20 items, namely reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance and tangibles. Vodacom employees are dependable in handling customer's service problems and timely way (Reliability). Employees provide prompt service to customers (Responsiveness). Employees of Vodacom provide customers' attention in a gentle way (Empathy). Vodacom employees feel confidence in dealing with customers (Assurance). Vodacom have modern equipments and nice buildings (Tangibles).

#### 3.7.2 Dependent Variable

In this study customer satisfaction was measured using 16 questions of which were in a Likert scale format. Scale ranged from 1 to 5 (1 indicating strongly disagree with the proposition, and 5 showing strongly agree with the proposition). The responses were summed up and a total score was obtained for each respondent, the minimum score was 15. Three levels of customer satisfaction were generated from the 15 items, level one was named as "High level of Satisfaction", then moderate level of satisfaction" and the third level was named as "Low level of satisfaction. Factor analysis was used to combine the variables in a meaningful way after computing frequencies for each question.

Table 3.1 Variable and measurement procedures

Variables	Concepts	Dimensions	Indicators	Scale
Service quality	Conceptualized as dimensions of service quality that lead to customer Satisfaction	Reliability	1. Employees providing services as promised.	Ordinal
			2. When customer has a complain, employees show sincere interest in handling problem.	
			3. Vodacom performs the service right the first time. 4They provide their services at the promised time.	
			5. Vodacom keeps their records accurately.	
		Responsive ness	1. Employees keep customers informed about when services will be performed. 2. Employees give prompt service to customers. 3. Employees are willing to help customers. 4. Vodacom employees respond to customers' requests.	Ordinal
		Tangibility	1.Vodacom have modern equipments like computers 2. Physical facilities of Vodacom are visually appealing.	Ordinal

			<p>3. Vodacom employees have neat professional appearance.</p> <p>4. Physical environment of Vodacom is clean.</p>	
		Assurance	<p>1. Vodacom employees instill confidence in customers.</p> <p>2. Customers feel safe in their transactions.</p> <p>3. Employees are polite to customers</p> <p>4. Employees have the knowledge to answer customer questions Vodacom gives customers individual attention.</p>	Ordinal
		Empathy	<p>1. Employees deal with customers in a caring fashion.</p> <p>2. Vodacom has their customers' best interests at heart.</p> <p>3. Vodacom employees understand the specific needs of their customers.</p>	Ordinal
			4. Operating hours of Vodacom is convenient to customers.	
			5. Items Likert scale was used	
Customer Satisfaction	Conformance between the expectations of customers with perceived performance		6. Item Likert scale was used	Ordinal

Source: Author (2023)

### 3.8 Data Analysis and Interpretation Techniques

The analysis data obtained through questionnaires were cleared, coded, and analysed with the assistance of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Data collected through interviews were transcribed, arranged, and interpreted by using thematic content analysis. The use of SPSS and thematic content analysis depended on the nature of the information collected by the two techniques. Structured questions generate mostly quantifiable information, hence making the use of SPSS more appropriate, and the output is presented in the form of frequencies, percentages, tables, and charts. While thematic content analysis is useful where the nature of data is mainly narratives concerning the question 'how' and 'why' (Kothari, 2004).

### 3.9 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to ethical ideology in social sciences research in line with the St. Augustine University of Tanzania guidelines on research. First, the ethical concern about privacy and access to data was strictly observed by assuring respondents about confidentiality and informing them that the research is a scholarly undertaking for academic purposes. Second, respondents were asked to volunteer to provide the information needed. Finally, the study examined the approval of the respondents by telling if there were any risks and actions concerned in the study.

Therefore; the researcher treated all the information collected from participants with confidentiality without disclosing the respondent's identity and was as open minded as possible and expressed opinions as they were given

## PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

### 4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents the study findings, which are organized according to the study objectives. Thus, the chapter consists of sections, namely: demographic characteristics of the study population; customer's response on quality service provided by Vodacom Tanzania; factors which affect customer satisfaction; level of customer satisfaction on service provided and the relationship between customer satisfaction and service quality dimensions. It is worth noting that the sample size of the study was 250 participants; however, only 68% (170) completed the survey, and this information was used during the analysis. The remaining 32% (80) of respondents terminated the interview midway. The information from these respondents was incomplete and was thus excluded from the analysis.

### 4.2 Demographic Characteristics of the Study Population

Table 4.1 presents the characteristics of the surveyed respondents. Regarding marital status, approximately 58 (34.1%) of the respondents were married, 70 (41.2%) reported being single, 15(8.8%) reported being widowed, and the remaining 18(10.6%) and 9(5.3%) reported having been divorced and separated, respectively.

Of the 170 study respondents, 33 (19.4%) completed primary education, 10 (5.9%) had not attended school, 47 (27.6%) reported having secondary education, 60 (35.3%) were holders of first degree, and the remaining 20 (11.8%) reported having postgraduate education.

In terms of respondents' age, the results show that 37 (21.8%) reported an age below 30 years, 94 (55.3%) were between 31 and 40 years of age, 24 (14.1%) were between 41 and 50 years of age and the remaining 15 (8.8%) were above 50 years of age.

Of the surveyed participants, 63 (37.1%) were formally employed, 57 (33.5%) had not been employed, and the remaining 50 (29.4%) were students.

