

## **Influence of Brand Awareness, Attitude and Reputation on Performance of Telecommunication Companies in Tanzania: The Moderating Role of Customer Satisfaction**

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### **Abstract**

*Brand performance is vital in competitive, dynamic, developing markets, yet many companies, especially in the telecommunications sector, struggle to convert brand investments into measurable results due to a limited understanding of how brand assets and customer satisfaction interact. This study therefore examines the direct effects of brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand reputation on brand performance, and the moderating role of customer satisfaction. Using stratified and systematic random sampling, data were collected from 314 respondents across Tanzanian telecommunications companies. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was employed to analyse the data. The results show that both brand awareness, attitude, and reputation have a positive and significant influence on brand performance. Furthermore, customer satisfaction positively moderates the relationship between brand awareness and performance, while no significant moderating effects are found for brand attitude or reputation. These findings highlight the strategic value of brand-specific resources and the conditional role of customer satisfaction in driving brand performance. Theoretical and managerial implications underscore the importance of aligning branding strategies with customer experience initiatives in dynamic, emerging-market environments.*

**Keywords:** *Brand Awareness, Brand Attitude, Brand Reputation, Brand Performance and Telecommunication Companies*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Brand performance is among the essential factors influencing business growth (Zhang). However, managing brand performance globally poses several challenges for organisations (Gonzalez-Rodriguez et al., 2021), these include change in customer preferences and behaviours, resource constraints and increasing competition across the globe (Wulandari et al, 2025). In the Tanzanian telecommunications sector, these challenges are even more

pronounced due to market saturation and the similarity of service offerings among major operators such as Vodacom, Airtel, Yas, and Halotel. Despite heavy investments in branding strategies, many of these firms still struggle to translate brand-related initiatives into improved brand performance (Amani, 2022). According to Cahyani and Sutedjo (2022) brand performance plays a vital role in establishing a unique identity, differentiating from competitors, and create loyal customers who automatically become interested in whatever the company has to offer. Strong brand performance contributes to increased market share, customer trust, and long-term business success (Eshragh *et al.*, 2020). This indicates that highly performing brand is important intangible asset because it builds credibility and trust which facilitate competitive advantage ( Baek *et al.*, 2025).

Rahman *et al.*, (2019) reveals that brand performance not only help companies to create competitive advantage but it play essential role to help management to sustain the competitive advantage. Thus, brand performance complies with the Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, and Non-Substitutable (VRIN) criteria stipulated by the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory (Islam *et al.*, 2021). More specifically, brand-related assets such as brand awareness, brand attitude, brand reputation, and other proprietary assets may create and sustain competitive advantage because these brand-specific assets act as both ex ante limits and ex post limits to competition (Islam *et al.*, 2021). This indicates that brand assets (awareness, brand attitude, brand reputation) affect brand performance both individually and collectively (Rahman *et al.*, 2019).

Previous studies suggest that customer satisfaction is a crucial aspect of brand performance (Shi *et al.*, 2022; Eshragh *et al.*, 2020; Alwan & Alshurideh, 2022). For example the study by Kucharska (2019); Qalati *et al.*, (2019); Cahyani and Sutedjo (2022); Natalia *et al.*, (2021) insisted that high level of customer satisfaction may facilitates repeat purchases, customer loyalty, positive word-of-mouth referrals, enhancing brand image and reputation, improving customer retention rates and customer lifetime value which help to increase brand performance. Several studies such as Shi *et al.*, (2022); Alwan and Alshurideh (2022) suggest that the influence of brand awareness, attitude and reputation could either be moderated or mediated by customer satisfaction. Therefore, this study aims to build on the RBV theory and applies Expectation Disconfirmation Theory (EDT) to explain customer satisfaction, which moderates the influence of brand awareness, attitude, and reputation on brand performance. The use of customer satisfaction as a moderator enhances the RBV theory's ability to predict brand performance.

Despite these insights, the current literature reveals, several research gaps remain that need to be addressed to enhance both theoretical understanding and practical application. First, while the RBV theory provides a useful lens to understand brand assets, there is limited research integrating RBV with EDT to account for the dynamic influence of customer satisfaction on brand performance. Second, most prior studies are grounded in developed economies such as the United Kingdom, the USA and Poland (Foroudi, 2019; Kucharska, 2019; Koh *et al.*, 2009), with limited empirical evidence from developing countries like Tanzania, where consumer dynamics, competitive environments, and brand strategies differ significantly. Third, much of the existing literature has examined the direct relationship between brand awareness, attitude and reputation on brand performance (Cahyani & Sutedjo, 2022; Paul & Bhakar, 2018); Mmasi and Mwaifyusi, 2021), but has not examined the conditional effects of customer satisfaction as a moderator, particularly in the telecommunication sector. Previous studies are dominant in the restaurant, retail and hotel industry (Hultman *et al.*, 2021; Chen & Chang, 2011; Foroudi, 2019).

