

**CONSUMER RESPONSE TO PRODUCT PLACEMENT STRATEGIES: A STUDY
WITH REFERENCE TO PUNJAB**

A Thesis

**Submitted In Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

Submitted by:

Ravineet Kaur

(Registration number: 901710004)

Under the guidance of

Dr. Rakesh Kumar Sharma

Assistant Professor

School of Humanities & Social Sciences

Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology

Dr. Apurva Bakshi

Assistant Professor

School of Humanities & Social Sciences

Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology



SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES (SHSS)

THAPAR INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY

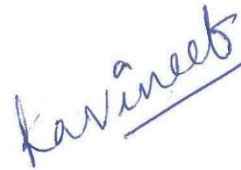
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Declaration

I, **Ravineet Kaur** hereby declare that the thesis entitled '**Consumer Response to Product Placement Strategies: A Study With Reference to Punjab**' submitted to Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology (Deemed to be University), Patiala, in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY** in **MANAGEMENT**, is a record of the original research work carried out by me under the supervision of **Dr. Rakesh Kumar Sharma**, Assistant Professor, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology and **Dr. Apurva Bakshi**, Assistant Professor, School of Humanities & Social Sciences, Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology. The matter embodied in this thesis has not been submitted in part or full to any other institute for the award of any degree.



Ravineet Kaur

(Registration number: 901710004)

Certificate

This is to certify that the thesis entitled ‘Consumer Response to Product Placement Strategies: A Study With Reference to Punjab’ which is being submitted by Ms. Ravineet Kaur, in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY** in **MANAGEMENT**, is a record of the candidate’s original research work carried out under our supervision and guidance. The matter embodied in this thesis has not been submitted in part or full to any other institute for the award of any degree.



Dr. Rakesh Kumar Sharma

Assistant Professor

School of Humanities & Social Sciences

Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology

Date: 20/12/2022

Place: Patiala, Punjab, India



Dr. Apurva Bakshi

Assistant Professor

School of Humanities & Social Sciences

Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology

Date: 20/12/2022

Place: Patiala, Punjab, India

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Abstract

Consumers have started avoiding overt advertising messages, making it essential to find alternative ways to reach consumers and advertise effectively. The practice of product placement has been gaining momentum in recent years due to some of its advantages over overt advertising strategies, yet marketers do not have adequate knowledge about its effectiveness. There is a need to better understand the effectiveness of product placements, given the huge amounts of money spent on this advertising strategy. Responding to this need, the present study captured consumers' perceptions and responses toward product placements.

The study proposed and tested a research model to examine the factors influencing consumers' perceptions and responses toward product placements in movies. Existing theories/frameworks, such as the consumer socialization framework, persuasion knowledge model (PKM) and self-congruity theory, were used to guide this examination. Purchase intention, a predictor of consumer behavior, was used as the key dependent variable to evaluate product placement effectiveness. The study attempted to fill a research gap by treating CPI and placement prominence as distinct execution factors and by examining the effect of the interaction between these execution factors. The study also investigated the previously unexplored relationship between product acceptability and purchase intentions. Since there is a dearth of research on placement effectiveness in the context of Asian emerging markets, the present study was conducted in India where there is a rising trend of placing branded products in movies. Participants (N= 600) were shown research stimuli and asked to fill out a structured questionnaire. T-test, multiple regression, analysis of covariance (ANCOVA), analysis of variance (ANOVA) and structural equation modeling (SEM) were used to analyze the responses.

The results of this survey-based study suggested that consumers have positive attitudes toward the practice of placement in movies. The results revealed that socialization factors and brand consciousness influence consumers' attitudes toward the practice of product placement, which in turn positively impact their behavioral intentions. The results indicated that the acceptability of products placed in media content varies based on gender and media consumption. The study is among the first to confirm a positive association between product acceptability and purchase intentions. The results demonstrated that product placement execution and individual-difference

factors significantly impact consumers' brand attitudes, which in turn positively impact their purchase intentions.

Based on the findings, the study provides implications and future research directions. The study offers implications for policymakers, academicians, marketing professionals and content producers. The study's findings can create exciting research and theory development opportunities for academicians. Based on the findings, marketing professionals and content producers can make decisions and develop robust product placement strategies. The use of product placements can help marketers break through the clutter of advertising messages and reach target audiences. Product placements can be leveraged by marketers to enhance consumers' relationships with brands and favorably influence consumers' affective and behavioral responses. As the practice of placing branded products in entertainment content is gaining popularity, policymakers need to constantly monitor this practice. To regulate product placements in media content, policymakers can modify the existing policies governing this practice in India. They can also formulate new policies governing this practice in India.

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List of abbreviations

Abbreviation	Full form
AIDA	Attention, interest, desire and action
ANCOVA	Analysis of covariance
ANOVA	Analysis of variance
AVE	Average variance extracted
CB-SEM	Covariance-based structural equation modeling
CCA	Confirmatory composite analysis
CFA	Confirmatory factor analysis
CMB	Common method bias
CPI	Character product interaction
CR	Composite reliability
CTA	Confirmatory tetrad analysis
DVRs	Digital video recorders
ELM	Elaboration likelihood model
eWOM	Electronic word-of-mouth
HTMT	Heterotrait-monotrait
M	Mean
M&E	Media and entertainment
PKM	Persuasion knowledge model

PLS-SEM	Partial least squares structural equation modeling
SD	Standard deviation
SEM	Structural equation modeling
SNS	Social networking site
SPSS	Statistical package for social sciences
SRMR	Standardized root mean square residual
VB-SEM	Variance-based structural equation modeling
VIF	Variance inflation factor

Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Background

Marketing strategies dictate the success of a business. Business growth is driven by the successful marketing of products and services. Marketing mix decisions related to products revolve around the four P's- Product, Price, Place and Promotion. This concept of the four P's was given by Jerome McCarthy (Yudelson, 1999). The product-related decisions include quality, design, performance features, aesthetics/ appearance, packaging and labeling. There are different pricing strategies where the price for a product is quoted based on the relation between demand and supply, market competition, target audience, production cost, raw material, promotional cost, etc. A place can be defined as a point of availability of the product. A brand can use offline, online, or a combination of both modes for making the product accessible to customers. Thus, a place can be a mobile application, online website, or retail outlet. Promotions include all the marketing communications regarding the brand or its product that are directed toward the consumers. Promotions can be done through advertisements, public relations, loyalty programs, event sponsorships, internet marketing, etc. Marketers are required to carefully design promotional strategies for achieving the desired marketing objectives. The original model of the four P's has been extended keeping in mind the marketing of services. The service marketing mix comprises seven P's, namely Product, Price, Place and Promotion, People, Process and Physical evidence (Kushwaha & Agrawal, 2015; Rafiq & Ahmed, 1995).

Different promotional strategies are used to influence consumers. Advertising is one of the most important aspects of promotions. It has been established that consumers go through three different stages when responding to advertisements: cognitive, affective and behavioral. Based on this hierarchy, several models have been proposed for advertising effects evaluation. The attention, interest, desire and action (AIDA) model is one of the most widely adopted models (Sachdeva, 2020). According to this advertising effects model, brands initially attract the attention of existing as well as potential customers and ultimately persuade them to buy the products. Due to fierce competition and constant changes in the marketplace, brands are leaving no stone unturned in attracting new customers and retaining their existing customer base with the

help of advertising strategies. Advertising strategies can be classified into overt and covert strategies (Kuhn et al., 2010). Overt advertising refers to explicit communication by a brand to secure audience attention. The purpose of such communication is clear and the message is easily distinguishable. Conversely, covert advertising refers to indirect communication by a brand, so the purpose of brand communication may be unclear to consumers.

Nowadays, marketers are shifting their attention from overt advertising to covert advertising. The growing popularity of covert advertising techniques like product placement can be attributed to consumer skepticism (Dias et al., 2016; Ferguson & Burkhalter, 2015), advertising clutter and advertising avoidance (Davtyan & Cunningham, 2017; Eagle & Dahl, 2018; Kuhn et al., 2010). Consumers are becoming increasingly conscious of the possibility of ad avoidance. Advertisements can be avoided by using mechanical, cognitive and behavioral techniques (Chinchanachokchai & Gregorio, 2020; Gregorio et al., 2017; Kelly et al., 2010). Mechanical avoidance strategies involve the use of specific devices such as digital video recorders (DVRs) and remote controls. Consumers can press the mute button, ‘zip’ (fast forward), or ‘zap’ (switch channels) when advertisements appear on-screen, making it difficult for marketers to communicate with consumers (Thomas & Kohli, 2011). Consumers can cognitively avoid exposure to advertisements by mentally ignoring advertising messages. Consumers tend to engage in behaviors and actions that help them avoid exposure to advertisements. In the case of commercials, consumers can look away from the screen. They can leave the room or talk with others during an ad break. In the case of online advertisements, consumers can leave social media pages having ads, close pop-up ads and install ad-blockers (Chinchanachokchai & Gregorio, 2020). The rising popularity of ad-blocking has become a matter of concern (Tudoran, 2019). Moreover, media consumption habits are changing. Some people, especially young consumers, prefer streaming platforms over traditional television to avoid advertisements (Gabielli et al., 2021; Madnani et al., 2020). This trend tells that product placement in media content will likely become the dominant form of covert advertising.

1.2 Product Placement

Product placement, a covert advertising technique, can be defined as the inclusion of branded products/ services in media content for advertising purposes (Karrh, 1998). Product placement is becoming common in movies, television shows, video games, music videos and books (Chan &

Lowe, 2018; Messinger et al., 2008; Russell, 2019). Brands can benefit from the global reach of media content (Karrh et al., 2001; M. Yang & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 2007). The placement can be as simple as the brand identifier or product briefly appearing in the background, or as complex as the product playing the starring role. Since the brand identifier or product is integrated into the media content, viewers cannot avoid it. Viewers process the entertainment content and the advertising message at the same time, blurring the line between entertainment and advertising (Naderer et al., 2018; A. Sharma et al., 2022). This potentially potent yet covert advertising strategy is aimed at influencing consumers' attitudes and behaviors.

Product placement is generally a paid practice where the brand pays a certain amount to the content producers for getting its product positioned in the media content. Paid product placement is beneficial for the brand as well as the content producers (Devlin & Combs, 2015). This helps producers to reduce the overall production cost and helps brands to gain exposure (DeLorme & Reid, 1999; Gregorio & Sung, 2010; McDonnell & Drennan, 2010). The practice of placing branded products, which was started to enhance the realistic and artistic appeal of media content, has become a full-fledged industry (DeLorme & Reid, 1999; Russell, 2019). Placements in media content have evolved over the years. The role of product placement has evolved from a fleeting background prop to being an integral part of the content (A. Sharma et al., 2022; M. Yang & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 2007). The Mini Cooper, for example, is featured in the movie *The Italian Job*, seamlessly integrated into the movie's plot. In recent years, the execution of product placements in media content has become more methodical with the establishment of specialized product placement agencies (Kurthakoti et al., 2016; Thomas & Kohli, 2011). After determining placement opportunities, the agencies negotiate with content producers regarding the execution of placements (Eagle & Dahl, 2018; Homer, 2009; Russell, 2019).

Product placement execution has attracted substantial research attention in recent years. Researchers are paying attention to execution factors such as placement modality, brand prominence and character product interaction (CPI). Modality refers to the way a placement occurs in the media content. Based on modality, placements can be categorized into three types: audio-only, visual-only and audio-visual (Chan & Lowe, 2018; Devlin & Combs, 2015). In visual-only placements, brand identifiers or products are visible on the screen. In audio-only placements, brands or products are mentioned in the dialogues or lyrics. In audio-visual

placements, brand identifiers, brands, or products are not only visible on the screen but also mentioned in the dialogues or lyrics. Prominence is the extent to which a brand identifier or product is the focus of attention (Gupta & Lord, 1998, p.48). The prominence of placement is determined based on its size (close-up or not), position on the screen, centrality to the scene, frequency and duration (see Figure 1.1). These dimensions of prominence are controlled to achieve the required placement type: subtle or prominent (Homer, 2009). A placement is considered subtle when the brand identifier or product is small, shown as a background prop, placed along with several other products, and visible for a short duration (Gupta & Lord, 1998). A placement is said to be prominent when the brand identifier or product is large, shown in the foreground, central to the scene, and visible for a long duration (Gupta & Lord, 1998). CPI refers to the physical interaction between a placed product and a character (Devlin & Combs, 2015, p.81). Concerning visual placements in media content, physical interaction can be either absent or present. CPI is said to be present when a particular character is shown touching, holding, consuming, or using a product (Devlin & Combs, 2015). There can be an association between a product and an extra, a supporting character, or a leading character (Devlin & Combs, 2015; Ferle & Edwards, 2006). The model developed for the present study takes into account two execution factors- CPI and placement prominence.

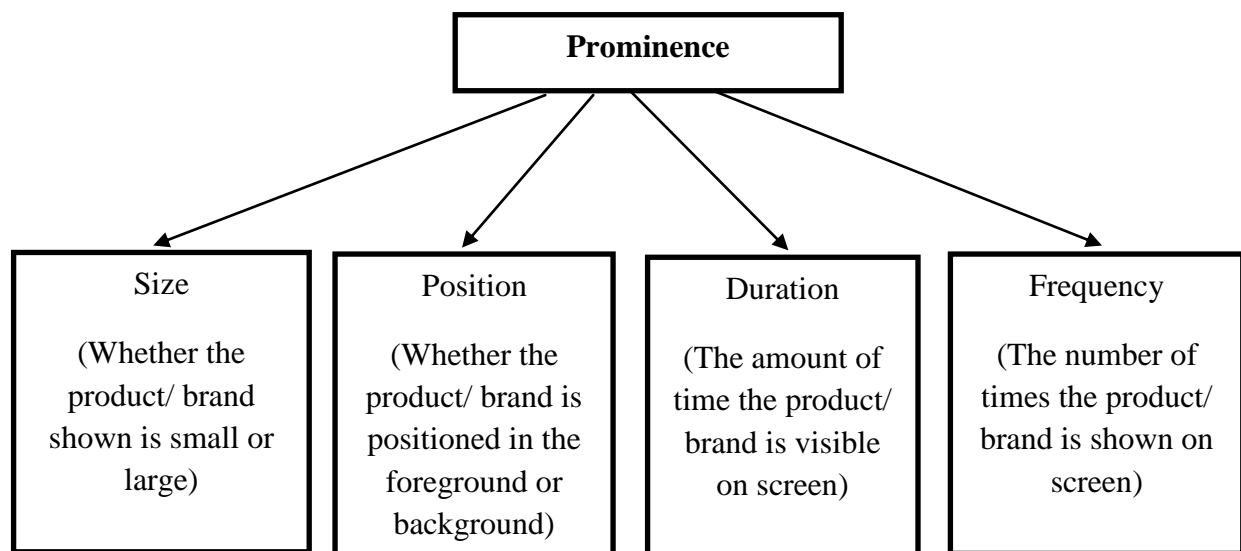


Figure 1.1 Different dimensions of placement prominence

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Due to intense competition in the marketplace, brands have to compete for consumers' time, attention and consideration. Advertising can help brands gain consumers' time, attention and consideration. Marketers adopt different advertising strategies to persuade consumers. However, existing literature suggests that consumers often distrust and avoid advertising messages, especially overt advertising messages (Chinchanachokchai & Gregorio, 2020; Gregorio et al., 2017; Kelly et al., 2010). This is because consumers understand the persuasive motive. Advertising avoidance has made it difficult for brands to convey a message to consumers. Thus, marketers have been compelled to shift their attention from overt advertising to covert advertising tactics. The practice of product placement in media content has been gaining momentum in recent years due to some of its advantages over overt advertising (Quinn & Kivijarv, 2020). However, marketers do not have adequate knowledge about whether and how placements in media content influence consumers' responses (Chan et al., 2017; Dias et al., 2016). They cannot efficiently allocate resources to this advertising strategy without understanding the factors affecting consumers' responses.