Marital Status	Frequency	Percent
Married	58	34.1
Single	70	41.2
Widow	15	8.8
Divorced	18	10.6
Separated	9	5.3
Age		
Less than 30 years	37	21.8
Between 31 – 40	94	55.3
Between 41-50	24	14.1
More than 50 years	15	8.8



Gender		
Male	95	55.9
Female	75	44.1
Education	35%	
Employed	63	37.1
Not employed	57	33.5
Student	50	29.4

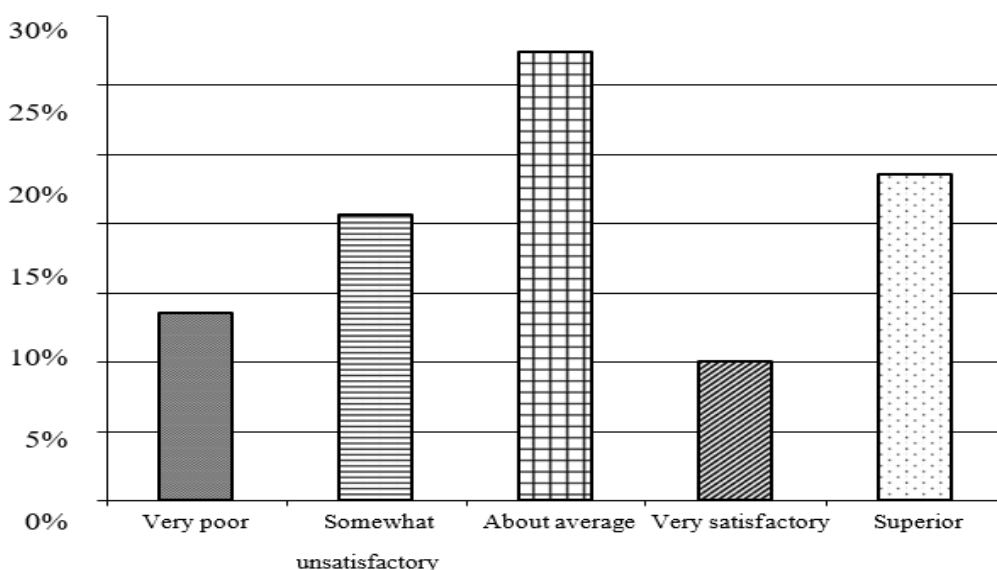
Table 4.1 Demographic Information

No	33	19.4
Completed Primary	10	5.9
Secondary Education	47	27.6
First Degree	60	35.3
Postgraduate	20	11.8
Employment		

### 4.3 Customer’s response on quality service provided by Vodacom Tanzania

Participants were asked to rate the quality of services provided by Vodacom Tanzania, as presented in Figure 4.2 below. Of the surveyed respondents, 23 (13.5%) rated the quality as very poor, 35 (20.6%) rated it as somewhat unsatisfactory, 55 (32.4%) rated the quality as average, 17 (10%) rated it as very satisfactory and the remaining 40 (23.5%) rated it as excellent.

Figure 4.1: Rating quality of services provided by Vodacom



### Participants’ daily use of services

The survey tool included a question on the daily use of Vodacom services by the study participants. There were four categories, of which approximately 25 (14.7%) used such services for more than two hours, 58 (34.1%) used them for more than 5 hours, 55 (32.4%) used them for more than 10 hours, and the remaining 32 (18.8%) used services for the whole day.

Table 4.3: Use of Vodacom services in a day

Response	Frequency	Percent
More than 2 hours	25	14.7
More than 5 hours	58	34.1
More than 10 hours	55	32.4
Whole day	32	18.8
Total	170	100

Table 4.4 presents the participant's rating of some of the services provided by the company. Approximately 44.1% of the respondents rated internet services as excellent, while 39.4% rated it as very good. Furthermore, the findings revealed that the majority (45.3%) of the participants rated the quality of the mobile call as very good, and approximately 31.2% rated the quality of the call as excellent. Another service that was rated was the mobile financial transfer; the results show that 26.5% rated it as excellent and approximately 24.7% rated it as very good. In terms of mobile content service, the findings indicated that 20.6% rated it as poor and approximately 14.7% rated mobile content services as satisfactory.

Table 4.4 Rating service provided by the company

Type of service	Score in Percentage (n = 170)			
	Excellent	Very good	Satisfactory	Poor
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
The Mobile Internet	75(44.1)	67(39.4)	20(11.8)	8(4.7)
Mobile call	53(31.2)	77(45.3)	35(20.6)	5(2.9)
Mobile financial transfer	45(26.5)	42(24.7)	58(34.1)	25(14.7)
Mobile content services	50(29.4)	60(35.3)	25(14.7)	35(20.6)

#### 4.4 Level of customer satisfaction

Table 4.5 presents the participants' level of satisfaction with various services offered by the Vodacom Company. There were five elements that were used to assess participants' satisfaction with services. The first was the company provision of service as promised, and the findings show that few (16.5%) participants strongly disagreed that the company provides services as promised. The majority, 29.4%, agreed that the company provides services as promised. The second element was keeping customers informed about when services were being performed; the findings show that approximately 33.5% agree that they are informed of the services, while 8.8% disagree, implying that they are not informed when the services are performed. The third element was readiness to respond to customers' requests, whereas approximately 31.2% agreed that the response to customer requests was good, while approximately 29.4% strongly agreed that the company was ready to respond to

customer requests. The use of modern equipment was examined, and the findings show that 37.6% of the respondents agree that the company used modern equipment, while only 26.5% strongly disagreed. The last element was convenient business hours, whereas the findings show that the majority (39.4%) agreed that the services are provided on convenient hours and that approximately 3.5% disagreed (Table 4.5).

Table 4.5 Level of satisfaction

S/N	Statement	Score in Percentage (n = 170)				
		Strongly satisfied	Satisfied	Uncertain	Dissatisfied	Strongly Dissatisfied
1	Providing service as promised	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
		50(29.4)	45(26.5)	17(10.0)	30(17.6)	28(16.5)
2	Keeping customers informed about when services was be performed	57(33.5)	70(41.2)	20(11.8)	15(8.8)	8(4.7)
3	Readiness to respond to customers request	50(29.4)	53(31.2)	25(14.7)	28(16.5)	20(11.8)
4	Modern equipment	30(17.6)	64(37.6)	4(2.4)	27(15.8)	45(26.5)
5	Convenient business hours	68(40.0)	67(39.4)	18(10.5)	6(3.5)	11(6.5)

