

# **Strengthening Sri Lanka Telecom Mobitel PLC's Corporate Strategy to Drive Customer Satisfaction**

**Dr.T.L.Vannarajah**

*<sup>1</sup>Dr.T.L.Vannarajah Lecturer Advanced Technological Institute, Jaffna*

**Abstract** - With the rapid advancement of customer relationship management, it is evident that customer satisfaction plays a critical role in the telecommunication industry. SLT Mobitel PLC could substantially benefit from adopting a proven and systematic consumer satisfaction model. However, the key challenge for the organization is to implement and maintain a consistent framework for measuring and enhancing customer satisfaction across its business functions, market segments, and geographic regions. Positioning customer satisfaction as a core element of corporate strategy has the potential to yield significant economic benefits. Satisfied customers form the foundation of SLT Mobitel PLC's success, as they contribute to repeat purchases, brand loyalty, and favorable word-of-mouth communication. Conversely, dissatisfaction among customers can impede business growth, since consumers represent the lifeline of the organization. Based on this analysis, it is recommended that SLT Mobitel PLC adopt a structured consumer satisfaction model to strengthen business development and enhance overall service quality. For the purpose of this study, the researcher selected 50 customers, with specific reference to SLT Mobitel PLC, through a purposive sampling method.

**Key words:** Customer satisfaction, Customer dissatisfaction, Corporate strategy

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Customer satisfaction has become a critical driver of success in the telecommunication industry. For SLT Mobitel PLC, setting clear goals for customer satisfaction ensures that efforts are directed effectively towards building a loyal and dependable customer base. Satisfied customers not only remain with the brand but also promote it through positive word-of-mouth, while dissatisfied customers quickly share their negative experiences on digital platforms, influencing wider audiences. A well-designed customer satisfaction strategy must address service-related issues, incorporate customer feedback, and go beyond meeting basic expectations. By empowering customers to share their opinions and suggestions, SLT Mobitel can identify weaknesses and continuously improve service quality. Retaining existing customers is as important as acquiring new ones, since research shows that even a 5% increase in retention

can raise profits by 25% to 95%. Therefore, customer satisfaction is both a survival factor and a growth opportunity.

In April 2024, SLT Mobitel introduced a new corporate strategy aimed at business expansion and reducing dissatisfaction (Andrado, 2024). While such strategic moves strengthen its market presence, the company must also focus on addressing service gaps directly through initiatives such as personalized services, product training, improved customer support, and value-added benefits (Scheck, 2023).

## **1.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT**

### **Why is SLT Mobitel PLC experiencing a decline in business among Sri Lankan customers?**

The problem arises from the company's insufficient attention to customer satisfaction. Failure to consistently provide courteous service, listen to customer concerns, and meet expectations has led to growing dissatisfaction. Customers increasingly share negative experiences on online platforms and social media, harming the company's reputation and competitiveness.

## **1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- What factors influence customer satisfaction in SLT Mobitel?
- How effective is SLT Mobitel's current corporate strategy?
- How does SLT Mobitel compare to competitors in service quality and pricing?
- How can SLT Mobitel improve customer service and support?
- What role does digital transformation play in enhancing customer experience?
- What strategic improvements can increase customer satisfaction?

## **1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

- Identify key factors influencing customer satisfaction.

- Evaluate the effectiveness of SLT Mobitel's current corporate strategy.
- Compare SLT Mobitel's strategy with competitors.
- Assess opportunities for improving customer service and support.
- Explore digital transformation to enhance customer experience.
- Recommend strategic improvements to increase customer satisfaction.

#### 1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In the modern telecommunication industry, customer satisfaction and loyalty are vital for sustainable growth. While satisfaction is essential, it does not guarantee loyalty; however, loyalty cannot exist without satisfaction. This study aims to provide SLT Mobitel PLC with a practical framework to improve its corporate strategy through enhanced customer satisfaction.

