PRODUCT PLACEMENT EFFECTIVENESS IN MOVIE: A CASE STUDY FROM INDIA

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Abstract

India has one of the world's biggest movie industries in terms of the number of movies produced every year. Product placement has always been an interesting topic of discussion with reference to the movies as well as TV serials/commercials. The dual purpose of this study was to ascertain the perception of the respondents towards debutant actors and to examine the relationship between product placement effectiveness and debutant actors. An experimental design was used for conducting the research. A total of 52 management students participated in this experimental setup. The results revealed that the actors were basically judged on two major criteria – Charisma and Credibility. The effectiveness of different forms of product placement, that is, implicit products placement, integrated explicit product placement, and non integrated explicit product placement were analyzed. The results showed a difference in the recall rates of the three types of product placements. For all the three types of placement, the viewers recall, that is, implicit memory measurement and explicit memory measurement received no impact from the feelings of the respondents towards the debutant actors. The results from the current study also put forward that the debutant actors had no significant effect on product placement. Thus, the major objective of the study, that is, finding out the impact of debutant actors on product placement effectiveness gave interesting results, where star presence was found to have no effect on product placement.

Keywords: Product placement effectiveness, McNemar test, Implicit and Explicit memory, debutant actor

I.   INTRODUCTION

In-film advertising talks about in-movie placement. The practice helps in encouraging products through films or TV shows (Jayswal & Salvi, 2007). Bollywood's stint with in film advertising dates back to 1955 when Shree 420 was released. Raj Kapoor in Shree 420 enters Mumbai, and a large Coca-Cola banner is evident to the audience in the background. A real commercial brand used in a movie as a promotional approach is referred to as in-film advertising. The occurrence of a product in a movie is usually a result of an economic transaction, but when placement is done without any economic exchange, it is called a product plug. Product placement happens with the inclusion of a brand's logo, or a favorable mention or appearance of a product in a movie. It is referred to as a hybrid message – a paid message aimed at influencing movie (or television) audiences via the planned and unobtrusive entry of a branded product into a movie. Product placement is often a work of both advertising agencies and PR firms (Craig-Lees, Scott, & Wong, 2008).

Bollywood is a popular and influential medium and has a mass market reach, and the industry

makes extensive use of product placement activities. There have been various Bollywood movies, which have placed products/brands for example, in the movie Chalti Ka Naam Gaadi (1958), several scenes in the film had posters depicting Mobil brake fluid; Yash Chopra's Dil to Pagal Hai (1997) had several brands like Pepsi, Levis, and Killer jeans placed in the film. Sooraj Barjatya's film Hum Saath Saath Haini (1999) was coupled with Coca-Cola. Shah Rukh Khan and Rani Mukharjee starrer Chalte Chalte (2003) had in-film placements of Hyundai Santro and Castrol engine oil. Coca-Cola and Perfetti's Mentos were placed in the film Kuch Na Kaho (2003) directed by Rohan Sippy. Starbucks was placed in Karan Johar's Kabhi Alvida Na Kehna (2006). Om Shanti Om (2007) incorporated many brands like Exide, Tag heuer, Maybelline, and MTV. The plot of Dostana incorporated one of the main characters working for Verve magazine. The placement of Audi and Sony Vaio in Bodyguard (2014) is well acknowledged. Product placement is a common phenomenon across all cultures and has received a lot of support (Argan, Velioglu & Argan, 2007; Gould, Gupta & Grabner-Krauter, 2000; Karrh, Mc Kee, & Pardun, 2003; Mowla & Hoque, 2013; Panda, 2004; Shapiro, 1993; Zhou & McKechnie, 2003).

II.   MODES OF PRODUCT PLACEMENT

There are various modes of product placement. Product placement can be classified by the form of expression or the strategies. Gupta and Lord (1998) detailed three modes of product placement, that is, visual placement, audio placement, and combined audio-visual placement. Furthermore, based on strategic purpose, Gupta and Lord also distinguished the product placement into two modes. It is based on the degree of product placement and how obvious it is. The two modes are prominent product placement and subtle product placement. According to the three modes and the two degrees, we can combine them into six specific modes, which are as follows:

- Prominent visual placement,
- Prominent audio placement,
- Prominent audio-visual placement,
- Subtle visual placement,
- Subtle audio placement,
- Subtle audio-visual placement.