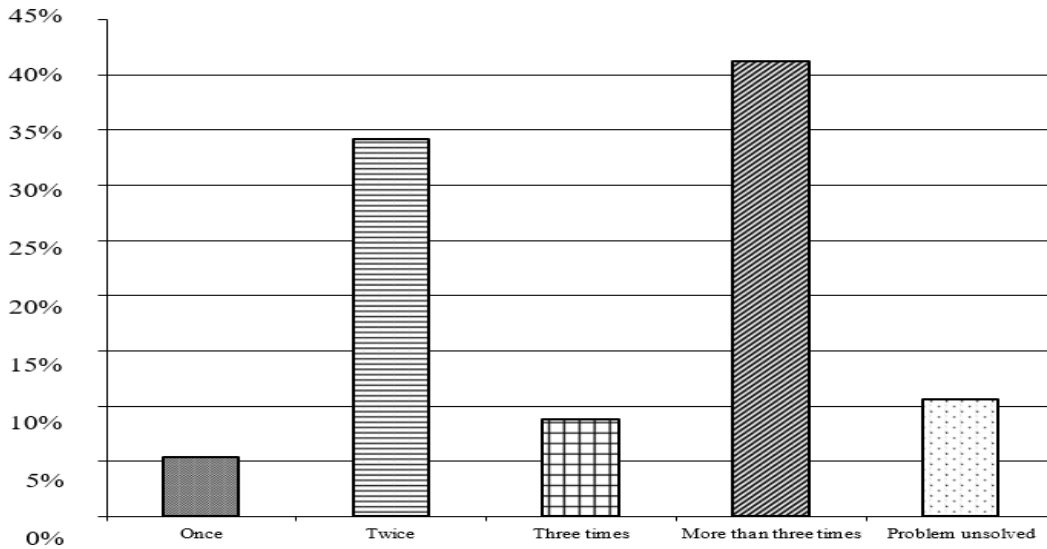
Table 4.6 below presents the findings on various questions that were used to assess the overall quality of services. The findings show that 23 (13.5%) said the company has staff who are welcoming, 35 (20.6%) said the service time is convenient, 55 (32.4%) said the company renders services accurately, 17 (10%) mentioned the costs of services, and the remaining 40 (23.5%) mentioned that the provision of various products affects the quality (Table 4.6).

Table 4.6 Overall quality

Response	Frequency	Percent
Welcoming staff	23	13.5
Service time	35	20.6
Accurate service	55	32.4
Service cost	17	10
Provision of various products	40	23.5
Total	170	100.0

Participants were asked about the number of times they contacted customer services before the problem was resolved, as presented in Figure 4.7 below. The findings show that the majority (58, 34.1%) contacted the call centre twice before the problem was resolved, 15 (8.8%) contacted three times, 70 (41.2%) contacted more than three times, and the remaining 18 (10.6%) said their problem had not been resolved.

Figure 4.2 Number of times had to contact customer



#### 4.5 Factors that Affect Customer Satisfaction

Table 4.7 presents the participants' ratings of various elements of service provision by the company. The results on rating the dependability of staff in handling customer service problems show that 47 (27.6%) strongly agreed and very few 10 (5.9%) of the participants strongly disagreed. The results for network problems facing the company show that 7 (4.1%) of the participants agreed, approximately 40 (23.5%) were uncertain and the remaining 75 (44.1%) disagreed. Business location does affect access to services, and the results showed that the majority of the participants (5.9%) agreed that location does affect service provision, while 47 (27.6%) were neutral and approximately 20 (11.8%) strongly disagreed. The findings revealed that approximately 23 (13.5%) of the participants strongly agreed that some employees were not willing to support customers, 35 (20.6%) agreed and approximately 55 (32.4%) of the participants were uncertain (Table 4.8). The results on the costs of service provision showed that 70 (41.2%) of the participants agreed that the cost of service provision affects customer satisfaction, 20 (11.8%) disagreed and the remaining 8 (4.7%) strongly disagreed.

Table 4.7 Factors affecting customer satisfaction

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1 Dependability in handling customer's service problems	47(27.6)	73(42.9)	25(14.7)	15(8.8)	10(5.9)
2 Network problem	30(17.6)	7(4.1)	40(23.5)	75(44.1)	18(10.6)
3 Business location	33(19.4)	10(5.9)	47(27.6)	60(35.3)	20(11.8)
4 Some employees are not willing to support customers	23(13.5)	35(20.6)	55(32.4)	17(10.0)	40(23.5)
5 Costs of transactions	57(33.5)	70 (41.2)	15(8.8)	20(11.8)	8(4.7)

#### 4.6 Level of Customer Satisfaction with the Service Provided

Level of customer satisfaction with service

Study participants were asked how long they had been using Vodacom services. The findings showed that only 5 (2.9%) participants had been using for less than one month, the majority (65,38.2%) had been using for 1 – 6

months, approximately 57 (33.5%) had been using for 6 months – 1 year, and the remaining had been using for more than 1 year (Table 4.9).

Table 4.8 How long have you been using Vodacom services

Frequency of time	Frequency	Percent (%)
Less than one month	64	17.1
1 - 6 months	141	37.6
6 months - 1 year	91	24.3
1 year to 3 years	61	16.3
Over three years	18	4.8
Total	375	100.0

On measuring overall satisfaction with service provision, we found that 5 (2.9%) of the participants were dissatisfied, 10 (5.9%) were somehow dissatisfied, the majority 85, (50.0%) were satisfied and approximately 70 (41.2%) were very satisfied with Vodacom service provision (Figure 4.3).

Table 4.9 presents the participants’ feelings about service provision by Vodacom Tanzania. The findings show that 88 (51.8%) said they feel very good about the quality of the services, 69 (40.6%) feel good and approximately 13 (7.6%) feel very bad about the quality of the services.

In terms of the prices of the various products, we found that 70 (41.2%) felt very good, while 85(50%) felt good. The results on trust showed that 65 (38.2%) of the participants felt very good, 78 (45.9%) felt good, and 27 (15.9%) felt very bad. Findings on various packages offered by Vodacom showed that 60 (35.3%) felt very good, and the majority 70, (23.5%) felt good (Table 5.1).

