

BRAND RECALL AS A MEDIATING VARIABLE IN IN-FILM BRANDING AND PURCHASE INTENTION AMONG MILLENNIALS

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Abstract:

In-film branding is marketing brands through movies. Consumers are exhausted of traditional brand communication and they desire to receive communication in an entertaining and enjoyable way. Movies have a big impact on our psychology. Everything we see in a film gets recorded in our memory is responsible for the thoughts we get after watching any movie. Brands use this to market their products and services. It helps them to reach out to their target audience in an interactive way. In this study we tried to understand the influence of in-film branding on purchase intention and the mediating influence of brand recall between in film branding and purchase intention and it was found that brand recall had a full mediation towards the relationship between in-film branding and purchase intention.

Keywords: In-film branding, Brand Recall, Purchase Intention

Introduction

The world of cinema entertains, educates and inspires millions of people around the world in different ways. Film apart from their entertaining aspects is also the perfect platform for marketing large business giants. The patterns of bonding particular products to particular casts in the movies are a common trend these days. The product placed in the movies thus follows the identity of characters, which henceforth influences the viewers on screen. Considering the Indian context there are possibilities for the exposure to both national as well as international movies.

Movie franchises in particular are inclined to a particular product or brand which thereby plays a key significant role in identity of the movie among audience.

Film is a form of entertainment that has the power to alter the beliefs of people seemingly every possibly way. It is a massive form of entertainment that runs the global economy forward in many countries as the old saying film transcends boundaries. The global audience across wide spectrum is widely crucial for the success of a film business. The amount of studies conducted in the field of product placement has been largely brought to public eye after 1980s. The movie business is a field currently experiencing tremendous growth especially in countries like India and China, two growing economies of the world. Movies today do not depend just on its running time but rather on the profits earned through the advertisements and merchandise that is effectively used as tool biz. Movies such as A Bug's Life and Toy Story have further decreased the gap between business and movies. Brands typically do promotional associations where they get to use movie characters or clippings to run their own advertisement which in turn helps movies get publicity and save on their marketing budgets. In other cases brands are intrinsically imbibed into movie scripts for placements in-film.

Popular Bollywood celebrities charge a lot of endorsing brands and the tie-ups with films starring them is a cheaper and more effective way to market any product. Also, many professional managers have entered this industry. Most of the in-film placements take place through these managers who deal with how much to charge for such deals. It is a good way to promote but advertisers should be careful about the placement of their brands in movies. Also, there should be an integration of story with brand values.

As the traditional media is getting over saturated with advertisements, brands are looking for new avenues every time to promote their names among the consumers. In film brand placement emerged as a successful avenue to gain attention from

consumers. Though It's not a very new phenomenon, but over the years it has gained huge importance from the market making it a billion-dollar industry. It's interesting to see how methodically both the film makers and the brands are working together to integrate the brand message within the films as an integral part. Throughout the World, in film brand placement is gaining huge popularity. In India also in film branding is becoming a very important source of earning revenues. Not only in Hindi films, are regional films also earning huge money from this technique. Scenes within a film are made these days to accommodate brand placement in presence of popular actors. In India, idol worshipping is very common hence whenever celebrity endorses a brand that too within a film, consumer's notices and remembers the brand.

Literature Review

In-Film Branding

Kiran Sharma, Nayana Nayak(2015) in his study has identified that marketers are in constant hunger to promote and reinforce their brand name in the customer's mind. Product placements started way back in early 1950's which is now used as a powerful tool to promote brands within the context of movies, television shows etc. Conceptually, Alain d'Astous and Francis Chartier (2000) have asserted that product placements are channels which successfully draw attention of the viewer's leading to acceptance of the brand placements followed by brand recall while shopping. The paper also attempts to investigate various other dimensions associated with product placements viz; celebrity endorsements, references and emotions which contribute to recall of the brand and therefore customer satisfaction .Manali Bhattacharya (2020) found out the effectiveness of in-film brand placement on brand recognition and recall. They established that brands plan strategies to create a place in the mind of the people which they are doing very successfully through the in-film brand placements. Through placement, a brand is included as part of a mass media program in return for some

