CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The present investigation was carried out in the state of Karnataka to evaluate the film marketing concepts and practices with special reference to Kannada film industry. Kannada film industry has completed about 80 years and earned national recognition for creative, quality oriented and audience-friendly film productions. The Kannada film industry has also gained prominence through constructive film genre and market segmentation. Kannada films are facing stiff competition from other languages, compounded by escalating production costs and theatre woes. Kannada films are being marginalized in their own turf due to the dominance of other language movies on all fronts. The Kannada film industry needs to concertedly work on strategies for its survival and progress by enlisting active participation of creative and professional resources. The producers, directors and distributors have adopted certain innovative tools and strategies for promoting Kannada films. Marketing in Kannada film industry has grown over a period of time as a specialized branch of film production. The findings of the study, testing of hypothesis, limitations of the study, implications of the study and suggestions for future research are delineated in this chapter.

5.2 Findings of the Study

Development of Marketing in Kannada Film Industry

From the brightly-painted pictures on walls and larger-than-life cutouts to digital-motion posters and smartphone applications, marketing in Kannada film industry has come a long way.

Posters, trailers, star appeal and appearances, and the brand identity associated with particular production houses were the popular modes used to draw film-goers to the theatres. Now, digital media and penetration of high speed Internet have changed the landscape of film marketing. The reach and power of the online media have added a new dimension to film marketing. Recognising the growing significance of marketing, Kannada film industry has started taking cues from other prominent
industries and embarked on harnessing the latest technology and digital innovation to promote films. Producing tailor-made versions for various social media platforms is one of the many off-the-hook strategies that the industry is focusing on currently.

Digital marketing in Kannada films may be said to have begun with the Vishnuvardhan starrer ‘Kshana Kshana’ in 2007. What made the marketing of this film different is that for the first time, Kannada moviegoers were exposed to the nuances of this explosive medium. The one of its kind, hi-tech poster sported the lead actor Vishnuvardhan firing a gun, sending fumes in the air and a small waterfall streaming out of the billboard. A 45-second clip of the film’s music could also be heard from the poster. This was quite an unusual scene for the moviegoers who were used to seeing larger than life cutouts, cinema theatres decorated with flowers.

Another such endeavour was the Ramesh Aravind film ‘Nammanna Don’ (2012). Its music was straightaway released in a novel format—the mobile platform. It was said to be the country’s first-ever music release on mobile phones.

Continuing the trend, a few recent films have used mobile applications for promotion. Mobile application of Pawan Kumar’s ‘Lucia’ (2013) became extremely popular within just a few days of its release. What marked out this app was that the user had to scan a Rs.100 or Rs.500 note to watch the song of the film, instead of scanning a poster or the film’s print ad. This novelty garnered huge appreciation from various quarters. The app went down so well in the West that Fulbright Film Scholar Karen Folger Jacobs cited this experiment as a model for other film-makers at a panel discussion held as part of the Bangalore International Film Festival in 2014.

Yet another effort at digital marketing in Kannada films is for the film, ‘Simpleagi Ondu Love Story’ (2013). The innovative factor this movie introduced was that it offered exclusive content from the film to anyone who wanted to download the app. This app had not only information about the film and snippets of songs; it also contained trailers that viewers could watch by simply scanning the film’s posters.

The introduction of the digital media for Kannada film promotion has taken other versions and forms. Kannada film industry’s first digital motion poster was created for Yash-starrer ‘Gajakesari’ (2014). The poster was uploaded on video sharing sites and played at film theatres, marking a growing trend in digital film
marketing. Use of motion posters for creating buzz and increasing visibility has become the norm in the industry now.

A trend of fans being heavily involved in the development of these apps was also seen. For instance, Shivu Adda, a web-based fan group of actor Shiva Rajkumar, developed an app which gave updates about his film ‘Andar Bahar’ (2013).

The Kannada film industry has dedicated portals such as chitrataloka.com, chitratara.com, cinecircle.com, etc. Chitrataloka.com, launched in 2000 by noted photojournalist K.M. Veeresh, is said to be the first online portal dedicated exclusively to Kannada cinema. The portal specializes in news, online promotion, film marketing, and web designing of Kannada films. It also launches various marketing events based on specific themes of a film and relies heavily on various social platforms to reach out to a wider audience.

The rush for using this platform is quite natural because of the observation that films that have been promoted through this medium have succeeded in drawing attention of the film-goers. However, the pace of change or adoption has not been proportionate to the speed of development of advanced technologies overall. If the speed at which digital technologies have undergone changes can be likened to a gallop; its adoption for promotion of Kannada films can be said to be a walk, if not a crawl.