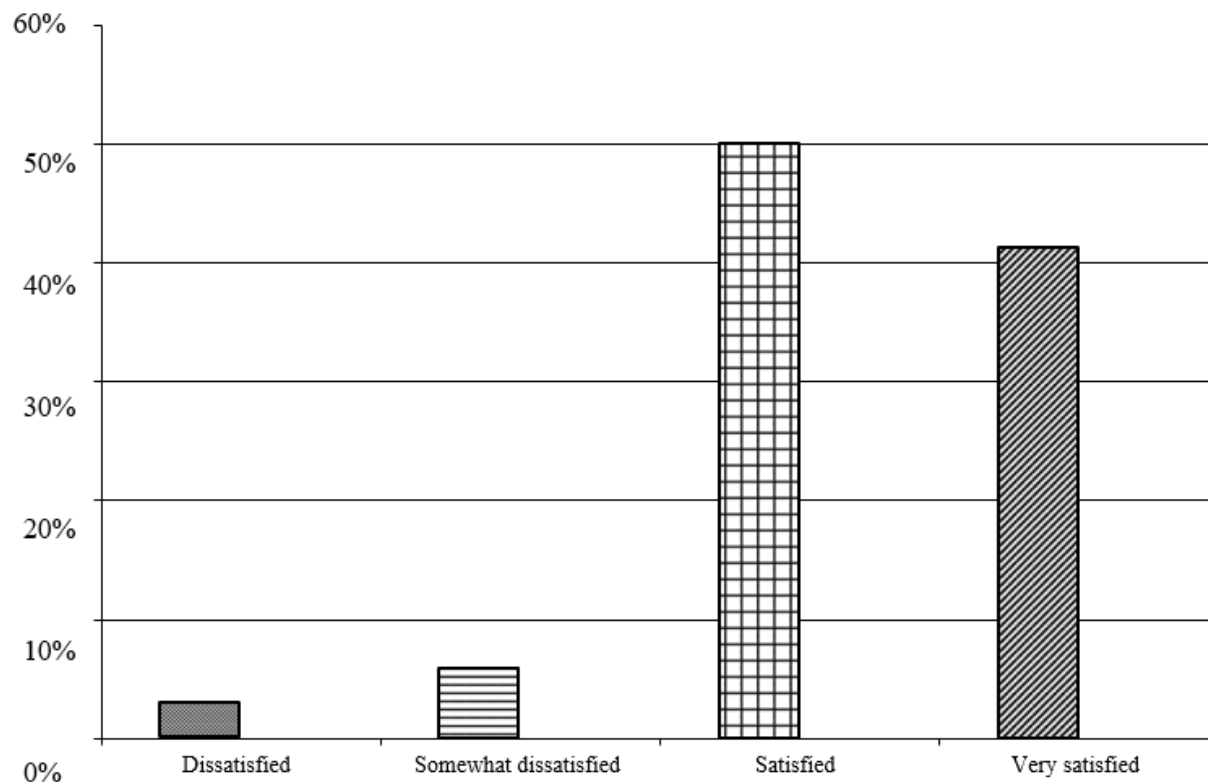


Table 4.9 Rating how participants feel about these services

	Very Good	Good	Very bad
	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
1 Feeling about quality	88 (51.8)	69(40.6)	13(7.6)
2 Feeling about price	70(41.2)	85 (50.0)	15(8.8)
3 Feeling about trust worth	65(38.2)	78(45.9)	27(15.9)
4 Feeling about packages	60(35.3)	70 (14.3)	40(23.5)

Customer knowledge on service provided by Vodacom Tanzania was assessed using a number of questions. The first was on maintaining error-free records, and the findings showed that 60 (35.2%) of the participants strongly agreed that the company maintains error-free records, and approximately 18 (10.6%) strongly disagreed. Furthermore, 70 (41.2%) strongly agreed that companies have employees who have a neat, professional appearance, 60 (35.3%) agreed and very few 6, (3.5%) strongly disagreed. The study findings showed that the majority 48, (28.2%) of the participants agreed that the company has employees who understand the needs of their customers, 35 (20.6%) were uncertain, and 40 (23.5%) and 2 (1.2%) disagreed and strongly disagreed, respectively. Customers were asked to rate whether they felt safe in their transactions, and the results showed that 23 (13.5%) strongly agreed, 85 (50%) agreed, 44 (24.8%) were uncertain, 5 (2.9%) disagreed and the remaining 13 (7.6%) strongly disagreed that customers felt safe in their transactions. Finally, we assessed how participants view companies as having employees who have the knowledge to answer customer questions. Approximately 75 (44.1%) strongly agreed that the company’s staff are knowledgeable in answering customer questions, 15(8.8%) were uncertain, and approximately 8 (4.7%) strongly disagreed.

Table 5.0 Customer’s knowledge on service provided by Vodacom Tanzania

S/N	Statement	Score in Percentage (n = 170)				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
		N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)	N (%)
1	Maintaining error-free records	60(35.2)	$\frac{48(28.2)}{60(35.3)}$	$\frac{34(20.0)}{14(8.2)}$	$\frac{10(5.9)}{20(11.8)}$	18(10.6)
	Company have employee who have a neat, professional appearance	70(41.2)				6(3.5)
	Company have employee who understand the needs of their customers	45(26.5)	48(28.2)	35(20.6)	40(23.5)	2(1.2)
	Does make customers feel safe in their transactions	23(13.5)	85(50.0)	44(25.9)	5(2.9)	13(7.6)
	Employees who have the	75(44.1)	68 (40)	15(8.8)	4(2.4)	8(4.7)

	knowledge to answer customer questions					
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#### 4.7 Discussion of the Findings

This discussion of findings was done based on specific objectives as follows: -

##### 4.7.1 Customers response on quality service provided by Vodacom Tanzania

The aim was to assess customers’ perceptions of the quality of services provided by the company in the study area. The majority were able to rate the quality of the services provided by Vodacom Tanzania as satisfactory. We found that the daily use of the services was higher and that the quality of the services was satisfactory. In terms of the levels of satisfaction, the results showed a higher response on the acceptability of the quality of service provided, customers were informed of the existing situations and any change in the system was communicated to the customer. Service quality was assessed based on the time it takes to answer customer call findings, which shows that it takes 3-5 minutes. Customers usually expect their calls to be answered immediately; however, if it does not happen immediately, they become disappointed. Parasuraman *et al.* (1988) pointed out that service quality is affected by the difference between expectations and what the customer receives. A different judgmental view of the nature of the services provided does affect the pleasure an individual receives from the service (Oliver, 1980). Moreover, individual satisfaction is associated with levels, transaction-specific satisfaction and cumulative satisfaction; hence, provision of the service has to take into consideration customers. Regular assessment of customer needs is important in ensuring decomposition of the various attributes of the quality of care (Cronin and Taylor 1992).