The findings of existing studies suggest that not all product placements are equally effective in favorably influencing consumers' responses. For instance, product placements can produce different responses depending on their execution. Though CPI and placement prominence are not closely related as they can impact consumers' responses differently (Naderer et al., 2018), there are very few studies that treat CPI and placement prominence as distinct execution factors. The interaction between these execution factors and the impact of this interaction on consumers' responses remain largely unexplored (R. Kaur et al., 2022). Much of the existing literature has focused on cognitive and affective reactions to placements (Bressoud et al., 2010; Sabour et al., 2016); limited studies have addressed behavioral reactions to placements (Redondo, 2012; S. Sharma & Bumb, 2020). Despite the growing literature on product placements, few relationships remain unexplored. For instance, no existing study has explored the direct association between product acceptability and behavioral reactions. Moreover, the majority of the studies related to product placement have focused on the consumers of developed western markets (Dens et al., 2012; Gould et al., 2000; Sabour et al., 2016). Chan et al. (2017) argue that consumers in different markets can have different perceptions of product placements. There is a paucity of

research on product placements in the context of an emerging market like India where there is a rising trend of integrating branded products into the entertainment content (Chan & Lowe, 2018). Despite the growing number of brands using product placements when targeting Indian consumers, there has been limited research on this topic in the Indian context.

1.4 Research Questions

The study attempts to address the following four research questions:

RQ1. How do Indians perceive the practice of product placement and how do audience characteristics impact Indian consumers' attitudes toward product placements?

RQ2. How do audience characteristics impact Indian consumers' acceptability of different product categories?

RQ3. How do individual-difference factors and execution factors impact Indian consumers' attitudes toward the placed brands?

RQ4. How do product placement attitudes, brand attitudes, brand self-congruity and product acceptability influence buying intentions?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

Our knowledge about how consumers evaluate and respond to advertising messages, especially product placements, is still limited. As the practice of product placement is gaining popularity, the current study aims to determine how placements in media content affect consumers' reactions. Specifically, the study intends to analyze the factors influencing Indian consumers' attitudes and behaviors toward brand placements in media content. The study also intends to investigate product placement effectiveness through Indian consumers' purchase intentions. Following are the four main objectives of this study:

O1: To analyze the impact of audience characteristics on attitude towards product placement.

O2: To analyze the impact of audience characteristics on product placement acceptance.

O3: To examine the impact of individual-difference factors and execution elements on brand attitude.

O4: To measure product placement effectiveness in terms of purchase intention.

1.6 Significance and Contribution of the Study

In recent years, emerging markets like India have become an attractive proposition for brands. To survive the fierce competition, brands are trying to win over consumers with their advertising strategies. Despite the considerable and ongoing changes in advertising strategies, little is known about how consumers process contemporary advertising formats. As more and more brands attempt to leverage product placements, rigorous investigation of factors affecting consumers' responses to product placements is becoming critical. As research on this topic is limited, the present study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of Indian consumers' responses to product placements and the factors affecting those responses.

The current study contributes to the available literature by examining product placement effectiveness in the Indian context. The present study's findings hold significance for policymakers, academicians, marketing professionals and content producers. The empirical findings can create exciting research and theory development opportunities for academicians. The research can also stimulate further interest in this area. The present study can be useful to marketers who are utilizing or are interested in utilizing product placement as a means of communicating with consumers. Marketers need to understand the effectiveness of brand/ product inclusions before allocating resources to this advertising strategy. Based on the study's findings, marketing professionals and content producers can make informed decisions and develop robust placement strategies. They can also design effective pricing schemes for product placement deals. With the proliferation of brands/ product inclusions, regular monitoring of this practice is important. To regulate product placements in media content, policymakers can review and refine the existing policies governing this practice in India. They can also formulate new policies governing this practice in India.

1.7 Organization of the Thesis

The thesis is organized into five chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction

The first chapter provides an overview of the marketing mix strategies and a description of the practice of product placement in media content. The chapter highlights the research problem that the study aims to address. The chapter mentions the research questions and lists the four main objectives of the present study. The chapter also highlights how the study's findings will hold significance for policymakers, academicians, marketing professionals and content producers.

Chapter 2: Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

The second chapter gives an overview of the theories relevant to the study. This chapter reviews the extant literature and discusses the findings of empirical studies that have been undertaken in the field of advertising, especially in the field of product placement. The chapter includes existing studies focusing on the impact of audience characteristics on product placement attitudes; the impact of audience characteristics on product placement acceptance; the impact of individual-difference factors and execution elements on brand attitudes; and the impact of placement attitudes, placement acceptance, brand attitudes, and brand self-congruity on purchase intentions. The chapter also presents the study's hypotheses based on the existing literature. The chapter highlights the gaps identified in the current state of knowledge about product placements in media content. Finally, the chapter presents the conceptual framework.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

The third chapter discusses in detail the methodology used for conducting this research. The main reason for selecting India for this study is highlighted. The chapter gives a clear account of how the data are collected and analyzed. Specifically, the chapter provides details regarding the stimuli, participants, procedure, measurement scales and data analysis tools.

Chapter 4: Results and Discussion

The fourth chapter presents details regarding descriptive statistics, common method bias (CMB) and data diagnosis. The chapter deals with the testing of the research hypotheses. The findings are presented according to the research objectives and hypotheses. The study findings are compared with the findings of existing studies. Based on the study findings, the chapter mentions the status of each hypothesis.

Chapter 5: Implications, Limitations and Future Directions

This chapter presents the theoretical and practical implications. The study findings have several important implications for policymakers, academicians, marketing professionals and content producers. The chapter also highlights the methodological shortcomings and discusses the scope for future research. The limitations of this study can be addressed in future research.

1.8 Summary of the Chapter

The first chapter gives an overview of the marketing mix strategies adopted by marketers. The chapter discusses advertising strategies, particularly product placement in media content. The chapter highlights the research problem that the study aims to address. The chapter mentions the research questions and lists the objectives of the present study. The chapter highlights the significance of the study for policymakers, academicians, marketing professionals and content producers. Finally, the chapter details the organization of the thesis.

Chapter 2

Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

The review of the available literature is one of the most important elements of any research project. The literature review critically analyzes and synthesizes published information on a research topic. The main goal is to summarize and categorize the available information. It helps in acquiring in-depth knowledge about a certain topic and understanding the contribution made by different researchers over the years. The previous findings help in identifying the scope for further research. Thus, it becomes a strong foundation for an investigation related to the chosen topic and facilitates theory development. This chapter reviews the extant literature leading to the development of the research hypotheses and the research model. The present chapter particularly reviews the available literature on product placements.

The chapter is divided into five sections. Section 2.1 deals with theories relevant to this study. These theories help gain a deeper understanding of the research topic and develop the research framework. The subsequent sections deal with the review of existing studies and the formulation of research hypotheses. The available literature is summarized and categorized. Section 2.2 reviews existing studies examining the impact of audience characteristics (demographic factors, frequency of media exposure, peer communication, brand consciousness and skepticism towards advertising) on attitudes toward product placements. Section 2.3 reviews prior studies focusing on the impact of audience characteristics (gender and frequency of media exposure) on product placement acceptance. Section 2.4 reviews existing studies investigating the impact of individual-difference factors (brand familiarity, product involvement and appreciation of media content) and execution elements (prominence and CPI) on brand attitudes. Section 2.5 reviews previous studies examining the impact of placement attitudes, placement acceptance, brand attitudes, and brand self-congruity on purchase intentions.

2.1 Theoretical Underpinning

Several existing theories and frameworks can be used to explain consumers' perceptions and responses toward advertising messages. This section focuses on theories and frameworks relevant to this study. A single theory cannot explain the relationships between different variables chosen for the study. The present study employs the consumer socialization framework,

persuasion knowledge model (PKM), theory of planned behavior and self-congruity theory as theoretical guideposts. These theories help to develop the research framework and hypotheses. All four theories/ frameworks help understand consumers' beliefs, attitudes and behaviors in the context of product placements. The consumer socialization framework helps understand consumers' attitudes toward product placements in media content and the acceptability of products shown in media content. The PKM helps understand the impact of product placement execution on consumers' brand attitudes. The theory of planned behavior helps understand consumers' purchase intentions. The theory helps understand the influence of product placement beliefs and attitudes on consumers' purchase intentions. The self-congruity theory also helps understand consumers' purchase intentions.

2.1.1 Consumer Socialization Framework

Consumer socialization (Ward, 1974) refers to the process by which individuals acquire skills, knowledge and attitudes. The consumer socialization framework explains the antecedents and outcomes of the consumer socialization process (Moschis & Churchill, 1978). The antecedents (or the social structural variables), socialization agents, socialization processes, and outcomes are the components of the framework. The social structural variables, such as income, family size and gender, define the social setting in which consumers learn. The socialization agents (like school, parents, media and peers) are responsible for influencing a consumer's learning. There are three different processes or mechanisms by which the socialization agents influence consumer socialization outcomes— reinforcement, modeling and social interaction. The outcomes are the attitudes and behaviors acquired by consumers. One of the most commonly used theoretical perspectives to explain the consumer socialization process is the social learning theory. This theory focuses on external sources or agents. The theory asserts that consumers' attitudes and behaviors are the results of learning acquired through their interactions with the socialization agents. Existing studies have used the consumer socialization framework in the context of shopping (C. Kim et al., 2015; Ngah et al., 2021; Saha & Sahney, 2022), electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) (Chu & Sung, 2015; A. Mishra et al., 2018) and advertising avoidance (Chinchanachokchai & Gregorio, 2020; Chung & Kim, 2021; Gregorio et al., 2017). How socialization impacts consumers' beliefs, attitudes and behaviors in the context of product

placements continues to remain underexplored. This research focuses on two of the most powerful socialization factors – peer communication and media exposure.

2.1.2 Persuasion knowledge model (PKM)

Another theoretical basis to explain consumers' responses to product placements is persuasion knowledge. The PKM (Friestad & Wright, 1994) offers an important framework for understanding how consumers assess and respond to advertising messages. Persuasion knowledge can be described as the ability of consumers to recognize and appraise advertisers' persuasive intent. The PKM posits that consumers' persuasion knowledge impacts their responses to advertisers' persuasive attempts. When consumers recognize a message as advertising and identify its persuasive motive, their persuasion knowledge is activated (Friestad & Wright, 1994). Persuasion knowledge helps consumers cope with advertising; the higher "knowledge" consumers possess, the better equipped they are to cope with advertisers' persuasion attempts. Consumers are exposed to both overt and covert advertising. When exposed to overt advertising, consumers easily identify the persuasive motive. Previous studies (Campbell, 1995; Panic et al., 2013) have suggested that exposure to overt advertising activates consumers' persuasion knowledge, which in turn negatively influences their attitudes and behaviors. However, the covert and deceptive nature of product placement prevents consumers from recognizing it as advertising (Reijmersdal, 2016). Thus, the integration of a commercial message into the editorial content is less likely to activate consumers' persuasion knowledge. Drawing upon this model, this research tries to determine how placements in media content affect consumers' reactions.

2.1.3 Self-congruity theory

Consumers tend to compare their perceived image of a brand with their self-image. Brand self-congruity refers to the match between the perceived image of a brand and a consumer's self-image (Sirgy, 1982). The perceived brand image corresponds to the brand-user image or brand personality (Sirgy, 2018). The brand-user image refers to the perception of a typical user of a brand. Brand personality refers to a set of characteristics that describe a brand in terms of human traits. Consumers associate brands with five traits: sophistication, competence, excitement, sincerity and ruggedness (Aaker, 1997). A consumer's self-image has four dimensions- ideal,

social, actual and ideal social (Krishen & Sirgy, 2016; Sirgy, 1982). The ideal self-image refers to how a consumer would like to see himself/ herself. The social self-image refers to how a consumer believes he/ she is seen by others. The actual self-image refers to how a consumer sees himself/ herself. The ideal social self-image refers to how a consumer would like himself/ herself to be seen by others. These dimensions of self-image serve as reference points in the evaluation of the perceived image of a brand. As such, brand self-congruity is the extent to which a consumer identifies with a brand or the users of a brand. The available literature suggests that brand self-congruity influences consumers' affective (e.g. brand attitudes) and behavioral responses (e.g., brand choice and purchase intention) (Sirgy, 2018). The self-congruity theory, frequently used in the field of advertising, suggests that consumers' affective and behavioral responses depend on the congruence between the brand's image and consumers' self-image (Sirgy, 1982). Consumers prefer brands whose image is congruent with their self-image.

2.1.4 Theory of planned behavior

The theory of planned behavior is a modified version of Ajzen and Fishbein's (1980) theory of reasoned action. Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior is widely used by researchers to explain consumer behavior in specific contexts. The theory considers attitudes and external influences (subjective norms) as predictors of consumers' behavioral intentions. The theory suggests that consumers' attitudes are associated with their behavioral intentions. Attitudes are formed based on beliefs. Experiences and external influences such as peers and family members contribute to the formation of attitudes, which in turn impact behavioral intentions. According to this theory, behavioral intentions can be used to predict the behavior of an individual. When an individual has control over behavior, intentions are sufficient to predict the individual's behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Existing studies have used this theory to predict consumers' behavioral intentions in the context of luxury goods (Jain, 2020), organic food products (Wee et al., 2014) and influencer marketing (Chetioui et al., 2020). The present study uses the theory of planned behavior to examine consumers' behavioral intentions toward products placed in entertainment content.

2.2 Impact of Audience Characteristics on Attitudes Toward Product Placements

Attitude towards the practice of product placement in media content has received substantial attention from academicians and marketing professionals over the past several years. It has been considered a key factor for predicting product placement effectiveness. It deals with consumers' perceptions and concerns about the practice of product placement. It focuses on the commercial aspects, ethical aspects, regulatory aspects and introduction of realism (Gupta & Gould, 1997; Nelson et al., 2004). Understanding consumers' beliefs about product placements can help marketers in their decision-making.

Demographic characteristics may affect consumers' attitudes toward advertising. The link between demographic characteristics and consumers' attitudes toward advertising has been examined in the context of different advertising strategies. Shavitt et al. (1998) found that age, gender, education level and family income influence consumers' attitudes toward advertising. The findings revealed that (i) males report more favorable attitudes than females, (ii) younger consumers report more favorable attitudes than older consumers, (iii) consumers with less education report more favorable attitudes than consumers with more education and (iv) consumers with less income report more favorable attitudes than consumers with more income. In the context of e-mail advertising, Haq (2009) examined the impact of demographic characteristics on consumers' attitudes toward advertising. The author found that demographic characteristics did not impact consumers' attitudes toward advertising. In the context of social media advertising, Chu and Kamal (2011) noted that gender did not have a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward advertising. The findings indicated no gender differences in terms of attitudes toward advertising. Gregorio et al. (2017) conducted a study on advertising in four different media, namely newspapers, magazines, television and radio. The authors observed that age impacts attitudes toward advertising. The findings indicated that younger consumers report more favorable attitudes than older consumers.

Very few studies have examined the influence of demographic characteristics on consumers' attitudes toward product placements. Existing studies (Bressoud & Lehu, 2009; Gregorio & Sung, 2010) suggest that younger consumers show more favorable attitudes than older consumers. Gregorio and Sung (2010) and Sung et al. (2009) found that gender impacts consumers' attitudes toward placements in movies. Bressoud and Lehu (2009) examined the impact of gender on consumers' attitudes toward brand/ product inclusions. The authors found

that male consumers show more favorable attitudes than female consumers. Existing studies (Bressoud & Lehu, 2009; Gregorio & Sung, 2010) suggest that consumers with lower levels of education show more favorable attitudes than consumers with higher levels of education. Gregorio and Sung (2010) found that income level did not have a significant impact on consumers' attitudes toward the practice of brand placement. We believe that demographic characteristics may affect consumers' attitudes toward product placements. Based on the findings of existing studies, it is hypothesized that:

H1a: Men show more positive attitudes toward placements than women.

H1b: Younger viewers show more positive attitudes toward placements than older viewers.

H1c: Viewers with lower family income show more positive attitudes toward placements than viewers with higher family income.

H1d: Viewers with lower education levels show more positive attitudes toward placements than viewers with higher education levels.

Media helps in the formation of beliefs and attitudes, thereby establishing it as a powerful socialization agent. Much of the literature, concerning the impact of media on consumers, has focused on advertising exposure. Advertising has attracted considerable attention from researchers and practitioners owing to its emphasis on consumption-related messages. Exposure to overt or covert advertising messages owing to media exposure/ usage may impact consumers' attitudes toward advertising. In the context of e-mail advertising, Haq (2009) noted that the frequency of an advertising message affects consumers' attitudes toward advertising. Media consumption is often associated with attitudes toward advertising. The relationship between media consumption and attitudes toward advertising has been examined in the context of different advertising strategies. Gregorio et al. (2017) conducted a study on advertising in four different media, namely newspapers, magazines, television and radio. The authors observed that media consumption positively impacts attitudes toward advertising across the four media.

