



Assessing the Impact of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction: A case Study of Salam Telecommunications in Kunduz City Center

Zubaidullah Seerat^{1*}; Momen Noori¹

¹Department of Business Administration, Faculty of Economics, Salam University, Afghanistan

*Corresponding Email: zubaidullah.seerat1370@gmail.com, Phone Number: +93744470034

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to identify the level of customer satisfaction with the service quality of Salam Telecommunications Company in the center of Kunduz. The research method is descriptive-correlational in terms of practical purpose. The main question of this research is "Does the service quality of Salam Telecom Company has an impact on the satisfaction of customers or not? And the hypothesis of this research is that the service quality of Salam Telecom Company has a positive impact on satisfaction of customers. The desired statistical population of this research are (200) users of Salam SIM cards that (120) individuals were selected as the sample by the proportional stratified sampling method. The data has analyzed by the SPSS and the Cronbach's alpha coefficient has gotten (0.8). Therefore, the questionnaires have the necessary reliability. The research findings show that the most important factor that affects customer satisfaction is the better quality and low price of services. Therefore, there is a meaningful relation between the quality services and customers satisfaction. By any measure which the price be less and the quality be appropriate the customer satisfaction will increase.

Keywords: Customer Satisfaction, Salam Company, Service Quality, Kunduz and Telecommunications.

Introduction

In today's competitive world, companies can succeed which by paying attention to customers' needs and want and providing services based on them. The path which allows companies to differentiate from competitors and sustainable competitive advantage leading to customer satisfaction is providing better service. Certainly, customer satisfaction helps companies to have better performance in the field of competition and provide with better quality. Researchers believe that service quality has meaningful impact

on customer satisfaction and loyalty, which finally leads to more loyalty of customers. (Habibi & Hsani, 1399).

Because quality is the most important factor of progress and determines customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction, the quality of services is evaluated based on what the customer expects from them. Regarding to services quality many definitions have presented which one of the most common is: The service's ability to meet the needs or expectations of customers. Certainly, if the expectations exceed performance, the perceived quality is less satisfying, leading to customer dissatisfaction (Shahin, 2006) According to A. Parasuraman and his colleague's definition, service quality is the comparison between the expectations of customers and the performance of services (Khamis,2013). Michael Lewis defines the service quality as the extent to which service performance matches the expectations and needs of customers (Michael Lewis, 2013).

According to the definition by Brady and Robertson, service quality helps create a necessary competitive advantage and acts as an effective differentiating factor (Dankwah,2013). According to research by Bolton and Drew, many customers prefer the service quality which the price and other costs remain constant. In this case, service quality becomes an important aspect of product and service (Khamis, 2013). Now service quality is one of the necessary elements in perception of customers. In about pure services (such as health services, financial services, educational services and telecommunication services) is evaluated the dominant factor to customers. Meanwhile the customer service is offered in the composition of physical product, which may be very crucial in determining customer satisfaction (Zitamel et al., 1392). Certainly, if customers get what they expect and compare it with other services the results will lead to their satisfaction. Certainly, if customers achieve what they expect and compare it with other services, the results will lead to their satisfaction. While judgment about quality is not necessarily dependent on experience and is more often based on the recommendations of others or company advertisements, especially when the judgment concerns services that individuals have never used (Lovelock & Wright, 2016).

With the rapid expansion of communication technologies and the increasing awareness of customers, users' expectations of telecommunication services have increased significantly. Modern customers are no longer satisfied merely with access to communication services; rather, they consider factors such as network coverage quality, clarity of voice calls, internet speed, reasonable pricing, and effective customer responsiveness as fundamental determinants of their satisfaction with telecommunication companies. Accordingly, a customer is defined as an individual or an organization that enters into a contract with others to obtain the required goods or services (Haghighat Talab, 1385). From a market-oriented perspective, a customer is an individual who possesses both the ability and the willingness to purchase a product or service. When these two characteristics coexist, the process of selection and purchasing takes place. In this view, the customer is regarded as

an intelligent and informed individual who carefully studies available options and, through value assessment and consideration of personal capabilities and resources, makes purchasing decisions (Hashemzadeh, 1393). Customer satisfaction requires maintaining customer happiness and contentment, both in daily interactions and from a long-term and strategic perspective. Competitive pressures compel organizations to identify customer needs and formulate strategies that enable them to succeed in comparison with competitors. Customer satisfaction reflects the level of utility a customer gains from various product or service attributes and serves as a source of profitability and a fundamental reason for organizational activity (Mojdeh, 1399). Consequently, customer satisfaction has become one of the most important theoretical and empirical issues for marketing scholars and practitioners and is widely regarded as the essence of success in today's highly competitive business environment.