Theoretically, we recognize the importance of assimilation theory in this analysis. Our findings suggest that consumers make a sort of cognitive comparison between the expectations regarding

Vodacom services compared to other services, and the existence of a higher desire for other services affects the users of the services as well as customer satisfaction (Anderson, 1973). We observed that Vodacom Consumers’ ratings of the service can reduce the tension resulting from a discrepancy between expectations and product/service performance either by distorting expectations so that they coincide with perceived product performance or by raising the level of satisfaction by minimizing the relative importance of the disconfirmation experienced (Olson and Dover 1979). Some researchers have discovered that the control of actual product performance can lead to a positive relationship between expectations and satisfaction. Consequently, it is assumed that dissatisfaction could never appear unless the evaluation process began with the customers’ negative expectations.

##### 4.7.2 Factors that affect customer satisfaction with Vodacom service

A number of factors in this study were found to affect customer satisfaction with Vodacom services. The results have shown that responsiveness, assurance, tangible and empathy significantly affect customer satisfaction with service provision. The findings are similar to Negi (2009), who found a causal relationship between service quality dimensions, overall service quality and customer satisfaction among subscribers of mobile services in Ethiopia. A study conducted in Nigeria to investigate the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in telecommunication found a positive relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction (Ojo, 2010).

A recent study conducted in Malasia using the SERVQUAL model to examine the impact of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction showed that all service quality dimensions positively influenced customer satisfaction in terms of loyalty and attitudes (Arokiasamy and Abdullah, 2013). In addition, the test results showed that there was a significant gap between the perceived satisfaction and expectation (P-E) on all of the service quality dimensions. This is similar to the findings in our study, which have shown that all the dimensions of service quality influence customer satisfaction.

A number of factors are associated with customer satisfaction, including coverage, call quality, promotions and

offerings of incentives and rewards, prices of service, billing, customer, and bundled services (J.D. Power and Associates Survey 2009). In addition, satisfaction is also influenced by additional features and services from mobile operators. In Turkey, a study was undertaken to determine the National Customer Satisfaction Index of mobile phone users based on a sample of 1950 mobile phone subscribers. The dimensions that emerged in customer satisfaction included meeting customers' prepurchase expectations, perceived quality (coverage, responsiveness to customer complaints, value-added services, promotional activities and their fulfilment), and complaint handling (Ozer and Aydin, 2005). Consumer surveys (Cap, 2003) found that network quality based on data services and voice services strongly influences customer satisfaction and loyalty with regard to the use of mobile phones.

A recent study conducted on 460 regular users of mobile services Wael (2015) in Syria showed a direct significant impact of service quality on customer satisfaction; this effect appeared through three dimensions (network quality, responsiveness, reliability), and there was no direct effect of other dimensions on customer satisfaction. In our case, we had defined only five service quality dimensions of which we found they had influence on customer satisfaction.

#### **4.7.3 Level of customer satisfaction with service provided by Vodacom Tanzania**

To ensure that the customer satisfaction level is high, organizations must first know the expectations of customers and how they can meet such expectations. It has been discovered that the cost of attracting new customers far exceeds the cost involved in retaining existing ones. Similar to Mohammed (2012), who conducted a study on the importance and consequences of satisfaction in the competitive telecom industry in Bahrain, the findings showed that offers, rents and charges were the most significant in determining the level of satisfaction, retention, and likelihood of switching from one mobile provider to another. Conversely, intercommunication factors (such as customer service, friendly employees, and user-friendly websites) were found to affect the level of customer satisfaction (Mohammed, 2012). A significant positive relationship was found between the level of customer satisfaction and retention, while a poor association was noticed between satisfaction/retention and loyalty.

In Thailand, the level of customer satisfaction has been influenced by promotional value, and the quality of customer service at shops and corporate image play the most important roles in determining customer satisfaction (Leelakulthanit and Hongcharn 2011). Similarly, Alom, Khan, and Uddinl (2010) interviewed 60 university students in Bangladesh and found that brand image and perceived call rate influence consumers' level of satisfaction and selection decision of a mobile service provider in Bangladesh. In Saudi Arabia, customers were more satisfied with the quality of service, network coverage, quality of SMS, mobile internet, customer service, and promotion schemes of Saudi Telecom services (STC) compared to other telecom companies in Saudi Arabia (Sharma, 2014). Muhammad (2011) argues that the level of customer satisfaction depends on managers' desire and maintains the required services and service quality.

Both direct and indirect factors affect the level of customer satisfaction with telecommunication services. Mohammed (2012) argues that service quality and fair prices have indirect influences on the level of customer satisfaction with mobile phone operators through perceived value.

Perceived value has a mediating role between quality, charge fairness and satisfaction. Fair price has a positive direct impact on customer satisfaction. Mobile phone operators are recommended to formulate operations and marketing strategies that focus on the expectations of customers to enhance the level of satisfaction (Mohammed 2012). Similar industries may reveal similar relationship features with respect to these relationship constructs if they are under similar categories.

The level of customer satisfaction does vary depending on other options the customer may have and other products against which the customer can compare the organization's product.

Customers' level of satisfaction has now become a major concern of mobile service providers in our country (Hossain, Hossain and Siddikee, 2012).



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## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

### 5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the findings, recommendations and conclusions. It comprises conclusions on the findings in relation to the study objectives, recommendations based on the findings and suggestions for further studies based on the scope of the current study.

### 5.1 Summary of the Findings

The findings presented in the summary are from a survey conducted on the quality of services provided by Vodacom Tanzania. The survey included participants who rated the quality of services on a scale ranging from very poor to excellent.

According to the findings, 13.5% of the respondents rated the quality as very poor, 20.6% rated it as somewhat unsatisfactory, 32.4% rated it as average, 10% rated it as very satisfactory, and 23.5% rated it as super.

