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**DISSERTATION**

**THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON VODAFONE'S  
INTERNATIONALISATION IN UKRAINE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS ON  
THE COUNTRY'S TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY**



**Part 1: Dissertation Proposal**

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## Abstract

The aim of this report is to answer the following two research questions: how has the internationalization of Vodafone in Ukraine been affected by COVID-19 and what are the effects of the lockdown in Ukraine triggered by COVID-19 on the country's telecommunications industry? It is important to address these two questions to understand how the globalised environment and the local economy have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic since anything on such a scale has never occurred before in the modern history of human civilization. To answer those two questions the author of the report will perform a thorough analysis of Vodafone's business activity in Ukraine before and during the times of the COVID-19 pandemic. The author will also research the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the local telecommunication industry by gathering the data needed from the business sources located in Ukraine. For that purpose, the field trip to Ukraine will be arranged. The location of the trip in Ukraine was selected as the Ivano-Frankivsk region not just because it is the author's place of birth, but also because it is a place of Bukovel Ski Resort, one of the biggest resorts in Europe and the best one in Ukraine, confirms Skiresort.info (2021).

## Introduction

As mentioned above, the purpose of this research report is to study and evaluate the effect of COVID-19 on Vodafone's internationalization in Ukraine and its implications for the country's telecommunications industry in general. Therefore, the author of this research proposed two key research questions:

1. How has the internationalisation of Vodafone in Ukraine been affected by COVID-19 in general and the Ivano-Frankivsk region in particular?
2. What are the implications of the lockdown in Ukraine on the telecommunications industry in general and in the Ivano-Frankivsk region in particular?

One of the most important aspects of a thesis, dissertation or research paper is the correct formulation of the aims and objectives (Discoverphds, 2021). This is because our goals and objectives will dictate the scale, breadth and direction that our research will eventually take. A successful set of aims and objectives will give the research

emphasis and clarification to our readers, with our aims indicating what needs to be accomplished and our objectives indicating how this will be achieved, according to (Discoverphds, 2021). The aims of the research project were already mentioned briefly in this paper's abstract, here is a more detailed description:

1. This research is required to establish the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the globalisation processes worldwide, that is why.
2. To do that, the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on Vodafone's internationalisation in Ukraine will be investigated, researched and analysed, that is what the research is about.
3. The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the telecommunications industry in Ukraine will also be investigated as the second part of the research aim of the study.
4. The research will be performed by investigating, exploring and analysing the objects of the study as it recommended by Saunders et al. (2007).

Presented below the list of the study objectives, identified by the author of the research, based on the suggestions provided by Saunders et al. (2007):

|                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Research question 1:</b> How has the internationalisation of Vodafone in Ukraine been affected by COVID-19 in general and the Ivano-Frankivsk region in particular? | <b>Research question 2:</b> What are the implications of the lockdown in Ukraine on the telecommunications industry in general and in the Ivano-Frankivsk region in particular? |
| <b>Study objectives</b>                                                                                                                                                | <b>Study objectives</b>                                                                                                                                                         |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vodafone's external and internal environmental scans.</li> </ul>                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ukraine's telecommunications industry analysis.</li> </ul>                                                                               |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ukraine's market PEST Analysis.</li> </ul>                                                                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary data collected from telecommunications industry businesses in Ivano-Frankivsk region, including Bukovel area.</li> </ul>         |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Primary data collected from Vodafone's franchises in Ivano-Frankivsk region, including Bukovel area.</li> </ul>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secondary data collected (documentary, multiple choice, surveys).</li> </ul>                                                             |

|                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary data collected (documentary, multiple choice, surveys).</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arranged interviews with local administration representatives to gather more primary data.</li> </ul> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

**Table 1:** Study objectives for the dissertation proposal, based on sources: (Author's research) and (Saunders, et al., 2007)

## Literature review

In this part of the paper, the author will summarize the sources of literature that will be identified as the most relevant and critical to the study research. The book *Research Methods for Business Students*, written by Mark N.K. Saunders and co-authors Philip Lewis and Adrian Thornhill (Saunders, et al., 2007), has already been mentioned in this report and will be used in the dissertation in the future. The next book to be mentioned is *Doing a Successful Research Project: using Qualitative or Quantitative Methods* by Martin Davies and Nathan Hughes (Davies & Hughes, 2014) will be helpful in the use of methodology and methods in the research process. Book *Exploring Corporate Strategy: Text and Cases* by Gerry Johnson and co-authors Kevan Scholes and Richard Whittington (Johnson, et al., 2008) will be applied to explain the international strategy, together with *International Business: Competing in the Global Marketplace*, book written by Charles W L Hill (Hill, 2012). Another useful book is named *International Business: Environments and Operations* by John D. Daniels and co-authors Lee H. Radebaugh and Daniel P. Sullivan (Daniels, et al., 2015) will be helping the author to describe and understand international business and globalisation. In addition to this list of the essential literature, some publications from the MarketLine website such as *Global Telecommunication Services: June 2020* (MarketLine, 2020), *Ukraine: In-depth PEST insights* (MarketLine, 2020), *Telecommunication Services in Ukraine* (MarketLine, 2015) and *COMPANY PROFILE: Vodafone Group Plc* (MarketLine, 2020) will be used to obtain some vital information towards the study objectives. Various websites having some relation to the research topic also will be mentioned during the process of investigation.