On the other hand, there is disagreement among scholars on the influence of brand awareness on brand performance. Some scholars have found a positive relationship between brand awareness and brand performance (Widodo & Rakhmawati, 2021; Razak *et al.*, 2020; Cahyani and Sutedjo, 2022), unlike the study by Hultman *et al.* (2021); Chen and Chang. Likewise, there is no consensus regarding the influence of brand attitude on brand performance. Scholars such as Paul and Bhakar (2018); found negative relationship, while Foroudi (2019); Liu *et al.*, (2020); Mmasi and Mwaifyusi (2021) found positive relationship. Similarly, there is disagreement among scholars on the influence of brand reputation on brand performance. For example Patker and Mateen (2016) found negative relationship, while Kucharska (2019); Gonzalez-Rodriguez *et al.*, (2021); Ledikwe and Roberts-Lombard (2019), found positive relationship. Therefore, this study seeks to bridge these gaps by examining the influence of brand awareness, attitude, and reputation on brand performance in the telecommunications sector, with customer satisfaction as a moderating factor. The need to study customer satisfaction, brand awareness, attitude, reputation and performance in the telecommunication industry is important because the industry played a significant role towards the social and economic development in Tanzania (Gupta, 2019). Also, the telecommunication industry is among the major contributors to the government revenue in Tanzania (TCRA, 2021).

This paper makes several contributions to the literature. First, it extends the RBV by empirically validating brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand

reputation as strategic intangible resources that significantly influence brand performance in the Tanzanian telecommunication sector. Moreover, by integrating EDT, the study enhances the RBV by incorporating customer satisfaction as a moderating factor, providing a more comprehensive understanding of how internal brand assets interact with consumer experiences to drive performance, as proposed by (2022) and Alwan and Alshurideh (2022). This theoretical contribution is especially relevant in developing economies, where such integrative models remain underexplored. Second, the study offers practical implications for managers in the telecommunications industry by identifying brand awareness as the most influential factor in performance, especially when customer satisfaction is high. Managers should invest in awareness-building and integrate customer satisfaction into brand strategies to improve performance. They should also maintain favourable brand attitudes and a strong reputation to strengthen brand performance.

The rest of the paper is organised as follows. The next part presents the literature review and hypothesis development. This is followed by the methodology, including sample and data collection, measurement techniques, and data analysis. The following part reports and discusses the findings. Finally, the paper presents the implications, limitations, and suggestions for future research.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT**

### **Theoretical Review**

This study is primarily grounded in RBV theory, which plays a key role in strategic management and marketing literature by explaining how firms achieve and sustain competitive advantage (Rahman *et al.*, 2019). Originally developed by Wernfelt and refined by Barney (1986), the RBV theory views a firm as a collection of strategic resources and capabilities (Koh *et al.*, 2009). These resources, both tangible and intangible, must meet four conditions to provide sustained competitive advantage: they must be valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (Barney, 1986). Intangible assets such as brand awareness, brand attitude, and brand reputation are especially important in service-oriented and highly competitive industries, as they significantly influence customer perception, loyalty, and ultimately brand performance (Rahman *et al.*, 2019).

In this study, brand performance is considered as an outcome of effectively managing these intangible brand assets. The RBV theory suggests that firms which develop and maintain strong brand awareness, attitude, and reputation are better positioned to differentiate themselves, build trust, and attract and

retain customers (Rahman *et al.*, 2019). These brand-specific resources act not only as ex-ante barriers to entry but also as ex-post defences against competitive pressures. This makes them strategic assets that align well with the RBV theory, particularly when firms aim to optimize internal capabilities for external market gains.

However, while RBV offers a strong foundation for understanding how internal resources, it does not sufficiently account for how consumers evaluate and react to these brand attributes (Koh *et al.*, 2009). This limitation is addressed by integrating the EDT, which adds a valuable consumer-centric perspective to the framework. Originally proposed by Oliver (1980), EDT states that customer satisfaction depends on the difference between pre-consumption expectations and post-consumption experiences. When perceived performance exceeds expectations (positive disconfirmation), satisfaction increases; when it falls short (negative disconfirmation), dissatisfaction occurs (Matonya, 2018; Uzir *et al.*, 2021).

Integrating EDT with RBV provides a more holistic view of brand performance by recognising that strategic resources alone are not enough; how customers perceive and react to those resources also matters. In this context, customer satisfaction acts as a dynamic capability, strengthening or weakening the impact of brand resources on performance outcomes. Although critics argue that EDT relies heavily on subjective expectations, which vary across individuals (Uzir *et al.*, 2021), it remains widely accepted in marketing research due to its strong ability to explain post-purchase behaviour (Matonya, 2018).