In the short term, the study highlights the current state of service quality, customer satisfaction, and loyalty, offering insights into why customers may feel dissatisfied and how the company can take corrective action (Discipio, 2023). In the long term, the findings emphasize the importance of regular survey-based feedback to guide operational decisions, improve facilities and service delivery, and ultimately exceed customer expectations. By focusing on customer satisfaction as a strategic priority, SLT Mobitel PLC can strengthen competitiveness, retain valuable customers, and secure sustainable growth in Sri Lanka's telecommunication sector.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. CORPORATE STRATEGY

Corporate strategy is the highest level of organizational planning, defining the company's overall objectives, directions, and the means of achieving them through strategic management activities. It represents a long-term, well-structured plan that guides the course of a business or organization. A strong corporate strategy establishes strategic goals, motivates employees to achieve them, and reinforces the organization's value. It outlines what needs to be done, when it should be accomplished, and the milestones required to track progress. At the same time, corporate strategy is a continuous process that must remain flexible to respond effectively to changing environmental conditions, such as market trends and competitive pressures (Anon., 2019).

Corporate strategy should encompass every aspect of the business and influence its entire product and service portfolio. This includes not only production and business direction—such as market, financial, and growth goals—but also the specific actions required to achieve them. Key considerations involve resource allocation, workforce skills, talent development, and the alignment of employee capabilities with organizational objectives (Anon., 2019).

In the modern context, consumer strategy is closely tied to technology. Advanced analytics, data management, and decision-making tools enable companies to better identify, understand, and engage with customers in more efficient ways. Examples include inbound channels such as contact centers, customer portals, and mobile applications, as well as systems supporting outbound communication (Chiu, 2016).

To be effective, communication and customer experiences must be seamlessly coordinated across multiple touchpoints. Delivering meaningful experiences requires integration across all channels and must address the entire customer lifecycle, rather than focusing only on isolated interactions.

### 2.2 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

Customer satisfaction refers to the sense of fulfillment customers experience when interacting with a company. In other words, it reflects the extent to which customers are content with their overall experiences and perceptions of the organization (Anon., n.d.).

Since customers initiate and complete all business transactions, they are often regarded as the “kings” of the market. They form the foundation of an organization's growth, reputation, and financial success. Therefore, businesses must strive to meet or exceed customer expectations to ensure satisfaction. When achieved, customer satisfaction contributes not only to organizational improvement but also to long-term competitiveness and sustainability (Ajith, 2024).

## 3. METHODOLOGY

Research methodology provides a systematic framework to analyze and address the problem under investigation. In this study, the primary objective is to identify the reasons behind customer dissatisfaction with SLT Mobitel PLC among Sri Lankan consumers in the telecommunication sector. Primary data have been collected and analyzed using appropriate procedures to gain insights into this issue.

This chapter outlines the strategies adopted for the study, the sampling procedure, the characteristics of the target population, and the sample size. It also highlights the development of the conceptual framework, which was based on insights from the literature review.

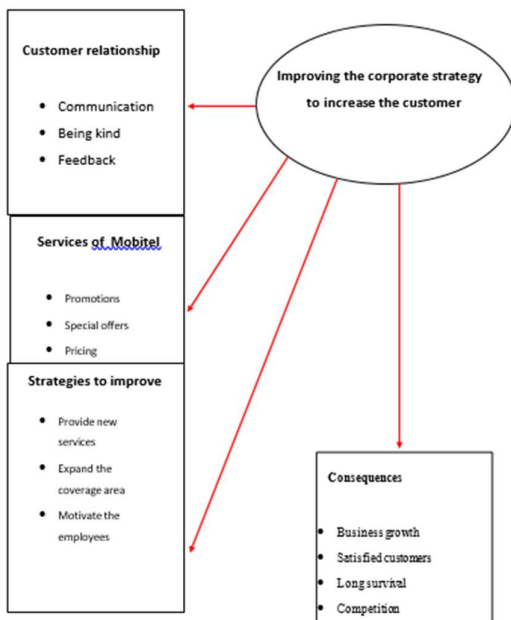
### 3.1 SAMPLING PROCEDURE

The research focuses on the Sri Lankan population, as the study aims to examine the causes of customer dissatisfaction and the resulting decline in SLT Mobitel PLC's business performance.