## Methodology and Methods

The methodology of the research will be combining two approaches: quantitative and qualitative. “The purpose of quantitative research is to discover answer to questions through the application of scientific procedures.” (Davies & Hughes, 2014, p. 9). “Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world.” (Davies & Hughes, 2014, p. 9). In other words, the quantitative method is represented in figures and graphs. Used to test or refute hypotheses and conclusions. This form of research can be used to create generalizable facts about the subject. Popular quantitative methods include experiments, findings reported as numbers, and closed-ended surveys (Streefkerk, 2021). On the other hand, qualitative analysis is expressed in terms. It is used to grasp ideas, feelings and experiences. This form of research allows gathering in-depth insights into subjects that are not well known. Popular qualitative approaches include open-ended interviews, word-based observations, and literature reviews that discuss concepts and theories (Streefkerk, 2021). Methods for data collection will be used by the author: interviews, questionnaires and observations.

## Procedures of Data Analysis and Anticipated Results

The process of Data Analysis can be displayed as a diagram presented below:

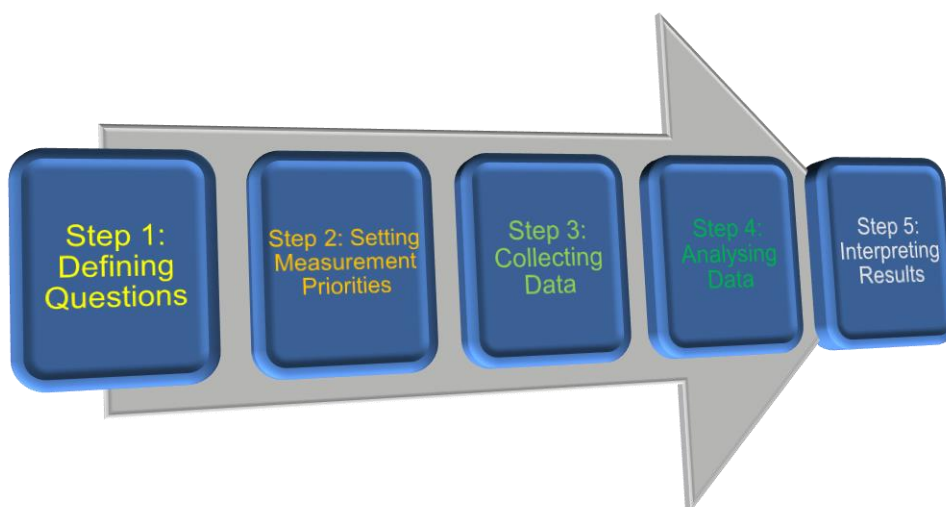


**Diagram 1:** Five steps of Data Analysis, based on source: (Dillard, 2017)

**Step 1 – Defining Questions:** Questions should be observable, simple and brief. They must be designed to either qualify or disqualify possible solutions to a particular issue or opportunity (Dillard, 2017).

**Step 2 – Setting Measurement Priorities:** Pounds to measure sales and profits, time frames (year, quarter or month), percentage to compare “yes” or “no” in questionnaires (Dillard, 2017).

**Step 3 – Collecting Data:** Before collecting new data, the author must decide which information may be obtained from current databases or sources on hand. The file storage to be allocated and naming method to be established. This saves time and prevents from gathering the same details twice. The author shall keep the accumulated data organized in a log with the collection dates and to add any source notes during the data storage process (Dillard, 2017).

**Step 4 – Analysing Data:** To manipulate data in different ways. SPSS software will be very useful in this case (Saunders, et al., 2007).

**Step 5 – Interpreting Results:** Analysed data must satisfy those three questions:

1. Are the data reacting to the original question? How is that?
2. Will the data help to protect against any objection? How is that?
3. Are there any restrictions on the findings that have not been taken into consideration? (Dillard, 2017).

## **Ethical Approach**

A number of ethical principles should be considered when performing a master's level dissertation research (Laerd Dissertation, 2021). The author summarised them in three main principles:

1. *The risk of harm should be minimised:* A dissertation study should not be dangerous to the participants. Where there is a risk that the participants may be harmed or placed in a position of discomfort, there must be a good explanation for this (Laerd Dissertation, 2021). Following types of harm cannot be used towards the participants of the research: physical harm, psychological distress, discomfort, social disadvantage and invasion of the privacy (Laerd Dissertation, 2021).