This situation raises important questions: Why do companies need to achieve customer satisfaction, and what is the importance of customer satisfaction for organizations? To address these questions, it is essential to understand the consequences of customer dissatisfaction, the benefits that satisfied customers bring to organizations, and the ways in which companies can achieve customer satisfaction. Research shows that approximately 96 percent of customers never complain about poor behavior or low-quality products and services, and about 90 percent of dissatisfied customers do not return to the company. As a result, many organizations consider customer satisfaction a key indicator for evaluating service quality, and this approach continues to gain importance. The significance of customer satisfaction is closely related to competition at the global level (Vazifeh Doost & Memarian, 1393).

In Kunduz Province, Salam Telecommunications Company, as one of the providers of telecommunication services, plays a significant role in meeting the communication needs of citizens. However, evidence indicates that in some cases challenges such as weak network coverage in certain areas, fluctuations in internet quality, problems in after-sales services, and dissatisfaction with pricing packages exist. These issues may lead to reduced customer satisfaction and, ultimately, to the loss of market share.

According to the establishment of telecommunications companies in Afghanistan and the number of these companies and the impact of service quality on the importance of customer satisfaction, the active companies in this industry are witnesses to extreme competition for achieving a high market share in the telecommunications market.

On the other hand, as for to a large number of telecommunications companies in Afghanistan, the customers have different choices for good communication.

In this situation, intense competition has taken shape among the telecommunication companies for attracting of new customers, protecting of early customers and achieving of customers satisfaction.

The success of such a competitive market necessitates an increase in telecommunication service quality. Therefore, it requires that the officials of telecommunication companies pay attention to the research findings which are about achieving customer satisfaction and improving quality.

Now the overall importance of this research is to determine the impact of service quality dimensions on customer satisfaction at Salaam Telecommunication Company in Afghanistan, particularly in Kunduz city.

The main objective of this study is to identify the level of customer satisfaction with the quality of services provided by Salam Telecommunications Company in the central area of Kunduz city.

To measure the level of service quality of Salam Telecommunications Company from the customers' perspective in Kunduz Province.

To examine the level of customer satisfaction with the telecommunication services of Salam Telecommunications Company.

To investigate the impact of call quality and internet services on customer satisfaction.

To identify the most important service quality factors that have the greatest influence on customer satisfaction.

Material and Method

This research regarding its applied goal and data collection method is descriptive correlational. The data has been collected in two methods in this study, 1- library method (review of various types of Persian and English texts regarding customer satisfaction and service quality and also reviewing of websites). 2- field method (collecting data by a questionnaire which has contributed to the sample group). The statistical population of this research are 200 users of Salaam Seim cards in the central of Kunduz city, which 120 users has selected by proportional stratified sampling method. The collecting tool of this research is a questionnaire which has two parts, the first part of questionnaire contains demographical questions and the second part of the questionnaire is related to other significant questions. Type of scale in this research is the Questionnaire on a 5-point Likert scale, which answers continue with very high, high, medium, low and very low. The respondent answers to one of these five choices and these five choices have scored according to chart1.

Table 1. Score of 5-point Likert scale

Effect Size	Score or Numerical Value of the Scale	Effect Size
Completely dissatisfied	1	Very low
dissatisfied	2	low
No opinion	3	Medium
Satisfied	4	high
Completely dissatisfied	5	Very high

Validity: In this research, the validity of the content type is confirmed by telecommunication experts and University lecturers.

Reliability: In this study, considering that the questionnaires are not designed with true and false types, questions have been designed on a 5-point Likert scale; therefore, Cronbach's alpha for reliability was calculated using SPSS. Chart 2 points to this issue.

Table 2: Reliability of questionnaire

Cronbach's alpha	Number of the questions	Questionary
0/80	27	The Impact of the Quality on Customer Satisfaction

Theoretical Framework

Definition and concept of quality

The present era is called quality era. In this competitive situation, only those producers can be succeeded which they produce the products and services with better quality. In fact, the word of quality is applied to different meanings like, the degree of excellence, degree of conformity with standard and well characteristics. Therefore, the quality can be defined as to do the right things constantly in all over the company (Sarvari, 1399). Considering that, the quality of each component is the nature and part of that. So, we can say that specific definition of quality is so difficult. But, the opinion of quality system is that, all characteristics of product which fulfil the needs and wants of a customer is quality.

Service quality can carry different meanings across various contexts. Consequently, the concept of service quality has been widely documented in services marketing literature. Customer service quality exerts a significant positive impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty, as well as on business performance. Thus, service quality can be defined according to different theoretical perspectives and assumptions (Habibi & Hosseini, 1399).