Very few studies have analyzed the association between media consumption and attitudes toward brand/ product inclusions. Nelson and Deshpande (2013) found that media consumption did not have a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward brand/ product inclusions. However,

Schmoll et al. (2006) found that there is a positive association between media consumption and consumers' attitudes toward brand/ product inclusions. Similarly, Gregorio and Sung (2010) found that movie-watching frequency has a positive impact on consumers' attitudes toward brand/ product inclusions in movies. This relationship can be explained based on the mere-exposure effect. According to this effect, repeated exposure to a stimulus elicits favorable affective reactions (Zajonc, 1968). Thus, consumers develop favorable attitudes toward the practice of product placement as they are repeatedly exposed to the placement of brands. It is expected that:

H2: Frequency of media exposure is positively associated with viewers' attitudes toward placements.

Peer communication refers to the peer interactions among individuals about goods and services (Moschis & Churchill, 1978). These interactions have a strong influence on individuals' attitudes and behaviors. Researchers and practitioners are particularly interested in understanding the influence of peers on consumers' attitudes and behaviors. Susceptibility to peer influence can be informative and/ or normative (A. Mishra et al., 2018; Shin et al., 2020). Susceptibility to informative influence is an individual's tendency to accept information from peers (Bilal et al., 2021; Shin et al., 2020). Our peers are a powerful source of information, particularly when it comes to brands (D'Alessio et al., 2009). Susceptibility to normative influence is an individual's tendency to conform to the expectations and wishes of peers (Shin et al., 2020). It is the peer influence that prompts individuals to follow certain trends or standards, and thus affects their attitudes and behaviors (Finkle, 2018; Mangleburg et al., 2004). The changes in an individual's attitudes and behaviors due to peer influence can be subconscious and/ or conscious. An individual may shop for products and brands based on friends' recommendations and reviews, which may be a conscious choice. To impress others, an individual may subconsciously shop for certain products and brands. Technology, particularly the internet, helps people communicate and even discuss brands (Ismail, 2017; Messinger et al., 2008; Saluja & Singh, 2014).

Peer communication is often associated with consumers' attitudes toward advertising. Gregorio et al. (2017) conducted a study on advertising in four different media, namely newspapers, magazines, television and radio. The authors observed that peer communication positively impacts attitudes toward advertising across the four media. In the context of social networking

site (SNS) advertising, E. S. Kwon et al. (2014) found that communication with peers is positively related to attitudes toward advertising messages on Twitter. In a study on social advertising, Zarouali et al. (2018) found that peer communication is positively related to consumers' attitudes toward social advertising. The authors noted that consumers showed more favorable attitudes when they engaged in peer communication. In studies with American students as respondents, researchers (Gregorio & Sung, 2010; E. Kwon & Jung, 2013) found that peer communication positively impacts attitudes toward brand/ product inclusions. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H3: Peer communication is positively associated with viewers' attitudes toward placements.

Brand names influence consumers' purchase decisions enormously, with well-known brands being popular choices (F. Wang & Li, 2019; Workman & Lee, 2013). Brands have become status symbols, especially among young individuals. People want to buy expensive and well-known brands that enhance their self-image (Khare & Rakesh, 2010). People tend to judge others and form impressions based on the brands they use or wear (Ghazali, 2011). People, especially young individuals, believe that buying certain brands can help them gain peer acceptance (Lachance et al., 2003; Nelson & McLeod, 2005). Advertising plays an instrumental role in impacting brand awareness and preference. Brand consciousness refers to the degree to which an individual is oriented toward purchasing well-known brands (Chu & Kamal, 2011). Brand-conscious consumers use brands for self-expression. Brand consciousness impacts how consumers perceive commercial messages (Chu & Kamal, 2011). Brand-conscious consumers are more aware of product placements in media content (Nelson & McLeod, 2005). In the case of brand/ product inclusions in films, Nelson and Devanathan (2006) found that brand consciousness impacts attitudes toward product placements. Brand-conscious consumers pay attention to the brands shown in media content and appreciate their presence for making the content appear more realistic. Thus, we hypothesize that:

H4: Brand consciousness is positively associated with viewers' attitudes toward placements.

Advertising can have a profound impact on consumers. Academicians and professionals have always shown a keen interest in understanding consumers' attitudes toward different advertising strategies (Cheah et al., 2022; Reisenwitz & Fowler, 2019). Attitude towards advertising refers to

consumers' impressions of advertising in general (Redondo, 2012). Consumers' attitudes toward advertising in general are frequently used to predict their attitudes toward a specific advertising strategy (E. S. Kwon et al., 2014; T. Lee et al., 2011). Few studies (M. S. Kim & Mcclung, 2010; Nelson et al., 2004; Winkler & Buckner, 2006) have examined the link between attitudes toward advertising and attitudes toward brand/ product inclusions. Nelson et al. (2004) analyzed consumers' attitudes and behaviors toward product placements in games. The findings of the study suggest that consumers' attitudes toward advertising in general are positively associated with their attitudes toward brand/ product inclusions. Similarly, M. S. Kim and Mcclung (2010) found that positive attitudes toward advertising in general lead to positive attitudes toward brand/ product inclusions in video games. Winkler and Buckner (2006) conducted a survey-based study on brand/ product inclusions in games. The authors assert that consumers who have negative attitudes toward advertising in general may have negative orientations toward brand/ product inclusions. Consumers' attitudes toward advertising tactics are related to their persuasion knowledge (Friestad & Wright, 1994). The critical processing and counterarguing results in skepticism toward advertising (Youn & Kim, 2019). Skepticism toward advertising in general refers to negative feelings and attitudes toward the claims made in advertisements (Darke & Ritchie, 2007; Obermiller & Spangenberg, 1998). Consumers are bombarded with overt and covert advertisements on a daily basis. As consumers are not always receptive to advertising, the present study takes into consideration the skepticism toward advertising. Thus, we propose that:

H5: Advertising skepticism negatively impacts viewers' attitudes toward placements.

2.3 Impact of Audience Characteristics on Product Placement Acceptance

The product categories placed in media content can be classified into two types: neutral and ethically charged products. Neutral products are those products that are normally used by consumers and are not controversial (Chan et al., 2017). Ethically charged products are those products that raise ethical concerns regarding their advertising and consumption (Gupta & Gould, 1997). These products are considered controversial (M. S. Kim & Mcclung, 2010). Product placement acceptability refers to the consumers' perceptions of product placement in media content concerning the appropriateness of the product category for placement; certain product categories may be perceived more favorably than others (Sung et al., 2009). Consumers may exhibit different views about products placed in media content (S. Sharma & Bumb, 2020).

It is important to find out how product acceptability may be affected by ethical concerns and audience characteristics. Existing studies (Chan et al., 2017; Guido et al., 2010; McKechnie & Zhou, 2003; Sung et al., 2009) suggest that consumers have different perceptions of product placement based on the product category. These studies suggest that the acceptability of ethically charged products, such as alcohol, tobacco and weapons, is different from that of neutral products.

Existing studies suggest that gender, a social structural variable, affects the acceptability of products shown in video games (M. S. Kim & Mcclung, 2010), television shows (Tiwsakul et al., 2005) and films (Brennan et al., 2004; Guido et al., 2010; Gupta & Gould, 1997; Sung et al., 2009). Certain product categories are targeted toward a specific gender group (McCartan & McMahan, 2020). Consumers tend to react to such gender-targeted products accordingly. Findings of some studies (Gupta & Gould, 1997; M. S. Kim & Mcclung, 2010; Tiwsakul et al., 2005) have indicated that male consumers are more accepting of the placement of ethically charged products than female consumers. This may be due to female consumers being more sensitive to advertising messages involving ethically charged products than male consumers (Fam et al., 2009). Also, female consumers may be more aware of the harmful effects of these products than male consumers. In the context of placements in movies, Gupta and Gould (1997) and McKechnie and Zhou (2003) found that the acceptability of neutral products did not vary among the sexes. However, some researchers (Brennan et al., 2004; Sung et al., 2009) have found that male consumers tend to show higher acceptability for both ethically charged and neutral products than female consumers. It is hypothesized that:

H6: Male viewers are more accepting of the placement of branded products than female viewers.

Individuals mostly consume media content for amusement. Very few studies have analyzed the influence of media exposure/ usage on the acceptability of products shown in entertainment content. In the context of placements in movies, Gould et al. (2000) and Gupta and Gould (1997) found that the frequency of movie watching positively influences product acceptability. The findings of the studies revealed that consumers who watched more movies demonstrated higher acceptability than consumers who watched fewer movies. However, McKechnie and Zhou (2003) found that the frequency of movie watching did not have a significant impact on product acceptability. In the case of brand/ product inclusions in games, M. S. Kim and Mcclung (2010)

noted that media usage is positively related to product acceptability. The findings indicated that heavy gamers were more accepting of products shown in video games than light gamers. This relationship can be explained based on the mere-exposure effect. According to this effect, repeated exposure to a stimulus elicits favorable affective reactions (Zajonc, 1968). Greater media consumption leads to greater exposure to product placements, which in turn leads to higher acceptability for products shown in media content. It is expected that:

H7: Frequency of media exposure is positively associated with viewers' acceptability of products shown in media content.

2.4 Impact of Individual-difference Factors and Execution Elements on Brand Attitudes

To have a comprehensive understanding of this advertising strategy, it is essential to examine the impact of execution factors on consumers' responses. How the branded products are placed in the entertainment content may affect their effectiveness. Brand/ product inclusion can be prominent irrespective of the presence of physical interaction. For instance, in the music video for Thomas Rhett's "*Die a Happy Man*", viewers can see a Beats speaker resting on a table. Although the placement is prominent, there isn't any physical interaction between the product and the artist. At the same time, brand/ product inclusion can have CPI regardless of its prominence. For instance, in the music video for Charlie Puth's "*I Warned Myself*", viewers can see the model wearing Nike shoes. Although CPI is present, the logo is not very prominent. Therefore, this study treats CPI and placement prominence as distinct execution factors.

Placement prominence is one of the most widely studied execution factors in the product placement literature. Researchers have examined the influence of prominence on consumers' affective and behavioral reactions. In the case of brand/ product inclusions in television shows, Naderer et al. (2021) found that there was no significant difference in consumers' brand attitudes between the prominent placement condition and the no placement condition. In the case of brand/ product inclusions in games, Cauberghe and Pelsmacker (2010) and Reijmersdal et al. (2012) noted that prominence did not have a significant effect on attitudes toward the placed brands. The authors argued that brand attitudes were affected similarly for both prominent and subtle placements due to the pleasurable experience and interactive nature of games. In the case of brand/ product inclusions in films, Naderer et al. (2018) observed that placement frequency (a

dimension of placement prominence) did not influence children's brand attitudes and brand choices. However, Chan et al. (2016) observed that prominence impacts brand attitudes and behavioral intentions. The findings indicated that subtle placements led to more favorable brand attitudes and higher behavioral intentions than prominent placements. Similarly, Dens et al. (2012) observed that prominence impacts brand attitudes. The findings indicated that subtle placements led to more positive brand attitudes than prominent placements. Homer (2009) found that an increase in the repetition of prominent placements leads to a decrease in brand attitudes. The author also found that an increase in the repetition of prominent placements leads to a decrease in the element of realism and an increase in the level of distraction.

The negative influence of placement prominence on consumers' brand attitudes and behavioral intentions can be best explained by the PKM. Prominent placements are more likely to activate consumers' persuasion knowledge than subtle placements (Cowley & Barron, 2008). When exposed to prominent placements, consumers may become suspicious and start elaborating on the intent of placing branded products in entertainment content. Prominent placements stimulate consumers to question their relevance (Chan et al., 2017). This critical evaluation may hamper consumers' viewing experience. Thus, the activation of persuasion knowledge is likely to have a detrimental impact on attitudes toward the brands placed in entertainment content. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H8: Subtle product placements generate more positive brand attitudes than prominent product placements.

Few studies have examined the influence of CPI on consumers' affective and behavioral reactions. In the case of brand inclusions in movies, Naderer et al. (2017) and Naderer et al. (2018) observed that CPI impacts brand choice. The findings revealed that children exposed to placements with CPI were more likely to choose the placed brands than children exposed to placements without CPI. However, the authors observed that CPI did not have a significant influence on children's brand attitudes. Children did not explicitly evaluate the placed brand better after watching the movie excerpts. The authors explained these findings by suggesting that, in the case of children, product placements may impact implicit attitudes (i.e., preconscious affective reactions) more than explicit attitudes. The authors argued that the impulse to choose the placed brand indicates a positive change in implicit attitudes. In an experimental study with

adults as participants, Kamleitner and Jyote (2013) observed that CPI impacts brand attitudes and purchase intentions. The findings indicated that placements with CPI led to more favorable brand attitudes and higher behavioral intentions than placements without CPI. Similarly, with young adults as participants, M. Yang and Roskos-Ewoldsen (2007) conducted a study on visual product placements in movies. The authors found that attitudes toward brands used by the main characters were more favorable than toward brands not used by the main characters.

Placements with CPI may elicit more positive affective and behavioral reactions than placements without CPI due to meaning transfer (Kamleitner & Jyote, 2013; Schemer et al., 2008). When a character interacts with a product, the evaluation of that character may be transferred to the branded product. The meaning transfer mechanism may lead to favorable responses when the characters are perceived positively. Moreover, compared to product placements without CPI, product placements with CPI are well integrated into the media content and enhance the perceived realism of media content (Kamleitner & Jyote, 2013). Product placement with CPI shows brand usage in a naturalistic setting. Such placements demonstrate to viewers how the product is used or consumed. Watching a character interact with a branded product enhances its perceived value and utility (Naderer et al., 2017). Thus, it is expected that:

H9: Product placements with CPI generate more positive brand attitudes than product placements without CPI.

While researchers have examined the influence of placement prominence and CPI separately on consumers' attitudes toward the placed brand, the interaction between these execution factors and the impact of this interaction on attitudes toward the placed brands remain largely unexplored. In a study with children as participants, Naderer et al. (2018) observed that the interaction between placement frequency (a dimension of placement prominence) and CPI did not impact brand attitudes. However, we expect the effect of CPI and placement prominence on consumers' brand attitudes posited in H8 and H9 to reinforce each other. Therefore, we formulate the following hypothesis:

H10: Subtle product placements with CPI generate the most positive brand attitudes, and prominent product placements without CPI generate the least positive brand attitudes.

Brand familiarity refers to an individual's prior experience, both indirect and direct, with a brand (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987; Hsiao et al., 2022). Brand familiarity relates to the memories accumulated in an individual's mind. Familiarity with the advertised brand is a potentially important predictor of consumers' affective responses. Past experiences may affect the formation of attitudes toward the advertised brand (Phelps & Hoy, 1996). Familiar brands may have an advantage over unfamiliar brands as familiarity may enhance attitudes toward the advertised brand. In a study on SNS advertising, Langaro et al. (2018) reported that brand awareness generates brand familiarity, which in turn positively influences brand attitudes. In the context of audio placements in radio shows, Wei et al. (2008) found that brand familiarity positively impacts brand attitudes. In the case of brand/ product inclusions in songs, Ferguson and Burkhalter (2015) found that consumers' familiarity with the placed brand did not have a significant influence on their brand attitudes. In the case of brand/ product inclusion in films, Chan et al. (2016) and Verhellen et al. (2016) found that brand familiarity can predict attitudes and behavioral intentions toward the placed brand. The findings revealed that placement of well-known brands led to more positive brand attitudes than placement of unknown brands. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H11: Brand familiarity positively impacts viewers' brand attitudes.