## **Development of Hypotheses**

### ***Brand Awareness and Brand Performance***

Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers recall or recognise a brand and associate it with a particular product or service (Cahyani & Suttedjo, 2022). Empirical evidence reveals a mixed relationship between brand awareness and brand performance. For instance, while most studies (Widodo & Rakhmawati, 2021; Razak *et al.*, 2020; Anees-ur-Rehman *et al.*, 2017; Cahyani & Suttedjo, 2022) find a positive and significant relationship between brand awareness and performance, others (Hultman *et al.*, 2021; Chen & Chang, 2011) report an insignificant effect. These differences may stem from the context, sector, or methodological approaches used in the respective studies. Nonetheless, the majority of findings support the notion that higher brand awareness enhances a brand's visibility and customer trust, thereby strengthening its performance. Consistent with the RBV, brand

awareness is considered a valuable intangible asset that enhances brand performance. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H<sub>1</sub>: *Brand awareness is positively related to brand performance of the telecommunication companies.*

### ***Brand Attitude and Brand Performance***

Brand attitude reflects consumers' overall evaluations and emotional responses toward a brand, which influence their purchasing decisions (Qalati *et al.*, 2019). Prior studies report conflicting findings regarding its influence on performance. For example, while Paul & Bhakar (2018) and Yang and Wang (2010) report negative and insignificant relationships, others like Foroudi (2019), Liu *et al.* (2020), and Mmasi and Mwaifyusi (2021) find a significant positive influence of brand attitude on performance. Positive brand attitudes often foster consumer loyalty, advocacy, and repeated purchases, which ultimately improve brand performance (Foroudi, 2019). Guided by the RBV, brand attitude serves as a crucial resource that enables firms to gain a sustained competitive advantage and increase the performance of the company. Based on this theoretical and empirical support, the study proposes that:

H<sub>2</sub>: *Brand attitude is positively related to brand performance of the telecommunication companies.*

### ***Brand Reputation and Brand Performance***

Brand reputation encompasses stakeholders' perceptions of a brand's credibility, reliability, and trustworthiness over time (Kucharska, 2019). Similar to awareness and attitude, empirical evidence on the relationship between reputation and performance varies. Studies such as Ledikwe and Roberts-Lombard (2019); (2021); Kucharska (2019) find a positive and significant association between reputation and brand performance, whereas others like Patker and Mateen (2016); Koh *et al.* report insignificant effects. Despite these inconsistencies, reputation remains a core strategic resource under the RBV, which contributes to increase brand performance of the companies. Hence, this study hypothesises that:

H<sub>3</sub>: *Brand reputation is positively related to brand performance of the telecommunication companies.*

### ***Moderating Role of Customer Satisfaction***

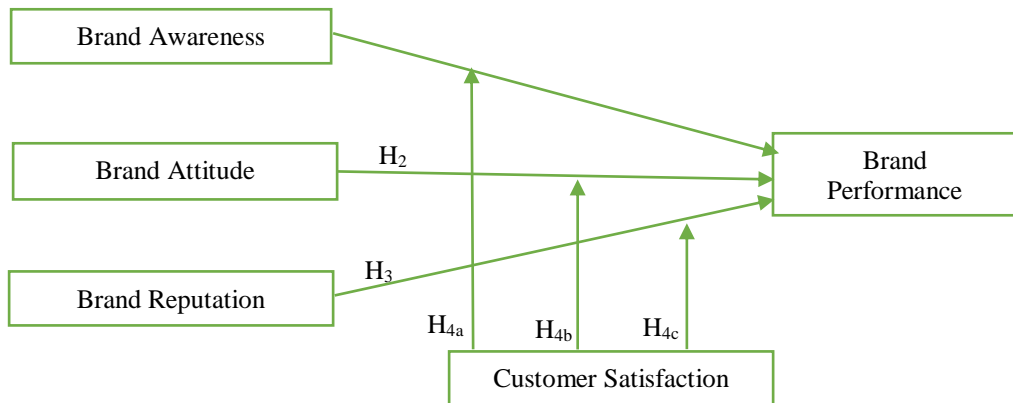
Customer satisfaction increasingly receives recognition as a key construct that strengthens the link between brand attributes and brand performance (Shi

