

The Impact of Facebook Advertising on e-Brand Equity: Examining the Moderating Effect of Negative Sentiments with Special Reference to Telecommunication Industry in Sri Lanka

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Facebook advertising has become one of the most used social media advertising platforms in the Sri Lankan telecommunication industry. The industry is growing rapidly over the past decade of time and demand for telecommunication services have been enormously raised. In today's context, telecommunication service providers utilize Facebook advertising to accomplish specific marketing goals and objectives. Thus this study aims to interpret how Facebook advertising affects e-brand equity. Moreover, the researcher's secondary aim is to examine the moderate role of negative sentiments. This analysis was quantitative and structured questionnaires were used to obtain primary data from the sample. The study used the convenience sampling method, which comes under non-probability sampling and three hundred thirty-three responses were collected from the western province which includes Colombo, Gampaha and Kalutara districts. The data were analyzed using the software SPSS 25 to obtain descriptive statistics, comparing mean analysis and correlation analyses. The findings of the study revealed that Facebook advertising significantly impacted e-brand equity while negative sentiments significantly moderated the relationship between Facebook advertising and e-brand equity. Finally, the study contributes with several strategies for the telecommunication industry with their Facebook advertising practitioners in planning the advertising campaigns and improving the existing practices.

Keywords: *Brand Equity, e-Brand Equity, Facebook Advertising, Negative Sentiments, Sentiments Analysis*