Product involvement is defined as the perceived relevance of a product based on a consumer's interests and needs (Zaichkowsky, 1994). Product involvement is known to impact consumers' responses to advertising messages. Existing studies have investigated the role of product involvement in brand attitude changes. In the context of print advertising, F.-P. Chen and Leu (2011) and Te'eni-Harari et al. (2009) noted that brand attitudes were positively influenced by product involvement. In the context of celebrity endorsements, C.-M. Yang (2019) found that product involvement can predict brand attitudes. The findings indicated that high involvement led to more positive brand attitudes than low involvement. In the case of online advertising platforms, Belanche et al. (2017) reported that product involvement positively impacts brand attitudes. In the case of brand/ product inclusions in games, Vanwesenbeeck et al. (2017) found that product involvement did not have a significant influence on brand attitude change. The authors argued that, in the case of children, brand attitudes were affected similarly for both low-involvement and high-involvement products due to low cognitive elaboration or less thoughtful

processing of the embedded brand messages. However, Vashist (2018) found that product involvement is a strong predictor of brand attitudes. The findings indicated that higher product involvement led to more positive attitudes toward the placed brand among students. Although the relationship between product involvement and brand attitudes is less explored in the product placement context, we believe that product placement in entertainment content may produce different affective outcomes (e.g., brand attitudes) for different products. Thus, we hypothesize that:

H12: Product involvement positively impacts viewers' brand attitudes.

Appreciation of media content is the consumers' attitude toward the media content in which brands/ products are placed (Nelson et al., 2006). It is a conscious evaluation of the media content in which brands/ products are placed. Attitude toward the media content is a potentially important predictor of consumers' affective reactions. In the context of brand/ product inclusions in games, Nelson et al. (2006) examined the impact of game liking on brand attitude change for real and fictitious brands. The authors found that the impact of game liking on brand attitude change was more positive for real brands than for fictitious brands shown in the game. Reijmersdal et al. (2012) noted that the impact of game involvement on brand evaluation was mediated by game attitude. In the context of brand/ product inclusions in television programs, Chan (2020), Muzellec et al. (2013) and Reijmersdal et al. (2010) studied the relationship between program liking and brand evaluation. The findings of the studies indicated that higher program liking led to more favorable attitudes toward the placed brand. In the case of placements in songs, Ferguson and Burkhalter (2015) found that consumers' attitudes toward the song did not have a significant effect on their brand attitudes. However, Delattre and Colovic (2009) noted that attitudes toward entertainment content containing audio placements positively impact brand attitudes. In the context of product placements in movies, Kurthakoti et al. (2016) and Verhellen et al. (2016) found that movie liking did not have a significant effect on consumers' attitudes toward the placed brands. However, Lord and Gupta (2010) found that appreciation of media content positively affects brand attitudes. This association can be explained based on the affect transfer mechanism. It is a mechanism by which the media content in which brands/ products are placed can influence the formation of brand attitudes. It is suggested that the favorable attitudes

toward the media content in which brands/ products are placed can be transferred to brand attitudes (MacKenzie et al., 1986). It is proposed that:

H13: Appreciation of media content positively impacts viewers' brand attitudes.

2.5 Product Placement Effectiveness in Terms of Purchase Intention

Assessing product placement effectiveness is advantageous for different parties involved. Although product placement in media content is not new, many factors affecting its effectiveness remain to be examined. Purchase intention (willingness to buy) has been used as the key dependent variable to measure product placement effectiveness because it is considered the best predictor of consumer behavior. It is presumed that purchase intentions can translate into actual purchases (Ajzen, 1991; A. Sharma et al., 2022; Vanwesenbeeck et al., 2017). Thus, brand/ product inclusion can be viewed as an effective advertising technique if it has the ability to favorably impact consumers' purchase intentions. The present study should be of interest to marketers trying to increase sales.

The relationship between consumers' attitudes and their behavioral responses (e.g., purchase intentions) has been widely examined in the advertising literature. In the case of smartphone advertising, E.-B. Lee et al. (2017) found that advertising attitudes positively affect brand attitudes and purchase intentions. In the case of celebrity endorsements, researchers (Gong, 2021; Paul & Bhakar, 2018; R. P. Singh & Banerjee, 2018) noted that consumers' attitudes toward advertising positively influence their purchase intentions. In the case of online advertising platforms, Lim et al. (2021) found that attitudes toward advertising, security of websites and responsiveness of websites can predict purchase intentions. In the case of web advertising, Shaouf et al. (2016) observed that advertising attitudes positively influence attitudes toward the brand and purchase intentions. In the case of brands using social media to advertise their products, researchers (Hamouda, 2018; C. A. Lin & Kim, 2016; Zhao & Wang, 2020) found that consumers' attitudes toward advertising are important antecedents of their purchase intentions. The more positive attitudes consumers have toward the advertising strategy, the higher their purchase intentions toward the advertised products.

In the case of brand/ product inclusions in films, Morton and Friedman (2002) observed that consumers' attitudes toward the practice of product placement are positively associated with

their purchase intentions. Similarly, in the case of brand/ product inclusions in video games, few studies (M. S. Kim & McClung, 2010; H.-F. Lin, 2014; Nelson et al., 2004) have reported that consumers' attitudes toward placements positively influence their purchase intentions. The more positive attitudes consumers have toward product placements in entertainment content, the higher their purchase intentions toward the shown brands/ products. This association can be explained based on the theory of planned behavior. According to this theory, consumers' attitudes determine their purchase intentions (Ajzen, 1991). Based on the findings of existing studies, it is hypothesized that:

H14: Viewers' attitudes toward placements positively impact their purchase intentions.

According to the theory of planned behavior, consumers' perceptions and attitudes determine their behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 1991). In the context of product placement, we argue that product acceptability may be an important antecedent of purchase intentions. To our knowledge, only one existing study (R. Kaur et al., 2021) has examined the indirect effect of product acceptability on purchase intentions, which found a positive association between the acceptability of products shown in entertainment content and purchase intentions via attitudes toward product placements. No existing study has attempted to explore the direct association between purchase intentions and acceptability of products shown in entertainment content. This calls for research attention. It is proposed that:

H15: Higher acceptability of products shown in media content leads to higher purchase intentions.

The available literature suggests that cognitive responses can impact affective responses, which in turn can impact behavioral responses. As per the hierarchy of effects, attitudes toward the advertised brand can be formed based on cognitive information processing which can subsequently lead to purchase intention towards the advertised brand. In addition, Petty and Cacioppo's (1986) elaboration likelihood model (ELM) asserts that consumers' behavioral intentions can be affected by their attitudes toward the advertised brands. The association between brand attitudes and consumers' purchase intentions has been examined in the context of different advertising strategies. In the context of smartphone advertising, E.-B. Lee et al. (2017) found that brand attitudes positively affect purchase intentions. In the context of celebrity

endorsements, studies (Ferle & Choi, 2005; Ha & Lam, 2017; Pradhan et al., 2016; Singh & Banerjee, 2018) have examined the association between consumers' brand attitudes and their purchase intentions. The findings indicated that attitudes toward the brand are positively related to purchase intentions. In the context of online advertising, Hwang et al. (2011) noted that brand attitudes have a positive impact on purchase intentions. In a study on web advertising, Shaouf et al. (2016) observed that brand attitudes positively influence purchase intentions.

In the context of product placement, there are limited studies that focus on consumers' affective as well as behavioral reactions. In the case of brand/ product inclusions in games, Yoo and Pena (2011) found that the video game environment influenced gamers' affective and behavioral reactions differently. In the case of brand/ product inclusions in movies, Naderer et al. (2017) and Naderer et al. (2018) observed that placement execution impacted affective and behavioral responses differently. Similarly, Lord and Gupta (2010) noted that appreciation of media content and product involvement impacted affective and behavioral responses differently. This suggests that consumers' affective responses may or may not impact their behavioral responses. In the context of product placement, there are limited studies that examine the relationship between consumers' affective and behavioral responses. M. Yang and Roskos-Ewoldsen (2007) conducted a study on visual product placements in movies. The findings of the study revealed that consumers' brand attitudes have a positive impact on their behavioral responses. When the attitudes toward the placed brand are more positive, consumers are more likely to choose the placed brand. Kowalczyk and Royne (2012) and Muzellec et al. (2013) conducted a study on the placement of brands in television shows. The authors found that attitudes toward the brand are positively associated with consumers' purchase intentions. In the case of brand/ product inclusions in games, Catalán et al. (2019) and Hsiao et al. (2022) noted that brand attitudes predict purchase intentions among consumers. Based on the findings of existing studies, it is hypothesized that:

H16: Brand attitudes positively impact purchase intentions.

The concept of brand self-congruity has attracted considerable attention from researchers in recent years. Self-congruity plays a significant role in influencing consumer responses. It is considered a key construct in explaining consumers' behavioral responses to advertising messages. Existing studies have demonstrated the impact of brand self-congruity on behavioral

responses in the context of television commercials (Xue & Phelps, 2013), celebrity endorsements (Pradhan et al., 2016) and social media advertising (Phua & Kim, 2018). The findings of these studies suggested that brand self-congruity positively influences behavioral reactions.

In the case of brand/ product inclusions in games, Adis and Jun (2013) and Adis et al. (2015) studied the effect of brand self-congruity on behavioral intentions. The findings of the studies suggested that the match between the user image of a brand and a consumer's self-image positively encourages consumption behavior. Consumers tend to purchase brands that are consistent with their self-image. Individuals who experience high levels of self-congruity with the image of the brand placed in entertainment media are more likely to purchase the brand or a product of the brand than those who experience low levels of self-congruity. This relationship can be explained based on the self-congruity theory. According to this theory, the motivation to purchase a certain brand enhances as the congruence between a brand's image and a consumer's self-image increases (Sirgy, 1982). Although the effect of brand self-congruity on behavioral responses is less explored in the product placement context, we believe that self-congruity with the brand placed in entertainment content may influence purchase intentions. Based on the available literature, it is proposed that:

H17: Brand self-congruity positively impacts purchase intentions.

2.6 Research Gaps

Researchers need to identify gaps in the current state of knowledge about a research topic. There can be different types of research gaps such as methodological gaps, empirical gaps and theoretical gaps. The identification of research gaps is extremely important for developing a research agenda. The identification of research gaps can help translate these gaps into specific research objectives, and subsequently, design a study to fill them. Based on the review of literature, we have identified the following research gaps:

The majority of the studies related to product placement have focused on the consumers of developed western markets (Dens et al., 2012; Gould et al., 2000; Sabour et al., 2016). Chan et al. (2017) argue that consumers in different markets can have different perceptions of product placements. There is a paucity of research on brand/ product inclusion effectiveness in the context of emerging markets, especially in the context of Asian emerging markets (Chan &

Lowe, 2018). There is a need to have an in-depth understanding of consumers' responses to this practice in the context of an emerging market like India where there is a rising trend of integrating branded products into the entertainment content.

Though CPI and placement prominence are not closely related as they can impact consumers' responses differently (Naderer et al., 2018), there are very few studies that treat CPI and placement prominence as distinct execution factors. A study by Naderer et al. (2018), focusing on placement execution, suggests that CPI and placement prominence can trigger different responses to product placements in media content. The interaction between these execution factors and the impact of this interaction on consumers' responses remain largely unexplored (R. Kaur et al., 2022). Thus, further research is required to analyze the effects of CPI and placement prominence separately as well as the impact of the interaction between these execution factors.

Much of the existing literature has focused on cognitive and affective reactions to placements (Bressoud et al., 2010; Sabour et al., 2016); limited studies have addressed behavioral reactions to placements (R. Kaur et al., 2021; Redondo, 2012). Addressing behavioral reactions to brand/product inclusions is crucial from the marketers' perspective. Studies focusing on behavioral responses can lay the groundwork for comprehending the psychological processes and conditions that govern consumers' responses to a given message. These studies can provide new insights which are required for creating effective product placement strategies (A. Sharma et al., 2022). Thus, there is a need to better understand the different factors affecting consumers' behavioral responses.

Several existing studies (Krishen & Sirgy, 2016; Russell, 2002; Wei et al., 2008), focusing on consumers' affective responses, have used brand attitude as the key dependent variable to measure the effectiveness of brand/product inclusions. However, using brand attitude as the key dependent variable cannot provide in-depth insights into the effectiveness of brand/product inclusions. The change in brand attitude may or may not favorably impact consumers' behavioral reactions. In the context of placements in media content, there are very few studies that examine the association between brand attitude change and consumers' behavioral responses. Thus, further research is required to investigate the effect of brand attitude change on consumers' behavioral responses.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework gives an overview of the variables chosen for the study. It details the relationships to be examined in the study. Based on the literature review and the study's hypotheses, Figure 2.1 illustrates the proposed relationships between different variables. The study aims to provide insights into product placement effectiveness by taking into consideration the factors that may influence consumers' perceptions and responses toward products placed in movies. Demographic factors, frequency of media exposure, peer communication, brand consciousness and skepticism towards advertising are the audience characteristics considered for the study. Brand familiarity, product involvement and appreciation of media content are the individual-difference factors considered for the study. Prominence and CPI are the execution factors considered for the study.

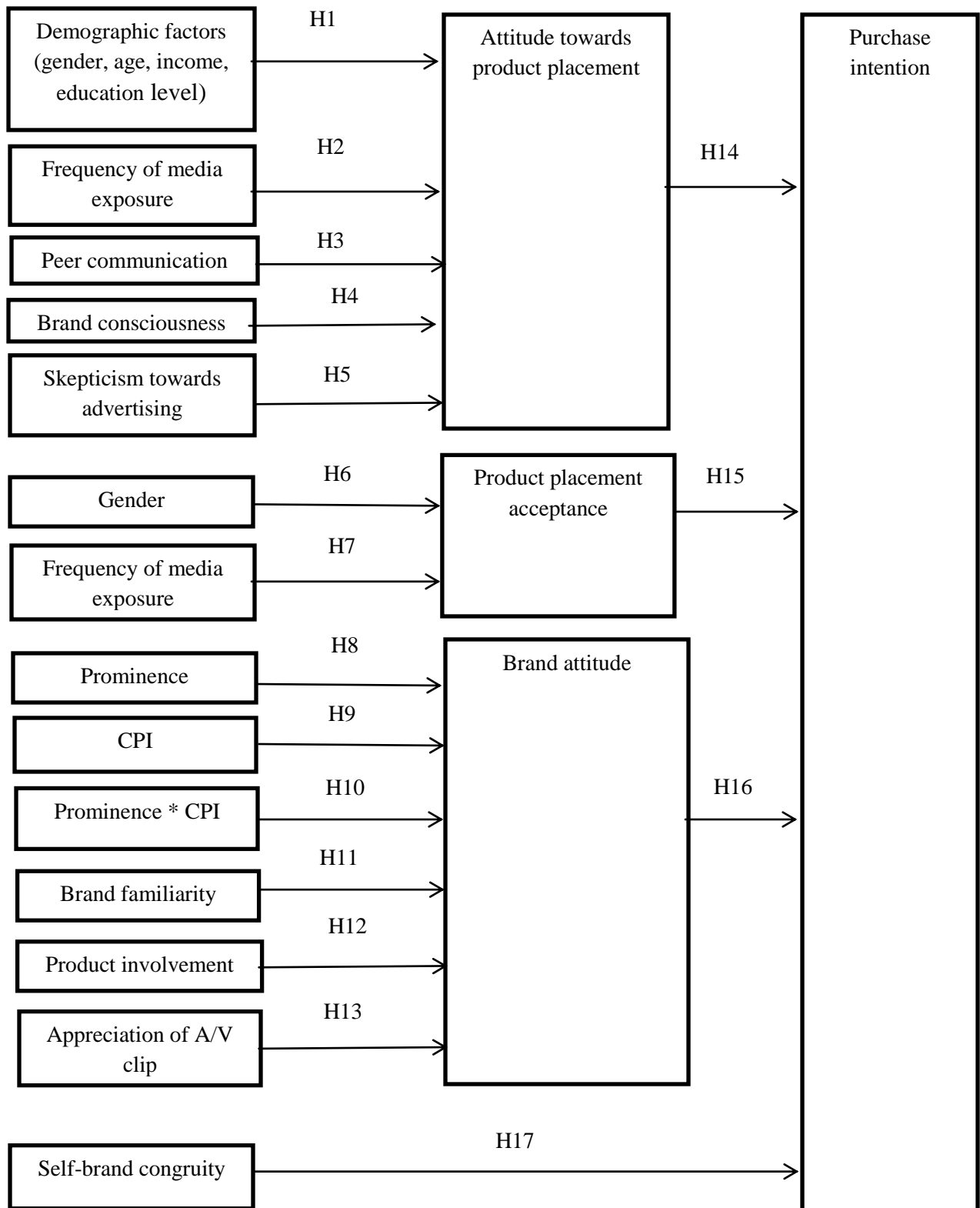


Figure 2.1 Conceptual framework for understanding product placement effectiveness

2.8 Summary of the Chapter

The second chapter gives an overview of the theories relevant to the present study. The chapter covers the consumer socialization framework, PKM, theory of planned behavior and self-congruity theory. These theories help explain the hypothesized relationship between variables. This chapter reviews the extant literature and discusses the findings of empirical studies that have been undertaken in the field of advertising, especially in the field of product placement. The chapter includes existing studies focusing on the impact of audience characteristics on product placement attitudes; the impact of audience characteristics on product placement acceptance; the impact of individual-difference factors and execution elements on brand attitudes; and the impact of placement attitudes, placement acceptance, brand attitudes, and brand self-congruity on purchase intentions. Based on the existing theories and studies, seventeen research hypotheses are formulated. The chapter highlights the gaps identified in the current state of knowledge about product placements in media content. The last part of the chapter presents the conceptual framework.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

The study used primary data to achieve the research objectives. This empirical study was conducted in India and used a questionnaire to collect the required data. The main reason for selecting India for this study was the tremendous growth of the Indian media and entertainment (M&E) industry in recent years. This industry encompasses different segments such as radio, music, movies, theatre, television, gaming and the internet. The M&E industry is one of the most booming industries in India. Digitalization has contributed enormously to the growth of this industry (Madnani et al., 2020; Nagaraj et al., 2021). There have been huge changes in media content creation and consumption. The increased availability of entertainment devices, such as smartphones, tablets and laptops, has brought about a paradigm shift in media consumption patterns (Nagaraj et al., 2021). With the proliferation of service providers, media consumption among Indian adults has been rising consistently and is expected to continue to rise in the future (Jha, 2018; Madnani et al., 2020). This increases the scope for product placements in media content and helps brands gain widespread exposure. Thus, the growth of the Indian M&E industry has created opportunities for marketers to use media content for communicating with consumers. Moreover, India is among the most populous nations and one of the fastest-growing economies in the world (Chou & Singhal, 2017; A. Kumar et al., 2009). Factors like the increase in people's disposable income, the rise of the upper middle class, steady economic growth and favorable demographics have made India an attractive market for brands (Jain, 2020; V. Kumar & Srivastava, 2020). Also, Indian consumers are willing to experiment with different brands.