*et al.*, 2022; Alwan and Alshurideh, 2022). While prior literature extensively focuses on the direct relationships between brand awareness, attitude, reputation, and performance, very few studies explore the moderating role of customer satisfaction (Paul & Bhakar, 2018; Yang & Wang, 2010; Foroudi, 2019; Liu *et al.*, 2020; Mmasi & Mwaifyusi, 2021). Customer satisfaction enhances the effectiveness of branding elements by reinforcing positive consumer experiences and fostering loyalty. It acts as a strategic resource by encouraging advocacy and repeat purchases, thus increasing overall brand value (Shi *et al.*, 2022). Moreover, as a moderating variable, customer satisfaction captures the strength of brand relationships, which influence how brand awareness, attitude, and reputation translate into actual performance outcomes (Shi *et al.*, 2022). High satisfaction levels amplify the positive effects of brand attributes by fostering loyalty and repeat purchases, while low satisfaction weakens these effects. Thus, customer satisfaction functions as an intangible yet powerful mediator of brand value creation, bridging perceptual brand constructs with tangible organisational performance (Alwan & Alshurideh, 2022). By integrating customer satisfaction as a moderator, this study extends RBV and offers a more comprehensive understanding of how brand attributes translate into performance outcomes. Therefore, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

- H<sub>4a</sub>: *Customer satisfaction positively moderates the relationship between brand awareness and brand performance.*
- H<sub>4b</sub>: *Customer satisfaction positively moderates the relationship between brand attitude and brand performance.*
- H<sub>4c</sub>: *Customer satisfaction positively moderates the relationship between brand reputation and brand performance.*

### **Conceptual Framework**

Based on a synthesis of the converging literature, a conceptual model guides the empirical study. The conceptual framework reflects all the hypotheses tested in this study. It is constructed based on the RBV theory and EDT. The framework proposes that brand performance is influenced by brand awareness, attitude, and brand reputation, and that customer satisfaction moderates these relationships. These assumptions are illustrated in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

## METHODOLOGY

### Sample and Data Collection

This study adopted a probability sampling approach consistent with the positivist paradigm. The target population comprised 1,832 employees working in four major telecommunication companies in Dar es Salaam: Vodacom, Airtel, Yas, and Viettel Tanzania Limited (Halotel), which collectively hold 97% of the telecom market share in Tanzania (TCRA, 2021). Dar es Salaam was selected because it is the commercial and communication hub where intense competition among major telecommunication companies best reflects the brand performance challenges under study (Amani, 2022). The selection focused on employees in marketing and customer service departments from the four companies, as they are deemed best positioned to assess branding practices and customer satisfaction (Arasa & Gathinji, 2014). Employees were chosen because they have insider knowledge of brand issues and can reliably assess how branding efforts translate into performance. This approach aligns with prior research that relies on employees' perspectives to evaluate internal brand-related constructs and performance (Matonya, 2018; Foroudi, 2019).

A stratified random sampling technique was used to categorise employees by company, followed by systematic random sampling within each stratum to ensure proportional representation. Hair *et al.* (2010) indicated that appropriate sample sizes for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) typically range between 200 and 400, cautioning that samples exceeding this range may lead to model over-sensitivity. Based on recommendations from prior studies, a sample size of 300 was considered optimal for this study (Kass & Tinsley, 1979; Field, 2009; Hair *et al.*, 2011). To account for potential non-response and in line with prior survey-based studies in brand management,



which reported an average response rate of 80%, implying a 20% non-response rate (Hultman *et al.*, 2021; Razak *et al.*, 2020; Cahyani & Sutedjo, 2022), the sample size was adjusted upward to 375 by dividing 300 by 0.80. The adjusted sample was then distributed proportionally by company size relative to the total population (1,832). The calculated ratios were as follows: Vodacom ( $548/1,832 = 0.299$ ), Airtel ( $490/1,832 = 0.267$ ), Yas ( $450/1,832 = 0.246$ ), and Halotel ( $344/1,832 = 0.188$ ). Systematic sampling was implemented by selecting every 5<sup>th</sup> employee in each stratum. Table 1 presents the final sample distribution and sampling intervals.

**Table 1: Sample Distribution by Stratum and Systematic Sampling Interval**

Stratum	Stratum Population (N)	Ratio	Sample Size (n) = 375×Ratio	Sampling Interval (K) = (N/n)
Vodacom Tanzania Limited	548	0.299	112	$548/112=5^{\text{th}}$
Airtel	490	0.267	100	$490/100=5^{\text{th}}$
Yas	450	0.246	92	$450/92=5^{\text{th}}$
Halotel	344	0.188	71	$344/71=5^{\text{th}}$
Total	1,832	1	375	

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire distributed between August 31, 2023, and February 28, 2024, through a drop-and-collect method, known for its efficiency with larger samples (Kumar, 2018). Of the 382 questionnaires distributed, 351 were returned (91.9% response rate). After removing 37 incomplete and inconsistent responses, 314 questionnaires were retained, yielding a final usable response rate of 82.2%.

### Measures

The constructs under investigation include brand awareness, brand attitude, brand reputation, customer satisfaction, and brand performance were operationalised using multi-item scales adapted from previously validated instruments in empirical literature. All items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), a widely accepted scale for capturing attitudes and perceptions in social science research (Foroudi, 2019; Mwaifyusi & Dau, 2022).

