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## FACTORS AFFECTING THE SALES REDUCTION FOR SLT 4G LTE PRODUCT IN SLT MOBITEL TRINCOMALEE BRANCH

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### ABSTRACT

The organization success and the failures depend on the number of sales that achieved by the organization per month. This article is about the research investigate about the factors behind the sales reduction of 4G LTE product in SLT Mobitel Trincomalee branch. The research was conducted among the customers across the Trincomalee region. Researcher has identified Product quality, Price, Brand competition, Promotion, Customer relationship as the independent variable. A mixed-method approach was employed, incorporating both primary and secondary data collection methods. Primary data were gathered through surveys and depth interviews with a sample of 451 customers, selected using simple random sampling from a population of 4,500. Secondary data, including sales reports and disconnection data, were also analyzed. For the data analysis part, the researcher has used SPSS tool. The study concludes that SLT Mobitel must enhance service quality, reconsider pricing strategies, and increase promotional efforts to regain market share and improve future sales performance. The insights gained from this research provide actionable recommendations for SLT Mobitel to better align with customer expectations and enhance their competitive position in the telecommunications industry.

**Keywords:** *Sales reduction, Sales, SLT Mobitel, Telecommunication, Trincomalee*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka Telecom Mobitel (SLT-M), a leading provider in the telecommunications industry. This research focuses on identifying the factors contributing to the decline in sales of SLT 4G LTE broadband services in the Trincomalee region. The study examines both organizational and environmental factors that impact sales, aiming to provide actionable recommendations to improve sales performance and meet monthly targets. The findings are expected to offer valuable insights for SLT Mobitel and other companies in the telecommunications sector to better understand customer expectations and market dynamics, ultimately helping to enhance customer satisfaction and develop effective marketing strategies.



### 1.1 Research Question and Research Objective

Researchers raise the following research question and set research objective as mentioned in Table 1.

**Table1: Research Question and Research Objective**

Research Question	Research Objective
1. What are the organizational factors which are affecting the sales of SLT-LTE?	1. To identify the factors affecting the LTE sales reduction in SLT Mobitel Trincomalee Branch.
2. What are the environmental factors which are affecting the sales of SLT-LTE?	2. To determine the customer expectation in the product SLT LTE.
3. What will be the solution to increase the Sales of SLT-LTE?	3. To recommend ways to improve / overcome the sales reduction and achieve the monthly sales target in the company.

### 1.2 Significance of the study

This research not only enhances the researcher's skills, knowledge, and ability to conduct effective marketing research but also provides valuable insights into the factors influencing sales in the telecommunications industry. The findings enable SLT Mobitel's Trincomalee branch to address the sales decline of its LTE product by understanding customer behavior and perception. This understanding can guide the implementation of targeted marketing strategies to drive sales growth and achieve monthly targets. Furthermore, companies in similar industries can benefit from the insights to better align their offerings with customer expectations. Readers will gain a comprehensive understanding of the telecommunication market and the critical factors impacting product sales.



## 2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### *Product Quality*

There are many different definitions and dimensions have been found in the academic literature related to product quality. Quality is a multifaceted and complex concept. In brief, Quality can be defined as the ability of a product to meet or exceed customer's expectations (Waters & Waters, 2008).

### *Product Price*

Price is one of the main factors playing an important role in the distribution in the service in the market. The product or service's success also depending on the pricing factor of the service and market. Hence, Setting the price for a product is the difficult thing. (Foxall, 1949).

Price is one of the elements in the marketing mix, which plays a heavy role in the service as marketers use price as a communication tool to communicate with the customers. (Dickson and Sawyer, 1990; Monroe and Lee, 1999; Vanhuele and Dreze, 2002).

### *Customer Perception*

Article by Jessica Bruce (2022) concluded that the customer opinion found on ratings and reviews can help the businesses to attract more customers, increase conversation rates, encourage their brand, and take an extra leap to grow productivity and sales.

Customers are looking for customer service staffs with high responsive and problem-solving skills to solve their problems with a short period of time when accessing high-tech providers (Santouridis and Trivellas, 2010). (Abdolvand et al 2006) emphasis that the internet service providers need to provide instant superior customer support in order to enhance their service quality and to create loyal customer base.

### *Promotion*

According to Philip Kotler – “Sales promotion consists of a diverse collection of incentive tools, mostly short-term, designed to stimulate quicker and/or greater purchase of particular product/services by consumers or the trade.” Also, Kotler (2003) Claims that while advertising is used as a long-term technique for increasing the brand potential value, Sales promotions are commonly used in the organization to create a short-term demand for the products.

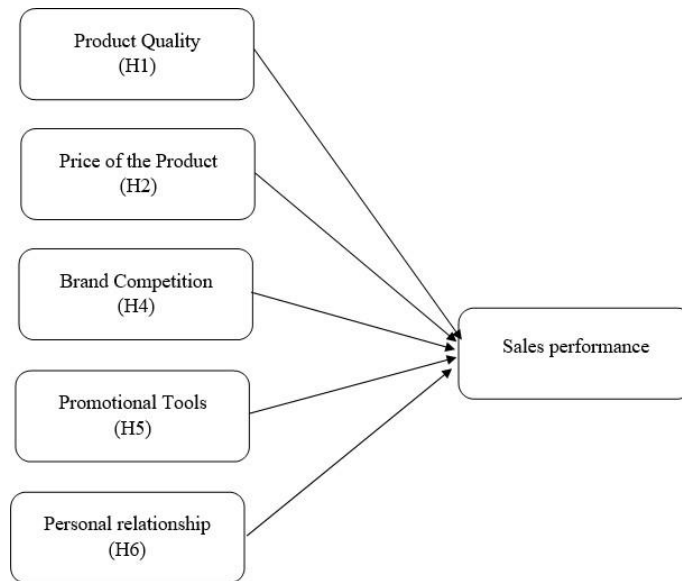
As a promotional strategy, advertising serves as a major tool in creating product awareness and condition the mind of a potential consumer to take eventual purchase decision (Kotler., Keller, K.& Koshy, A.,2009)