The study targeted individuals aged 15 years and above, including teenagers, young adults, adults, and the elderly. Both male and female participants were included to ensure gender representation. This approach allowed the researcher to determine which age groups contribute most significantly to the usage of telecommunication services. The final sample size consisted of 50 participants, all of whom were Sri Lankans.

A convenience sampling technique, a form of non-probability sampling, was employed in this study. This method was selected due to the ease of accessing participants who were readily available and willing to contribute to the research. Although non-random, this approach provided useful preliminary primary data for identifying the factors behind customer dissatisfaction and the business challenges faced by SLT Mobitel PLC.

### 3.2 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



### 3.3 Data Collection

This study is based on a primary data collection system, where the researcher distributed questionnaires to the selected sample population. The primary purpose of the questionnaires was to collect demographic and personal information, such as age group, social class, and other relevant characteristics, to better understand customer profiles. Since the aim of the study is to investigate the reasons for customer dissatisfaction with SLT Mobitel PLC and the resulting decline in business, primary data collection methods were essential for capturing customer perceptions of telecommunication services.

The questionnaire method was chosen as the main tool for data collection. Designed with a qualitative orientation, the instrument contained both closed-ended and open-ended questions. This allowed the researcher to obtain structured responses for analysis while also giving participants the opportunity to share their opinions in their own words.

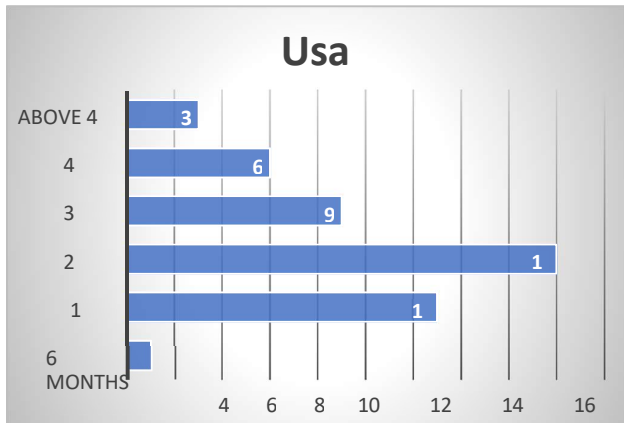
For clarity and structure, the questionnaire was divided into three sections:

- **Part A:** Collected participants' demographic and personal information.
- **Part B:** Contained closed-ended questions to gather data on customer perceptions and usage of telecommunication services.
- **Part C:** Included open-ended questions that allowed participants to express their personal views and experiences more freely.

This structure ensured that the data captured was both comprehensive and insightful, supporting the overall objectives of the research.

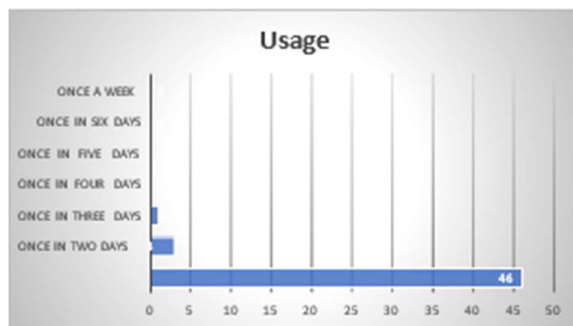
## 4. DATA ANALYSIS

Participants how long they are using telecommunication services form SLT Mobitel PLC



