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**THE IMPACT OF PERCEIVED BRAND EQUITY ON CUSTOMER
SATISFACTION: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO EMERGING TOURISM
DESTINATIONS**

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Destination marketing is an area which is not well addressed and understood, specially in developing countries. Therefore, this study has aimed to conceptualize the customer based brand equity in the tourism industry with respect to its effect on customer satisfaction. A sample of 385 tourists who have visited Sri Lanka for recreational purpose was used to test the relations which are in the proposed model of study. Structural Equation Modeling was used to confirm the relationship of the dimensions of brand equity towards perceived brand equity and perceived brand equity on customer satisfaction. Findings have shown that brand salience, brand performance, brand imagery, brand feelings, brand judgments, brand resonance are significantly affecting factors for perceived brand equity which is enhanced customer satisfaction of tourism industry in Sri Lanka. Further findings of the research conclude that brand salience, brand imagery and brand feelings are the highly affected factors towards perceived brand equity to emerging tourism destination. Also fit indices obtained for the conceptual model implies a high validity of the model in explaining the relations among variables. Hence destination marketing promoters could follow these findings of the research for implementing branding strategies in the sector of destination marketing and these findings could help the implementation bodies or policy makers to prioritize and allocate resources across important dimensions to optimize the investment based on the outcome of the model.