consideration from the advertiser (James A Karrh ,1998) .He also clarifies the definition of brand placement and outlines an emerging body of research into placement, especially in its potential impact on program audiences. Pola B.Gupta & Kenneth R.Lord (2012) has identified in-film branding as a promotional strategy of growing interest is the placement of branded products in movies. An experiment compared the recall effectiveness of common product-placement strategies with each other and with advertising. Prominent placements did higher recall than did advertisements, which, in turn, outperformed subtle placements. Attitudinal study conducted by Israel D.Nebenzahl & Eugene Secunda (2015) reveals that most consumers do not object to product placement in motion pictures and prefer it over alternative forms of on-the- screen promotional activities because it is considered to be unobtrusively integrated in the film and those who object do so on ethical grounds. DJ Park & Bruce K Berger (2010) investigated viewer recognition of brands placed in films, according to film genre, gender, and previous viewing experience. A sample of 137 moviegoers watched 12 film clips representing three popular genres (action, comedy, and drama) and reported their recognition of brand placements. Results suggest that brand recognition is more common in drama films. In recent times, due to an overcrowded competitive market and media clutter, consumers are slow to recognize and respond to communication through conventional media. (Saikit Banarjee, 2009).

Brand Recall

Alian D Astous & Francis Chartier(2012) tried to examine the impact of objective and subjective characteristics of product placements on consumer evaluations and memory. A sample of 103 movie goers viewed and reacted to 18 product placements taken from 11 different movies. After a one- week delay, they were contacted and asked to recall the products and brands they had seen. Rick Wilson, Brain T Dill(2011) study reveals

that those placements that are combined audio-visual, prominently displayed, have actor involvement, and have two or more verbal mentions of the brand significantly increase consumers' subsequent category-cued recall of the brand name of the product placement. Andrey Mikhailitchenko, Rajshekhar Raj G Javalgi, Galina Mikhailitchenko, Michel Laroche (2009) addressed the issue of visual imagery in cross-cultural consumer research. The authors investigate the relationship between visual imagery, brand familiarity, and brand claim recall. Although many brand managers favor the use of celebrities in advertisements, others worry that celebrities overshadow the brand and thus impair brand recall. Carsten Erfgen, Sebastian Zenker, Henrik Sattler(2015) identified that practitioners refer to this overshadowing as the vampire effect, defined as a decrease in brand recall for an advertising stimulus that features a celebrity endorser versus the same stimulus with an unknown but equally attractive endorser. Because there is no agreement about whether this overshadowing really exists, this research analyzes the existence of the vampire effect and its moderators. Chirag R Patel, Pankajray V Patel(2015) tried to study the impact of movie genre, product placement type, and viewer gender on audiences recall of brand placed in movies in order to know which one gets more attention and more attraction for buying behaviour. This study uses experimental design and comprises samples of 137 students enrolled in MBA course, who watch Hindi movies. Findings suggest that product placed in prominent mode has higher brand recall than product placed in subtle mode. Vijaykumar Krishnan, Ursula Y Sullivan, Mark D Groza, Timothy W Aurand(2013) in their article discussed the Brand Recall Index (BRI) as an easily implementable marketing metric to assess the brand equity for any brand specific to an identified segment.

Purchase Intension.

Sohail Younus, Faiza Rasheed, Anas Zia(2015) In the worst competitive market the consumer products manufacturing industries pay attention on customer purchase

intention for maintaining their reputation in market and enhanced their goodwill. Because loyal customers are good sources for creating revenue. The study describes that the relationship between dependent variables has a significant relationship with purchase intention. Nelson Barber, PeiJou Kuo, Melissa Bishop, Raymond Goodman(2012) Marketing managers routinely use purchase intentions data to make strategic decisions concerning both new and existing products and the marketing programs that support them. Predicting which consumer will purchase an environmentally friendly product, the research remains split, particularly when it comes to perceived “tradeoffs” between the environmental benefits, quality, and cost.

Based on the above literature the researcher tried to identify the influence of in-film branding on purchase intention and the mediating influence of brand recall on this relationship.

Objective of the study: To identify the mediating influence of brand recall on in-film branding and purchase intention.