III.   PRODUCT PLACEMENT THROUGH CELEBRITIES IN BOLLYWOOD

In Indian movies, one of the most prevailing trends in to have celebrities endorse product for which they are the brand ambassadors. For example, Taal (1999) and Kuchh Na Kaho (2003) (starring Aishwarya Rai, who is the brand ambassadors for Coca-Cola had in film placement of Coke (Exhibit 4). Hero Honda motorcycles endorsed by Hritik Roshan were features in the movie Kabhi Khushi Kabhi Gham (2001), Aap Muje Achhe Lagane Lage (2002), and Koi Mil Gaya (2003) where he was the lead actor. Shah Rukh Khan, the brand ambassador of Santro, used the brand in in his home production Chalte Chalte (2003). Priyanka Chopra, the brand ambassador for Sunsilk, endorsed the product in Fashion (2008). Similarly, Sonam Kapoor, who is the brand ambassador for L'oreal, used L'oreal products in her home production Aisha (2010). Kareena Kapoor, the brand ambassador for Sony Vaio, was seen endorsing the product in the movie Bodyguard (2011), in which she was the lead actress. Hence, the above analysis shows that product placement by stars

in bollywood movies is a widely seen phenomenon.

IV.   REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Steortz (1987) defined brand placement as "the use of a product's name, signage, or other trademarks appearing in media". Product placements are a means of "incorporating brands in movies in return for money". It increases realism and are important means of character development which support in better sense of familiarity (Gupta & Gould, 1997, p. 37). Karrh (1998) defined brand placements as "the paid inclusion of branded products or brand identifiers through audio and/or visual means, within mass media programming". It has been reported in the literature that prominent product placements accrue higher recall than subtle placements (Brennan, Dubas, & Babin, 1999; Gupta & Lord, 1998). It has been noted that the prominence of product placement enhances recognition, but it has a negative impact on recall (d'Astous & Chartier, 2000). Previous researches proposed that audio-visual placements build up the maximum recall (Balasubramanian, Karrh, & Patwardhan 2006; Brennan & Babin, 2004; Law & Brain, 2000). Conversely, Russell (2002) and used explicit measure for measuring product placement effectiveness and found that the effects for memory are similar to the effects for attitude for studying brand recall and recognition measures in terms of explicit memory.

Gaps in Literature

The previous studies have studies the effectiveness of product placement for various types of placements. The product placements done by celebrities or brand ambassadors have also gathered a lots of importance, but none of the past research studies analyzed what impact does a debutant actor/non celebrity has on the effectiveness of brand placements in terms of recognition via implicit or explicit memory. The present research attempts to understand the relationship between debutant actors as endorsers in a Bollywood movie and its impact on implicit and explicit brand recognition/recall to evaluate the effectiveness of product placement

V.   OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

(1) To study the perception of the respondents towards the skills of debutant actors.
(2) To analyze the effectiveness of different forms of product placement, that is, implicit product placement, integrated explicit product placement, and non – integrated explicit product placement.
(3) To study the relationship between debutant actors and the effectiveness of product placement.

Hypotheses:

H1: There is no significant gender difference in perception of the respondents towards the image of debutant actors.
H2: There is no significant age difference in perception of the respondents towards the image of debutant actors.
H3: There is no significant difference between implicit and explicit memory recall for an implicit product placement.
H4: There is no significant difference in implicit and explicit memory recall for an integrated explicit product placement.

H5: There is no significant difference in implicit and explicit memory recall for non – integrated explicit product placement.

H6: There is no relationship between effectiveness of an implicit product placement and debutant actors.

H7: There is no relationship between effectiveness of an integrated explicit product placement and debutant actors.

