

The Impact of Social Media Marketing on Consumer Purchase Intention on Franchised Fast-Food Industry in Western Province, Sri Lanka with the Mediating Effect of Brand Trust

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Technology plays a major role in the present era, as technology has been updating day by day. Accordingly, social media plays a key role in the technological era as one of the major online communication platforms. The purpose of the research is to examine the impact of social media marketing on purchase intention with the mediating effect of brand trust, with special reference to the franchise fast food industry in the western province. The methodology has been designed by using positivism research philosophy and a deductive research approach to identify the facts that have been developed through the conceptual framework on social media marketing in online communities, online advertising, and electronic word of mouth as the sub variables in the quantitative research strategy. The primary data collection has been employed with a well-structured online survey questionnaire with 384 respondents from franchise fast food customers in the western province. According to the findings of the research, there is a positive impact of social media marketing on purchase intention. This study has major implications for both theoretical and managerial implications. By using these insights, marketers in Sri Lanka's franchise fast food sector can maximise their efforts in digital marketing by customising their campaigns to appeal to the tastes and expectations of their target market. In the Sri Lankan context, the impact of social media marketing on consumer purchase intention can be further examined in relation to a specific industry.

Keywords: *Brand Trust, Franchise Fast Food Industry, Purchase Intention, Social Media Marketing*