

The Impact of Brand Equity on Customer Brand Preference & Purchase Intention: With Special Reference to Automobile Industry in Sri Lanka

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Automobile industry in Sri Lanka has experienced a rapid growth during the last two decades earning a strong market position as a major commercial activity. Due to the high competition, players of the industry, comprised of major automobile marketers as well as small to medium dealers, who are operating carefully planned marketing strategies to capture the consumers. Here, brand related prominence of the automobiles is mainly used in selling the vehicles. The power of the brand is about the portrait of the brand, its consumers have in mind, 'brand equity' is a major factor that leads the consumer to consider an automobile brand as a preferred selection. Considering this scenario, this research is investigating the impact of brand equity on customer brand preference and the purchase intention within the automobile industry in Sri Lanka. Building upon the prior research of Aaker (1996)'s brand equity dimensions were used as the base to measure the brand equity. The research explored how the brand equity leads to the brand preference of the consumers and then their future purchase intentions in selecting an automobile brand. A survey-based research strategy in a cross-sectional research design was used to gather primary data from 200 automobile users within the Western Province of Sri Lanka. The findings revealed a positive relationship between brand equity and purchase intention which is mediated by the brand preference. The automobile brands marketers in Sri Lanka should aim their marketing strategies to uplift the brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality and brand loyalty of the related brands in uplifting the preferences towards the brands among consumers as well as to increase the customer purchase intentions.

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