3.1 Research Design

Using a cross-sectional design, the present study measured product placement effectiveness based on consumers' responses to product placements in media content. Existing studies (e.g., Chan & Lowe, 2018; Devlin & Combs, 2015) suggest that most brand/ product inclusions in media content are visual-only placements. Thus, the study focused on visual-only placements. Existing studies (Cauberghe & Pelsmacker, 2010; Lord & Gupta, 2010; Naderer et al., 2017) focusing on product placement execution have used an experimental design. Since the study deals with two execution factors (placement prominence and CPI), a 2 (prominence: subtle or

prominent) x 2 (CPI: present or absent) within-subjects experimental design was used. This resulted in four experimental conditions: subtle-with CPI, prominent-with CPI, subtle-without CPI and prominent-without CPI. Since this study focused on visual-only placements in media content, prominence was evaluated based on the size (close-up or not) and position of the brand identifier or product on the screen (Dens et al., 2012). In line with the study conducted by Naderer et al. (2017), CPI was evaluated based on the physical interaction between a placed product and the main character. Preexisting entertainment content, containing product placements, was used as stimuli for the research. Using preexisting content containing real brands/products helps enhance external validity (Bergkvist & Rossiter, 2006; Krishen & Sirgy, 2016; Law & Braun, 2000; M. Yang & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 2007).

3.2 Stimuli

The practice of product placement is common in movies. Several existing studies have used movie excerpts containing product placements (e.g., Chan et al., 2017; Homer, 2009; Lord & Gupta, 2010; Reijmersdal, 2016). The present study used excerpts from Bollywood movies (or Hindi movies) as research stimuli. Based on our pretests, we took four movie excerpts containing visual product placements. The movies were in Hindi, which is the most commonly spoken language in the country where this research was conducted. The excerpts contained the placement of products belonging to multiple categories (see Figure 3.1). The product categories were selected based on a pretest that identified gender-neutral products (i.e., of equal interest to both genders). Halkias et al. (2016) argue that the presence of products belonging to different categories eliminates category specificity. This helps to enhance the generalizability of research findings.

Prominence	Subtle	Tag Heuer	Ray Ban
	Prominent	Sunsilk	Apple
		Absent	Present
CPI			

Figure 3.1 Classification of brands/ products based on placement execution

3.3 Pretests

To ensure that the excerpts contained placement of gender-neutral products, several products were pretested. A first pretest was performed to select products perceived as gender-neutral. This pretest was performed with forty young adults who did not participate in the main study. A list covering a wide range of product categories was prepared. Based on the study conducted by Fugate and Phillips (2010), the respondents were asked to rate each product on a five-point scale ranging from 1= “not at all masculine (feminine)” to 5= “highly masculine (feminine)”. The results of t-tests indicated that sunglasses, watches, shampoos and laptops were gender-neutral products. Taking into consideration the four experimental conditions, excerpts were taken based on the results of this pretest. The excerpts contained the placement of the above-mentioned products. The product placements could be classified based on different combinations of CPI and prominence: subtle-with CPI, prominent-with CPI, subtle-without CPI and prominent-without CPI (see Figure 3.1).

To ensure that the selection of brands of gender-neutral products would not distort the research findings, the brands placed in excerpts were pretested. A second pretest was conducted to check for possible confounds due to different brands. This pretest was performed with thirty young adults who did not participate in the main study. The respondents’ attitudes towards each brand were assessed on a five-point scale (strongly dislike/ strongly like, negative/ positive,

unfavorable/ favorable) adapted from Kamleitner and Jyote (2013). The results of repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicated no significant differences in preexisting attitudes ($M_{\text{Apple}}=3.38$; $M_{\text{Tag Heuer}}=3.28$; $M_{\text{Ray Ban}}=3.40$; $M_{\text{Sunsilk}}=3.08$; $\eta_p^2=0.056$; $p=0.170$) across the four brands. Thus, the brands placed in excerpts were suitable for the main study and the preexisting brand attitudes would not affect the research findings. Thereafter, the respondents were shown excerpts containing the placement of products perceived as gender-neutral. In line with the study conducted by Lord and Gupta (2010), the respondents were asked to assess the prominence of placements (the brand/ product: “drew a lot of attention”, “was given importance in the scene”) on a five-point scale ranging from 1= “strongly disagree” to 5= “strongly agree”. For each product placement, the scores were averaged to create a single measure of prominence. The results suggested that the brands/ products present in movie excerpts were rightly classified based on their prominence.

3.4 Participants

The collection of individuals that is the focus of research is known as the population. It is not feasible to collect responses from the entire population. Thus, a subset of the population, known as a sample, is selected to conduct the research. The process of obtaining samples to understand the characteristics of the population is known as sampling. To make valid inferences, the selected sample should be representative of the population from which it is drawn. Sampling techniques can be categorized into two types: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. In probability sampling, each member of the population of interest has an equal chance of being selected. This is not the case for non-probability sampling.

The population of interest for the study comprised movie viewers, aged between 18 and 35 years, studying at a higher educational institution. This research was conducted in Punjab, a state in north-west India. Punjab is one of the most prosperous states in India (R. R. Kaur & Luthra, 2018). Consumers in Punjab yearn for reputed brands, which they see as a symbol of status and wealth. With consumers in Punjab having a lavish lifestyle and high purchasing power, the opportunities for brands are endless (Thakur & Kaur, 2016). A simple random sampling technique, a type of probability sampling, was adopted to select the participants from six higher educational institutions. Consistent with prior studies on product placement (Catalán et al., 2019; Chan et al., 2017; McKechnie & Zhou, 2003; Reijmersdal, 2016; Sung & Gregorio, 2008), we

used young adults as research participants. A total of six hundred young adults participated in this study. The use of young adults as participants was appropriate because they are a prime target for content producers and marketers (Chou & Singhal, 2017; Gupta & Gould, 1997; T. Lee et al., 2011; Morton & Friedman, 2002). Students are regular movie viewers and are major consumers of branded products (Balasubramanian et al., 2014; Sabour et al., 2016). Based on the aforementioned reasons, the use of students as research participants was deemed appropriate. The demographic details of the participants are presented in Table 3.1. Among the six hundred participants, 323 (53.8%) were males and 277 (46.2%) were females. Approximately 73% of the participants were aged 18–23, followed by those aged 24–29 (20.8%) and 30–35 (6.2%). For education level, 396 (66%) had a bachelor’s degree and 204 (34%) had a master’s degree or higher. For annual family income, 265 (44.2%) had more than 10,00,000 INR, 223 (37.2%) had 5,00,000 INR– 10,00,000 INR and 112 (18.7%) had less than 5,00,000 INR.

Table 3.1 Demographic details of participants (N= 600)

Demographic characteristic	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	53.80
Female	46.20
<i>Age</i>	
18 and above- below 24 years	73.00
24 and above - below 30 years	20.80
30 and above- below 36 years	6.20
<i>Education level</i>	
Bachelor's degree	66.00
Master's degree	16.70
Other	17.30
<i>Family income</i>	
Up to 5,00,000 INR	18.70
5,00,000 INR to 10,00,000 INR	37.20
Above 10,00,000 INR	44.20

3.5 Procedure

The participants were shown the excerpts taken for the present study. This exposed them to four different conditions: subtle-with CPI, prominent-with CPI, subtle-without CPI and prominent-without CPI. Although the participants were asked to watch all the excerpts, they were not informed about the objective of the study. Informing the participants about the objective of the study would have influenced their viewing behavior and consequently affected the findings (Bergkvist & Rossiter, 2006). After watching the excerpts, all participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire. To avoid the problem of missing data, all questions were mandatory. The participants received no monetary incentive. They were guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality. After the completion of the experiment, they were thanked for their time. They were also informed about the objective of the study and the reason for not informing them about it beforehand.

Although a within-subjects experimental design is commonly used in studies on product placement, there are some problems associated with this design. The most common problem is the order effect (Kurthakoti et al., 2016). This problem arises when the stimuli are presented to all the participants in the same order. The order of presentation of stimuli may affect the study findings. To address this concern, the present study used counterbalancing. The order of presentation of the excerpts was counterbalanced.

3.6 Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire was designed to test the proposed relationships. This questionnaire was developed in English. In India, English is widely used in educational institutes and is the national foreign language, thus making it appropriate for the present research (Muralidharan et al., 2017; Muralidharan et al., 2016). The research employed existing scales to measure the constructs. However, the statements were slightly modified to suit the context of the present research. All the questions were closed-ended. Five-point scales were used to measure the constructs. The adoption of the same scale values for measuring the constructs allows for easier interpretation of study findings (Wong & Merrilees, 2007). The use of five-point scales boosts the response rate and minimizes the respondents' frustration level (Leong et al., 2020). Three-

point scales can depress the respondents' opinions, while seven-point scales can confuse the respondents (Pai & Huang, 2011).

To help ensure clarity regarding the research topic, a definition and a few examples of placements were given at the beginning of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. In the first section, participants' demographic details were gathered. This section also comprised items measuring media exposure, peer communication, brand consciousness and skepticism toward advertising. In the second section, the participants were inquired about their attitudes toward product placements. They were also inquired about their acceptability of various product categories for placement in media content. The third section comprised items measuring appreciation of audio-visual clipping, brand familiarity and product involvement. The fourth and final section measured brand attitude change, brand self-congruity and purchase intentions. The present study measured brand attitude change to avoid the possible confounding effects of prior brand attitude. To mask the purpose of the research, we employed a self-reported measure of change instead of a pre-post measure of change. Pre-attitude measures would have informed the participants about the purpose of the research and thus affected their viewing behavior (Bergkvist & Rossiter, 2006).

Before survey administration, the questionnaire was reviewed by three subject-matter experts having English proficiency. They assessed whether the items were relevant to and representative of the study constructs. After incorporating the suggested changes, the questionnaire was pilot tested with thirty young adults. They provided feedback regarding the language, clarity and comprehensibility of the items. Based on the responses, some minor changes were made to refine the questionnaire. This exercise helped to ensure the content and face validity of the questionnaire (Jain, 2020; S. Kumar et al., 2021; Lim et al., 2021). The final questionnaire is presented in the Appendix.

3.7 Measures

Table 3.2 provides the details of the measures used in this study. Demographic information, such as age, education level, gender and family income, was gathered. Following previous studies on product placement (e.g., Gupta & Gould, 1997; McKechnie & Zhou, 2003), media exposure was measured by asking the participants to indicate the average number of movies watched on a

monthly basis. Peer communication was measured using a five-item scale adapted from E. Kwon and Jung (2013). Brand consciousness was assessed using a four-item scale adapted from Nelson and McLeod (2005). Skepticism toward advertising was measured using eight statements adapted from Nelson et al. (2004) and Obermiller and Spangenberg (1998). Attitude towards product placements was measured using fourteen statements adapted from Gupta and Gould (1997). Based on the study conducted by Sung et al. (2009), the participants were inquired about their acceptability of different product categories for placement in movies. They were inquired about their acceptability of seven product categories- fashion accessories, cosmetics, footwear, apparel, electronic gadgets, automobiles and food and beverages. It was appropriate to inquire only about the acceptability of neutral products as movie viewership in India is maximum for Hindi movies (Statista, 2021a; Statista, 2021b) where the viewers come across product placement of neutral products only. A list of seven product categories was prepared based on existing studies (e.g., Chan et al., 2017; Gregorio & Sung, 2009).

In line with the study conducted by Reijmersdal et al. (2010), appreciation of audio-visual clipping was assessed by asking participants to rate the clipping on a five-point scale. Based on the study conducted by Wei et al. (2008), participants were asked to indicate their familiarity with each brand. Based on the study conducted by Lord and Gupta (2010), product involvement was assessed on a five-point scale. Based on the study conducted by Reijmersdal et al. (2010), participants were asked to indicate the change in their attitudes toward each brand on a five-point scale. Brand self-congruity was measured using a scale adapted from Adis et al. (2015). Following previous studies on product placement (Besharat et al., 2013; Herrewijn & Poels, 2013; Lord & Gupta, 2010), participants were asked to indicate their likelihood of buying each product/ brand on a five-point scale.

Table 3.2 Measurement of study constructs

Construct	Description of scale	Source
Peer communication	Statements were assessed on a five-point scale where 1 denoted “strongly disagree” and 5 denoted “strongly agree”	Adapted from a study conducted by E. Kwon and Jung (2013)

Brand consciousness	Items were assessed on a five-point scale where 1 denoted “strongly disagree” and 5 denoted “strongly agree”	Adapted from a study conducted by Nelson and McLeod (2005)
Skepticism toward advertising	Items were rated on a five-point scale where 1 denoted “strongly disagree” and 5 denoted “strongly agree”	Adapted from studies conducted by Nelson et al. (2004) and Obermiller and Spangenberg (1998)
Attitude towards product placements	Statements were rated on a five-point scale where 1 denoted “strongly disagree” and 5 denoted “strongly agree”	Adapted from a study conducted by Gupta and Gould (1997)
Acceptability	Items were rated on a five-point scale where 1 denoted “very unacceptable” and 5 denoted “very acceptable”	Adopted from a study conducted by Sung et al. (2009)
Appreciation of audio-visual clipping	Item was measured on a five-point scale where 1 denoted “very negative” and 5 denoted “very positive”	Adapted from a study conducted by Reijmersdal et al. (2010)
Brand familiarity	Items were rated on a five-point scale where 1 denoted “not at all familiar” and 5 denoted “very familiar”	Adapted from a study conducted by Wei et al. (2008)
Product involvement	Items were evaluated on a five-point scale where 1 denoted “of no concern” and 5 denoted “of concern”	Adapted from a study conducted by Lord and Gupta (2010)
Brand attitude change	Items were evaluated on a five-point scale where 1 denoted “very negatively” and 5 denoted “very positively”	Adopted from a study by Reijmersdal et al. (2010)

Brand self-congruity	Items were measured on a five-point scale where 1 denoted “strongly disagree” and 5 denoted “strongly agree”	Adapted from a study conducted by Adis et al. (2015)
Purchase intentions	Items were rated on a five-point scale where 1 denoted “very unlikely” and 5 denoted “very likely”	Adapted from studies conducted by Besharat et al. (2013), Herrewijn and Poels (2013), and Lord and Gupta (2010)

3.8 Tools and Techniques Used

There are two major approaches to research in any field- qualitative research and quantitative research. The two approaches have different data collection and analysis methods. Both approaches have their own merits and demerits. Researchers have to adopt an approach based on the study’s objectives. Qualitative research is a type of research that produces results not arrived at by statistical techniques. To collect data, qualitative research has a wide variety of research methods such as participants’ observation, case studies, focus groups and in-depth interviews. This research approach can help achieve a comprehensive understanding of different perspectives. However, the analysis of qualitative data is time-consuming and labor-intensive. The major disadvantage of this research approach is that the results are easily affected by the researcher’s own biases. Quantitative research is conducted by collecting quantifiable data and analyzing them using statistical techniques. Quantitative data are collected using structured methods such as polls and surveys. These methods require researchers to use closed-ended questions, making data analysis quite straightforward. The results achieved are unbiased and generalizable to the entire population.