Bitner and Hubert (1994) and Kollberg (2010) say that satisfaction is quick respond to expense while service quality is general concept of customer in relation to service delivery (as cited in Rahim Hussein and Amjad Al-Nasr, 2014). P. Crosby says in relation to quality "quality is that product matches to required conditions or customer need" and S. Walton believes that "quality is everything that customer wants to deliver him". Quality means the degree of product excellence or presenting of service higher than the average, regarding to fair and competitive price (Najafi-Bik, 2012).

Shin and Kim (2008) believe that service quality is the overall perception of the consumer regarding the relative efficiency of the service provider (as cited in Deng, Lu, Wei, and Zhang, 2010). (Habibi and Hosseini, 1399). In simpler terms, Jing and Wang (2006) define service quality as the consumer's evaluation of the received service performance and its comparison with their expectations (as cited in Malek, 2011). Additionally, Procter and Gamble consider quality to be the continuous effort of each individual to understand, find, and satisfy customer expectations (Miltonberg, 2005). Certainly, when a customer feels that an organisation is addressing their needs in the best possible way, while competing

companies neglect these needs, they will always make exclusive purchases from the company they expect (Schumacher and Lewis, 2004).

Quality has been presented as enterprise characteristic, specific and important character of a person or a product, degree of advantage and as a social status and it firstly must be defined and measured for control and improvement of its dimensions (Dankwah, 2013). Quality is the performance of a product which causes to customers satisfaction and overcoming the resulting deficiencies and finally prevents the customer's dissatisfaction (Nde Deniel & Paul Berinyuy, 2013). According to Feigenbaum creator of the quality control word, he defined that "quality is the ability of a product which provides the statue that a product produces effeciently", Deming defined quality as "meeting customer satisfaction and reducing variations and ensuring consistency and uniformity in a product or service," while Crosby defined quality as "the conformance of a product or service to predefined requirements (specifications and standards).

Joseph Juran believes "quality is the matching of goods and services with their applications." The other meaning of this phrase is that the goods and services must fulfil the needs and wants of customers.

According to the most recent official and authoritative standard (ISO 9000), quality is defined as "the degree to which a set of inherent characteristics fulfils requirements or needs" (Hosseini, Ahmadinejad, & Ghaderi, 1389).

Value-Based Definitions: These definitions describe quality in relation to its utility or use (Dankwah, 2013). In other words, a value-based definition of quality can be understood from statements like: "I really got my money's worth." This reflects a perception of quality grounded in the value received (Kreitner, 2005).

In traditional approaches, the quality of products and services has often been defined by their physical characteristics or attributes such as durability and reliability. However, many modern companies have reconsidered this concept. According to these companies, even the most advanced and sophisticated meets the customers' needs, wants, and expectations.

Thus, in the contemporary view, quality is defined as the degree to which a product or service conforms to customer expectations and the specified requirements (Roosta Venous, & Ebrahimi, 1395). Service quality is one of the concepts which, because of the problem in its definition and measurement of both of its constituent words and lack of general agreement about them from the definition and conceptualisation side, hasn't been paid attention to more in the literature. The definition of quality may differ from one person to another and from state to state (Odema Dankwah, 2013). The service quality has only been discussed in very few writings. Reviews show that there are three main issues with services.

- Evaluation of service quality for customers is more difficult than the evaluation of goods
- Customer perception of service quality is the result of the comparison between customers' expectations and the actual performance of services.

- Quality evaluations are not solely based on the outcome of a service, but also include assessments of the service delivery process (Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1985).

Service Quality Dimensions

Research shows that customers do not perceive quality as a one-dimensional concept, but rather judge it based on multiple factors. The dimensions of service quality were initially identified through the pioneering research of Parasuraman, Valerie Zeithaml, and Leonard Berry. Their studies recognised five key dimensions of service quality, which later led to a series of refinements (Zeithaml, 2013).

Services: the service definition has always been difficult, because of diversity. The thing which makes this matter complicated is that the service is intangible and it is often not easy to perceive and identify or its supply. Philip Kotler believes that service is an intangible activity in which one side supplies something to another side, and it does not result in ownership of anything.

The service production may or may not depend on a physical good. (Hosseini & Qaderi, 1389). The word "service" has different meanings, which leads to confusion in the definition of this word in the management literature. Service can be an industry, performance, output, presentation or a process. Also, service is mainly defined as an intangible material, and its result is similar to an activity, rather than a tangible product. Therefore, the interference of the material element is not clear and obvious. (Dankwah, 2013).

"According to another study conducted by Jones, services are examined from two different perspectives: that of customers and that of service providers. Therefore, from the service provider's perspective, it is a process that involves essential service delivery factors, such as performance, employee awareness, and employee interaction, which are managed differently across various industries. However, from the customer's perspective, services are a phenomenon that customers perceive as an integral part of their lives, consisting of factors such as need, choice, and emotional satisfaction.

