CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

AND

IMPLICATIONS
5.1

INTRODUCTION

Based on data analysis from previous chapter, this final chapter presents significant conclusions derived from the findings. The implications of the conclusions are discussed next, followed by the limitations of the research and avenues for further research.

The main research problem as proposed in Chapter 3 was ‘What are Indian viewers’ attitudes towards the on-going practice of product placement in Hindi movies and TV serials?’. Attitude towards product placement in movies and TV serials was studied from various perspectives like overall response, differences in response based on demographic differences, differences in media habits and individual differences. Demographic differences were considered on the criteria of age, gender and income. Moreover, movies and TV serials as media for placement were compared. Conclusions derived from findings of data analysis are discussed next.

5.2

CONCLUSIONS ABOUT PRODUCT PLACEMENT IN MOVIES

Six factors of attitude towards product placement in Hindi movies emerged from analysis of a total of 563 responses. Conclusions about attitude towards product placement in movies analyzed from different perspectives are discussed next.
Conclusions about overall response

Overall response of viewers towards product placement in movies was quite positive. More than 80% respondents were aware of the product placement practice, noticing brands in movies and knowing the commercial purpose behind it. More than 60% respondents exhibited interest in the practice by remembering brands that were connected to the theme or were familiar to them; they thought brands in movies made scenes realistic and were a means to know about the latest in-fashion products. A little more than 50% respondents preferred seeing brands in movies rather than in traditional TV commercials.

Neutral attitude was exhibited towards influence of brands placed in movies in terms of trial, liking, or usage of brands. Thus, viewers were not decidedly influenced or not influence by the brands in movies, it was an undecided response.

Besides, over 60% respondents thought that unnecessary exposure to brands was given in movies and that it should be restricted to only those brands required in the theme of the movie.

Conclusions about demographic differences

Viewers’ age, gender and income were considered in order to know the effect of demographic differences on attitude towards product placement. Response differed greatly with age, with younger respondents having distinctly more positive attitude towards brands shown in movies than their older counterparts. Younger respondents noticed more brands and were more interested and influenced by the placement. They were more tolerant and knowledgeable about the commercial aspect of the practice as compared to older respondents.
Response towards product placement did not vary much with gender, except that women seemed more interested in brands shown in movies as compared to men.

Affluent respondents were found more tolerant and knowledgeable about product placement in movies, whereas they showed lesser interest in and preference for this mode of marketing as compared to lower income groups.

➤ Conclusions about differences in media habits
Greater attention and tolerance towards brands shown in movies was exhibited by viewers with higher movie watching frequency as compared to those with less frequent movie viewers.

➤ Conclusions about individual differences
Brand consciousness and general liking for TV commercials were considered for individual differences. More than 50% respondents were positively brand conscious. Respondents with higher brand consciousness generally noticed more brands in movies, were more interested in and influenced by the brands, with a higher preference for this mode of marketing.

More than 70% respondents generally liked watching TV commercials. Respondents with higher liking for TV commercials generally noticed more brands, were more interested in and influenced by brands shown in movies. They also exhibited higher level of tolerance towards and knowledge about commercial purpose of this practice.
5.3 CONCLUSIONS ABOUT PRODUCT PLACEMENT IN TV SERIALS

Six factors of attitude towards product placement in Hindi TV serials emerged from analysis of a total of 561 responses. Conclusions about attitude towards product placement in TV serials analyzed from different perspectives are discussed next.

Conclusions about overall response

Like movies, overall response of viewers towards product placement in TV serials was quite positive. Close to 80% respondents were aware of the product placement practice, noticing brands in movies and knowing that it was a kind of advertisement for the brand. More than 60% respondents exhibited interest in the practice, feeling that brands in TV serials served as a means to know about the latest in-fashion products and remembered the brands that were connected to the theme or were familiar to them. Around 45% respondents preferred seeing brands placed within TV serials rather than in traditional TV commercials.

An overall negative attitude was exhibited towards influence of brands placed in TV serials in terms of trial, liking, or usage of brands. Close to 50% respondents said they were not influenced by brands in TV serials.