2. *Gaining informed consent*: The principle of informed consent is one of the underpinnings of research ethics. Informed consent means that participants can recognize that (a) they engage in research and (b) what research expects of them. Such details may include the purpose of the study, the methods used, the potential effects of the research, as well as the associated criteria (Laerd Dissertation, 2021).
3. *Confidentiality and anonymity*: The protection of privacy and confidentiality of study participants is another functional aspect of research ethics. Participants would normally only be able to provide voluntary information, in particular information of a private or sensitive nature, if the researcher decides to maintain the information confidential (Laerd Dissertation, 2021).

### **Gantt Chart and Limitations**

“As part of this section of their proposal, many researchers find it useful to produce a schedule for their research using a Gantt chart. Developed by Henry Gantt in 1917, this provides a simple visual representation of the tasks or activities that make up your research project, each being plotted against a time line.” (Saunders, et al., 2007, p. 69). Presented below is the typical Gantt chart for the research project.

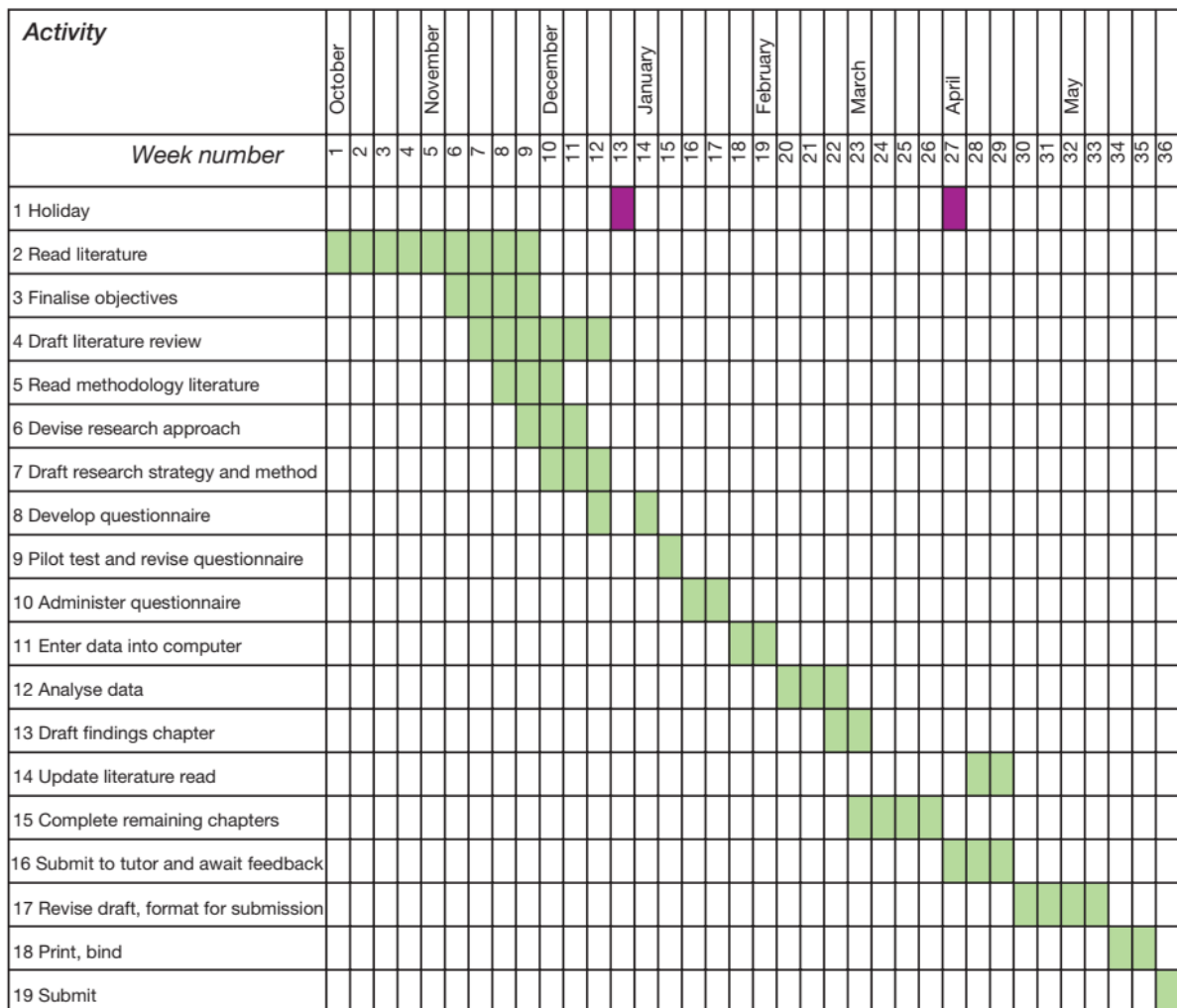


**Figure 1:** Gantt chart for the research plan, based on source: (Saunders, et al., 2007)

In regard to possible limitations, the author can add the Ukrainian laws, local customs and traditions, logistics and problems with getting some information from local administration representatives.

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