



EFFECTIVENESS OF PRODUCT PLACEMENT IN TAMIL CINEMAS IN TAMILNADU

Dr. V. Sreedevi* Krishnabhaskar Mangalasserri**

*Professor & Head, Faculty of Management Studies Noorul Islam Center for Higher Education, Kanyakumari.

**Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Management Studies, Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli.

Abstract

Product placement in films receives renewed focus in integrated marketing communication (IMC). One of the main concerns with regard to product placement as a marketing communication tool is that marketers have little knowledge if consumers are aware of product placements or recognise products that are deliberately placed in feature films by marketers and advertisers. In this research, the researcher has mainly focused to examine the effectiveness of product placement in Tamil movies in Tamilnadu. For this, 250 college level educated people have selected who watching Tamil cinema atleast one in a month. Their opinion has been collected through a well structured questionnaire and subduced into tables and graphs by using percentage analysis, mean score analysis and Anova analysis. The research found that majority of the female respondents felt the effectiveness of product placement which stimuli the purchase the product.

Keywords: Product Placement in Movies, Television Shows.

Introduction

A product placement is the inclusion of a product, brand name or the name of the firm in a movie for increasing memorability of the brand and instant recognition at the point of purchase. It is an advertising technique in which the companies pay a fee or provide service in exchange for a prominent display of their product. Product placement appears in plays, film, television series, music videos, video games, and books. Product placement occurs with the inclusion of a brand's logo in shot, or a favourable mention or appearance of a product in shot. This is done without disclosure, and under the premise that it is a natural part of the work. Most major movie releases today contain product placements. The most common form is movie and television placements and more recently computer and video games.

The phenomenon of zipping and change in the television usage behavior due to surfing during commercial breaks has reduced the effectiveness of the television commercials. Similarly the commercials on cinema halls are found to be of low involvement as the audience takes them as blocks between the reasons of visiting the cinema hall and the time available to them for entertainment. So the brand communication and the entertainment products are viewed differently by the audience in both the media. Brand placement provides an opportunity where the involved audience gets exposure to the brands and products during the natural process of narration of the movie or television commercial. The audience can undertake multitude of working while observing the television program at a home setting which may affect the degree of attention span of the audience and hence reduce the overall effectiveness of the medium for enhancing brand memory. Quite contrast to this is the movie going behaviour where the audience makes a voluntary choice for viewing (exposure) at a cost (financial, time, and opportunity cost) for the purpose of entertainment. It has been observed from research that brand recall for commercials shown during the television programs with higher level of TRPs are very poor due to the channel switching behaviour (Fourier and Dolan 1997). High level of media clutter, similarity of programming across channels, channel switching behaviour are the factors responsible to generate sufficient level of research interest among researchers at the practice of brand placements in movies. It is very important to expose the product only to the target audience. A good marketer should first identify the target market based on geographic segmentation and demographic variables or may be even both.

Literature Review

Moster et al. (2002) explains that films offer product exposure to millions of customers, making product placements a rapidly growing marketing communication medium. By cleverly weaving a product into a scene, marketers hope audiences will connect their brand with the stars or story they see on the screen. Product placements have received renewed attention within the developing context in Africa.

Brand recognition and comprehension versus brand recall and its effect on purchase behavior, it seems brand recognition as a measure is more objective in character than brand recall. Recognition describes the form of memory that requires a person to judge whether or not a stimulus, located in a set of distracting stimuli. (Bettman, 1979). Unaided recall exists when people retrieve information from memory without any assistance. Recognition is considered a measure of unaided recall, and more important than aided recall. (Gupta and Lord, 1998) have studied the impact of product placement on brand recognition: the impact of various product placement categorization and product placement mode. Brand awareness is the primary goal of advertisers in product placement; memory based awareness measures such as recognition or recall is appropriate (Nelson, 2002). Short term memory immediately after exposure, as well as consumer evaluation of product placements was tested.



Product placements in movies are nearly as old as cinema itself (Turner, 2003; Newell and Salmon, 2004). It consists in putting a product and/or a brand into a movie scene where it can be seen and/or its name heard. The placement can either be paid by the advertiser or result in an exchange of products and/or services such as logistics facilities (Karrh, 1998). Ford paid 30 to 40 millions dollars to place Aston Martin cars in the James bond named Die Another Day (2002). Mainly since the end of the 1980', several researches have contributed to a better understanding of this communication technique coined as 'hybrid' by Balasubramanian (1994) since it combines several media techniques. Its positive effect on attitude (Fontaine, 2005), behaviour (Daugherty and Gangadharbatla, 2005), and especially its potential impact on brand recall (Brennan, Dubas and Babin, 1999; d'Astous and Chartier, 2000) represent the main core of the research knowledge.

