

Impact of CSR on Brand Equity and the Mediating Effect of Corporate Image with Special Reference to Cellular Mobile Phone Users in the Telecommunication Industry in Western Province

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This research explores the intricate relationships between corporate social responsibility, brand equity, and corporate image within the telecommunications sector in Sri Lanka, specifically focusing on cellular mobile phone users in the Western Province. The study used convenience sampling to gather data through self-administered questionnaires from 290 cellular mobile phone users. As quantitative research, the study identifies distinct CSR dimensions, including environmental, ethical, philanthropic, and economic, and assesses their varying impacts on brand equity. Notably, philanthropic CSR emerges as highly influential, while environmental CSR exhibits a nuanced relationship within the telecommunications industry. The study also confirms that corporate image significantly mediates CSR and brand equity. Further, the research acknowledges limitations, particularly the relatively small sample size; recommendations for future research include expanding the study to other provinces to enhance generalisability. Additionally, extending the investigation to different industries is advised to provide more accurate and comprehensive directions for understanding the interplay between CSR, brand equity, and corporate image. The findings contribute to theoretical and practical implications, guiding organisations in strategically aligning CSR practices and effectively managing corporate image to strengthen brand equity in the dynamic context of the telecommunications industry.

Keywords: *Brand Equity, Corporate Image, Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR Awareness*