This study employed a quantitative research method to achieve the research objectives. The cross-sectional data were analyzed using two different software packages- the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 25.0 developed by IBM and SmartPLS version 3.0 developed by SmartPLS GmbH. Before starting the analysis process, the data were checked for CMB, multicollinearity and normality. CMB may occur when the participant responds to questions

related to both the independent and dependent variables. The presence of CMB can adversely impact the research findings. Attempts were made to minimize the likelihood of CMB. Moreover, Harman's single-factor test was conducted to check for CMB. Multicollinearity refers to the presence of intercorrelations among two or more independent variables. Multicollinearity was checked using variance inflation factor (VIF) values. The data set is considered to be normally distributed if the values are symmetrically distributed about the mean. The normality of the data was assessed based on skewness and kurtosis values.

Different tools and techniques were used to achieve the research objectives. The first objective was to analyze the impact of audience characteristics (demographic factors, frequency of media exposure, peer communication, brand consciousness and skepticism towards advertising) on attitudes toward product placements. Hypotheses H1-H5 were related to the first objective. The second objective was to analyze the impact of audience characteristics (gender and frequency of media exposure) on product placement acceptance. Hypotheses H6 and H7 were related to the second objective. The third objective was to examine the impact of individual-difference factors (brand familiarity, product involvement and appreciation of media content) and execution elements (prominence and CPI) on brand attitudes. Hypotheses H8-H13 were related to the third objective. The fourth objective was to measure product placement effectiveness in terms of purchase intentions. Hypotheses H14-H17 were related to the fourth objective.

Since the present study used a 2 x 2 within-subjects experiment design, it was not possible to test the entire model (shown in Figure 3.2) using a single technique. Hence, different tools and techniques were used to test the hypothesized relationships. To test hypotheses H1, H2, H6 and H7, T-tests and ANOVAs were performed. To test hypotheses H3-H5, H14 and H15, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used. The SEM approach is widely used for data analysis as it helps analyze relationships between multiple independent and dependent variables. There are two variants of SEM- variance-based structural equation modeling (VB-SEM) and covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM). VB-SEM is preferred over CB-SEM, for testing models with multiple latent variables (Henseler et al., 2015). Moreover, VB-SEM has fewer restrictive assumptions (Talwar et al., 2020) and higher statistical power (Joseph F. Hair et al., 2019) than CB-SEM. Among the VB-SEM techniques, partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) is being widely used by marketing researchers to test the proposed

hypotheses. Variance-based PLS-SEM can easily handle both reflective and formative constructs (Joseph F. Hair et al., 2019; Matthews et al., 2018). Though PLS-SEM works well with small sample sizes, existing studies have demonstrated that this technique can also be used with large sample sizes (Joseph F. Hair et al., 2019; Lou & Yuan, 2019; Matthews et al., 2018). Thus, the use of PLS-SEM was appropriate. Hypotheses H8-H10 were tested using repeated measures analysis of covariance (ANCOVA). To test hypotheses H11-H13, H16 and H17, regression analyses were conducted. We briefly explain these tools and techniques in this section.

3.8.1 T-test

The T-test is a parametric test for data analysis. It is a popular statistical method used by researchers for hypothesis testing. The method is used to compare the means between two groups. Before applying this test, the data should be checked for normal distribution. If the data are non-normal, then researchers should use a non-parametric alternative to the t-test. T-tests are of three types: paired t-test, one-sample t-test and two-sample t-test (P. Mishra et al., 2019). If two groups are selected from a single population, then a paired t-test is performed. The same subjects are studied either under two different conditions or at two different times. If the mean of a selected sample is to be compared with a standard mean value (either the mean value of the population from which the sample is drawn or the theoretical mean value), then a one-sample t-test is performed. If two unrelated groups are selected from two different populations, then an independent t-test or a two-sample t-test is performed. Both groups should be independent of each other. A two-sample t-test can be performed when the dependent variable (test variable) is continuous and the categorical independent variable (grouping variable) has exactly two categories. If the independent variable (grouping variable) is continuous, researchers can specify a cut point for dichotomizing the variable (i.e., create two groups).

3.8.2 ANOVA

ANOVA is a parametric test for data analysis. It is a statistical technique used by researchers for the testing of hypotheses. For this technique, the dependent variable should be normally distributed. The technique is used to compare the means among three or more groups (P. Mishra et al., 2019). Inferences about means are made based on the analysis of variance. One-way and two-way ANOVA are used to compare the means across independent groups. One-way ANOVA

is used when there is one categorical independent variable, whereas two-way ANOVA is used when there are two categorical independent variables. In one-way ANOVA, the categorical independent variable should have at least three categories. In two-way ANOVA, the categorical independent variables should have at least two categories. The main purpose of using two-way ANOVA is to analyze the combined effect of both independent variables on the dependent variable.

Repeated measures ANOVA can have between-subjects and within-subjects factors. Repeated measures ANOVA is used to compare the means among three or more dependent groups. Repeated measures design involves multiple measures of the same variable taken either over more than two time periods or under different conditions. One-way repeated measures ANOVA is used when there is one categorical independent variable, whereas two-way repeated measures ANOVA is used when there are two categorical independent variables. The main purpose of using two-way repeated measures ANOVA is to analyze the interaction between the two independent variables and the influence of this interaction on the dependent variable. When a covariate is introduced to check for possible confounding effects, the technique becomes ANCOVA.

3.8.3 Regression

Regression analysis is used by researchers for the testing of hypotheses. Regression analysis allows researchers to analyze the relationship between the independent variable/s and the dependent variable. In marketing research, the dependent variable is the desired outcome, while the independent variables help achieve the desired outcome (Sarstedt & Mooi, 2019). A simple regression model (having only one independent variable) is written as:

$$y = \alpha + \beta_1 x_1 + e$$

The α represents the intercept (or constant), x_1 represents the independent variable, β_1 represents the regression coefficient for the independent variable (x_1), e represents the error and y represents the dependent variable.

A multiple regression model (having multiple independent variables) is written as:

$$y = \alpha + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + e$$

The α represents the intercept (or constant), x_1 represents the first independent variable, β_1 represents the regression coefficient for the first independent variable (x_1), x_2 represents the second independent variable, β_2 represents the regression coefficient for the second independent variable (x_2), e represents the error and y represents the dependent variable.

Regression analysis helps to:

- Determine whether the independent variables have a significant relationship with the dependent variable.
- Analyze the strength of the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable.
- Compare the effects of independent variables measured using different scales. The comparison can be made based on standardized regression coefficients.
- Make predictions based on available data.

3.8.4 SEM

SEM has become one of the preferred data analysis techniques among researchers. This technique helps to test complex models. The technique is very helpful when a research model has multiple independent (exogenous) and dependent (endogenous) constructs. SEM consists of several linear equations that simultaneously determine relationships among several constructs. Although the SEM technique serves purposes similar to multiple regression, there are some considerable differences between the two techniques. SEM can simultaneously test multiple relationships, including those where a dependent construct becomes an independent construct in the subsequent relationship within the same analysis. It can also simultaneously take into account multiple dependent variables. The major advantage of this technique is that it does not ignore measurement errors (Steenkamp & Baumgartner, 2000). In a research model, the arrows represent the proposed relationships between different constructs. Testing a model using PLS-SEM involves two steps.

First, the measurement model is assessed to check the reliability and validity of the constructs. When using PLS-SEM, this step involves confirmatory composite analysis (CCA) (Manley et al., 2020). The objective of CCA is measurement model confirmation in PLS-SEM (Joe F. Hair et

al., 2020). CCA requires that constructs and their associated items/ indicators be specified before data analysis. CCA helps to investigate how well the items/ indicators capture the construct. Items/ indicators are dropped based on the outer loading values. After dropping the items/ indicators, the reliability and validity of the constructs are checked.

Second, the structural model is assessed to determine the influence of one construct on another. This step involves path analysis. It allows researchers to test the hypothesized relationships among constructs. The sign and magnitude of the path coefficient dictate the relationship between the two constructs. Conclusions are drawn based on the path coefficients and statistical significance of relationships.

3.9 Summary of the Chapter

The third chapter discusses in detail the methodology used for conducting this research. The chapter gives a clear account of how the stimuli were selected and pretested. Pretests were conducted to ensure that the brands present in the selected stimuli would not distort the research findings. Further, the process of data collection and analysis is explained. The chapter provides details regarding the participants, procedure, measurement scales, and tools and techniques used for analyzing the data.

Chapter 4

Results and Discussion

The previous chapter discusses in detail the collection of responses. This chapter deals with the analyses of responses and the interpretation of results. The analyses of responses involve both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics describe the characteristics of responses using numbers or graphs (Sondhi & Sandhu, 2020). They provide information about the sample and form the basis for analyses of responses. The responses can be analyzed using different statistical techniques. Inferential statistical techniques can be parametric or non-parametric. T-test, ANOVA and ANCOVA are examples of parametric inferential statistical techniques (Delattre & Colovic, 2009; P. Mishra et al., 2019). Mann-Whitney U test, Kruskal-Wallis test and bootstrap are examples of non-parametric inferential statistical techniques (Delattre & Colovic, 2009; Henseler et al., 2016; Tudoran, 2019). Inferential statistics provide information about the statistical significance of differences or about the statistical significance of relationships between variables (P. Mishra et al., 2019). For instance, if the p-value is less than 0.05, we can say that the difference is statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level or the relationship between variables is statistically significant at the 95 percent confidence level. The decision to accept or reject a hypothesis is made based on inferential statistics. Thus, inferential statistics help draw inferences and conclusions about the population from which the sample is taken.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics for the variables considered for the study are presented in Table 4.1. Mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis provide important descriptive information. Mean is a measure of central tendency and is defined as the sum of all the values divided by the number of values. Standard deviation is a representation of the dispersion or variation of a data set relative to its mean. Skewness is a measure of the asymmetry of data distribution. The coefficient of skewness is negative or positive if the distribution is skewed to the left or right, respectively. Kurtosis describes the shape of the tails of a distribution. Outliers are present in either tail. Outliers are the data values that differ significantly from the other data values. The long tails indicate the presence of outliers, while the short tails indicate a paucity of outliers. The

coefficient of kurtosis provides a measure of outliers. A large kurtosis generally indicates the problem of outliers.

Table 4.1 Descriptive statistics (N= 600)

Construct	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Peer communication				
PC_1	2.51	1.18	0.298	-0.822
PC_2	3.16	1.22	-0.348	-0.824
PC_3	3.53	1.14	-0.548	-0.397
PC_4	3.46	1.19	-0.469	-0.659
PC_5	3.37	1.24	-0.466	-0.724
Brand consciousness				
BC_1	3.75	1.04	-0.737	0.034
BC_2	3.28	1.18	-0.396	-0.655
BC_3	3.81	1.04	-0.802	0.187
BC_4	2.16	1.11	0.604	-0.520
Skepticism toward advertising				
SKEP_AD_1	3.89	1.14	-0.839	-0.128
SKEP_AD_2	4.30	1.02	-0.582	0.929
SKEP_AD_3	3.32	1.13	-0.181	-0.733
SKEP_AD_4	3.24	1.23	-0.005	-1.004
SKEP_AD_5	3.69	1.06	-0.593	-0.118

SKEP_AD_6	3.19	1.10	-0.102	-0.465
SKEP_AD_7	3.22	1.17	-0.203	-0.785
SKEP_AD_8	3.42	1.34	-0.444	-0.994
Attitude toward product placements				
ATT_PP_1	3.69	1.16	-0.711	-0.287
ATT_PP_2	3.10	1.15	-0.183	-0.756
ATT_PP_3	3.48	1.12	-0.536	-0.368
ATT_PP_4	3.69	1.09	-0.755	-0.014
ATT_PP_5	3.05	1.21	-0.174	-0.843
ATT_PP_6	3.46	1.09	-0.411	-0.341
ATT_PP_7	3.40	1.02	-0.427	-0.048
ATT_PP_8	3.39	0.99	-0.163	-0.223
ATT_PP_9	3.75	1.01	-0.611	-0.124
ATT_PP_10	2.69	1.14	0.038	-0.950
ATT_PP_11	3.26	1.16	-0.310	-0.631
ATT_PP_12	3.50	1.13	-0.519	-0.434
ATT_PP_13	3.69	1.01	-0.655	0.143
ATT_PP_14	3.37	1.12	-0.193	-0.511
ATT_PP_15	3.75	1.04	-0.546	-0.197
Acceptability				
ACC_FB	3.71	1.02	-0.708	0.265

ACC_AUTOMOBILES	3.90	1.01	-0.640	-0.236
ACC_ELECTRONICS	3.88	0.98	-0.646	-0.001
ACC_APPAREL	3.45	1.00	-0.434	-0.037
ACC_FOOTWEAR	3.53	1.02	-0.400	-0.185
ACC_COSMETICS	3.18	1.12	-0.288	-0.506
ACC_ACCESSORIES	3.48	1.10	-0.521	-0.207
Appreciation of audio- visual clipping	3.65	0.74	0.028	0.017
Brand familiarity				
FAM_RAYBAN	4.09	1.04	-0.009	0.296
FAM_APPLE	4.55	0.76	-0.826	0.905
FAM_TAGHEUER	2.87	1.37	0.008	-1.220
FAM_SUNSILK	4.35	0.95	-0.569	0.956
Product involvement				
INV_RAYBAN	3.12	1.28	-0.163	-1.000
INV_APPLE	3.96	1.13	-0.987	0.153
INV_TAGHEUER	2.51	1.21	0.239	-0.841
INV_SUNSILK	3.50	1.20	-0.549	-0.532
Brand attitude change				
BA_RAYBAN	3.29	0.97	-0.184	0.022
BA_APPLE	3.62	0.96	-0.271	-0.280

BA_TAGHEUER	3.01	0.92	-0.039	0.517
BA_SUNSILK	3.31	0.98	-0.206	0.075
Brand self-congruity				
SC_RAYBAN	3.16	1.16	-0.210	-0.621
SC_APPLE	3.71	1.10	-0.642	-0.245
SC_TAGHEUER	2.76	1.12	0.057	-0.541
SC_SUNSILK	3.44	1.11	-0.419	-0.427
Purchase intentions				
PI_RAYBAN	3.06	1.24	-0.075	-0.912
PI_APPLE	3.63	1.20	-0.599	-0.526
PI_TAGHEUER	2.71	1.13	0.107	-0.574
PI_SUNSILK	3.16	1.14	-0.205	-0.556

Source. Compilation using SPSS

4.2 Common method bias (CMB)

Research may suffer from CMB when the participant responds to questions related to both the independent and dependent variables. The presence of CMB can adversely impact the research findings. To minimize the likelihood of CMB, participants were asked to answer the questions as honestly as possible and were guaranteed anonymity (Podsakoff et al., 2003). It was necessary to check for CMB because the study used a self-report instrument for data collection. Harman's single-factor test was performed to check for CMB. In this test, a single factor was produced with all the questionnaire items. According to the results, the single factor accounted for 19.240 percent of the variance. The results indicated that CMB did not exist as the variance explained for the single factor was less than the recommended threshold of 50 percent (Chinchanachokchai & Gregorio, 2020; S. Kumar et al., 2021).

