

Brand Romance; An Upright Predictor of Brand Loyalty in Mobile Phone Market, based on University Academics in Sri Lanka

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Today, the fast-growing mobile phone industry necessitates marketers to develop strong customer-brand relationships in order to maintain a loyal customer base and prevent them from switching to other competitive brands in the market. In such a context; the concept of 'Brand Romance' is imperative for marketers to uplift brand attitude and brand loyalty of consumers. So, the main objective of this research is to investigate the impact of brand romance on brand loyalty in the mobile phone market, with a special reference to University Academics of Sri Lanka. Indeed, this is a cross sectional study with a deductive approach, supported by three dimensions of brand romance namely brand pleasure, brand arousal and brand dominance, introduced by Patwardhan & Balasubramanian, (2011). A sample of 200 Academics was selected using simple random sampling and data was collected using structured questionnaire, administered via emails. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics revealed that the sample respondents exhibit a moderate level of brand loyalty as well as moderate levels of all the three dimensions of brand romance towards the currently using mobile phone brand. Further, results of regression analysis revealed that there is a significant impact of brand pleasure ($p < 0.05$), arousal ($p < 0.05$) and dominance ($p < 0.05$) on brand loyalty. Therefore, it is recommended for the marketers to develop strategies fostering brand romance in order to develop a loyal customer base with the brand for the long run.

Keywords: *Brand Arousal, Brand Dominance, Brand Loyalty, Brand Pleasure, Brand Romance*

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