In terms of daily use of Vodacom services, the survey found that 14.7% of the participants use the services for more than two hours, 34.1% use for more than five hours, 32.4% use for more than 10 hours, and 18.8% use the services throughout the day.

The survey also assessed the participants' ratings of specific services provided by Vodacom. The findings showed that 44.1% of the respondents rated the internet services as excellent, and 39.4% rated it as very good. The quality of mobile calls was rated as very good by 45.3% of the participants and as excellent by 31.2%. Mobile financial transfer was rated as excellent by 26.5% and as very good by 24.7%. Mobile content services had a rating of poor by 20.6% and satisfactory by 14.7% of the participants.

The level of customer satisfaction was measured by assessing various aspects of service provision. The findings showed that participants had different levels of satisfaction with different elements. For example, 29.4% of the participants agreed that the company provides services as promised, 33.5% agreed that they are kept informed about when services were being performed, 31.2% agreed that the company is ready to respond to customer requests, 37.6% agreed that the company uses modern equipment, and 40% agreed that the services are provided on convenient business hours.

Factors that affect customer satisfaction were also identified in the survey. The findings showed that participants had varying opinions on these factors. For example, 27.6% strongly agreed that the staff were dependable in handling customer service problems, while 5.9% strongly disagreed. Regarding network problems, 4.1% agreed, 23.5% were uncertain, and 44.1% disagreed. Participants also had varying opinions on the impact of business location, willingness of employees to support customers, and cost of services on customer satisfaction.

The survey also assessed the length of time participants have been using Vodacom services. The findings showed that 38.2% had been using the services for 1-6 months, 33.5% for 6 months to 1 year, and the remaining participants for varying periods of time.

Overall, the findings showed that 50% of the participants were satisfied and 41.2% were very satisfied with Vodacom's service provision. Participants also had positive feelings about the quality of services, prices, trustworthiness, and packages offered by Vodacom.

The survey also evaluated participants' knowledge of the services provided by Vodacom. The findings showed that the majority of participants believed that the company maintains error-free records, has employees with a neat and professional appearance, and understands the needs of customers. Participants also felt safe in their transactions and believed that the employees had the knowledge to answer customer questions.

In summary, the survey findings provide insights into customer ratings, satisfaction levels, factors affecting customer satisfaction, and customer knowledge on the service provided by Vodacom Tanzania.

## 5.2 Summary of Objectives

The objective findings in this section focused on customer response and satisfaction with the quality of service provided by Vodacom Tanzania. The majority of customers rated the quality of the services as satisfactory. The study found that daily usage of the services was high, and customers were generally informed of any changes in the system. However, there was dissatisfaction with the time it took to answer customer calls, as customers expected immediate response.

Factors that were found to affect customer satisfaction with Vodacom services included responsiveness, assurance, tangibility, and empathy. Other studies conducted in Ethiopia, Nigeria, Malaysia, and Turkey also found a positive relationship between service quality dimensions and customer satisfaction.

The level of customer satisfaction with Vodacom Tanzania's services was found to be influenced by factors such as cost, offers, rents, charges, intercommunication factors, promotional value, quality of customer service, and corporate image. Higher levels of customer satisfaction were associated with higher customer retention rates.

Overall, the findings highlight the importance of understanding customer expectations and meeting them in order to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction. Mobile service providers need to focus on factors such as service quality, fair prices, and perceived value to enhance customer satisfaction and retention.

## 5.3 Conclusions

Based on the findings, the following conclusions can be drawn regarding the customer's response to the quality service provided by Vodacom Tanzania:

- **Rating of service quality:** A significant number of respondents rated the quality of services provided by Vodacom Tanzania as average. A smaller percentage rated it as very poor, somewhat unsatisfactory, very satisfactory, and super. This indicates that there is room for improvement in delivering quality services to meet customer expectations.
- **Customer's daily use of services:** The survey results reveal that participants have varying usage patterns of Vodacom services. The majority use the services for more than 5 hours, followed by more than 10 hours. This suggests that Vodacom's services are being widely utilized, indicating a positive level of customer engagement.
- **Rating of specific services provided:** Internet services were predominantly rated as excellent and very good, highlighting customer satisfaction in this area. Mobile call quality also received positive ratings, with a significant percentage rating it as very good. However, mobile content services were rated as poor by a portion of respondents, indicating a potential area for improvement.
- **Level of customer satisfaction:** The findings show that participants generally had a positive level of satisfaction with the services provided by Vodacom Tanzania. The majority agreed that the company provides services as promised, keeps customers informed about service performance and is ready to respond to customer requests. The use of modern equipment and convenient business hours was also well received.
- **Factors affecting customer satisfaction:** The study identified several factors that affect customer satisfaction. These include the dependability of staff in handling customer service problems, network problems faced by the company, business location, employees' willingness to support customers, and the cost of service provision. Addressing these factors could lead to a higher level of customer satisfaction.
- **Overall customer satisfaction:** When asked about their overall satisfaction with Vodacom's service provision, the majority of participants expressed satisfaction, with a notable percentage indicating that they were very satisfied. This indicates that Vodacom is generally meeting or exceeding customer expectations.
- **Customer knowledge of the service provided:** The findings suggest that participants have a generally

positive perception of Vodacom's employees and their knowledge and ability to handle customer queries and transactions. Maintaining error-free records, employee appearance, understanding customer needs, and ensuring transaction safety were areas that received positive ratings.

In conclusion, while there were areas for improvement identified in the survey findings, overall, the majority of customers expressed a positive level of satisfaction with the quality services provided by Vodacom Tanzania. Adapting and addressing the factors affecting customer satisfaction can further enhance the overall customer experience.