H8: There is no relationship between effectiveness of a non-integrated explicit product placement and debutant actors.
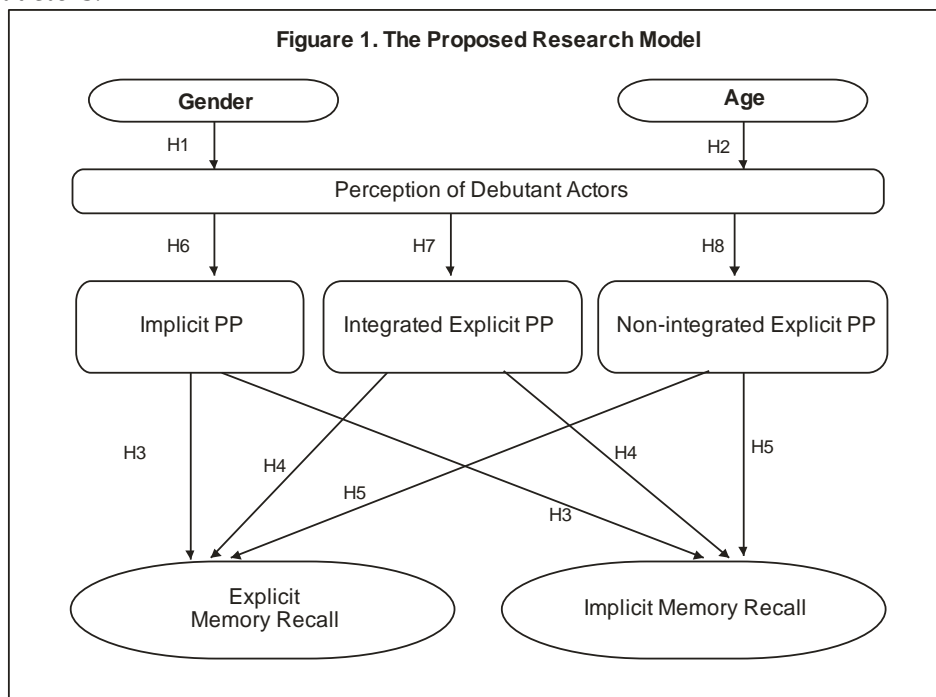

Figure 1

The Proposed Research Model:

The study is an attempt to establish the relationship between effectiveness/recall of product placement done by debutant actors. Earlier studies have put forth that celebrity presence has a positive impact on the brand recall, but no research has been done to see the effectiveness of product placement done by debutant actors (Figure 1).

Research Methodology:

Design: This study uses experimental designs with three types of brand placements – implicit product placement, integrated explicit product placement, and non – integrated explicit product placement. The three placed product were placed within the same clip. The three placements were in the movie for the same duration, that is, between 20-25 seconds.

Participants: A total of 52 management students participated in this experimental setup. This study was presented as a movie entertainment study and each session was conducted with 10-12 participants.

Procedure: In the recognition task, the participants were first shown the video clip and were then

provided with a self administered questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to ascertain the effectiveness of product placement on implicit as well as explicit memory. For the implicit memory measurement, the respondents were requested to pick up a brand they wanted to buy if they were given a chance. The implicit memory measurement was followed from the model used by Law and Braun (2000) in their study. The actual brand was placed along with three brands that were not present in the clip for all the three forms of product placement. This was followed by few questions to judge the respondents' general feelings towards the clip shown. The third section involved a scale for measuring the various attributes of the debutant actors. The scale used was developed by Ohanian (1990). The scale comprises of 11 items (as per the need of the study) on a scale from 1 to 7. The fourth section purposely asked respondents to remember the brands shown in the clip that they recalled in order to measure the explicit memory. The list included the items that were shown in the movie. This was followed by the last part of the questionnaire that collected the demographic details of the respondents.

Analysis:
A total of 52 subjects were used in the experimental study. The research was spread over a period of three months. It was conducted from May to June 2016. Statistical software SPSS along with Microsoft Excel was used for analyzing the data. Statical approach of one-way ANOVA and Independent t-test and McNemar's test was used for testing the hypotheses based on implicit and explicit memory recall.

Table 1. Demographic Details of the Respondents

Descriptive Statistics	No of Respondents	Percentage
Gender		
Male	23	44
Female	29	56
Age		
Below 20 years	3	6
20-25 year	45	86
26-30 years	4	8
Above 30 years	0	0
Number of movies seen per month		
0-1	20	38.5
2-3	12	23.1
3-5	11	21.2
Above 5	9	17.3

Table 2. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.883
Bartlett's Test of	Approx. Chi-Square	466.639
Sphericity	Df	55
	Sig.	.000

Table 3. Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Charisma of Actors	Credibility of Actors
Attractiveness	.317	**.850**
Class Appeal	.442	**.778**
Looks	.340	**.875**
Sex Appeal	.226	**.876**
Elegance	.505	**.694**
Dependability	**.672**	.324
Honesty	**.797**	.253
Reliability	**.811**	.370
Sincerity	**.793**	.320
Trustworthy	**.824**	.251
Skills	**.597**	.455

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
[a.] Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

Table 4. Reliability Analysis

	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Charisma of Actors	.934	5
Credibility of Actors	.899	6