Besides, over 60% respondents thought that unnecessary exposure to brands was given in TV serials and that it should be restricted to only those brands required by the theme of the program.
Chapter 5

Conclusions about demographic differences

Age, gender and income were considered in order to know the effect of demographic differences on attitude towards product placement. Response differed with age, with younger respondents having more positive attitude towards brands shown in TV serials than their older counterparts. Younger respondents exhibited more attention and interest towards brands placed in TV serials as compared to older respondents. Besides, younger respondents were more tolerant toward product placement practice and did not find it excessive.

Response towards product placement did vary with gender in that women were found to be more interested in and influenced by brands in TV serials as compared to men.

Moreover, lower income respondents showed more interest in brands placed in TV serials, but exhibited lesser knowledge about the commercial purpose of the practice, compared to higher income respondents. Affluent respondents were more tolerant towards product placement in TV serial but showed lesser preference for this mode of marketing as compared to lower income groups.

Conclusions about differences in media habits

Response did not vary much with difference in media habits, except that higher frequency TV viewers were more influenced by brands in TV serials than lower frequency viewers.

Conclusions about individual differences

Brand consciousness and general liking for TV commercials were considered for individual differences. More than 50% respondents were
positively brand conscious. Respondents with higher brand consciousness generally noticed more brands in movies, were more interested in and influenced by the brands, with a higher preference for this mode of marketing.

More than 70% respondents generally liked watching TV commercials. Respondents with higher liking for TV commercials generally noticed more brands. were more interested in and influenced by brands shown in TV serials. They also exhibited higher level of tolerance towards and knowledge about commercial purpose of this practice.

5.4. CONCLUSIONS ABOUT COMPARISON OF MOVIES AND TV SERIALS AS MEDIA FOR PRODUCT PLACEMENT

A total of 457 respondents of Questionnaire-version-1 were considered for comparison of movies and TV serials for product placement, since Questionnaire-verison-1 measured attitude towards product placement in both the media.

It was found that although respondents showed greater interest in brands placed in TV serials, they were more influenced by placed in movies. Moreover, the fact that product placements are marketing endeavors with commercial purpose was better known for movies than for TV serials.
5.5

IMPLICATIONS AND DISCUSSION

As seen from the conclusions of this research study, viewers generally had positive attitude towards product placement in Hindi movies and TV serials. This synchronizes with findings from previous studies (DeLorme & Reid. 1999; Gupta & Gould, 1997). Product placement is a very well known practice among Indian viewers, with viewers well aware about its prevalence and generally noticing the presence of brands in movies and TV serials. Moreover, viewers are well aware of the fact that product placement is a marketing endeavor with commercial purpose of product promotion. Viewers know that presence of brands in programs is not by chance, but actively arranged by marketers.

The argument by critics that product placement is a deceptive practice because it causes people who are unaware of the persuasive intent of the product placement to engage in purchase behaviors (Gupta, Balasubramanian & Klassen. 2000; DeLorme & Reid, 1999; Karrh, 1998) is refuted by the findings of present research study. The claim that promotional motive of product placement is hidden (Balasubramanian, 1994) is also proved otherwise in this research. The argument by Nebenzahl and Jaffe (1993) that product placement would be less ethical does not hold true for Indian viewers. Ethical issue relating to marketers deceiving unaware consumers by influencing them about their products need not be of concern as far as Indian viewers are considered.

A sizable majority of viewers exhibited interest in brands placed in movies and TV programs and considered it a good way of knowing about latest trends in fashion. This finding is in line with the suggestion
by DeLorme & Reid (1999) that some motivations for viewing movies may be to learn about brands. Moreover, viewers claimed to remember brands better if they were familiar to them or related to program theme. It was found from this research that younger viewers, women and lesser income groups were especially interested in seeing brands in programs. Moreover, product placement in TV serials was found to generate higher level of interest than movies probably because younger generation as well as women are known to be more regular viewers of TV serials.