4.3 Data Diagnosis

Before starting the analysis process, the data were checked for multicollinearity and normality. The presence of multicollinearity can adversely affect the study findings as the independent variables influence each other. Thus, it becomes difficult to examine the relationship between the dependent variable and each of the independent variables in the model. Multicollinearity was checked using variance inflation factor (VIF) values. VIF values help to determine the severity of multicollinearity. The problem of multicollinearity becomes profound if the VIF value exceeds 10 (Mwema & Crewett, 2019; O'Brien, 2007). To resolve this problem, variables with a VIF value greater than 10 should be dropped from the model, followed by a re-estimation of VIF values. In this research, the VIF values for the constructs were less than 3 (see Table 4.8, Table 4.10 and Table 4.12), suggesting the absence of multicollinearity (Joseph F. Hair et al., 2019). An evaluation of the normality of the dataset is a prerequisite for conducting statistical analyses as normal distribution is an assumption for parametric tests. The normality of the data was assessed based on skewness and kurtosis values. These values are presented in Table 4.1. The data were normally distributed as the skewness values were within the desired limits of ± 1 and the kurtosis values were within the desired limits of ± 2 (Joshi & Garg, 2020).

4.4 Reliability and Validity

It is important to check the reliability and validity of the research instrument. Reliability is the main concern for questionnaire-based studies. Reliability can be described as the extent to which a measurement scale yields consistent results (Hammersley, 1987; Heale & Twycross, 2015). To assess the reliability of measurement scales, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR) were computed for each construct. Cronbach's alpha and CR are measures of internal consistency (Joe F. Hair et al., 2020; Niclasen et al., 2013). The reliability of measurement scales was satisfactory as Cronbach's alpha values and CR values were above 0.7 (Aggarwal & Rahul, 2018; Joe F. Hair et al., 2020; Nunnally, 1978).

Validity can be described as the extent to which a measurement scale yields accurate results (Hammersley, 1987; Heale & Twycross, 2015). There are different types of validity that concern researchers. Validity can be categorized into three types: face, content and construct validity. As mentioned in section 3.6, content and face validity were ascertained. Face validity is a type of

validity that determines whether the research instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Heale & Twycross, 2015). It is a subjective judgment of whether the questionnaire measures what it is intended to measure. Content validity determines whether the measurement scale reflects the construct in scope as well as in content (Heale & Twycross, 2015; Johnston et al., 2014). Content validity is ascertained based on the detailed examination of the questionnaire items. Before survey administration, the questionnaire was reviewed by three subject-matter experts having English proficiency. They assessed whether the items were relevant to and representative of the study constructs. Taking into account the responses received from the experts, a few items were deleted. Afterward, the questionnaire was pilot tested with thirty young adults belonging to the population of interest for the study. They were asked to fill out the complete questionnaire and provide feedback regarding the language, clarity and comprehensibility of the items. Based on the responses, some questions were rephrased. In addition, a few language mistakes were identified and corrected. This exercise helped to establish the content and face validity of the questionnaire.

Construct validity determines whether the measurement scale operates as predicted by theory (Johnston et al., 2014). Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and CCA are commonly used statistical techniques for investigating construct validity (DiStefano & Hess, 2005; Joe F. Hair et al., 2020). In this study, CCA was conducted to investigate construct validity. Items with an outer loading value of 0.5 or greater were retained (Javed & Khan, 2020). After dropping the items with low factor loading, we evaluated the model fit. The final model had a satisfactory model fit. In addition to CFA/ CCA, convergent and discriminant validity are commonly used to provide evidence of construct validity (Strauss & Smith, 2009; Westen & Rosenthal, 2003). Thus, convergent and discriminant validity were assessed to further investigate construct validity. Convergent validity was checked based on the average variance extracted (AVE) values (Johann et al., 2022). Convergent validity was confirmed as the AVE value for each construct was above 0.5 (Joe F. Hair et al., 2020). Discriminant validity was assessed based on the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) criterion and the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The use of the HTMT criterion to assess discriminant validity is becoming increasingly common in marketing studies. This approach is being widely used in studies adopting the PLS-SEM technique. The HTMT criterion is based on the correlation between the constructs. In this criterion, the HTMT ratios should be less than the predefined threshold of 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015). In the Fornell-

Larcker criterion, the square root of the AVE value for a construct is compared with its correlation coefficients with other constructs in the model. In a given model, the square root of a construct's AVE value should be greater than its correlation coefficients with other constructs in the model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Discriminant validity was established for the present study as both criteria were met.

4.5 Power Analysis

Issues arise when the sample size is too small. The accuracy of the findings may be compromised when the size of the chosen sample is too small. In hypotheses testing, there is a probability of making two types of error- Type I error and Type II error. Thus, adequate sample size is required for testing the hypotheses. An adequate sample size reduces the chances of making Type I and Type II errors. Post hoc power analysis can be used to assess the adequacy of the sample size (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2004). It is performed after the completion of a study. For this study, post hoc power analysis was conducted using G*Power software (Faul et al., 2009). The power level ($1-\beta$) was calculated based on the desired α level, sample size and effect size. The β value corresponds to the chances of making a Type II error and the α value (or the p-value) corresponds to the chances of making a Type I error. The α level was kept at 5 percent. Based on the statistical tests used for analyzing the responses, the computed power level was above 80 percent (Kang, 2021). Thus, the sample size was adequate.

4.6 Hypotheses Testing

The first objective was to analyze the impact of audience characteristics (demographic factors, frequency of media exposure, peer communication, brand consciousness and skepticism towards advertising) on attitudes toward product placements. Hypotheses H1-H5 were related to the first objective. The second objective was to analyze the impact of audience characteristics (gender and frequency of media exposure) on product placement acceptance. Hypotheses H6 and H7 were related to the second objective. The third objective was to examine the impact of individual-difference factors (brand familiarity, product involvement and appreciation of media content) and execution elements (prominence and CPI) on brand attitudes. Hypotheses H8-H13 were related to the third objective. The fourth objective was to measure product placement

effectiveness in terms of purchase intentions. Hypotheses H14-H17 were related to the fourth objective.

The first hypothesis predicted demographic differences in attitudes toward product placements. Age, education level, family income and gender were categorical variables. For the analysis, “female” was assigned a value of “1” and “male” was assigned a value of “2”. Age had three categories (“18 and above- below 24 years” was assigned a value of “1”, “24 and above- below 30 years” was assigned a value of “2” and “30 and above- below 36 years” was assigned a value of “3”). Education level had 3 categories (“bachelor's degree” was assigned a value of “1”, “master's degree” was assigned a value of “2” and “other” was assigned a value of “3”). Family income had 3 categories (“up to 5,00,000 INR” was assigned a value of “1”, “5,00,000 INR to 10,00,000 INR” was assigned a value of “2” and “above 10,00,000 INR” was assigned a value of “3”).

An independent t-test was performed to test Hypothesis 1a predicting that men would show more favorable attitudes toward product placements than women. Before testing the hypothesis, the homogeneity of variances was checked using Levene’s test. The results indicated that the groups being compared had approximately equal variances ($p > 0.05$) (Gong, 2021). Thus, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was satisfied. The results of an independent t-test revealed that there were no gender differences in consumers’ attitudes toward placements in movies ($t = -1.054$, $p = 0.292$). Hence, H1a was not supported. To test H1b-d, concerning the impact of age, income, and education level on attitudes toward product placements, one-way ANOVAs were conducted. The results of Levene’s tests indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was satisfied ($p > 0.05$). The results of ANOVA revealed no significant impact of age on attitudes toward product placements ($F = 1.486$, $p = 0.227$). Therefore, H1b was not supported. The results of ANOVA showed a significant impact of income on consumers’ attitudes toward placements ($F = 3.022$, $p = 0.049$). Further, post hoc analysis established that the mean scores for attitudes toward product placements were significantly different between lower and higher income ($p = 0.019$). Adults with higher incomes showed more favorable attitudes toward product placements than adults with lower incomes. Therefore, H1c was not supported. The results of ANOVA showed a significant impact of education level on attitudes toward product placements ($F = 2.726$, $p = 0.066$). Further, post hoc

analysis established that the mean scores for attitudes toward product placements were significantly different between Bachelor's and Master's degrees ($p = 0.038$). Adults with higher education levels showed more favorable attitudes toward product placements than adults with lower education levels. Therefore, H1d was not supported.

To test Hypothesis 2, concerning the impact of media exposure on attitudes toward product placements, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. The frequency of media exposure was a categorical variable. For the analysis, "less than 3" was assigned a value of "1", "3 to 5" was assigned a value of "2" and "more than 5" was assigned a value of "3". Before testing the hypothesis, the homogeneity of variances was checked using Levene's test. The results indicated that the groups being compared had approximately equal variances ($p > 0.05$). Thus, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was satisfied. The results of ANOVA showed a significant impact of media exposure on attitudes toward product placements ($F = 8.407$, $p < 0.001$). Further, post hoc analysis established that the mean scores for attitudes toward product placements were significantly different between low and medium media exposure ($p = 0.032$), between medium and high media exposure ($p = 0.055$), and between low and high media exposure ($p < 0.001$). Results suggested a positive association between media exposure and attitudes toward placements. Young adults who watch more movies had more favorable attitudes toward product placement than young adults who watch fewer movies. Therefore, H2 was supported.

To test H6 and H7, concerning the effect of gender and media exposure on the acceptability of products shown in movies, a repeated measures ANOVA was conducted. Before testing the hypotheses, the homogeneity of variances was checked. The results of Levene's tests indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances was satisfied ($p > 0.05$). The ANOVA results indicated a significant product effect ($p < 0.001$). Table 4.2 summarizes the mean scores for different product categories. Table 4.3 and Table 4.4 demonstrate the effect of gender and media exposure on product acceptability. The 'between-subjects effects' and 'within-subjects effects' were considered. The results indicated that the main effect of gender was statistically significant ($F = 3.823$, $p = 0.051$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.006$), and the interaction between gender and product was significant ($F = 17.405$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.028$). Also, the results indicated that the main effect of media exposure was statistically significant ($F = 8.621$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.028$), and the

interaction between media exposure and product was significant ($F = 2.854$, $p = 0.002$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.010$). However, the interaction between gender and media exposure did not have a significant impact on the acceptability of products placed in movies ($F = 0.840$, $p = 0.432$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.003$). Since the interaction effect was not significant, we focused on the main effect of gender and media exposure. Table 4.2 shows that men were more accepting of the placement of automobiles, electronic gadgets, and food and beverages than women. Hence, H6 was partially supported. Table 4.2 shows that young adults who watch more movies demonstrated higher acceptability than young adults who watch fewer movies. Further, post hoc analysis indicated that the mean scores for product acceptability were significantly different between low and medium media exposure ($p = 0.099$), between medium and high media exposure ($p = 0.037$), and between low and high media exposure ($p < 0.001$). Results suggested a positive relationship between media exposure and the acceptability of products shown in movies. Hence, H7 was supported.

Table 4.2 Means of product acceptability (based on gender and media exposure)

Product category	Gender		Media exposure		
	Women (M)	Men (M)	Low (M)	Medium (M)	High (M)
Food and beverages	3.66	3.75	3.53	3.80	4.19
Automobiles	3.72	4.05	3.72	4.04	4.24
Electronic gadgets	3.75	3.98	3.80	3.85	4.18
Apparel	3.51	3.39	3.41	3.45	3.57
Footwear	3.55	3.51	3.51	3.47	3.70
Cosmetics	3.47	2.93	3.15	3.21	3.24
Fashion accessories	3.68	3.30	3.39	3.54	3.68

Source. Compilation using SPSS

Table 4.3 Within-subjects effects of gender and media exposure

	F value	Sig.	Partial eta squared (η_p^2)
Product * Gender	17.405	< 0.001	0.028
Product * Media exposure	2.854	0.002	0.010
Product * Gender * Media exposure	0.925	0.503	0.003

Source. Compilation using SPSS

Table 4.4 Between-subjects effects of gender and media exposure

	F value	Sig.	Partial eta squared (η_p^2)
Gender	3.823	0.051	0.006
Media exposure	8.621	< 0.001	0.028
Gender * Media exposure	0.840	0.432	0.003

Source. Compilation using SPSS

To test H8-H10, concerning the effect of prominence, CPI, and the interaction between these execution factors on consumers' brand attitudes, a repeated measures ANCOVA was conducted. The analysis was conducted with gender as a covariate. Table 4.5 shows the effect of prominence, CPI, and the interaction between these execution factors on consumers' brand attitudes. Based on the analysis, the impact of gender on brand attitude change was not significant, $F(1, 599) = 0.765$, $p = 0.853$, $\eta_p^2 \sim 0.000$. The 'within-subjects effects' were considered. The results indicated a significant main effect of prominence, $F(1, 599) = 9.333$, $p = 0.002$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.015$, and CPI, $F(1, 599) = 53.328$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.082$, on brand attitude change. Also, the results indicated a significant effect of the interaction between these execution factors, $F(1, 599) = 15.136$, $p < 0.001$, $\eta_p^2 = 0.025$, on brand attitude change. Further, paired t-tests were performed to examine the simple effect of CPI and prominence on consumers' brand attitudes. Since the interaction between CPI and prominence was significant, it was important to examine the simple effect of these execution factors on consumers' brand attitudes. Paired t-tests

helped compare the brand attitude change scores across the four experimental conditions (see Table 4.6 and Table 4.7). The results of paired t-tests also indicated a significant effect of CPI and prominence on consumers' brand attitudes. As shown in Table 4.6, prominent product placements led to more positive brand attitude changes than subtle product placements. Therefore, H8 was not supported. As shown in Table 4.7, product placements with CPI led to more positive brand attitude changes than product placements without CPI. Therefore, H9 was supported. Figure 4.1 shows the brand attitude change scores for different conditions. The brand attitude change score was highest for prominent product placements with CPI ($M = 3.62$), while the brand attitude change score was lowest for subtle product placements without CPI ($M = 3.01$). Therefore, H10 was not supported.

Table 4.5 Influence of CPI, prominence, and the interaction between these execution factors

	F value	Sig.	Partial eta squared (η_p^2)
Gender (Covariate)	0.765	0.853	~ 0.000
Prominence	9.333	0.002	0.015
CPI	53.328	< 0.001	0.082
Prominence * CPI	15.136	< 0.001	0.025

Source. Compilation using SPSS

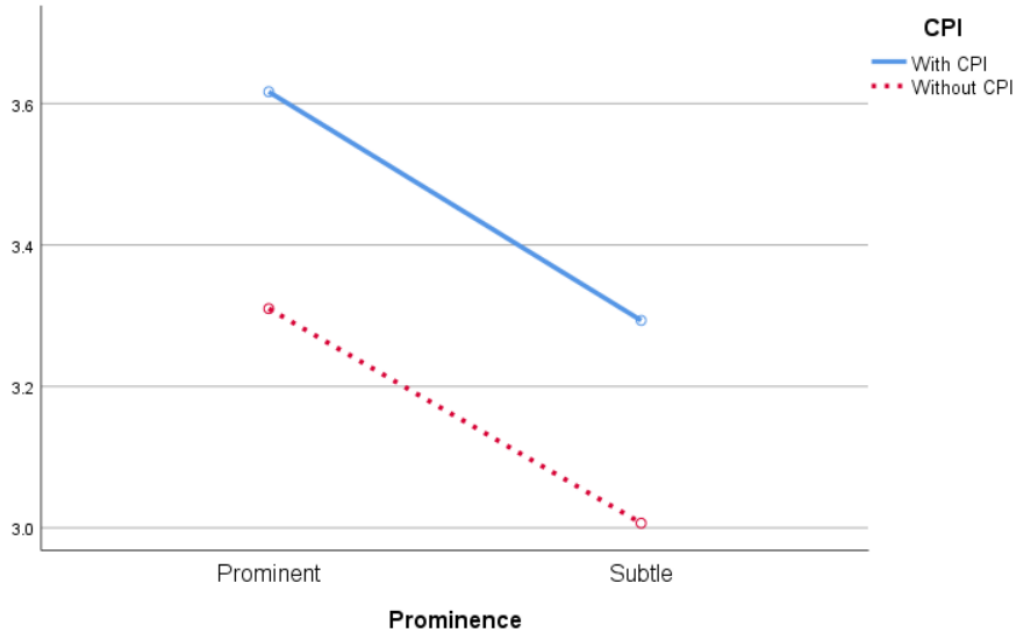


Figure 4.1 Brand attitude change scores for different conditions

Table 4.6 A comparison of brand attitudes toward prominent and subtle product placements

	Diff. between means	t-value	Sig.
Pair 1: BA_APPLE (Prominent-with CPI) and BA_RAYBAN (Subtle-with CPI)	0.323	8.182	< 0.001
Pair 2: BA_SUNSILK (Prominent-without CPI) and BA_TAGHEUER (Subtle-without CPI)	0.303	6.550	< 0.001
<i>Note.</i> BA = Brand attitude change			

Source. Compilation using SPSS

Table 4.7 A comparison of brand attitudes toward product placements with CPI and without CPI

	Diff. between means	t-value	Sig.
Pair 1: BA_APPLE (Prominent-with CPI) and BA_SUNSILK (Prominent-without CPI)	0.307	8.360	< 0.001
Pair 2: BA_RAYBAN (Subtle-with CPI) and BA_TAGHEUER (Subtle-without CPI)	0.287	6.717	< 0.001
<i>Note.</i> BA = Brand attitude change			

Source. Compilation using SPSS

To test H11-H13, concerning the impact of brand familiarity, product involvement and appreciation of media content on consumers' brand attitudes, multiple regression analyses were conducted. The main reason for conducting regression analyses was the research design used in the study. Since the present study used a 2 x 2 within-subjects experiment design, it was necessary to examine the impact of individual-difference factors on consumers' brand attitudes for each of the four brands separately. Considering the hypotheses, the relationships were analyzed for each of the four brands separately (Krishen & Sirgy, 2016) as well as for the pooled data (Dens et al., 2012; Kurthakoti et al., 2016; Nelson et al., 2006; Verhellen et al., 2016). The results of stepwise regression analyses are presented in Table 4.8 and Table 4.9. The VIF values for the constructs were less than 3 (see Table 4.8), suggesting the absence of multicollinearity. The Durbin-Watson values were close to 2 (see Table 4.9), suggesting the absence of autocorrelation.