This is ironical, considering that Bengaluru is India’s IT capital, where mobilisation of resources for technologies should be relatively simpler. The adoption of technologies has been patchy. The examples of films that have used this medium, illustrated above, show that adoption of digital technologies for marketing has been a matter of choice rather than the norm, unlike Bollywood and to a lesser extent, other south Indian cinema. However, not everyone is getting on the bandwagon though Bengaluru is considered the IT-hub and a lot of companies in the city are involved in creating apps. But, they are working for other languages as Kannada filmmakers are yet to fully adopt newer technology.

The phenomenon of paid news, institutionalised by Medianet and other similar agencies, has become pervasive. This highly organised mode of marketing involves paying newspapers and broadcasters for positive coverage. Kannada film industry too
has started harnessing the latest technology to promote films. Though Sandalwood still has to catch up with the other film industries in terms of big time marketing strategies such as corporate tie-ups and promotional tours, they are leaving no stone unturned to be in pace with the current trends and tuning in strategies according to their market size and share.

**Demographic Features**

- A majority of the study sample represent male respondents (70.29%), PUC/Diploma/graduation categories (86.29%), film audience (58.57%) and Bangalore-Mysore regions (64.86%) respectively.

**Attitude of Respondents about Film Marketing**

- Film marketing is an important component of film business and management (82.86%).
- Film-makers are required to understand the marketability of a film before taking up the project (83.43%).
- Film-makers and marketers should have an understanding of the different audiences that exist (81.71%).
- Film marketing basically assists a film in reaching its target audience at any time (78.29%).
- Film-makers and marketers must consider value creation and recreation activities for consumers/audience (77.14%).
- Film marketing landscape had changed significantly in the age of commercialization of media (84.0%).
- Film marketers are influenced by box office economics (86.86%).
- Film marketing practically involves systematic market research (80.0%).
- The artists have become brands or entrepreneurs in film marketing (74.29%).
- Film marketing is undertaken on the basis of adoption of time-tested practices (68.57%).
- Film marketing helps position the movie to target audience (76.0%).
• Film marketers adopt effective film marketing tools and techniques (71.43%).

• Film marketing ensures a good opening and performance at the box office (70.86%).

• Critical reviews impact the process of film marketing (63.43%).

• Stars play a vital role in the film marketing process (83.43%).

**Application of Film Marketing Tools**

• Festivals screening is used as a tool of film marketing (57.14%).

• Street marketing is used as a tool of film marketing (56.0%).

• Search engine platform is not used as a tool of film marketing (66.29%).

• Film posters and hoardings are used as tools of film marketing (91.43%).

• Film trailer is used as a tool of film marketing (88.0%).

• Games and competitions are not used as tools of film marketing (81.14%).

• Mobile games are not used as tools of film marketing (77.71%).

• Mobile apps are not used as tools of film marketing (81.14%).

• Television commercials are used as tools of film marketing (85.14%).

• Radio commercials are used as tools of film marketing (85.14%).

• Movie websites are used as a tool of film marketing (77.71%).

• Merchandising is not used as a tool of film marketing (68.57%).

• Celebrities/stars are used as tools of film marketing (79.43%).

• Television reality and talk shows are used as tools of film marketing (84.57%).

• Radio talk shows are used as tools of film marketing (65.71%).

• Mall activation is not used as a tool of film marketing (63.43%).

• Partnership with food chains is not used as a tool of film marketing (58.86%).

• Product placement tie-ins are not used as tools of film marketing (60.0%).

• Movie portal is not used as a tool of film marketing (58.86%).
- Press conference/meet is used as a tool of film marketing (61.71%).
- Press junkets are used as tools of film marketing (60.0%).
- Film premiere is used as a tool of film marketing (60.57%).
- E-mail marketing is not used as a tool of film marketing (60.57%).
- Social media platforms are used as tools of film marketing (69.71%).
- Print advertisements are used as tools of film marketing (84.57%).
- Paid news is used as a tool of film marketing (79.43%).
- Market research is not used as a tool of film marketing (82.29%).
- Word of mouth and buzz marketing are used as tools of film marketing (80.0%).

