Brand personalities of telecommunication service providers in Sri Lanka: an empirical study

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Anthropomorphism or attribution of human characteristics to non human things and events is a natural human tendency. In consumer behavior research, a considerable amount of attention has been given to the construct brand personality which refers to the set of human characteristics associated with brands. Some researchers found that personality of brand enables consumers to express his or her own self, ideal self or specific dimension of the self through the use of brands. Hence, brand managers have enduring interest in brand personality development activities with attributing human characteristics or traits to brands. It essentially help brand to take competitive advantage over the competitors.

As an industry, mobile telecommunication service providers in Sri Lanka are in the growth stage of its industry life cycle and show tremendous competitive activities among each other. With this phenomenon brand managers of these companies try to associate their brands to various activities and events to build acceptable and reputable brand personalities. Although a few explorations on identification of personalities of brands in Sri Lanka, this research study attempted with conceptualization to measure the personality of mobile telecommunication brands in Sri Lanka. Researchers investigated perception of consumers in Sri Lanka regarding the four mobile telecommunication service brands and utilized the convenience sample drawing from the Kelaniya University. As the sample, two hundred respondents were examined through structured questionnaire with five point Likert scale. The all constructs were defined with the help of Aaeker's five brand personality dimension i.e. sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness model.

The study revealed that each brand, including Dialogue, Tigo, Mobitel and Hutch, represents its own personality dimension while sharing more than one key personality actors. And it offers new ways for mobile telecommunication brands to strengthen their brands and market position in a competitive environment.

Key words: Brand personality, Competitive advantage, Mobile telecommunication, Industry Life Cycle, Telecommunication

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