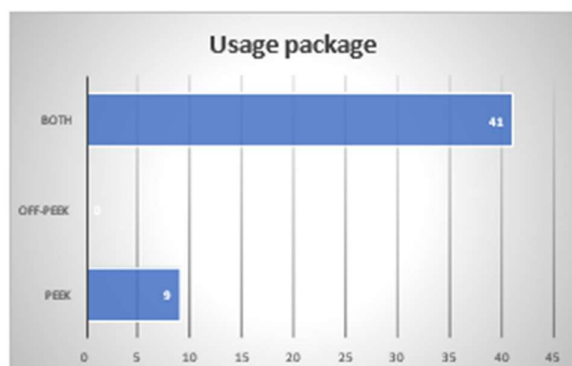
18 participants have been using the services for 2 years. 13 participants have been using for 1 year. 9 participants have been using for 3 years. 6 participants have been using the service for 4 years. 3 participants have been using the service for above 4 years. Only the one participant has been using for 6 months.

**participants, how often they use telecommunication**



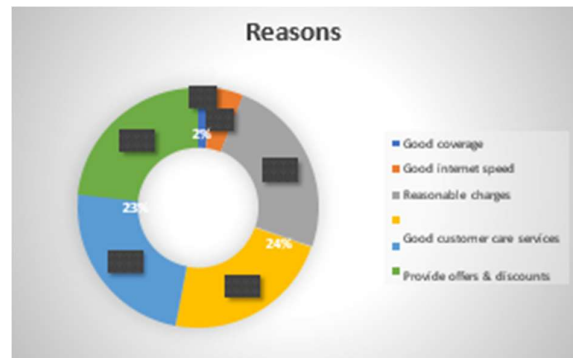
46 participants are using the service daily, 3 participants are using the service once in two days. Only a participant is using the service once in three days.

**usage of the package time**

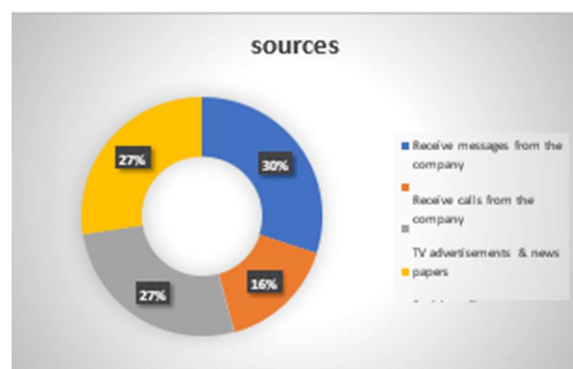


Both peek and off-peek are used by 41 participants and peek is only used by 9 participants. In off-peek there are no one using it.

**why participants chose SLT Mobitel PLC services**

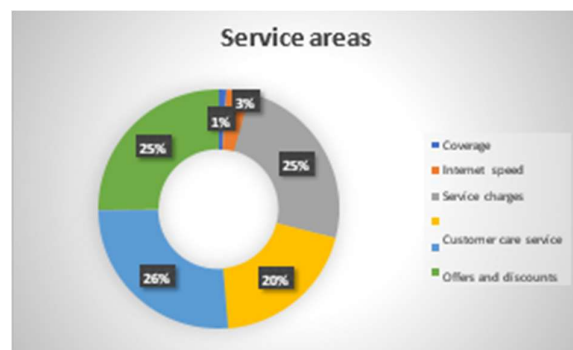


**Get to know about new services and special offers**



30% of the participants receive messages, 27% of the participants get to know from social media and TV advertisements & newspapers. Rest of the participants receive calls from the company.

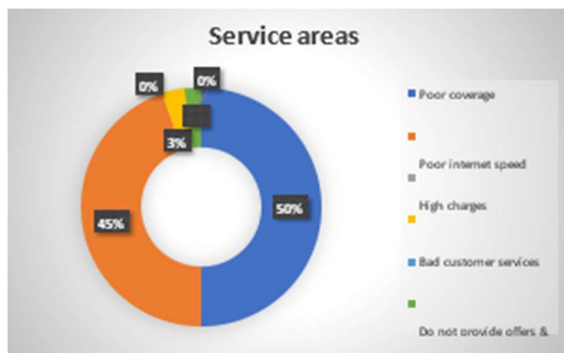
**More satisfied areas in SLT Mobitel PLC services**



26% of participants are satisfied with offers and discounts. 25% of participants are satisfied with safety and service

charges. 20% of the participants are satisfied with customer care service. Rest of the participants are satisfied with coverage and internet speed.