Brand awareness was measured using six items adapted from (2020), Foroudi (2019), and Mmasi and Mwaifyusi (2021). These items assessed respondents' recall, recognition, familiarity, and informational awareness of the company's brand. Brand attitude was assessed using six items drawn from Liu *et al.*, (2020); Foroudi (2019), assessing trust in the brand, emotional connection, and confidence in the company's offerings.

Brand reputation was measured using five items adapted from Foroudi (2019); Mmasi and Mwaifyusi (2021), focusing on customer perceptions of brand credibility, reliability, and responsiveness. Customer satisfaction was assessed using three items from Matonya (2018) that measured how well expectations were met or exceeded. Moreover, brand performance was measured through four items adapted from Mmasi and Mwaifyusi (2021); Koh *et al.*, (2009), assessing brand outcomes such as increased sales, customer retention, and positive customer advocacy. In total, the instrument comprised 24 items as detailed in Table 2.

**Table 1: Measurement of the Constructs**

Constructs	Code	Items
Brand awareness	AW1	Our customers can clearly recall some characteristics of this brand
	AW2	The company's brand is memorable to our customers.
	AW3	The company's brand is recognisable to our customers
	AW4	Our services and products are well known among customers.
	AW5	Our services and products are familiar to the customers.
	AW6	Our customers have enough information about the company's products and services.
Brand attitude	ATT1	Our customers feel confident in our service
	ATT2	We are honest and sincere in addressing customers' concerns.
	ATT3	We do not disappoint our customers
	ATT4	We make our customers happy.
	ATT5	Our customers like the company's products and services
	ATT6	Our customers feel good to use our services and products.
Brand reputation	REP1	Our customer depends on this brand
	REP2	We are trusted by our customers
	REP3	Our customers are delighted with this company
	REP4	We fulfill the needs of our customers
	REP5	We respond constructively to our customers
Customer satisfaction	SAT1	In my opinion, customers expect quality service from this brand
	SAT2	Based on my experience, we meet customer expectations
	SAT3	From my observation, customer experience with this brand often exceeds what they initially expected
Brand performance	PER1	Our sales volume increases over the past three years
	PER2	The number of new customers increase over the past three years
	PER3	Our customers say positive things about this brand
	PER4	Our customers repeatedly purchase this brand

### Common Method Variance

Following the guidance of Podsakoff *et al.*, (2024), Common Method Variance (CMV) was assessed through a combination of procedural and statistical approaches. Under the procedural remedy, respondents were

assured of anonymity and informed that their participation was voluntary, thereby reducing evaluation apprehension and response bias. For the statistical test, Harman's single-factor analysis was conducted, and the results showed that the five most significant factors explained 25.7% of the total variance, well below the 50% threshold recommended by Podsakoff *et al.* (2023). This indicates that common method bias was not a serious concern in the study.

### **Data Analysis Techniques**

This study employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) to evaluate the model and test the proposed hypotheses. PLS-SEM is well-suited for structural models that involve numerous constructs or complex relationships (Hair *et al.*, 2019; Hair *et al.*, 2021). It is particularly appropriate for exploratory research that includes theoretical frameworks featuring constructs with moderating roles (Uzir *et al.*, 2021). Prior research has applied PLS-SEM to examine brand performance in various contexts (Foroudi *et al.*, 2021; Liu *et al.*, 2020; Gonzalez-Rodriguez *et al.*, 2021). SmartPLS version 4 was employed to assess the model using the two-stage approach proposed by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). In the first stage, the reliability and validity of the measurement model were evaluated. The second stage involved testing the hypothesised relationships through the bootstrapping procedure, as outlined by Anderson and Gerbing (1988).

## **RESULTS OF ANALYSIS**

### **Measurement Model Assessment**

Following the approach of Fornell and Larcker (1981), assessing the reliability and validity of the measurement model is a necessary step before testing the hypothesised relationships. The reliability of the measurement scales was assessed through indicator loadings, internal consistency reliability using Cronbach's alpha, Composite reliability ( $\rho_A$ ), and  $\rho_C$ . As presented in Table 3, all indicator loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair *et al.*, 2019; Mazengo & Mwaifyusi, 2021), ranging from 0.748 to 0.905. This indicates strong individual item reliability. Furthermore, Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.753 to 0.944, composite reliability ( $\rho_A$ ) ranged from 0.754 to 0.949, and  $\rho_C$  values ranged from 0.844 to 0.955, all well above the minimum acceptable level of 0.70. These results demonstrate strong internal consistency reliability across all constructs.