Table 5. Independent sample t – Test

		Levene's test		t – test statistics		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.
Charisma of Actors	Equal variances assumed	.329	.569	-.520	50	.605
Credibility of Actors	Equal variances assumed	.625	.433	-1.436	50	.157

Table 6. ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Charisma of Actors	Between Gropus	2.459	2	1.229	.585	.561
	Within Groups	102.879	49	2.100		
	Total	105.338	51			
Credibility of Actors	Between Gropus	7.353	2	3.677	2.635	.082
	Within Groups	68.383	49	1.396		
	Total	75.737	51			

Demographic Distribution: The details regarding the demographic characteristics of the respondents, that is, gender, age, number of movies seen in month is presented in the Table 1. The gender distribution in the sample survey was not biased, with 44% males and 56% female respondents. Most of respondents were in the age group of 20-25 years due to the respondents being university students. The average number of movies seen every month by the subjects under study was 1-2 movies.

In order to achieve objective 1, the 11 item scale that was constructed for measuring the attributes of the debutant actors was factor analyzed. Factor analysis reduced the 11 variables into two factors after PCA with varimax rotation. The two factors were named as Charisma of Actors and Credibility of Actors. KMO Bartlett's was also found to be significant (Table 2); 75% of the variance is explained by these tests than the expected value of 60%. The rotated component matrix for the eleven variables with the factor loading is presented in the Table 3. The factor analysis of two factors was tested using Cronbahch's Alpha. The two factors were found to reliable, with Cronbach's alpha values above 0.7. The values were found to be significant at 0.934 for Charisma of Actors and 0.899 for Credibility of Actors respectively (Table 4).

VI.   RESULT AND DISCUSSION

To test the first hypothesis, the independent t – test was applied to see if any gender differences existed in the perception of the respondents towards the image of debutant actors. The test of homogeneity for Charisma of Actors and Credibility of Actors has equal variances (p=0.569, 04.33>.05). The t – test revealed that the p – value for Charisma of Actors at $p < 0.05$ level [t= -.520, p=0.605] and for Credibility of Actors [t=-1.436, p=0.157] is greater than 0.05 (Table 5). Thus, the null hypothesis H1 is accepted. Hence, no significant gender differences existed with regard to the perception of the respondents towards the image of debutant actors.

In order to test the impact of age on respondents' perception towards debutant actors, ANOVA test was conducted. The result of ANOVA at $p < 0.05$ (Table 6) reveal the following F-value for factors Charisma of Actors
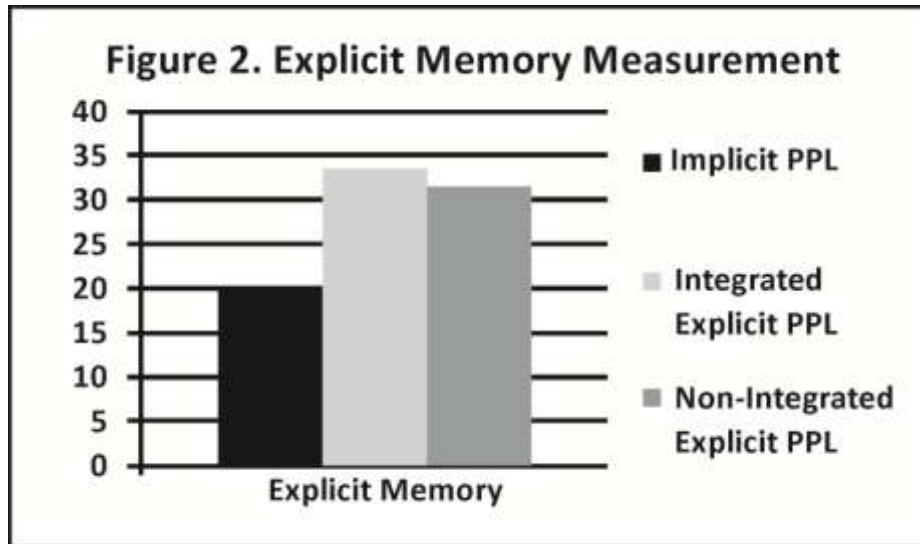
Figure 2. Explicit Memory Measurement

Table 7. McNemar Test

Type of Product placement (implicit and explicit memory recall)		Sig. (2-sided)
Non integrated explicit product placement	Choose a Bike & Splendor	.001[a]
Integrated explicit product placement	Choose a Car & Ferrari	.002[a]
Implicit product placement	Choose new Glasses & Ray-Ban	.093[a]

Table 8. Independent Sample t – Test (Implicit Product Placement) Implicit Memory

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.
Charisma of Actors	.315	.577	-.109	50	.914
			-.107	42.920	.915
Credibility of actors	2.297	.136	-.195	50	.847
			-.189	39.979	.851

[F (2, 49)-.585, p=0.561] and Credibility of Actors [F (2, 49) =2.635, p=0.082]. The results show that no significant age differences existed with regard to the perception of the respondents towards the image of debutant actors, thereby leading to acceptance of H2.