**Adoption of Film Marketing Strategies**

- Kannada film marketing is based on defining the movie’s target audience (82.29%).
- Kannada film marketing is based on development of good website to promote films (83.43%).
- Kannada film marketing is based on understanding movie making environment (89.14%).
- Kannada film marketing is based on communication of effective film-making mission (82.29%).
- Kannada film marketing is based on convincing the audience about the USPs of the film (65.14%).
- Kannada film marketing is based on advanced marketing approaches (71.43%).
- Kannada film marketing is not based on proper budgeting and management of funds (75.43%).
- Kannada film marketing is based on creating relevant contents for communication (73.14%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on use of effective tag line for compelling attention (69.71%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on effective use of digital technology (80.0%).
• Kannada film marketing is not based on creative story boards (70.86%).
• Kannada film marketing is not based on captivating quotes and messages (72.0%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on the use of optimal title (68.57%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on effective trailers (68.0%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on appropriate movie websites for adequate information (70.29%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on effective use of film magazines and other publications (52.57%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on effective use of social media platforms (66.86%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on good media touch points (70.29%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on leverage of social networks and blogging community (77.71%).
• Kannada film marketing is not based on using e-mail campaigns (70.29%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on designing of creative posters, cut-outs and hoardings (73.14%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on intelligent use of stars, celebrities and talented personalities (76.0%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on timely, innovative audio launches (70.29%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on proper utilization of special events and occasions (73.14%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on suitable media campaigns (74.29%).
• Kannada film marketing is not based on highly visible product tie-ins and corporate partnerships (66.29%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on effective publicity campaigns (70.86%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on orchestrated media events (66.86%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on effective theatrical promotions (56.57%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on effective word-of-mouth tactics (58.86%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on effective use of talk shows, game shows and other reality shows on TV (67.43%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on effective use of talk shows and game shows on Radio (65.14%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on effective crowd funding campaigns (70.86%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on publicity and advertising campaigns (67.43%).
• Kannada film marketing is based on optimal movie release time (70.29%).

Uses of Film Marketing Strategies

Use of the following strategies has served as boosting or enhancing factors for Kannada film marketing:

• Setting up of website/portal (70.29%).
• Content marketing (77.14%).
• Use of taglines (86.29%).
• Quotes and messages (80.57%).
• Movie trailers (76.0%).
• Movie websites (73.71%).
• Video sharing sites (74.86%).
- Magazines and blogs (69.71%).
- Social media platforms (70.29%).
- Digital media applications (69.14%).
- Design and visual elements of movie posters (69.71%).
- Online music platforms (81.14%).
- Special events and occasions (85.71%).
- Uses of media touch points (66.86%).
- Product tie-ins and corporate partnerships (74.86%).
- Advertising and publicity campaigns (83.43%).
- Orchestrated media events (74.86%).
- Theatrical promotions (84.57%).
- Crowd funding campaigns (76.57%).
- Stars, celebrities and talented personalities (73.14%).
- Print media publicity (65.71%).
- Electronic media publicity (70.29%).
- Kannada film marketing practices are on par with Bollywood and other film industries (72.0%).

5.3 Testing of Hypotheses

H1. The stakeholders of Kannada film marketing have not developed a positive attitude towards film marketing.

The data which are presented in the thesis clearly reveal that the stakeholders of Kannada film marketing have developed a positive attitude towards film marketing in modern times. Hence, the above hypothesis stands disproved according to the data analysis.
H2: Advanced tools of film marketing are not applied by the stakeholders of Kannada film marketing in Karnataka state.

The data which are presented in the thesis clearly reveal that the stakeholders of film marketing have applied the major tools of film marketing in the study areas. Hence, the above hypothesis stands disproved according to the data analysis.

H3: The film marketing strategies adopted by the stakeholders are not advanced.

The data which are presented in the thesis clearly reveal that the stakeholders of Kannada film marketing have adopted advanced strategies. Hence, the above hypothesis stands disproved according to the data analysis.

H4: The film marketing strategies adopted by the stakeholders are not practically useful.

The data which are presented in the thesis clearly reveal that the stakeholders of film marketing have found the adequate uses of Kannada film marketing strategies. Hence, the above hypothesis stands disproved according to the data analysis.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

It was not practically possible for the researcher to enjoy the benefit of accessibility of data to all the stakeholders of Kannada film marketing due to time, energy and resource constraints. Lack of transparent information and data in terms of reporting profitability and other financial aspects was one of the major limitations. There are no methods of verifying or substantiating the information made available in the public domain with respect to the box office collections and profitability, thus making it difficult to gauge if the film’s success at the box office was the result of its marketing campaign or not.

All the stakeholders of Kannada film industry namely producers, directors, distributors and exhibitors were not available to the researcher since they were pre-occupied with film production, distribution, exhibition and other activities. The usual limitations of the survey method such as time, human inadequacies, resource constraints, recollection and communication were experienced by the researcher.
Incidental, purposive and stratified sampling methods were followed in selecting the respondents. Though much care has been taken to collect the primary data, the memory bias on the part of the respondents cannot be completely ruled out.

5.5 Implications of the Study

Kannada film industry has passed through several testing times since its inception. However, the hopes of rejuvenating Kannada film industry have been kindled with young talents marking new trends through their innovative films in the new millennium. The following implications are listed under with a view to promote Kannada film industry and Kannada film marketing in future.