Both convergent and discriminant validity were examined to evaluate the construct validity of the measurement model. Convergent validity was assessed using Average Variance Extracted (AVE). As shown in Table 3, all

AVE values exceeded the threshold of 0.50, with values ranging from 0.574 to 0.781. This confirms that a substantial amount of variance in the observed indicators is explained by their respective latent constructs, thus supporting convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

**Table 3: Assessment of Reliability and Convergent Validity**

Item	Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	rho_A	rho_C	AVE
Brand awareness					
AW1	0.854	0.932	0.934	0.946	0.746
AW2	0.873				
AW3	0.898				
AW4	0.831				
AW5	0.871				
AW6	0.853				
Brand attitude					
ATT1	0.899	0.944	0.949	0.955	0.781
ATT2	0.889				
ATT3	0.892				
ATT4	0.833				
ATT5	0.887				
ATT6	0.901				
Brand reputation					
REP1	0.766	0.909	0.910	0.933	0.736
REP2	0.905				
REP3	0.863				
REP4	0.877				
REP5	0.873				
Customer satisfaction					
SAT1	0.895	0.857	0.862	0.913	0.777
SAT2	0.890				
SAT3	0.859				
Brand performance					
PER1	0.749	0.753	0.754	0.844	0.574
PER2	0.756				
PER3	0.748				
PER4	0.777				

AVE: Average Variance Extracted

Discriminant validity was evaluated using both the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. According to the Fornell-Larcker criterion, discriminant validity is established when the square root of

each construct's AVE is greater than the corresponding inter-construct correlations. As reported in Table 4, all constructs met this criterion. Moreover, HTMT values (shown in parentheses in Table 4) were below the recommended cut-off value of 0.85 (Henseler *et al.*, 2015), further confirming discriminant validity among the constructs. Therefore, the measurement model demonstrated acceptable levels of reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, indicating that the model fits the data well and is suitable for structural model testing.

**Table 4: Assessment of Discriminant Validity**

	ATT	AW	PER	REP	SAT
ATT	0.884 <sup>a</sup>				
AW	0.663 (0.707) <sup>b</sup>	0.864 <sup>a</sup>			
PER	0.546 (0.643) <sup>b</sup>	0.580 (0.690) <sup>b</sup>	0.758 <sup>a</sup>		
REP	0.455 (0.489) <sup>b</sup>	0.471 (0.512) <sup>b</sup>	0.510 (0.615)	0.858 <sup>a</sup>	
SAT	-0.405 (0.445) <sup>b</sup>	-0.456 (0.510) <sup>b</sup>	-0.370 (0.459) <sup>b</sup>	-0.291 (0.325) <sup>b</sup>	0.881 <sup>a</sup>

aFornell-Larcker (AVE).

bHTMT ratio.

AVE: Average Variance Extracted; HTMT: Heterotrait-Monotrait.

### Results of Hypotheses Testing

The results of hypothesis testing are presented in Table 5 and Figure 2. This entailed examining the hypothesised path relationships, the magnitude of effect sizes ( $f^2$ ),  $p$ -values and  $t$ -statistics, Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and coefficients of determination of the endogenous latent constructs ( $R^2$ ). (Hair *et al.*, 2019). VIF values were used to assess multicollinearity, and all values fell below the recommended threshold of 5, indicating no multicollinearity issues among the predictor constructs. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) for brand performance was 0.459, showing that approximately 45.9% of the variance in brand performance was jointly explained by brand awareness, brand attitude, brand reputation, and the respective interaction effects.