## 5.4 Recommendations

### 5.4.1 Recommendations to Vodacom Company

There are several recommendations that can be made to Vodacom Tanzania to improve the quality of their services and enhance customer satisfaction:

- **Improve service quality:** With a significant number of customers rating the quality of services as average or below average, Vodacom Tanzania should prioritize enhancing the quality of their services. This can be achieved through regular training and development programs for employees to improve their customer service skills and ensure consistent service delivery.
- **Address mobile content services:** The findings indicate that a portion of customers rated mobile content services as poor or unsatisfactory. Vodacom Tanzania should focus on evaluating and improving its mobile content offerings to meet customer expectations and enhance satisfaction in this area.
- **Enhance communication and information provision:** Customers expressed a need for improved communication and being kept informed about when services were being performed. Vodacom Tanzania should invest in effective communication channels and regularly update customers on service delivery timelines and any potential disruptions or changes.
- **Address customer issues promptly:** The number of times customers need to contact customer services before their problems are resolved can be reduced. Vodacom Tanzania should strive to resolve customer issues in a timely manner, ensuring efficient and effective customer support.
- **Invest in modern equipment:** The findings indicate that customers have varying opinions on the company's use of modern equipment. By investing in modern technologies and equipment, Vodacom Tanzania can improve service efficiency and enhance the overall customer experience.
- **Consider pricing and cost of services:** The cost of service provision was mentioned as a factor affecting customer satisfaction. Vodacom Tanzania should periodically evaluate their pricing strategies to ensure they are competitive and offer value for money.
- **Focus on employee professionalism and knowledge:** Customers expressed the importance of employees having a neat, professional appearance and being knowledgeable in answering customer questions. Vodacom Tanzania should emphasize the importance of professionalism and invest in employee training and development to enhance knowledge and expertise.
- **Address network problems:** A significant number of customers disagreed that network problems are adequately addressed. Vodacom Tanzania should prioritize addressing network issues promptly and proactively to ensure a smooth and uninterrupted customer experience.
- **Assess business location:** Some customers believe that business location affects service provision. Vodacom Tanzania should evaluate the accessibility and convenience of their service locations, considering customer feedback and making necessary improvements if needed.

- Continuously monitor customer satisfaction: Vodacom Tanzania should regularly gather customer feedback through surveys and other feedback mechanisms to stay updated on customer satisfaction levels and identify areas for improvement. This continuous monitoring enabled the company to adapt and respond to changing customer needs and expectations.

#### 5.4.2 Recommendations to future researchers

Based on the findings regarding customer responses to the quality service provided by Vodacom Tanzania, the following are some recommendations for future researchers:

- **Conduct a qualitative analysis:** While the survey provides quantitative data, it would be valuable to conduct in-depth interviews or focus groups to gather more nuanced insights into the customer's experiences and perceptions of the service provided by Vodacom Tanzania.
- **Explore factors contributing to low ratings:** Further investigation is needed to understand the reasons behind the low ratings for quality service. This could involve exploring specific aspects of service delivery, such as responsiveness, reliability, and customer support, to identify areas for improvement.
- **Assess customer expectations:** Consider conducting research to understand customers' expectations of Vodacom Tanzania's services. By comparing these expectations with the actual service provided, researchers can identify gaps and develop strategies to meet customer expectations more effectively.
- **Investigate the correlation between service usage and customer satisfaction:** Analyse the relationship between the amount of time customers spend using Vodacom Tanzania services and their satisfaction levels. This could provide insights into whether service quality corresponds with customer usage patterns and identify potential areas for improvement.
- **Examine the impact of service offerings:** Investigate the impact of different service offerings, such as mobile internet, mobile calls, mobile financial transfers, and mobile content services, on customer satisfaction. This analysis can help identify areas where improvements or adjustments are needed to enhance customer satisfaction.
- **Explore different factors affecting customer satisfaction:** Consider conducting research to explore additional factors affecting customer satisfaction, such as staff dependability, network reliability, business location, employee supportiveness, and service costs. Understanding these factors in more detail can inform strategies to improve customer satisfaction.
- **Assess the effectiveness of customer support:** Evaluate the number of times customers need to contact customer services before their problems are resolved. This assessment can provide insights into the efficiency and effectiveness of Vodacom Tanzania's customer support services.
- **Investigate the impact of employee knowledge on customer satisfaction:** Analyse the correlation between employees' knowledge and their ability to answer customer questions with customer satisfaction levels. This analysis can highlight the importance of employee training and knowledge enhancement in improving overall service quality.

These recommendations can help future researchers gain a deeper understanding of customer perceptions and experiences regarding the quality service provided by Vodacom Tanzania. By addressing these areas of improvement, Vodacom Tanzania can enhance customer satisfaction and improve their service delivery.

**A Research Report Submitted to the Faculty of Business and Economics in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of Master's Degree of Business Administration at St. Augustine University of Tanzania 2023**

## CERTIFICATION

I, undersigned satisfy that, I have read and hereby recommend for acceptance of the research report entitled “**The Influence of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction of the Telecommunication Companies in Tanzania: A case study of Vodacom Tanzania.**” as a partial fulfilment of the award of Master in Business Administration.

.....  
Dr. Silverius. C. Komba

(Supervisor 1)

Date.....

.....  
Dr. Crispin Mbogo

(Supervisor 2)

Date.....

## DECLARATION AND COPYRIGHT

I, **OKINDA, Mauree. M.** declare that this research report is my own original study and that it has not been presented to any other higher learning institution for similar or any other academic purpose.

Signature.....

Date.....

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this research report to my loving Father Mr. Morris Okinda and my caring and supportive brothers William Morris and Raymond Morris for their understanding and encouragement. Their assistance and words of advice have led to the accomplishment of this work.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I express my gratitude to Almighty God for His unwavering provision, remarkable miracles, and eternal affection that have accompanied me throughout my academic journey.

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to my supervisors, Dr. Silverius. C. Komba and Dr. Crispin Mbogo, for their diligent endeavors in ensuring the smooth completion of my research report.

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## APPENDIX 1 :

### Questionnaire

Dear respondent,

My name is **Mauree Morris Okinda**, a postgraduate student at ST. AUGUSTINE UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA (DAR CENTER). In partial fulfilment of the requirements for a degree Masters of Business Administration. I am undertaking research on "***Relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in telecommunication industry in Tanzania: A case study of Vodacom Tanzania***". I wish to emphasize that the research is purely academic and that all the information given and views expressed shall be treated as confidential. It is hoped that the findings will be useful for both academicians and the public as a whole. I would appreciate if you spend some time answering the questions as needed.