Confronted to media fragmentation and audience scattering on the one hand (Deloitte, 2005) and to the soar of electronic video devices allowing to skip commercials (O'Neill and Barrett, 2004). On the other hand, advertisers are more and more looking for other opportunities to expose their products and their brands in front of their consumers eyes, preferably in the most favourable condition. As product placement in movies seems to be well accepted (O'Reilly et al., 2005), and since it is comparatively much less expensive than a 30-second TV spot and can also be more efficient (Jaffe, 2005), it is more frequently used for an exposition on TV after the exposition at theatre. According to this long term objective the main purpose to reach a brand recall and improving brand image remains.

Statement of the Problem

The Indian film industry is the largest in the world. Now, aided by technological advancements, the industry is set to take a further leap across production, exhibition and marketing. In such a scenario, product placement in mainstream films deserves a renewed focus because as a marketing communication tool, it is fast emerging as the medium with maximum potential to capture and covert audiences to potential consumers. This is especially relevant in a world where traditional media vehicles are increasingly failing to reach the consumers for various reasons.

Advertising is often not believed because consumers know that the producer or manufacturer of a product or service paid for the advertisement. There is however, a perception with the general public that products in films or broadcast programmes are 'for real'. Branded product placements of well-known names contribute to this perception. The placed products represent a time frame in the sequence of events as it unfolds or develops on the screen or in their television programmes. As such it is assumed that these placed products are perceived as credible and true to real life experiences. The larger than life experience in a cinema theatre makes the perceived impact of product placements more effective. New avenues opened for advertisers and marketers to place their products in other communication media as the traditional feature film and television programmes. New technology is available to disseminate films to the Internet, e-mail, and DVD, mobile phones and play stations. The result manifests in a new window of opportunities for marketers and communication specialists to deliberately place their products in such a manner that it has the strategic effect on the viewers.

Product placement is therefore necessary that marketers and advertisers alike should take cognisance of the strategic placements and effects of prominently as well as subtle placed products. The problem marketers and advertisers encounter in Tamilnadu is that research evidence exists where consumer's reactions to product placements were tested. At this juncture of the research backyards, the researcher was examining the effect of product placement in Tamil cinemas in Tamilnadu.

Methodology

In this study, data collected was a part of large study aimed to identify the effectiveness of product placement in Tamil movies in Tamilnadu. For this, 250 people has been selected who have college level education and atleast watching Tamil cinema monthly once. The collected details have subdued into tables with the help of percentage analysis, mean score analysis, Anova analysis and correlation analysis.

Results and Discussions: The socio-economic factors of the selected respondents are given below table.

Table 1: Socio-Economic Factor of the Selected Respondents

No.	Factors	Number of Respondents	%
1	Age		
	a) 18-25 Yrs.	129	51.6
	b) 26-35 Yrs.	67	26.8
	c) 36-45 Yrs.	21	8.4
	d) Above 45 Yrs.	33	13.2
	Total	250	100.0



No.	Factors	Number of Respondents	%
2	Gender		
	a) Male	107	42.8
	b) Female	143	57.2
	Total	250	100.0
3	Educational Status		
	a) UG	129	51.6
	b) PG	36	14.4
	c) Professional	85	34.0
	Total	250	100.0
4	Occupation		
	a) Govt. Employee	62	24.8
	b) Pvt. Employee	109	43.6
	c) Business	48	19.2
	d) Others (Students, House wives, Agriculturist, etc.)	31	12.4
	Total	250	100.0
5	Marital Status		
	a) Married	137	54.8
	b) Unmarried	113	45.2
	Total	250	100.0
6	Monthly Income level		
	a) Upto Rs.10000	48	19.2
	b) Rs.10001 – Rs.20000	138	55.2
	c) Above Rs.20000	64	25.6
	Total	250	100.0
7	Residential Area		
	a) Urban	159	63.6
	b) Rural	38	15.2
	c) Semi-Urban	53	21.2
	Total	250	100.0

It could be found from the analysis that majority of the respondents are seeing the product placement in Tamil cinema who belongs to 18-25 years, female, UG qualified, working in private sector, married, earning monthly between Rs.10001 to 20000 and living in urban area.