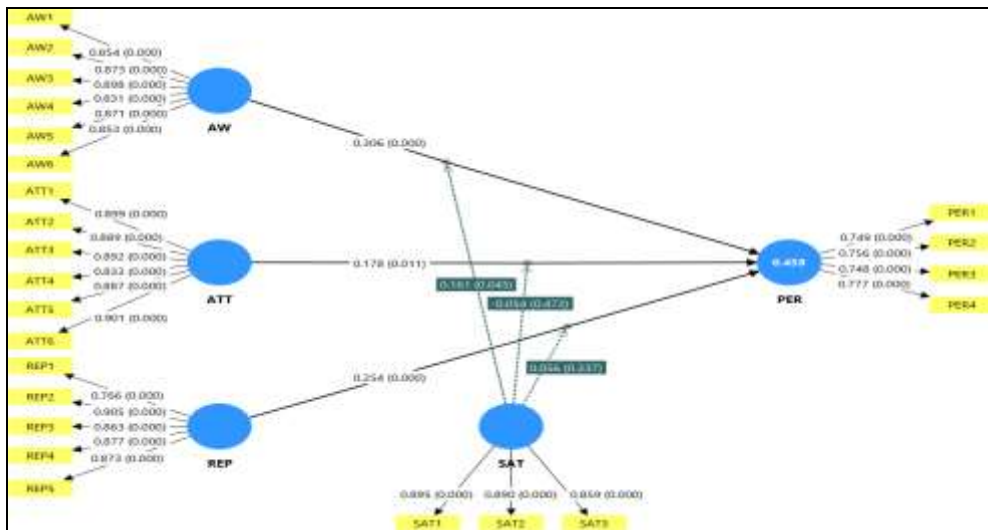


Figure 2: Structural Model

The results of the structural model evaluation are summarised in Table 5. As hypothesised, brand awareness exhibited a statistically significant and positive effect on brand performance ( $\beta = 0.306$ ,  $t = 4.159$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), thereby supporting H<sub>1</sub>. The effect size was moderate ( $f^2 = 0.083$ ), indicating a meaningful contribution to the variance explained in brand performance. Similarly, brand attitude was positively and significantly related to brand performance ( $\beta = 0.178$ ,  $t = 2.552$ ,  $p = 0.011$ ), supporting H<sub>2</sub>, though the effect size was relatively small ( $f^2 = 0.030$ ). In line with H<sub>3</sub>, brand reputation also demonstrated a significant and positive influence on brand performance ( $\beta = 0.254$ ,  $t = 4.260$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), with a moderate effect size ( $f^2 = 0.086$ ), suggesting its substantial role in shaping brand outcomes.

Table 5: Results from Hypothesis Test

Hypotheses	Path	Path coefficient	t-value	p values	Effect size (f <sup>2</sup> )	Remarks
H <sub>1</sub>	AW → PER	0.306	4.159	0.000	0.083	Accepted
H <sub>2</sub>	ATT → PER	0.178	2.552	0.011	0.030	Accepted
H <sub>3</sub>	REP → PER	0.254	4.260	0.000	0.086	Accepted
H <sub>4a</sub>	SAT x AW → PER	0.161	2.023	0.043	0.021	Accepted
H <sub>4b</sub>	SAT x ATT → PER	-0.054	0.718	0.473	0.003	Rejected
H <sub>4c</sub>	SAT x REP → PER	0.056	0.961	0.337	0.004	Rejected

Note:

AW: Brand awareness; ATT: Brand attitude; REP: Brand reputation; SAT: Customer satisfaction; PER: Brand performance.

To test the moderating role of customer satisfaction, three interaction terms were included in the model, as presented in Table 5. The results revealed that customer satisfaction significantly moderated the relationship between brand awareness and brand performance ( $\beta = 0.161$ ,  $t = 2.023$ ,  $p = 0.043$ ), supporting H<sub>4a</sub>. However, customer satisfaction did not significantly moderate the relationship between brand attitude and brand performance ( $\beta = -0.054$ ,  $t = 0.718$ ,  $p = 0.473$ ), nor between brand reputation and brand performance ( $\beta = 0.056$ ,  $t = 0.961$ ,  $p = 0.337$ ), leading to the rejection of H<sub>4b</sub> and H<sub>4c</sub>, respectively. The effect sizes for the rejected moderation paths were negligible ( $f^2 < 0.01$ ), suggesting minimal practical significance.

## DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

In the increasingly competitive and dynamic landscape of the Tanzanian telecommunication industry, understanding how brand-specific resources translate into superior brand performance has become crucial (Matonya 2018). While prior literature underscores the significance of brand attributes such as awareness, attitude, and reputation, empirical evidence remains inconclusive, especially in developing country contexts (Mmasi and Mwaifyusi, 2021). This study contributes to this growing area by examining not only the direct effects of these brand elements on brand performance but also how customer satisfaction moderates these relationships, drawing from the RBV and EDT.

In the context of the Tanzanian telecommunication industry, the results are consistent with RBV theory. The study shows a positive and significant relationship between brand awareness and brand performance (H<sub>1</sub>). This supports the view that brand awareness functions as a valuable and rare intangible resource that enhances customer recall, visibility, and performance (Liu *et al.*, 2020). This result aligns with findings by Widodo and Rakhmawati (2021); Razak *et al.*, (2020); Anees-ur-Rehman *et al.*, (2017); Cahyani and Sutedjo (2022), who report a positive and significant effect of awareness on performance. In contrast, studies by Hultman *et al.*, (2021); Chen and Chang (2011) find this relationship to be statistically insignificant. This discrepancy may stem from contextual differences. In emerging markets like Tanzania, where brand differentiation and loyalty are still evolving within the telecommunication sector, brand awareness contributes to increased brand performance.

The study also confirms that brand attitude significantly influences brand performance (H<sub>2</sub>). This finding supports earlier research by Foroudi (2019); Liu *et al.*, (2020); Mmasi and Mwaifyusi (2021), who find that favourable brand attitudes drive customer loyalty and positively influence brand

performance. These results, however, contradict the findings of Paul & Bhakar (2018); Yang and Wang, (2010), who report a negative relationship. In this study, positive brand attitudes contribute to enhanced brand performance among telecommunication companies.