#### Dissatisfied areas in SLT Mobitel PLC services



50% of participants hate poor coverage, 45% they are dissatisfied with poor internet connection. Rest of the participants are dissatisfied with safety and bad customer services.

#### Participants who expect from the company



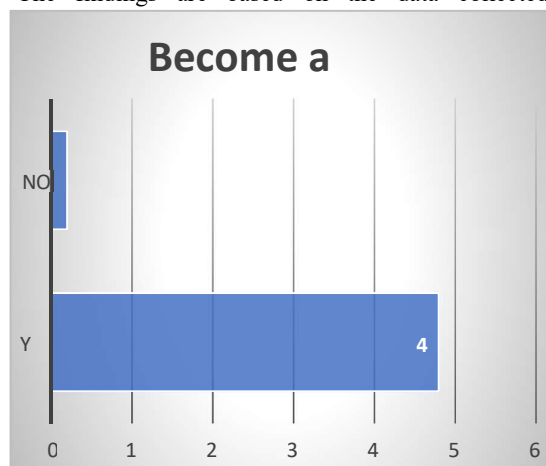
39% of the participants are expecting high level of coverage and 36% of the participants are expecting more internet speed. 12% participants are expecting good customer services. 8% and 5% participants are expecting more offers and more security level.

If the company solve the customer dissatisfaction and increase the satisfaction, participants who are the customers of the SLT Mobitel PLC to will become a loyal customer or not 48 participants answered that they will become a loyal customer and just 2 participants answered they will not. So, if majority of the participants said that they will be a

loyal customer if they consider about customer dissatisfaction and provide good solutions.

#### 5. Discussion of Findings

The findings are based on the data collected through



questionnaires that reflect customer perspectives regarding the use of telecommunication services from SLT Mobitel PLC. A total of 50 surveys were distributed among customers in the Colombo area. All 50 participants are active users of SLT Mobitel PLC services, including mobile, internet, and communication facilities. The demographic distribution shows that female respondents participated more actively in the survey (65%) compared to males (35%) (Ref. Pic-01). The majority of surveys were collected from Colombo-13, representing 40% of respondents. Most participants reported an income range of LKR 25,000-50,000.

In terms of network usage, 84% of participants used 4G services, 10% used 3G, and 6% were limited to 2G, mainly due to the absence of smartphones or the inability to access higher network. When asked about overall service satisfaction, 33 out of 50 participants stated that they were satisfied with SLT Mobitel PLC services. However, customers raised significant concerns about poor network coverage, slow internet speed, and the lack of sufficient customer service branches. Notably, 28 respondents disagreed with the statement that Mobitel has adequate branches in their areas.

Regarding service usage, 14 participants had been customers for only one year, while the remaining had subscribed for more than one year. A large majority (46 participants) used the services daily. Additionally, 82% subscribed to both peak and off-peak packages, while the rest used only peak packages.

Significantly, 60% of participants indicated they would not continue with Mobitel's services. However, most also agreed

that they would remain loyal if the company addressed their dissatisfaction and improved overall service delivery .

### 5.1 Dissatisfied Customers and Decline in Business

The findings confirm that SLT Mobitel PLC is experiencing customer dissatisfaction and a decline in business performance. The primary cause identified is inadequate network coverage and unreliable internet speed, which directly impacts customer experience. Another key issue is the limited number of customer service branches. Customers reported difficulty in accessing physical outlets, often having to travel long distances to resolve issues or obtain information.

Furthermore, competition is a major challenge. Rival companies provide wider network coverage, faster internet services, and more attractive offers, including discounts and bonuses. These competitive advantages contribute to Mobitel's customer attrition and declining market share.