Behaviour of the Selected Respondents towards Tamil Cinema

Table 2: Behavior of the Selected Respondents towards Tamil Cinema

No.	Factors	Number of Respondents	%
1	Period of Seeing Tamil Cinema		
	a) Upto 5 years	37	14.8
	b) 6-10 years	89	35.6
	c) 11-15 years	72	28.8
	d) Above 15 years	52	20.8
	Total	250	100.0
2	Frequency of Watching Tamil Cinema in a month		
	a) 1-4 times	137	54.8
	b) 5-9 times	72	28.8



No.	Factors	Number Respondents	of	%
	c) Above 9 times	41		16.4
	Total	250		100.0
3	Type of Tamil Cinema Preferred			
	a) Action Movie	42		16.8
	b) Horror Movie	19		7.6
	c) Comedy Movie	86		34.4
	d) Romantic Movie	32		12.8
	e) Science Fiction	18		7.2
	f) More than one choices	53		21.2
	Total	250		100.0
4	Please of watching Tamil Cinema			
	a) Theatre	149		59.6
	b) House	101		40.4
	Total	250		100.0
5	Watching Tamil Cinema along with			
	a) Friends	101		40.4
	b) Family members	71		28.4
	c) Alone	32		12.8
	d) More than one choices	46		18.4
	Total	250		100.0

It is noted from the Table 2 that majority of the respondents are seeing the product placement in Tamil cinema who are watching the Tamil cinema for 6 to 10 years, 1-4 times watching in a month, comedy movie, seeing in theatre and watching Tamil Cinema along with friends.

Effectiveness of Product Placement in Tamil Cinemas among the Sample Respondents

The following analysis noticed that selected sample respondents' opinion towards effectiveness of product placement in Tamil Cinemas. For this effectiveness of product placements has been identifying through 23 statements with five point scaling technique. From the opinion of the respondents about the effectiveness of product placement, mean score calculated and considered as dependent variable. In order ascertain the effectiveness of product placement in Tamil Cinemas among the respondents, the researcher has used mean score analysis and Anova analysis. The results are discussed in the following table.

Table 3: Effectiveness of Product Placement in Tamil Cinemas through Mean score analysis and Anova analysis

No.	Factors	Mean Score	'F' value	'p' value
1	Age			
	a) 18-25 Yrs.	3.5	10.924	0.000*
	b) 26-35 Yrs.	4.2		
	c) 36-45 Yrs.	3.7		
	d) Above 45 Yrs.	4.0		
	Gender			
	a) Male	4.1	13.611	0.000*
	b) Female	4.4		
2	Educational Qualification			
	a) UG	3.8	9.073	0.000*
	b) PG	4.5		
	c) Professional	4.1		
3	Occupation			



No.	Factors	Mean Score	'F' value	'p' value
	a) Govt. Employee	3.7	10.562	0.000*
	b) Pvt. Employee	3.9		
	c) Business	4.3		
	d) Others (Students, House wives, Agriculturist, etc.)	4.1		
4	Marital Status			
	a) Married	4.1	9.625	0.000*
	b) Unmarried	3.8		
5	Monthly Income level			
	a) Upto Rs.10000	4.1	13.112	0.000*
	b) Rs.10001 – Rs.20000	4.5		
	c) Above Rs.20000	3.8		
4	Residential Area			
	a) Urban	4.4	0.634	0.469 ^{NS}
	b) Rural	3.9		
	c) Semi-Urban	4.1		
5	Period of Seeing Tamil Cinema			
	a) Upto 5 years	3.8	4.586	0.016**
	b) 6-10 years	4.3		
	c) 11-15 years	3.9		
	d) Above 15 years	3.7		
6	Frequency of Watching Tamil Cinema in a month			
	a) 1-4 times	3.9	8.652	0.000*
	b) 5-9 times	4.3		
	c) Above 9 times	3.7		
	Type of Tamil Cinema Preferred			
	a) Action Movie	3.9	16.952	0.000*
	b) Horror Movie	3.2		
	c) Comedy Movie	4.3		
	d) Romantic Movie	4.1		
	e) Science Fiction	3.9		
	f) More than one choices	4.0		

Note: * - Sig. at 1% level, ** - Sig. at 5% level, NS – Not Significant

It could be noticed from the analysis that majority of respondents felt the effectiveness of product placement in Tamil cinemas at the high level who belongs to 26-35 years, female viewers, PG qualified respondents, engaged in their business, married, earn monthly Rs.10001 to 20000 income, living in urban area, around 6-10 years of watching Tamil cinema, 5-9 times watching the Tamil cinema monthly and viewing comedy movie mostly than other cinemas.

It could be found from the Anova analysis that the hypothesis is accepted for the relationship between residential area and effectiveness of Tamil cinema among the sample respondents. It indicates that there is no significant difference between the residential area of the respondents and their effectiveness of Tamil cinema.

