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## **Factors restricting the implementation of automating the tea auctioning system in Sri Lanka**

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The study was carried out comprehensively based on analyzing, the Sri Lankan Auction System, where the sales are done on the British Out-Cry Method. The analysis carried out was to research if this system could be transmitted into an automated method. The purpose of this analysis is if it would be advantageous to transform the present system, which would in the long run eradicate malpractices which are occurring in the current sale system, and to obtain more transparency for the farmer and the buyer, and also to have a faster sale process in the pre-sales and post-sales which take place on a weekly basis. Qualitative and quantitative research methods were used for this purpose. A questionnaire was planned covering the relevant criteria. The main objective of the analysis was to identify the restrictions behind automating the present system. The sub objectives were (i) to scrutinize the level of Information technology/knowledge of the stakeholders and how conversant they were with E-Auction/E-bidding, (ii) to determine whether job transference (being moved to another department or being retrenched) was a threatening barrier, (iii) to assess whether the government is providing technical and monetary support. The governing body of the tea industry, being the government itself, was analyzed to determine whether such support is necessary and effective. The questionnaire was distributed and the data collected through fifty stakeholders in the tea trade over a period of one month. These were stakeholders who could influence such a critical decision, made in relation to the auction system. The collected data was analyzed through the Likert scale approach. Recommendations were given in relation to the results of the analysis, which had a more positive approach towards implementing an automation system. Recommendations were given to overcome the critical barriers raised in this research, which were identified within the Sri Lankan Tea industry. Moreover, other auction centers around the world (*e.g.*, India, Kenya, Indonesia, and Africa), and Stock Exchanges which successfully transformed from the platform to automation, also have been taken into consideration for analysis and recommendations.

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