The factors common to both perspectives are: service value, service quality, and the interaction between the customer and the provider." (Nde Daniel & Paul Berinyuy, 2010)

"A broad definition of services is provided by Grönroos (1990) as follows: 'A service is a process consisting of a series of more or less intangible activities, typically performed in interaction between customers and employees, goods and service systems, which are offered as solutions to customer problems.'" (Odema Dankwah, 2013)

Services, in this context, refer to actions, efforts, or performances exchanged between the producer and the user, without resulting in ownership rights. Like any other intangible product, services fulfil the needs of users by providing pleasure, information, or convenience. (Arsalamon, W. et al., 1394)

Moreover, services are activities in which one party offers something intangible to another, resulting in a non-physical product. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2006)"

Effective factors on customers expectation

Perceptions and feelings of customers are an objective standard for performance evaluation of a collection, providing service and meeting the needs of customers (Ebrahimi

& Yazdi, 1389). The Customer is generally defined as follows: a customer is a natural or legal entity which wants goods and services to meet their needs and is ready to pay the appropriate price for them. But is only willing to pay when the goods meet their satisfaction (Parsa Manesh & Afshari, 1394). Also, for effectively managing customers' expectations, firstly, they should perceive the customers' expectations in scientific methods and take action based on the root causes and effective factors. Generally, customer expectations arise from two resources:

A) Personal needs: These relate to the emotional, psychological, and physical states of the customer, and play a significant role in shaping the level of expected service. They are divided into physical, social, psychological, and functional needs.

B) Social awareness: This refers to the individual's attitude toward the service and its correct execution. If a customer has experience and expertise in specific areas, they will have a stronger understanding of that service. Therefore, the more a customer's personal knowledge of service provision increases, the higher their expectations from service providers (Khamasi, 1383).

Customer Satisfaction

The word of consent has derived from the word of satisfaction and happiness. This word is equivalent to "satisfaction" in the English language and means the profit which a person gets from a product or service, in expression, it is the positive feeling that is created in a person after using the product or service. Customers have different levels of satisfaction after experiencing services, because it depends on how their expectations are fulfilled. Expectation is an emotional state. Therefore, reactions of customers may include nervousness, dissatisfaction, excitement, neutrality, and satisfaction (Lovelock & Wright, 1995).

Satisfaction is the evaluation of customers from the presented services, that is, satisfaction is the level of customers' needs and expectations fulfilment. When the service is completely new, the satisfaction is seldom known. Because the customer doesn't have the of using that product, and after the cycle of service, the satisfaction becomes clear (Zitamel et al., 1392)

Customer satisfaction (CS) is a term that has attracted significant attention among scholars and business experts. This is likely because of its importance as a key element in business strategy. It can also serve as a goal for business activities, especially in today's competitive market. As a result, several researchers have examined this concept from various perspectives. According to the report by Rust and Oliver (1994), customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction is a "cognitive or emotional reaction" that is a response to one or more service sessions (Nde Daniel & Paul Berinyuy, 2010).

According to Juran, customer satisfaction is a state where the customer feels that the product's features align with their emotions. Dissatisfaction, on the other hand, is a state where the flaws and defects of the product cause discomfort, complaints, and criticism from the customer. Lingfield considers customer satisfaction as an emotional reaction that results from a comparison between the received products and the customers' needs, desires, and social expectations regarding the product. Richard Oliver believes that customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction arises from the difference between the customer's

expectations and the quality they have received. Thus, to measure customer satisfaction, the following relationship can be used (Ghasemzadeh Moghadam, 1391).

- Increasing the level of customer satisfaction
- Increasing the customers' repayment behaviour
- Finally, the company's profit will increase (Ojo, 2010).

The providers of services give higher priority to customer satisfaction, because it is counted as a prerequisite for protecting customers. As a positive result of marketing activity, customer satisfaction will lead to repeat visits of products, repeat purchase of products or services and will increase advertisements to friends, while customer satisfaction will remove customer complaints. A satisfied customer will often remain loyal and will direct the company's path in the future (Loke, Adegbite Taiwo, Mat Salim, & G. Dawne, 2011).

The companies which fulfil customer satisfaction continuously, considering the rise in customer loyalty, will also enjoy more profitability and the survival of the company. So, for this reason, it is necessary to fulfil customer satisfaction, and it can be done by different methods, one of which is to know the perceptions and expectations of customers from the company's services which the company provide for them. Thus, the service quality can be evaluated, and as a result, the customer satisfaction will also be evaluated (Nde Daniel & Paul Berinyuy, 2010).