The study, in order to ascertain the effectiveness of product placement and brand recall, carried out both implicit and explicit memory measurement. The recall/recognition rave via explicit memory measurement for the three forms of product placement is depicted in the Figure 2. The Figure shows that the explicit memory measurement is highest for integrated explicit product placement followed by non-integrated explicit product placement, and is lowest for implicit

product placement.

In order to test if any relation existed between implicit memory and explicit memory recall for a product placed within the film McNemar;s test was used. McNemar ['s test shows that for implicit product placement, the null hypothesis is accepted since the significant values is greater than .05 (p=0.93). Hence, there is no significant difference between implicit and explicit recall for implicit product placement. The test results also depict that for non-integrated explicit product placement and for integrated explicit product placement, the null hypothesis is rejected as the values are significant at the .001 and .002 levels of significance respectively (Table 7).

Table 9. Independent Sample t – Test (Implicit Product Placement) Explicit Memory

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.
Charisma of Actors	3.857	.055	1.687	50	.098
			1.582	33.478	.123
Credibility of actors	.900	.347	.654	50	.516
			.625	36.257	.536

Table 10. Independent Sample t – Test (Integrated Explicit PPL) Implicit Memory

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.
Charisma of Actors	.004	.949	1.019	50	.313
			1.024	23.421	.316
Credibility of actors	1.175	.284	-.537	50	.593
			-.600	29.429	.553

Table 11. Independent Sample t – Test (Integrated Explicit PPL) Explicit Memory

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.
Charisma of Actors	.099	.754	-1.421	50	.776
			-1.399	37.055	.771
Credibility of actors	.050	.824	-1.011	50	.497
			-1.034	33.420	.504

Table 12. Independent Sample t – Test (Non-Integrated Explicit PPL) Implicit Memory

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.
Charisma of Actors	1.076	.537	-1.421	50	.162
			-1.399	38.493	.170
Credibility of actors	.127	.815	-1.011	50	.317
			-1.034	43.472	.307

Thus, there is no significant difference between implicit and explicit memory recall for an implicit product placement leading to the acceptance of H3. However, a significant difference in implicit and explicit memory recall for an integrated explicit product placement and non-integrated explicit product placement is seen, thereby rejecting H4 and H5. To further understand the relationship between debutant actors and implicit as well as explicit memory recall, the independent sample t – test was used. The test of homogeneity in case of both factors – Charisma of Actors and Credibility of Actors has equal variances (p=0.577, 0.136>.05). The t – test revealed that the p – value for Charisma of Actors at p < 0.05 level [t=-.109, p=0.914] and for the Credibility of Actors [t=-.195, p=0.847] is greater than 0.05 Table (09).

Similarly, the results for the test of homogeneity in case of explicit recall for both the factors – Charisma of Actors and Credibility of Actors has equal variances (p=0.055, 0.347>.05). The t – test revealed that the p – value for Charisma of Actors at p<0.05 level [t=1.687, p=.098] and for Credibility of Actors [t=.654, p=.516] is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis of an implicit product placement and debutant actors, leading to the acceptance of H6.

The independent sample t – test result for integrated explicit product placement are as follows. The test of homogeneity in case of implicit recall for both the factors – Charisma of Actors and Credibility of Actors has equal variances (p=0.949, 0.284>.05). The t-test revealed that the p-value for Charisma of Actors at p<0.05 level [t=1.019, p=0.313] and for Credibility of Actors [t=-0.537, p=0.593] is greater than 0.05 (Table 10). Similarly, the results for the test of homogeneity in case of explicit recall for both the factors – Charisma of Actors and Credibility of Actors has equal variances (p=0.754, 0.824>.05). The t-test revealed that the p-value for Charisma of Actors at p<0.05 level [t=-0.286, p=0.776] and for Credibility of Actors [t=0.685, p=0.497] is greater than 0.05 (Table 11). The results here lead to acceptance of the null hypothesis (H7). Thus, there is no relationship between effectiveness of an integrated explicit product placement and debutant actors.