This finding suggests that product placement in movies and TV serials should be considered as an important promotional tool for marketers, especially for lifestyle products. These products are known to be more popular with younger generation and also women, with their array of cosmetics, jewelry and accessories. Though lesser income groups may not be heavy users of lifestyle products, they are aspirers and can be potential users. Moreover, lifestyle products are easier to include in movies and TV serials, since program characters can use or endorse these products in a seemingly natural manner. This can be especially effective if done by successful actors who are role models to huge number of fans. TV serials especially can serve as a better platform for including brands, since they are viewed on a more frequent basis by fashion conscious younger generation, more home bound women segment and huge middle class viewers for whom TV provides cost effective means of entertainment.

Though viewers exhibited sufficient level of interest in brands within programs, it was found from this research that product placement could not positively influence viewers' in terms of increased preference for the placed brands. Although movies were found to be more influential
compared to TV serials, brands within movies also could not go beyond generating interest and retention. This finding was in line with previous research studies which did not find any increased brand preference due to product placements (Vollmers & Mizerski, 1994; Vollmers, 1995; Babin & Carder, 1996), but contrary to findings from studies which supported that product placement positively influenced purchase intention (Gould, Gupta & Grabner-Kräuter, 2000; Karrh, Frith & Callison, 2001; Morton & Friedman, 2002).

Though viewers exhibited overall positive attitude towards product placement, they did express concern over excessive or forced use of this practice, even agreeing to having censorship against excess of brands. This should serve as a caution for marketers against forceful inclusion of brands in programs. Excessive and unrelated brand inclusions may result in viewer irritation or reduced level of interest, which coincided with the findings of DeLorme, Reid & Zimmer (1994).

It was found from this study that considerable number of viewers preferred seeing brands within movies and TV serials as compared to traditional TV commercials, which is encouraging to product placement practice practitioners. But the onus of using this practice interestingly and subtly lies on them, lest it should be rejected by viewers.

5.6 LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The limitations of this research suggest a number of issues for future research. The results of this study have been generalized from the findings of a sample drawn from a restricted survey population of three
prominent cities of Gujarat State in India. Although the sample was appropriate for this research, results may differ for other consumers from other cities and states of India. Further research can be done with an extensive survey population for generalizing the findings. India being a multicultural nation, consumer responses may vary across states and regions.

In order to analyze influence of consumer differences on attitude towards product placement, variables representing consumer differences were considered one at a time, using statistical technique of one way ANOVA. This may have failed to account for any correlation between the variables of consumer differences and the resultant simultaneous effect on attitude. Analysis could be improved by use of Two way ANOVA or MANOVA, which though more complex, could provide more accurate results.

Demographic consumer differences in this research included age, gender and income but did not include education and occupation. Further research can include these demographic variables. Effects of various other variables can be considered in further research. To name a few, involvement in the program, modality of placement i.e. audio, visual or both, type of products placed could be considered.

This research considered only urban population as target population. Since more than 70% Indian population live in rural areas, gauging the attitude of rural consumer is of great importance to marketers (Menon, 2005). Further research can be carried out amongst rural consumers. Moreover, this study focused on only those viewers who were older than 16 years. Further research focusing on attitude of children towards
brands within programs could be worthwhile and significant, given that children are known to play active role in purchase decisions of their personal use products as well as household products (Schiffman, Kanuk & Kumar, 2010).

5.7

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This research found that viewers had an overall positive attitude towards product placement. Viewers exhibited high level of awareness about the product placement practice and its commercial intent. The product placement practice was acceptable as long as it was not excessive or forced, and preferable over traditional TV commercials. Brands appearing in movies and TV serials were generally noticed, generated interest but did not influence viewers in any way. Viewers’ attitudes varied with age, gender, income, media habits, brand consciousness and general liking for TV commercials. Movies emerged as a more influential medium as compared to TV, though brands in TV serials generated greater level of interest. The implications of this research could enable marketers to evaluate the communication tool of product placement in the overall promotional strategy.
REFERENCES