According to marketing theorists, customer satisfaction is the foundation of long-term success in professional service delivery systems. Reichheld and Sasser (1990) stated that customer satisfaction involves a fair exchange process between the seller and the consumer, with the expectation that both parties gain something of value (Khamis, 2013). Despite the availability of various methods for measuring customer satisfaction, feedback methods and customer satisfaction indices have been the most widely used (Khamis, 2013). In a study conducted in 2009, Negi attempted to explore the relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction in the telecommunications sector. According to him, linking customer satisfaction to service quality is a concept that has been discussed for many years. The results of his study show that satisfaction, reliability, and network quality are key factors in evaluating service quality (Nde Daniel & Paul Berinyuy, 2010).

Salam Telecommunications Company

This company was established in the competitive market of telecommunication companies in 2013; it is part of the Afghan Telecom company, but works independently. It is a partnership company, which means 51% share of this company belongs to the government and 49% of it belongs to the private sector.

It has about 300 staff, most of whom are youths. It started its activity with an initial capital of 65 million US dollars; but till now it has increased its capital to 200 million US dollars. This company demined its coverage area all over Afghanistan and it has about 2 million customers.

The Salaam Telecommunication Company has been funded to expand cable network and CDMA by telephone service through 3G throughout the country. This network is committed to provide the different and diverse telecommunication and internet needs of customers through quality, transparent and honest services.

Also, presenting new experiences of 3G services with appropriate rates and starting 4G services are the next plans of this company. Moreover, this company is committed to connecting all the central parts of the cities and the villages so that customers can be connected to each other in every place and every time.

The vision of this company is to be the favorite network of all in the telecommunications sector in Afghanistan. Its mission is to enable the company to become a leading force in Afghanistan's telecommunications market by providing reliable and quality telecommunication services, driven by a spirit of cooperation in support of peace and prosperity for the people of Afghanistan. The company's primary objectives and key strategies are as follows.

- Transparency in pricing
- Tariffs
- High-quality products and services
- Innovation and creativity in services to become a market leader in the telecommunications sector

The services provided by Salaam Telecommunication Company to its customers include:

- Voice calls
- Text messaging (SMS)
- Prepaid services
- 3G Internet (Source: www.salaam.af)

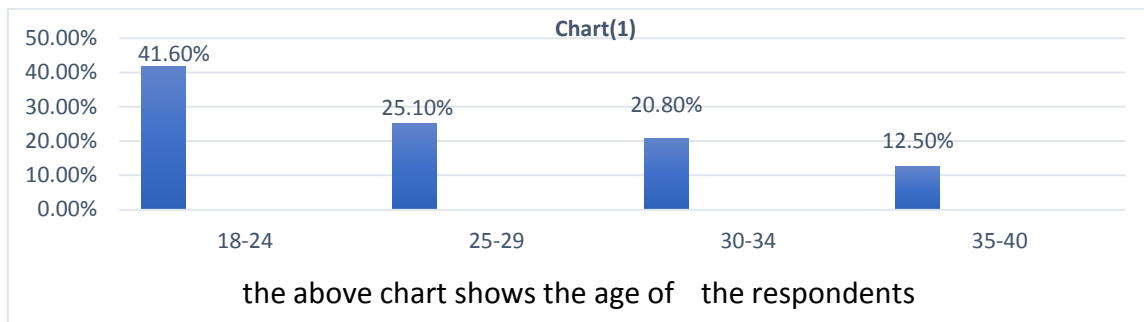
findings

Table (3) shows descriptive statistics of this research

Age of the respondents					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	18-24	50	41.6	41.6	41.6
	25-29	30	25.1	25.1	66.7
Valid	30-34	25	20.8	20.8	87.5
	35-40	15	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table (3) Descriptive statistics of respondents by age

Table 3. 3 shows the descriptive statistics of the respondents by age. Out of a total of 120 participants, 50 respondents (aged 18–24), 30 respondents (aged 25–29), 25 respondents (aged 30–34), and 15 respondents (aged 35–40) participated in the survey. In terms of percentages, these represent **41.6%**, **25.1%**, **20.8%**, and **12.5%** respectively, as illustrated in the following Figure.



