

Impact of Brand Avoidance on Brand Equity: Examining the Mediating Effect of Brand Hate with Reference to Mobile Telecommunication Brands in Sri Lanka

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Current literatures provide substantial insights on the good aspects of brand concepts, but studies on the negative aspects (brand avoidance) are very rare. Thus, this study claimed empirical gap for the concepts of Brand Avoidance, Brand Equity and Brand Hate. With reference to the practice gaps found in the context of telecommunication industry in Sri Lanka, this study was carried by employing a deductive approach to investigate how brand avoidance impacts on brand equity as the main notion. This study tested on four major mobile telecommunication brands in Sri Lanka by using a quantitative method. The sample was identified within the Western Province of Sri Lanka by collecting 257 respondents employing convenience sampling method. It followed a regression analysis and several pre statistical analyses were done through SPSS version 26 to test the hypotheses. The findings demonstrate a negative but a significant impact of Brand avoidance on Brand Equity. It further elaborates that Brand Hate mediates the impact of Brand Avoidance on Brand Equity. The findings contribute to managerial aspects to mitigate brand avoidance and make healthy brand equity in the challenging business environment.

Keywords: *Brand Avoidance, Brand Equity, Brand Hate, Telecommunication Industry*