The Table 12 and Table 13 depict the results of the independent sample t-test for non-integrated explicit product placement. It shows if implicit and explicit memory recall is dependent on the respondents' perception of debutant actors.

Table 13. Independent Sample t – test (Non-Integrated Explicit PPL) Explicit Memory

	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.
Charisma of Actors	.387	.305	.049	50	.961
			.046	16.661	.964
Credibility of actors	.056	.723	-.127	50	.900
			-.127	18.050	.901

The test of homogeneity in case of implicit recall for both the factors – Charisma of Actors and Credibility of Actors has equal variances (p=0.537, 0.815>.05). The t-test revealed that p-value for Charisma of Actors at p<0.05 level [t=-1.421, p=0.162] and for Credibility of Actors [t=-1.01, p=0.317] is greater than 0.05 (Table 13). Similarly, the results for the test of homogeneity in case of

explicit recall for both the factors – Charisma of Actors and Credibility of Actors has equal variances (p=0.305, 0.723>.05). The t-test revealed that p-value for Charisma of Actors at p<0.05 level [t=0.049, p=0.961] and for Credibility of Actors [t=-.127, p=0.900] is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis H8 is accepted, that is, no relationship was found between effectiveness of non-integrated explicit product placement and debutant actors (Table 14).

VII.   CONCLUSION

The dual purpose of this study was to ascertain the perception of the respondents towards the debutant actors and the relationship between product placement effectiveness and the debutant actors. The results of the factor analysis for studying the perception of the respondents towards debutant actors revealed that the respondents judged the actors on two major criteria – the Charisma of the Actors and the Credibility of the Actors. The research also puts forward that gender and age of the respondents has no effect on their feelings towards the debutant actors/actress.

Furthermore, the composition between implicit memory recall and explicit memory recall for the three different forms of placements showed that for an implicit product placement, no difference was found in the recall/recognition by implicit and explicit memory measurement. However, significant differences were found in the case of implicit and explicit memory measurement in case integrated explicit product placement and non-integrated explicit product placement. The major objective of finding out the impact of debutant actors on product placement effectiveness threw up interesting results. For all the three types of placements, implicit memory measurement and explicit memory measurement received no impact from the feelings of the respondents towards the debutant actors. The results are in agreement with the results obtained by Scott and Craig-Lees (2004), who concluded that star presence has no effect on product placement. The results from the current study also put forward that debutant actors have no significant effect on product placement.

VIII.   MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Product placement in the movie industry in India has been in practice for many decades. The current study was aimed at studying the impact of debutant actors on product placement effectiveness. The results here show that star presence has no impact on the effectiveness of the product placed. Thus, the film industry can utilize this fact for further use in their movies. The marketing communication managers of various brands should also focus on increasing the visibility of the brand rather than focusing on star power in brand placements in Bollywood movies. The users of this form of communication must use integrated product placement instead of implicit product placement as integrated product placement has a higher recall rate in the minds of the audiences.

A product/service which needs to be promoted must be integrated in the plot or must be used by the actors/actresses so as to enhance the chances of direct recall by the audience, so that an effective product placement can be accomplished. If a brand is placed prominently in a film and has both audio as well as visual components and is well connected to the plot in the movie, such a product placement will probably lead to significant increase in awareness of the placed brand among the viewers. Thus, the brand managers should lay emphasis on this fact while using this

form of communication. The various outcomes from this study can be used for effective placement of brands in the movies.

IX.   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The study was conducted on a small student sample and in a limited geographical area; thus, the results cannot be generalized. The research study has tested only the short-term effects of product placement. The scope of the study did not take into consideration the long-term measures. The real purchase behaviors were also not studies, which are the final outcomes of product placement influence. Furthermore, the study used a small clip of 15 minutes for analysis. Hence, a future study that is based on the entire duration of the movie/clip can be conducted. The impact of a long clip in comparison to a small clip can be an interesting research question. The effect of the frequency of the product placement in movie can also be studies to ascertain its effectiveness. A comparative study on individual brand placement to that of multiple brand placements in a single plot and its impact on recall by customers can be another topic for future study. A field quasi experiment with respect to various brands can be conducted in order to get better insights with respect to effectiveness of product placement. Future research can also involve various products categories in order to study the effectiveness of product placements in movies.

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