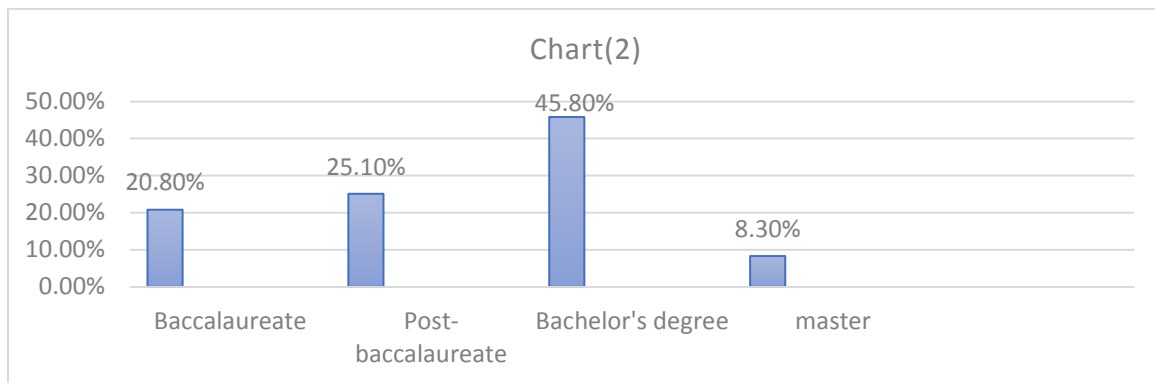
As shown in Table 3 and Chart 1, 41.6% of the respondents are between the ages of 18 and 24, 25.10% are between 25 and 29, 20.8% are between 30 and 34, and 12.5% are between 34 and 40 years old.

Education level of the respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Baccalaureate	25	20.8	20.8	20.8
Post-baccalaureate	30	25.1	25.1	45.9
Valid Bachelor's degree	55	45.8	45.8	91.7
master	10	8.3	8.3	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table (4) Descriptive statistics of the respondents according to their educational level

According to Table 4, which presents the descriptive statistics of the respondents, 120 participants are included, with 25 holding a Baccalaureate degree, 30 having completed post-Baccalaureate studies, 55 holding a Bachelor's degree, and 10 possessing a Master's degree. In percentage terms, this corresponds to 20.8% with a Baccalaureate, 25.1% with post-Baccalaureate education, 45.8% with a Bachelor's degree, and 8.3% with a Master's degree. These figures are also illustrated in the following Figure.



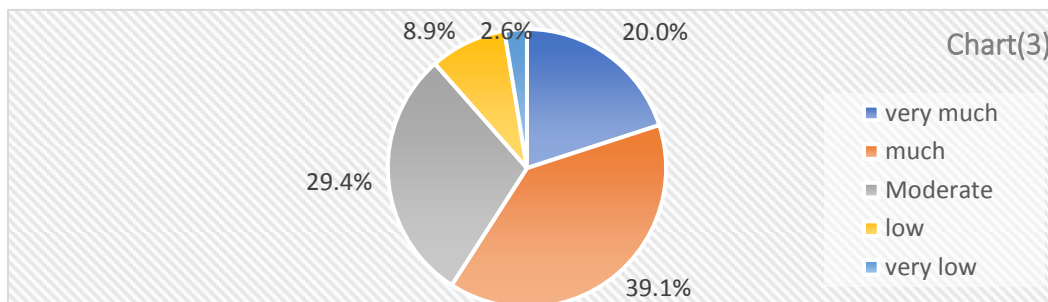
The above chart illustrates the educational levels of the respondents.

As shown in Table 4 and Chart 2, 20.8% of the respondents hold a Baccalaureate degree, 25.1% have completed post-Baccalaureate studies, 45.8% hold a Bachelor's degree, and 8.3% possess a Master's degree.

1. Inferential Statistics

Since the appropriate use of statistical techniques requires determining whether the collected data follow a normal distribution, this stage involves examining the results obtained from relevant questions designed to assess customer satisfaction with internet service quality. The aim is to verify the research hypotheses.

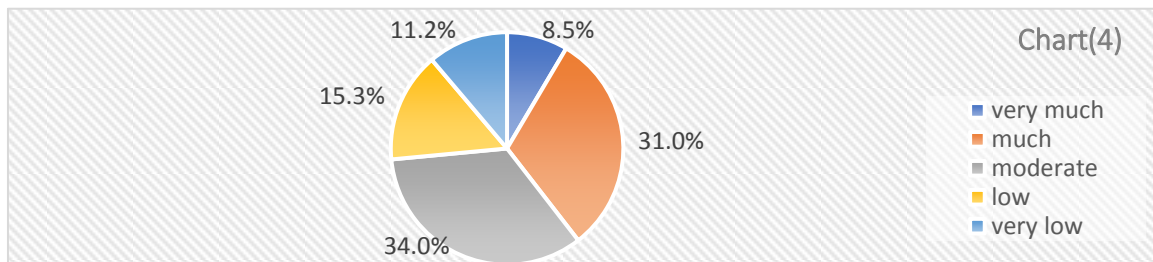
1. Does the quality of services and the success rate of voice calls affect customer satisfaction?



