

Impact of Out-of-Home Advertising on Customer Purchase Intension of Smartphones: The Moderating Role of Brand Trust with Special Reference to Gen Z in Sri Lanka

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This study examines the influence of Out-of-Home (OOH) advertising on the purchase intentions of Generation Z consumers in the Sri Lankan smartphone market, focusing on the moderating role of brand trust. While extensive research has been conducted globally on the efficacy of advertising, studies specifically addressing OOH advertising in Sri Lanka, particularly in connection with Generation Z, remain limited. This gap in the literature is critical, given the increasing prominence of OOH advertising in emerging markets like Sri Lanka, where unique cultural and economic dynamics shape consumer behavior. The study contributes to a nuanced understanding of the interplay between visibility, location, frequency, and creativity in OOH campaigns and their influence on consumer behavior.

The research adopts a positivist paradigm, employing a quantitative, correlational research design to establish relationships between variables. Data were collected from a sample of 377 respondents through convenience sampling, and SPSS 23 was utilized for analysis. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression tests provided insights into the impact of OOH advertising on purchase intentions. The study further employed PROCESS macro modeling to evaluate the moderating effects of brand trust. By integrating Riley's Retail Gravitation model and the TAB's Visibility Index alongside established indicators the study offers a comprehensive analytical framework tailored to the Sri Lankan context.

The findings reveal a positive correlation between OOH advertising and purchase intentions among Generation Z consumers. Notably, visibility, location, and frequency emerged as significant predictors of purchase intention, highlighting the importance of strategic ad placement and repetitive exposure in capturing consumer attention. However, contrary to

existing literature, creativity—traditionally deemed a pivotal element in advertising effectiveness—did not exhibit a significant relationship with purchase intention in this study. The moderating role of brand trust was substantiated, underscoring its capacity to enhance the impact of OOH campaigns on consumer decisions. These results underscore the vital role OOH advertising plays in shaping consumer behavior within the smartphone industry in Sri Lanka.

While this study provides valuable insights, it is not without limitations. The reliance on convenience sampling may limit the generalizability of the findings. Furthermore, the study's focus on Generation Z excludes the perspectives of other demographic groups that might interact differently with OOH advertising. Future research could expand the scope to include diverse consumer segments and explore longitudinal data to capture evolving trends in advertising effectiveness.

Practically, the study offers actionable recommendations for marketers in the Sri Lankan smartphone industry. By leveraging findings on visibility, location, and frequency of exposure, brands can optimize their OOH advertising strategies to better engage Generation Z consumers. Moreover, integrating elements that build brand trust, such as transparent messaging and ethical branding, can amplify the efficacy of advertising efforts. As Sri Lanka's smartphone market continues to grow, this research provides a critical foundation for developing robust, consumer-centric advertising strategies that align with local market dynamics and global best practices.

By bridging gaps in the existing literature and offering practical applications, this study contributes to both academic discourse and industry practice, enhancing our understanding of how OOH advertising can impact Purchase intention of Generation Z customers.

Keywords: *Brand Trust, Creativity, Frequency of Exposure, Location, OOH Advertising, Purchase Intention, Visibility*