## 2.1 Research Framework

The research identifies five independent variable product quality, pricing, brand competition, promotional tools, and personal relationships—that influence the sales volume of SLT Mobitel’s 4G LTE product. The conceptual framework, developed from literature review evidence, explores the relationship between these variables and the product's sales decline.

**Figure 1:**



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

**(Source: Variables Taken from Review of Literature)**



## 2.2 Operationalization

**Table 2:**

<b>VARIABLES</b>	<b>INDICATORS</b>	<b>QUESTIONS</b>
<b>Quality of the product</b>	Product Safety	04
	Product efficiency	
	Product Loyalty	
<b>Price of the product</b>	Affordable price	04
	Benefits to value	
	Ability to pay	
<b>Brand competition</b>	Competitor Product	03
	Competitor pricing	
<b>Promotional tools</b>	Promotional tools	03
	Promotional Budget	
<b>Personal relationship</b>	Customer Personality	03
	Frequency of communication	

**(Source: Variables Taken from Review of Literature)**



### 3. METHODOLOGY

The researcher utilized both primary and secondary data to ensure accurate findings. Primary data was collected through questionnaires distributed via Google Forms to a sample of 451 SLT 4G LTE customers in Trincomalee and through face-to-face or virtual interviews with SLT staff. Secondary data sources included 4G LTE sales and disconnection reports, SLT Mobitel's annual report, and relevant literature. A probability random sampling method was applied to select respondents, ensuring equal representation. Data analysis was performed using SPSS, employing descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis to derive meaningful insights into the factors impacting sales.

Sample Location	Trincomalee
Population	23000
Sample Frame	4500
Sample	451
Sampling Technique	Simple random sampling
Data collection Approach	Questionnaires, Depth interviews, Sales reports
Method of Contact	Social Medias, Phone calls, Emails
Data analysis type	Quantitative

**Figure 2 : Research Methodology**



## 5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDING

The study identified key factors contributing to the sales decline of SLT 4G LTE in Trincomalee. The majority of users were adults aged 18 to 50, with females representing 57.87% of the customer base, primarily due to their hybrid work-from-home patterns and household responsibilities. Analysis revealed that 49% of customers preferred competitors such as Dialog and Airtel over SLT Mobitel, citing better pricing, faster connection speeds, and superior service quality as primary reasons. Additionally, only 16% of respondents exclusively used SLT Mobitel, with the rest opting for alternative providers or parallel usage of multiple ISPs.

Customer dissatisfaction was primarily driven by frequent signal issues, particularly during power cuts, which disrupted daily activities such as work and education. Respondent's highlighted concerns over declining service quality compared to the early stages of SLT 4G LTE. Furthermore, pricing received mixed reactions; while 53% of respondents were neutral about pricing, others felt the service offered insufficient value for the cost.

Customer service emerged as a significant pain point, with reports of unresponsive staff, lack of knowledge about services, and delays in resolving technical issues. These shortcomings, coupled with internal competition from SLT's fiber connection product, have adversely impacted the promotion and sales of 4G LTE services.

However, advertising was found to have a positive influence, with respondents acknowledging its role in raising awareness and driving purchase decisions. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of promotional efforts varied across demographic groups, with digital platforms underutilized for reaching Tamil-speaking customers.

Overall, the findings underscore the need for SLT Mobitel to address critical issues in service quality, customer support, and network reliability. A strategic focus on competitive pricing, effective advertising, and equitable promotion through digital channels can help regain customer trust and enhance sales performance.



## 6. CONCLUSION

The study found that several factors contributed to the sales decline of SLT 4G LTE in Trincomalee. Customers were dissatisfied with SLT Mobitel's responsiveness and service quality, which failed to meet their expectations. Economic challenges, including the rising cost of telecommunications due to tax increases and foreign currency shortages, also played a significant role in the decline. These issues affected the company's ability to import quality routers and maintain service standards.

Additionally, SLT Mobitel's lack of promotional activities and the strong competition from other providers like Dialog and Airtel further impacted sales. Customers expressed a preference for competing brands due to better pricing, connection speeds, and customer service. To reverse the sales decline, SLT Mobitel must enhance service quality, improve customer service, and focus on effective promotional strategies, including optimizing digital channels. By understanding and addressing these factors, the company can better allocate resources and increase future sales performance.

## 7. LIMITATION OF THIS STUDY

This study faces several limitations that may influence its outcomes and conclusions. As the researcher is not affiliated with SLT Mobitel, accessing data sources posed challenges, with some employees reluctant to share information due to service-related sensitivities. Customers may also hesitate to disclose personal data or participate in the Google Forms survey due to privacy concerns or unfamiliarity with the technology. Additionally, the busy schedules of SLT staff made arranging depth interviews difficult. The research timeline of three months further constrained the collection and analysis of both primary and secondary data.



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