Source of research findings

Regarding chart (3), it is seen that 20% of customers have chosen the option of “very much”, 39.1% of customers have “very” choice, 29.4% of customers have “moderate” choice, 8.9% of customers have “low” choice, and 2.6% of customers have “very low” choice. That on average, the customer satisfaction with the Saalam telecommunication service network is relatively high. So, we got results from the findings of this research that customer satisfaction with Salaam’s vice calls quality and success is too high. But there is a little bit problem in antenna. But in general, most customers are satisfied with the quality and transparency of the vice calls during connecting.

2. Does the quality of 3G internet of Salaam Telecom have an effect on customer satisfaction?



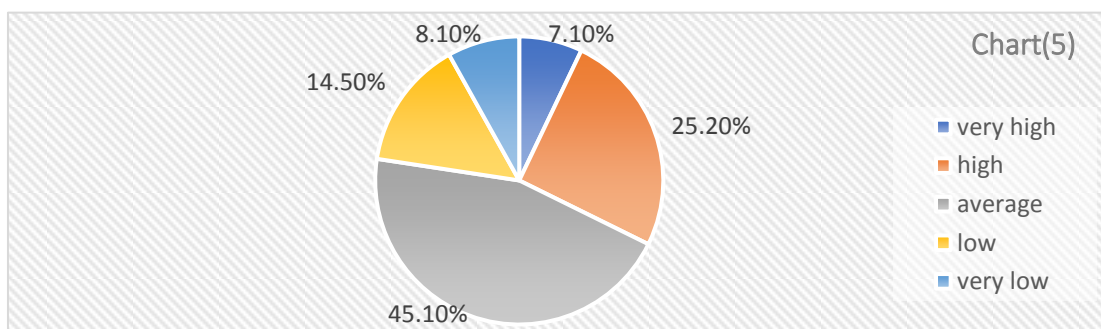
Source of Research Findings

As shown in Figure (4), 8.2% of the customers selected the "Very High" option, 31% selected the "High" option, 34% selected the "Moderate" option, 15.3% selected the "Low" option, and 11.2% selected the "Very Low" option.

Table 5. shows the level of customer satisfaction with internet speed at different times.

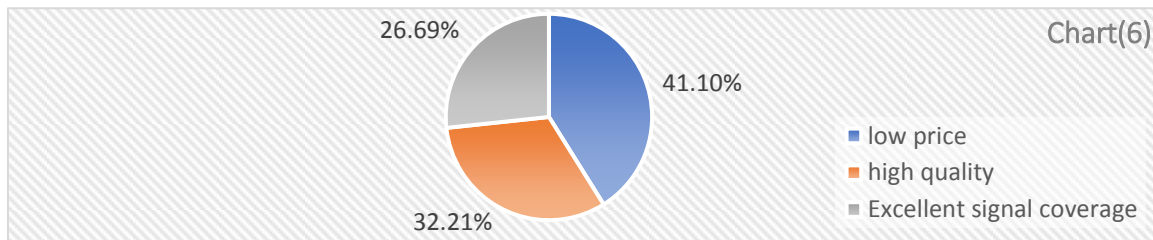
Very fast	fast	average	Weak	Very weak	Times
3,2%	17,5%	61,9%	12,7%	4,8%	6up to 12 A.M
1,6%	20,6%	52,4%	22,2%	3,2%	12 up to 6 A.M
1,6%	0%	30,2%	42,9%	25,4%	6 up to 10 night
11,1%	55,6%	30,2%	3,2%	%0	10 up to 2 night
15,9%	73%	11,1%	0%	%0	2 up to 6 morning

3). Do you satisfy form the quality of salaam’s internet compared to its expenses?



Source of Research Findings: As shown in Chart (5), 7.10% of customers selected "very high," 25.20% selected "high," 45.10% chose "average," 14.70% chose "low," and 8.10% selected "very low." On average, customers are relatively satisfied with the quality of the internet provided by the Salam telecommunications network in relation to its cost.

4) Which factors contribute to greater customer satisfaction?



Source of Research Findings

As shown in Chart (6), the key factors affecting customer satisfaction include low price (41.10%), high quality (32.21%), and excellent signal coverage (26.69%).

In this section of the study, we examine the results obtained from data analysis and focus on the figures derived from the research findings. Each of the proposed hypotheses will be evaluated based on the collected data, thus laying the groundwork for the final conclusion of the study. In the first step, we address the sub-hypotheses.

Table (6): Results Obtained from the Bootstrap Command

Result	P-value	T-value	Beta	Hypothesis
Is significant	0.023	2.232	0.242	H1
Is significant	0.027	3.132	0.277	H2
Is significant	0.012	2.150	0.712	H3
Is significant	0.000	4.190	0.730	H4

Research Hypotheses and Discussion First Research Hypothesis

The quality of services and the success of calls have a significant impact on customer satisfaction. As observed in Table 6 and Chart 3, the path significance coefficient (T-value) between the service quality variable and customer satisfaction is 2.232, which is greater than 1.96. This indicates that the effect of service quality assurance on customer satisfaction is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, thereby confirming this hypothesis.