#### 5.1.1 Why Customers Choose SLT Mobitel PLC

Despite challenges, customers continue to choose Mobitel primarily due to its reasonable pricing structure. Respondents indicated general satisfaction with service charges, highlighting affordability as a major strength. Participants also valued security and reliability, acknowledging Mobitel's commitment to protecting customer data and ensuring safe communication. Additionally, customers expressed appreciation for special offers and bonuses provided by the company.

However, to retain and convert these customers into loyal, long-term users, Mobitel must address dissatisfaction related to coverage, internet speed, and accessibility of customer service centers. By resolving these gaps, SLT Mobitel PLC can enhance satisfaction and foster stronger customer loyalty.

### 5.2 Summary of the Study

The study, titled "Improving the Corporate Strategy of SLT Mobitel PLC to Increase Customer Satisfaction", was conducted to identify reasons for the decline in Mobitel's business performance and to evaluate customer perceptions.

The research emphasizes the critical role of customer satisfaction in the telecommunication industry, where customer retention directly influences business growth. Through questionnaires and data analysis, the study explored both satisfaction and dissatisfaction factors, offering strategic

insights for SLT Mobitel PLC to improve customer relationships and regain market competitiveness.

### 5.3 Conclusion

The study confirms that customer dissatisfaction has a stronger negative impact on business performance than satisfaction has a positive one (Kim, 2017). The primary causes of dissatisfaction are poor coverage, slow internet speed, and insufficient service branches. Additionally, competitive pressure from rivals with better services and offers contributes to Mobitel's business challenges.

At the same time, Mobitel's strengths lie in affordable charges, customer security, and attractive offers. Customers indicated willingness to continue with Mobitel if their concerns are addressed effectively. Thus, improving corporate strategy with a focus on service quality, accessibility, and innovation is essential for rebuilding customer trust and loyalty.

### 5.4 Limitations of the Study

This study faced several limitations. The sample size of 50 participants is relatively small compared to the wider Sri Lankan customer base, limiting generalizability. Time constraints also restricted the depth of data collection. Furthermore, much of the secondary information was obtained from external sources, which may not fully reflect the latest organizational realities.

### 5.5 Suggestions for Future Research

Future studies could expand beyond the scope of customer satisfaction and dissatisfaction to examine broader aspects of corporate strategy. Additionally, research could investigate the outcomes of the Mobitel–Etisalat merger in greater depth. While this study relied on close-ended questions, future researchers are encouraged to use open-ended questions for richer, more detailed responses.

### References

- Anon. (n.d.). *Essentials of an effective customer satisfaction strategy*. Customer Service. Retrieved from <http://www.customerservice.ae/resources/featured/essentials-of-an-effective-customer-satisfaction-strategy>

- Anon. (n.d.). *Lack of customer service can impact business*. Chron: Small Business. Retrieved from <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/lack-customer-service-can-impact-business-2088.html>
- Harman, R. (2018). *5 points that emphasize the importance of customer satisfaction*. Apruve Blog. Retrieved from <https://blog.apruve.com/5-points-that-emphasize-the-importance-of-customer-satisfaction>
- Harper, B. (2017). *How can I satisfy a customer?* Quora. Retrieved from <https://www.quora.com/How-can-I-satisfy-a-customer>
- Idžaković, I. (2015). *Tips to satisfy customers*. StartUs Magazine. Retrieved from <https://magazine.startus.cc/tips-to-satisfy-customers/>
- Juneja, P. (2015). *Customer satisfaction*. Management Study Guide. Retrieved from <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/customer-satisfaction.htm>
- Kierczak, L. (n.d.). *Importance of customer satisfaction*. Survicate. Retrieved from <https://survicate.com/customer-satisfaction/importance-customer-satisfaction/>
- Kim, B. (2017). Customer satisfaction and its consequences in customer expectation level. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 18(4), 437–456. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15256480.2017.1359728>
- Mathew, A. (2015). *The impact of poor customer service*. LiveAdmins Blog. Retrieved from <https://www.liveadmins.com/blog/the-impact-of-a-poor-customer-service/>