Implications for Kannada Film Industry

- Film-making involves artistic temperament, professional commitment and sound technical expertise in order to cope with the emerging challenges.
- In the current scenario, Kannada film industry is dominated by businessmen, politicians, real estate tycoons and other vested interests that produce mindless films with inexperienced hands. The quality of Kannada films should grow along with the numbers.
- Factors like glamour, fame and opportunity to turn black money white should not be the basis for film-making. The professional film-makers should not be pushed to the sidelines by the new comers.
- Kannada film industry needs proper infrastructure and distribution systems which should be managed by the creative minds and seasoned professionals.
- The taste of the film audience differs from time to time. It is high time that Kannada film makers deviate from the tired old plots and focus on quality and content driven films.
- The contents and merits of Kannada film industry should eventually emerge victorious in this age of competitive film making.
- There is shrinkage in the number of cinema halls and Kannada films are not adequately supported by the multiplexes. Quick measures have to be taken to curb film piracy and resolve theatre issues.
• The government should provide subsidized financial assistance to build ‘Janata Chitramandiras’ (people’s film viewing centres) at taluk level in the entire state of Karnataka to encourage regular screening of Kannada films.

• There is a dearth of original film-makers. Kannada film industry should get rid of the age-old formula which glorifies sex and violence. This formula has become obsolete since young generation of audience think differently due to several factors including social mobility.

Implications for Kannada Film Marketing

• There is no proper synchronization between production and marketing in Kannada film industry. The film-makers should analyze the market conditions and challenges based on solid research and plan their marketing strategies accordingly.

• Proper planning and budgeting are critical in both film-making and marketing processes. It is not just the money that matters, but the positive mindset of the film-makers and producers. They should change in accordance with the changing film environment.

• Kannada film marketing strategies should be based on meaningful corporate tie-ups and merchandising in the present times.

• New opportunities have emerged in film marketing with the advent of social media and digital technologies. It is important for the Kannada film makers to adopt 360 degree approach to film marketing.

• Kannada film publicity and advertising campaigns should be based on generating positive publicity and leveraging positive emotions and feelings.

• Apart from using the conventional film promotion channels, Kannada film-makers should also make effective use of popular social media and mobile platforms for better film marketing. Digital apps are a new way to connect with the audience and get into their personal devices.

• Kannada film marketing strategies and activities cannot be the same for every other film. The film marketing strategies should be unique based on the film and the focus should be widened from traditional methods.
• Effective management of funds and optimum utilization of new opportunities and advanced technologies should be ensured to strengthen Kannada film marketing.

• Kannada film-makers should enlist active participation of media professionals and communication specialists in the process of film promotion and marketing activities. Bengaluru, being India’s IT capital, mobilisation of resources for technologies should be relatively simpler. A lot of companies in the city are involved in creating innovative apps and film-makers should make use of this opportunity.

5.6 Suggestions for Future Research

This study has attempted to evaluate the Kannada film marketing concepts, tools and strategies in this age of highly competitive business environment. The study has revealed the strengths and limitations of film marketing tools and strategies adopted by the Kannada film-makers. But, during the course of the study, it is understood that there are many areas which could be considered for research by the future generation of researchers. Further research is needed in order to better determine the best uses of Kannada film production and film marketing tools and strategies. The future researchers should concentrate on evaluation of Kannada film industry, structural considerations for Kannada film-making, adoption of healthy film censorship regulations, impact of technology on film-making, market research in the film industry, film marketing mix, value and supply chains, psychology of theatre audience or film-goers and other factors of film-making and film marketing with reference to Kannada films, Bollywood and other regional cinema.

5.7 Epilogue

Kannada film industry has emerged as one of the major streams of Indian Cinema. From its humble beginning in the late 1920s to a fully-fledged industry producing about 150 films today, it has travelled a long and arduous path making indelible impression on the minds of the people of Karnataka.

The Kannada film industry today is witnessing a surge in investments to tap the potential of underpenetrated markets. For Kannada films, there is no market beyond
its state and they have to compete on all fronts with other language cinemas in their own land. With extreme commercialization and explosion of technology, Kannada film industry is undergoing a metamorphosis. Kannada-speaking population is present outside the state as well as in other countries such as the US, UK, Australia, and pockets of the Middle East. Keeping this in mind, it is imperative for the Kannada film industry to focus on expanding its horizons and tap the national and international markets like its counterparts in other South Indian states. It has also become extremely important for the industry to stand out from the competition—and this is where the marketing plays a crucial role.

The Kannada film production and distribution processes are complemented by time-tested film marketing tools and strategies. But marketing is an inexact science and in many instances the films fail to do well at the box office despite all the marketing push. When such is the case, marketing strategies cannot be the same for every other film. The film marketing strategies should be unique based on the film and the focus should be widened from traditional methods. The investigation reveals that Kannada film industry needs to be rejuvenated and enriched in terms of advanced film marketing concepts, tools, techniques and strategies. The stakeholders of Kannada film industry are required to inculcate innovative and creative film marketing strategies, in tune with technological advancements and trends, to boost the marketing practices and the Kannada film industry as a whole.

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