On the other hand, all the remaining hypotheses is rejected due to significant association between the selected variables like age, gender, educational qualification, occupation, marital status, monthly income level, period of seeing Tamil cinema, frequency of watching Tamil cinema in a month, type of Tamil cinema preferred by the sample respondents and effectiveness of product placement in Tamil cinemas in Tamilnadu.

Findings and Conclusion

1. It is found from the analysis that majority of the respondents are seeing the product placement in Tamil cinema who belongs to 18-25 years, female, UG qualified, working in private sector, married, earning monthly between Rs.10001 to 20000 and living in urban area.



2. From the analysis, it is observed that majority of the respondents are seeing the product placement in Tamil cinema who are watching the Tamil cinema for 6 to 10 years, 1-4 times watching in a month, comedy movie, seeing in theatre and watching Tamil Cinema along with friends.
3. It brings from the analysis that majority of respondents felt the effectiveness of product placement in Tamil cinemas at the high level who belongs to 26-35 years, female viewers, PG qualified respondents, engaged in their business, married, earn monthly Rs.10001 to 20000 income, living in urban area, around 6-10 years of watching Tamil cinema, 5-9 times watching the Tamil cinema monthly and viewing comedy movie mostly than other cinemas.
4. It is found from the Anova analysis that the hypothesis is accepted for the relationship between residential area and effectiveness of Tamil cinema among the sample respondents. It indicates that there is no significant difference between the residential area of the respondents and their effectiveness of Tamil cinema.
5. Throughout the course of this research it has been found that the respondents in general had a positive effectiveness of product placements in Tamil cinemas even though the respondents considered product placements in films as commercials in disguise.
6. A conclusion drawn from this research was that products placed prominently in films were better recognised than those placements placed subtly within the context of the film. Another aspect closely considered in this research was the effect product placements have on the realism of the Tamil cinemas.
7. Researcher found that success of the product placement depends on the type of the product placement. Through the research, the integrated explicit product placement is appropriate and high number of respondents correctly notices and easily recalls the placed product in Tamil cinemas.
8. Finally, product placement's growing importance, as a component of integrated marketing communication requires that marketers strive to better understand its potential. This knowledge is expected to help marketers better define their strategies for marketing and brand integration in their innovative plans.

References

1. Balasubramanian, S. K. (1994). Beyond advertising and publicity: Hybrid messages and public policy issues. *Journal of Advertising*, 23(4), 29-46.
2. Bettman, J. R. (1979). *An information processing theory of consumer choice*. Reading, Boston, MA: Addison Wesley Publishing Company.
3. Brennan, I., Dubas, K. M. & Babin, L. A. (1999). The effects of placement type and exposure time on product placement recognition. *International Journal of Advertising*, 18, 323- 38.
4. D'Astous, A. & Chartier, F. (2000). A study of factors affecting consumer evaluations and memory of product placements in movies. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising*, 22(2), 31-40.
5. Daugherty, T. & Gangadharbatla, H. (2005). A Comparison of Consumers' Responses to Traditional Advertising and Product Placement Strategies: Implications for Advertisers. *American Marketing Association Conference Proceedings*, Chicago.
6. Fourier, S. and Robert, J. D. (1997). *Launching the BMW Roadster*. Case No-N9-597-002 Boston: Harvard Business School.
7. Gupta, P. B. & Kenneth, R. L. (1998). Product placements in movies: The effect of prominence and mode on audience recall. *Journal of Current Issues and Research in Advertising*, 20(1), 47-59.
8. Jaffe, J. (2005). *Life after the 30-second spot*. Hoboken, NJ: Adweek-John Wiley.
9. Karrh, J. A. (1994). Effects of brand placements in motion pictures. *Proceedings of the 1994 American Academy of Advertising*.
10. Moster HR, Bryant L, Sylvester K (2002). *Product Placement as a Marketing Tool in film and Television*. USA: Prentice-Hall.
11. Nelson, M. R. (2002). Recall of brand placements in computer/video games. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 42(2), 80-92.
12. Newell, J. & Salmon, C. (2003). Product placement from Lumière to E.T.: The development of advertising in motion pictures. Paper presented at the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Conference, Ad Division: Special Topics, Kansas City, MO.
13. O'Reilly, D., Cripps, R., Kazani, E., Patel R. & Zarra, A. (2005). Interpretation of product placement by UK movie-goers: A qualitative study. Paper presented at the 34 European Marketing Academy Conference(EMAC), Milan, Italy.
14. Turner, K. J. (2004). Insinuating the product into the message: An historical context for product placement. *Journal of Promotion Management*, 10(1/2), 9-14.