The model finalized for the study was as given below:

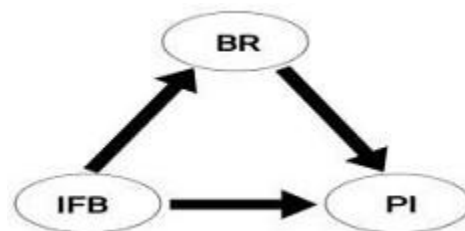


Fig-1

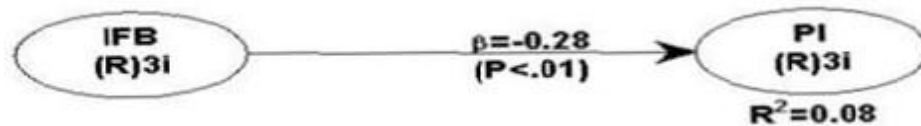
Methodology

Data was collected through random sampling through self-administered questionnaire. Usable responses were received from 200 respondents and the same were used for further analysis.

Questionnaire contained items pertaining to the three variables, in-film branding, brand recall and purchase intention apart from the demographic variables. In-film branding was measured with a three item scale, Brand recall with 6 items and Purchase intention with another three item scale. The responses were measured on five point likert scale and the analysis was done using IBM SPSS.version 26 and the model building and mediation was tested using Warp PLS 7.

Results and Interpretations

The relationship between in-film branding and purchase intention, without brand recall) was found to be significant with a negative beta value ($\beta = -0.28, p < 0.01$) and the coefficient of determination was 0.08.



Fig

-2

The second model was tested with the mediating role of brand recall and the following results were obtained.

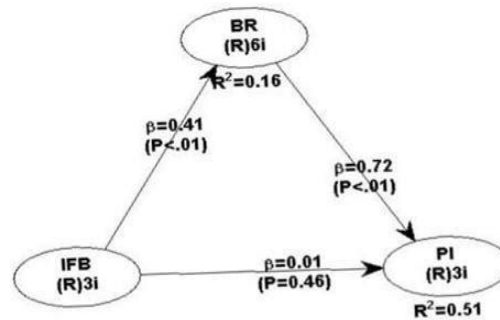


Fig-3

The direct path between in-film branding and purchase intention was found to be insignificant with the introduction of brand recall ($\beta=0.01, p=0.46$), while the relationship between in-film branding and brand recall and the relationship between brand recall and purchase intention were found to be significant ($\beta=0.41, p<0.01$; $\beta=0.72, p<0.01$) and the coefficient of determination is 0.51. While the direct relationship between in-film branding and purchase intention turned to be insignificant which means brand recall is found to have full mediation.

A test done to identify the difference between male and female towards in-film branding, brand recall and purchase intention revealed no statistically significant difference, $t(198) = 0.062, p = 0.950$; $t(198) = -0.861, p = 0.390$; $t(198) = -1.317, p = 0.189$. Similarly the differences across various occupations was tested by using one way MANOVA for in-film branding, brand recall and purchase intention and again no statistically significant difference were observed $F(6,390) = 1.119, p = 0.351$. Further multiple analysis of various tested for residential location (urban, semi-urban and rural) and frequency of watching movies (weekly, monthly, once in 6 months, once in a year) also revealed no statistically significant differences in the tested variables, in-film branding, brand recall and purchase intention, $F(3,194) = 1.728, p = 0.163$; $F(9,472.3) = 1.382, p = 0.193$.

Managerial Implications

Brand recall acts as a full mediation to the relationship of in-film branding and purchase intention. Product placement through films as such is not the one which is contributing towards purchase intention, but it is the brand recall trigger that is initiated by the brand recall. In-film as such is in fact creating a negative and significant impact on purchase intention. This could be due to the irritation caused by the frequent placement of brands in movies. Hence brand managers must ensure that the product placement is done not as a forceful placement but something which is connected with the story line of the movie. A forceful placement may create irritation among the viewers. Also there is no statistically significant difference between people residing in different locations, different occupations or people who view movies at different frequency. Hence uniformity in product placement across these divisions will not create any problems.

Limitations and Future Research

This study is limited to millennials in Kerala with the mediating role of brand recall on in-film branding and purchase intention. Other variable are not included in this study. Future studies can be carried out including other variables and other sections of age groups. Even experimental studies can be conducted to identify the influence of the product placements through movies and the corresponding purchase intention under different situations.

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