Second Research Hypothesis:

The quality of the G3 internet service provided by Salam Telecommunication Company has a significant impact on customer satisfaction.

As shown in Table 6 and Chart 4, the path significance coefficient (T-value) between the G3 service variable and customer satisfaction is 3.132, which exceeds the critical value of 1.96. This confirms that the effect of the G3 internet service quality assurance by Salam Telecommunication on customer satisfaction is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, supporting this hypothesis.

Third Research Hypothesis

The quality of services and their costs have a significant impact on customer satisfaction. As presented in Table 6 and Figure 5, the path significance coefficient (T-value) between the cost variable and customer satisfaction is 2.150, which is above 1.96. This indicates that the impact of service costs assurance on customer satisfaction is statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, confirming this hypothesis.

Fourth Research Hypothesis

The quality of Salam Telecommunication services significantly affects the identification of customer satisfaction levels. As seen in Table 6 and Chart 6, the path significance coefficient (T-value) between telecommunication quality and customer satisfaction identification is 4.190, greater than 1.96. This demonstrates that the assurance of Salam service quality has a statistically significant effect on identifying customer satisfaction at the 95% confidence level, confirming this hypothesis.

Discussion

In this section, we compare the findings of this study with previous related research. A study titled "Examining the Impact of Service Quality Dimensions on Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty: A Case Study of Three Leading Telecommunication Operators in Afghanistan" showed that some dimensions of service quality (operational efficiency, telecommunication quality, employee performance capability, reliability, and service convenience) did not have a significant impact on customers. However, other dimensions (service assurance and service competitiveness) had a positive and significant effect on customer satisfaction (Habibi & Hosseini, 1399).

Another study conducted in India titled "Service Quality and Customer Priorities in Choosing Telecommunication Networks" concluded that communication and price are two very influential factors in customers' choice of telecommunication networks. Service quality and availability were also important factors with considerable influence (Paulrajan & Rajkumar, 2011).

A different study entitled "Identifying and Ranking Factors Affecting Customer Satisfaction from Telecommunication Internet Services: A Study on Customers in Sabzevar" showed that the ten dimensions of internet packages and having specialised staff were the most influential factors on customer satisfaction from telecommunication internet services (Helalifard & Vazifehdust, 1397).

Moreover, a qualitative study titled "Customers' Perception of Service Quality in Nigeria's Telecommunication Sector" found a positive and significant relationship between service quality and customer satisfaction. The study also identified service quality as one of the most important factors considered by customers when choosing a telecommunication network (Abbas, Hassan & Osotimehin, 2015).

Another research in Iran titled "Investigating the Relationship between Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction in Kermanshah Telecommunication Company Using the SERVQUAL Model" concluded that as the quality of provided services increases, the level of customer satisfaction also increases (Mirayi & Karbasi, 1395).

Overall, the results of this study show some differences compared to previous research.

For example, prior studies have only examined partial aspects of the topic. In contrast, this study aims to realistically, comprehensively, and practically analyse various dimensions of the issue, which is the main innovation and distinction of this research. While previous studies emphasised that quality is the most important factor for customer satisfaction, the findings of the present research indicate that price is the most influential factor on customer satisfaction in the studied community, followed by quality. This means that in Afghanistan, especially in the city center of Kunduz, citizens prioritise price first and then quality. Generally, it can be said that the quality of Salam Telecommunication services in Kunduz city center is appropriate, and the majority of customers are satisfied with the services provided by this company.

Conclusion

The quality of services plays a key role in increasing customer satisfaction. Certainly, if the Salam telecommunication company can improve the quality of its telecommunication services in accordance with the needs of the technological age and minimize disruptions, customer satisfaction will definitely increase. On the other hand, attention to the low cost of services (call packages and internet packages), their quality, and efforts to improve persuasive telecommunication services not only leads to customer satisfaction, but also is effective in maintaining the company's competitive position in the market. Since improving the quality of services, effective support, transparency in interactions, value proportional to cost, and innovation can increase customer satisfaction and bring the company to a better competitive position in the telecommunications market. Because if the cost of services is not appropriate compared to the quality provided, customers will feel dissatisfied, as customers are looking to receive services that are worth what they pay. In this case, providing new services aligned with up-to-date technologies can create a positive feeling in customers. Overall, when the Salam telecommunication company can provide quality and satisfactory services for its customers in Afghanistan, and especially for the target community (the center of Kunduz province), it will ultimately lead to their satisfaction, and this will result in greater profitability for the company.

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Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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