### Section A: Demographic Information

Kindly mark (√) in the adjacent to your correct option.

Marital status: a) Married b) Single c) Widowed d) Divorced e) Separated

Age: a) Less than 30 yrs b) Between 31 and 40 yrs c) Between 41 and 50 yrs d) More than 50 yrs

Gender: a) Female b) Male Level of Education:

No Schooling	Primary Education	Secondary Education	First Degree	Postgraduate and above
1	2	3	4	5

Employment status: a) employed b) No employment c) Student d) Retire e) Others

**Section B: Customer Responses**

Please show the correct answer with the statement as indicated below.

1. Kindly rate the quality of service you received from Vodacom.

- a) Very poor
- b) Somewhat unsatisfactory
- c) About average
- d) Very satisfactory
- e) Superior

2. How frequently do you use Vodacom services in a day?

- a) More than 2 hours
- b) More than 5 hours
- c) More than 10 hours
- d) The whole day

3. How long have you been using Vodacom Services?

Months \_\_\_\_\_

Years \_\_\_\_\_

4. How do you rate each of the services below?

	Excellent=1	Very good=2	Satisfactory=3	Poor=4
The Mobile Internet				
Mobile call				
Mobile financial transfer				
Mobile Instant Messaging Services				



Premium Rate Mobile Content Services (such as ringtones, logos, video clips, games)				
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5. Kindly indicate how satisfied you are by each of the following criteria by using a scale of 1-5 from strongly disagree to strongly agree

Variable	Strongly disagree.....1 Disagree.....2 Uncertain.....3 Agree.....4 Strongly agree.....5
a. Providing service as promised	
b. Keeping customers informed about when services was be performed	
c. Readiness to respond to customers request	
d. Modern equipment	
e. Convenient business hours	

**Section C: Factors Affecting Customer Satisfaction.**

6. The required information was easily accessible on the internet to solve your problem. a) Strongly agree

b) Agree

c) Neutral

d) Disagree

e) Strong disagree

7. About how long did it take for your query to be answered

a) I was taken care of immediately

b) Within 3 minutes

c) Within 3-5 minutes

d) Within 5-10 minutes

e) More than 10 minutes

8. What does quality service mean to you?

a) Welcoming staff

- b) Service time
- c) Accurate service
- d) Service cost
- e) Provision of products

9. How many times did you have to contact customer services before the problem was resolved? a) Once

- b) Twice
- c) Three times
- d) More than three times
- e) The problem is still being resolved.

10. The table below shows the criteria related to factors affecting customer satisfaction with the service provided by Vodacom. Please indicate how satisfied you are by each of the following criteria using a 5-point Likert scale of 1-5 (from strongly disagree to strongly agree) for your answer. Kindly rank the criteria by ticking the appropriate box that is most closely related.

Variable	Strongly disagree.....1 Disagree.....2 Uncertain.....3 Agree.....4 Strongly agree.....5
a. Dependability in handling customer's service problems	
b. Network problem	
c. Business location	
d. Some employees are not willing to support customers	
e. Costs of transactions	

**Section D: Level Of Customer Satisfaction On Service.**

11. How long have you used Vodacom services?

- a) Less than one month
- b) 1 to 6 months
- c) 6 months to a year

- d) 1 to 3 years
- e) Over three years

12. Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality of the customer service provided by Vodacom? a) Dissatisfied

- b) Somewhat dissatisfied
- c) Neutral
- d) Satisfied
- e) Very satisfied

13. Measuring Service quality dimensions

Dimensions description		Strongly disagree.....1 Disagree.....2 Uncertain.....3 Agree.....4 Strongly agree.....5
Reliability	Providing service as promised	
	Dependability in handling customer's service problems	
	Performing services right the first time	
	Providing service at the promised time	
	Maintaining error -free records	
Responsiveness		
	Keeping customers informed about when services was be performed	
	Prompt service to customers	
	Willingness to help customers	
	Readiness to respond to customers request	
Assurance		
	Employees who instill confidence in customers	

	Making customers feel safe in their transactions	
	Employee who are consistently courteous	
	Employees who have the knowledge to answer customer questions	
Empathy		
	Giving customers individual attention	
	Employee who deal with customers in a caring fashion	
	Having customers best interest at heart	
	Employee who understand the needs of their customers	
	Convenient business hours	

Tangibles		
	Modern equipment	
	Visually appealing facilities	
	Employee who have a neat, professional appearance	
	Visually appealing materials associated with the services	

14. Customer's knowledge on service provided by Vodacom Tanzania

Variables	Strongly disagree.....1 Disagree.....2 Uncertain.....3 Agree.....4 Strongly agree.....5
a. Maintaining error-free records	

b. Company have employee who have a neat, professional appearance	
c. Company have employee who understand the needs of their customers	
d. Does make customers feel safe in their transactions	
e. Employees who have the knowledge to answer customer questions	

15. Select the rate that best describes how you feel about these services.

Variables	Strongly disagree-1	Disagree-2	Uncertain-3	Agree-4	Strongly agree-5
Quality					
Price					
Trust worth brand					
Packages					

**Thank you for your time and cooperation.**

## APPENDICES 2

### Appendix 1: Budget

ITEM	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Transport	50000 per dayx7	350,000
Stipend	40000 per dayx7	280,000
<b>Stationaries</b>	80,000	80,000
12 Note books	@2000 x 10	20,000
1Box of Pen	5000	5000
Photocopy	@500 x 100	50,000
Thesis Production		800,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>1,045,000</b>

**NOTE:** These budget estimates are purely exclusive of the master's degree Fees and other payable direct to the St. Augustine University of Tanzania.

## Appendix 2: Research Schedule

<b>PERIOD</b>	<b>RESEARCH ACTIVITY</b>
August, 2022- February, 2023	Proposal writing
March,2023-May, 2023	Data collection
June, 2023-October ,2023	Data processing and report writing
10 <sup>th</sup> November, 2023	Submission of the dissertation