Moreover, the study provides strong support for a significant positive relationship between brand reputation and brand performance (H<sub>3</sub>). This outcome is consistent with the work of Ledikwe and Roberts-Lombard (2019); Gonzalez-Rodriguez *et al.*, (2021); Kucharska (2019), who argue that a trustworthy and reputable brand enhances credibility and stakeholder loyalty. However, it contrasts with the findings of Patker and Mateen (2016); Koh *et al.* (2009), who report either negative or insignificant effects. These contrasting results may arise from differences in context or methodological design. In this study, brand reputation plays a crucial role in strengthening brand performance among Tanzanian telecommunication companies.

Importantly, this study extends prior work by examining the moderating effect of customer satisfaction on the relationships between brand attributes and performance. Results show that customer satisfaction positively moderates the relationship between brand awareness and brand performance (H<sub>4a</sub>). This finding suggests that the positive effect of brand awareness on brand performance becomes stronger when customers are satisfied. In other words, while brand awareness alone enhances brand performance by increasing visibility, recall, and customer familiarity, its impact is significantly amplified when customers are also satisfied with the services they receive (Shi *et al.*, 2022). In the Tanzanian context, telecommunication companies that not only maintain high levels of brand awareness but also ensure customer satisfaction are more likely to experience improved brand performance. Satisfied customers are more inclined to engage positively with well-known brands, recommend them to others, and remain loyal, thereby contributing to increased brand performance (Alwan & Alshurideh, 2022).

On the other hand, customer satisfaction does not significantly moderate the relationship between brand attitude and performance (H<sub>4b</sub>), nor between brand reputation and performance (H<sub>4c</sub>). This inconsistency may lie in the inherent nature of brand attitude and brand reputation, which are often regarded as relatively stable, deeply ingrained constructs. Once consumers form strong evaluative or affective associations with a brand, these perceptions tend to persist over time and are less susceptible to short-term fluctuations in satisfaction levels (Liu *et al.*, 2020; Kucharska, 2019). In this study, the influence of brand attitude and brand reputation on brand



performance among Tanzanian telecommunication companies works independently of customer satisfaction.

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY**

### **Theoretical Implications**

This study makes several notable theoretical implications. First, it advances RBV theory by empirically validating brand awareness, attitude, and reputation as intangible assets that satisfy the VRIN criteria and significantly influence performance in Tanzania telecommunication companies. The inclusion of these brand elements as internal capabilities provides further evidence of their strategic value in driving competitive advantage. Second, by integrating EDT into the RBV, the study offers a more holistic view of brand performance by considering how customer satisfaction, a post-consumption evaluation, moderates resource-performance relationships. This integrative framework addresses a theoretical gap in existing branding literature, which often isolates internal resources from customer evaluations. Moreover, this study adds to the limited body of knowledge in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in Tanzania, where empirical work on strategic branding remains scarce. It reinforces the importance of examining branding concepts within developing countries to ensure the broader applicability of existing theories.

### **Managerial Implications**

From a managerial perspective, the findings offer practical guidance for branding and marketing strategists operating in the Tanzanian telecommunication sector. First, managers should prioritise investments in brand awareness initiatives, such as advertising, sponsorships, and digital presence, as awareness shows the strongest effect on performance and is further amplified by customer satisfaction. Second, developing favourable brand attitudes through consistent brand messaging, customer engagement, and emotional branding can directly enhance brand performance. Although satisfaction does not moderate attitude, its direct effect implies it is a core driver of performance. Third, brand reputation should be carefully managed through transparency, corporate social responsibility, and service quality. While reputation contributes significantly to performance, its interaction with satisfaction is not statistically significant, suggesting that reputation operates independently and should be safeguarded as a long-term strategic asset.

Moreover, telecommunication companies are encouraged to continuously monitor and improve customer satisfaction, especially in relation to awareness-building efforts. Given that satisfaction enhances the conversion of awareness into performance, customer experience management should be integrated into marketing and brand strategies. By understanding which brand

attributes are most sensitive to satisfaction levels, managers can better allocate resources and optimise performance outcomes.

## **LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

Despite its contributions, this study is not without limitations, which offer avenues for future research. First, the study uses a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to draw causal inferences. Future research should adopt longitudinal designs to assess changes in brand performance over time and to better understand the temporal dynamics between brand attributes and customer satisfaction. Second, the research is confined to the telecommunication industry in Dar es Salaam, which, although representative, may limit generalisability to other sectors or regions in Tanzania. Future studies could extend the scope to include comparative analyses across industries or between urban and rural contexts to enhance external validity. Moreover, while this study focuses on customer satisfaction as a moderator, future studies may explore alternative moderating or mediating variables, such as brand trust, customer loyalty, or perceptions of service quality, to uncover more complex interaction effects. Further examination of cultural and socio-economic factors also reveals unique patterns in branding effectiveness in emerging markets.

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