Table 4.8 shows the unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients. An unstandardized coefficient suggests the change in the dependent variable due to one unit change in the independent variable while keeping other independent variables constant. Standardized regression coefficients are generally used to compare the effects of independent variables on the dependent variables (especially when the independent variables are measured on different scales or when the independent variables have different units). The higher the standardized regression coefficient, the stronger the impact on the dependent variable. As shown in Table 4.8, brand familiarity, appreciation of media content and product involvement had a positive effect on

consumers' brand attitudes (regression coefficients > 0 ; $t > 1.96$; $p < 0.05$). Based on our results, the construct with the most predictive power for consumers' brand attitudes was product involvement. As mentioned in Table 4.9, the F values were significant at the 5 percent level. The results of the individual brands reinforce the results of the pooled data. Table 4.9 shows the R^2 values and the adjusted R^2 values. The coefficient of determination (R^2) can take any value between 0 and 1. The value of R^2 indicates the percentage of the variance of the dependent variable that can be explained by the independent variables. The adjusted R^2 value is the refined version of the R^2 value. Unlike the R^2 value, the adjusted R^2 value evaluates the contribution of each independent variable. The value of R^2 always increases when a variable is introduced into the model, whereas the value of adjusted R^2 increases only when the introduced independent variable has a significant influence on the dependent variable. Thus, it is important to report the value of adjusted R^2 . Table 4.9 shows that the adjusted R^2 values lay between 0.221 and 0.328, suggesting a significant impact of brand familiarity, product involvement and appreciation of media content on consumers' brand attitudes. Therefore, hypotheses H11-H13 were supported.

Table 4.8 Regression coefficients for variables impacting consumers' brand attitudes

		Unstd. coeff. (B value)	Std. coeff. (Beta value)	t-value	Sig.	VIF
Apple	Brand familiarity	0.220	0.175	4.576	< 0.001	1.228
	Product involvement	0.334	0.392	10.154	< 0.001	1.247
	Appreciation	0.197	0.151	4.308	< 0.001	1.022
Sunsilk	Brand familiarity	0.144	0.139	3.603	< 0.001	1.150
	Product involvement	0.307	0.372	9.581	< 0.001	1.162
	Appreciation	0.166	0.124	3.407	0.001	1.017
Ray Ban	Brand familiarity	0.129	0.138	3.656	< 0.001	1.149
	Product involvement	0.288	0.377	9.919	< 0.001	1.167
	Appreciation	0.238	0.180	5.024	< 0.001	1.040
Tag Heuer	Brand familiarity	0.154	0.229	5.173	< 0.001	1.521
	Product involvement	0.225	0.296	6.679	< 0.001	1.525
	Appreciation	0.097	0.078	2.147	0.032	1.018
Pooled data	Brand familiarity	0.211	0.207	5.598	< 0.001	1.224
	Product involvement	0.363	0.401	10.677	< 0.001	1.256
	Appreciation	0.149	0.150	4.379	< 0.001	1.053
<i>Note.</i> Unstd. coeff. represents “Unstandardized coefficient”; Std. coeff. represents “Standardized coefficient”.						

Source. Compilation using SPSS

Table 4.9 Regression models predicting consumers' brand attitudes

	F value	Sig.	R square value	Adjusted R square value	Durbin-Watson
Apple	80.176	< 0.001	0.288	0.284	1.857
Sunsilk	57.635	< 0.001	0.225	0.221	1.767
Ray Ban	70.460	< 0.001	0.262	0.258	1.809
Tag Heuer	60.837	< 0.001	0.234	0.231	1.951
Pooled data	98.617	< 0.001	0.332	0.328	1.796

Source. Compilation using SPSS

To test H16 and H17, concerning the impact of brand attitudes and brand self-congruity on consumers' purchase intentions, multiple regression analyses were conducted. The main reason for conducting regression analyses was the research design used in the study. Since the present study used a 2 x 2 within-subjects experiment design, it was necessary to examine the impact of brand attitudes and brand self-congruity on consumers' purchase intentions for each of the four brands separately. Considering the hypotheses, the relationships were analyzed for each of the four brands separately (Krishen & Sirgy, 2016) as well as for the pooled data (Dens et al., 2012; Kurthakoti et al., 2016; Nelson et al., 2006; Verhellen et al., 2016). The results of stepwise regression analyses are presented in Table 4.10 and Table 4.11. The VIF values for the constructs were less than 3 (see Table 4.10), suggesting the absence of multicollinearity. The Durbin-Watson values were close to 2 (see Table 4.11), suggesting the absence of autocorrelation. Table 4.10 shows the unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients. Based on the values, brand attitudes and brand self-congruity had a positive effect on consumers' purchase intentions (regression coefficients > 0; $t > 1.96$; $p < 0.05$). As mentioned in Table 4.11, the F values were significant at the 5 percent level. The results of the individual brands reinforce the results of the pooled data. Table 4.11 shows the R^2 values and the adjusted R^2 values. The adjusted R^2 values

lay between 0.327 and 0.388, suggesting a significant impact of brand attitudes and brand self-congruity on consumers' purchase intentions. Therefore, H16 and H17 were supported.

Table 4.10 Regression coefficients for variables impacting consumers' purchase intentions

		Unstd. coeff. (B value)	Std. coeff. (Beta value)	t-value	Sig.	VIF
Apple	Brand attitudes	0.544	0.435	11.915	< 0.001	1.283
	Brand self-congruity	0.302	0.277	7.580	< 0.001	1.283
Sunsilk	Brand attitudes	0.480	0.416	11.597	< 0.001	1.146
	Brand self-congruity	0.281	0.274	7.644	< 0.001	1.146
Ray Ban	Brand attitudes	0.485	0.380	10.656	< 0.001	1.243
	Brand self-congruity	0.381	0.355	9.975	< 0.001	1.243
Tag Heuer	Brand attitudes	0.335	0.273	7.435	< 0.001	1.272
	Brand self-congruity	0.431	0.429	11.668	< 0.001	1.272
Pooled data	Brand attitudes	0.472	0.395	10.729	< 0.001	1.300
	Brand self-congruity	0.334	0.319	8.669	< 0.001	1.300
<i>Note.</i> Unstd. coeff. represents “Unstandardized coefficient”; Std. coeff. represents “Standardized coefficient”.						

Source. Compilation using SPSS

Table 4.11 Regression models predicting consumers' purchase intentions

	F value	Sig.	R square value	Adjusted R square value	Durbin-Watson
Apple	182.346	< 0.001	0.379	0.377	1.987
Sunsilk	146.843	< 0.001	0.330	0.327	2.042
Ray Ban	190.766	< 0.001	0.390	0.388	1.904
Tag Heuer	172.822	< 0.001	0.367	0.365	1.925
Pooled data	181.661	< 0.001	0.378	0.376	2.023

Source. Compilation using SPSS

Hypotheses H3-H5, concerning the impact of peer communication, brand consciousness and advertising skepticism on consumers' attitudes toward product placements, were tested using PLS-SEM. Hypotheses H14 and H15, concerning the impact of product placement attitudes and product acceptability on consumers' purchase intentions, were also tested using PLS-SEM. Confirmatory tetrad analysis (CTA) helps to empirically check whether the construct is reflective or formative (Joseph F. Hair et al., 2019). Based on the results, purchase intention was established as a formative construct. The results of CTA were consistent with the design of the study. The measurement model was assessed to check the reliability and validity of the constructs. As mentioned in section 4.4, CCA was conducted for the reflective constructs and items with a loading value less than 0.5 were dropped. As a result, four items of advertising skepticism (Att_Ad_4, Att_Ad_6, Att_Ad_7, Att_Ad_8), one item of brand consciousness (BC_4) and three items of attitudes toward product placements (Att_PP_13, Att_PP_14, Att_PP_15) were dropped. For the formative construct (i.e., purchase intention), the statistical significance of indicators' weights and outer loadings was considered. Based on the criteria suggested by Joseph F. Hair et al. (2019), no indicator of purchase intention was dropped. Table 4.12 shows the loading values and VIF values for the final model. The VIF values were less than

3, suggesting the absence of multicollinearity. After dropping the items, the reliability and validity of the constructs were checked. Section 4.4 discusses in detail the reliability and validity of the constructs. Table 4.13 shows Cronbach's alpha values, CR values and AVE values. The reliability of measurement scales was satisfactory as Cronbach's alpha values and CR values were above 0.7. Convergent validity was established as the AVE value for each construct was above 0.5. Discriminant validity was established as the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the HTMT criterion were met (see Table 4.14 and Table 4.15). The adjusted R^2 values for product placement attitudes and purchase intentions were 0.340 and 0.132, respectively. The R^2 values for product placement attitudes and purchase intentions were 0.345 and 0.137, respectively. As suggested by Henseler et al. (2016), the overall model fit was assessed based on the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) value. Generally, an SRMR value less than 0.08 is considered favorable (Henseler et al., 2016; A. Mishra et al., 2018). The final model had a satisfactory model fit (SRMR = 0.068).

Table 4.12 Loading values and VIF values

Item	Outer loading	VIF
Peer communication		
PC_1: I talk to my peers about the branded products shown in movies.	0.659	1.386
PC_2: I ask my friends about the brands they buy.	0.797	1.882
PC_3: I listen carefully to the product/ brand recommendations made by my peers.	0.859	2.256
PC_4: I read the reviews given by my peers about different brands and their products.	0.787	1.928
PC_5: I gather information about different products from my peers.	0.826	2.061

Brand consciousness		
BC_1: I pay attention to the brand names of the products I buy.	0.817	1.510
BC_2: Sometimes I'm willing to pay more money for products because of their brand name.	0.785	1.513
BC_3: Brand names tell me something about the quality of products.	0.866	1.656
Skepticism toward advertising		
SKEP_AD_1: When I'm watching television, I switch channels to avoid the commercials.	0.803	1.720
SKEP_AD_2: When I'm watching videos or shows on YouTube, if possible, I skip the commercials.	0.863	1.747
SKEP_AD_3: When I'm reading a magazine, I don't look at the advertisements.	0.541	1.245
SKEP_AD_5: If a claim is made in an advertisement for a product that I am considering buying, I check out the truth of the claim either by asking friends who have used the product or by trying out the product myself.	0.700	1.216
Attitude toward product placements		
ATT_PP_1: I don't mind if branded products are shown in movies unless their presence is excessive.	0.641	1.559
ATT_PP_2: I don't think that movie producers are misleading people by showing branded products in movies.	0.634	1.645
ATT_PP_3: I don't mind if a movie actor/ character uses a branded product or mentions a brand name for advertising purposes.	0.689	1.871
ATT_PP_4: The presence of branded products does not distract me while watching movies if they fit the scene.	0.650	1.692

ATT_PP_5: The presence of branded products adds realism to a movie.	0.646	1.639
ATT_PP_6: In movies, I prefer seeing real brands over fictitious brands.	0.651	1.606
ATT_PP_7: I don't consider product placement in movies unethical even if it is done for commercial purposes.	0.715	1.804
ATT_PP_8: I believe that product placement is more effective than traditional commercials.	0.565	1.426
ATT_PP_9: The placement of branded products is not annoying if they are well-integrated into movies.	0.724	1.959
ATT_PP_10: I start liking the product/ brand that is used by movie characters.	0.549	1.603
ATT_PP_11: In movies, I like seeing branded products that I use.	0.644	1.747
ATT_PP_12: I would not avoid watching a movie just because multiple brands/ products are shown in it.	0.564	1.353
Acceptability		
ACC_FB: Acceptability of food and beverages placed in movies.	0.762	1.658
ACC_AUTOMOBILES: Acceptability of automobiles placed in movies.	0.757	2.360
ACC_ELECTRONICS: Acceptability of electronic gadgets placed in movies.	0.807	2.637
ACC_APPAREL: Acceptability of apparel placed in movies.	0.796	2.458
ACC_FOOTWEAR: Acceptability of footwear placed in movies.	0.757	2.260
ACC_COSMETICS: Acceptability of cosmetics placed in movies.	0.683	2.350
ACC_ACCESSORIES: Acceptability of fashion accessories placed in movies.	0.727	2.557

Purchase intentions			
PI_RAYBAN: Likelihood of buying Ray Ban products.		0.537	1.535
PI_APPLE: Likelihood of buying Apple products.		0.865	1.504
PI_TAGHEUER: Likelihood of buying Tag Heuer products.		0.517	1.161
PI_SUNSLK: Likelihood of buying Sunsilk products.		0.576	1.616

Source. Compilation using SmartPLS

Table 4.13 Determining reliability and convergent validity

Construct	CR	Cronbach's alpha	AVE
Peer communication	0.891	0.846	0.622
Brand consciousness	0.863	0.763	0.678
Skepticism toward advertising	0.822	0.723	0.543
Attitude toward product placements	0.893	0.869	0.512
Acceptability	0.903	0.878	0.573

Source. Compilation using SmartPLS

Table 4.14 Assessing discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker criterion

	Acceptability	Skepticism toward advertising	Attitude toward product placements	Brand consciousness	Peer communication	Purchase intentions
Acceptability	0.757					
Skepticism toward advertising	0.278	0.737				
Attitude toward product placements	0.585	0.375	0.642			
Brand consciousness	0.366	0.283	0.484	0.823		
Peer communication	0.371	0.226	0.432	0.437	0.789	
Purchase intentions	0.344	0.139	0.306	0.271	0.318	
<p><i>Note.</i> The off-diagonal values indicate the correlation coefficient, whereas the diagonal values (in bold) indicate the square root of AVE.</p>						

Source. Compilation using SmartPLS

Table 4.15 Assessing discriminant validity using the HTMT criterion

	Acceptability	Skepticism toward advertising	Attitude toward product placements	Brand consciousness	Peer communication
Acceptability					
Skepticism toward advertising	0.308				
Attitude toward product placements	0.665	0.437			
Brand consciousness	0.439	0.334	0.583		
Peer communication	0.421	0.268	0.496	0.538	

Source. Compilation using SmartPLS

The structural model was assessed to determine the influence of one construct on another. Bootstrapping was used with 5,000 subsamples. Figure 4.2 depicts the hypothesized relationships between different constructs. The relationships between different constructs were examined based on the sign and magnitude of the path coefficients. The statistical significance of a relationship was determined based on the t-value and p-value. Table 4.16 presents the path coefficients, t-values and p-values for the inner model. The results showed a positive influence of peer communication on consumers' attitudes toward product placements (path coefficient = 0.244, $t = 5.982$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, H3 was supported. The results indicated a positive association between brand consciousness and consumers' attitudes toward placements (path coefficient = 0.312, $t = 7.472$, $p < 0.001$). Hence, H4 was supported. Interestingly, advertising skepticism had a positive effect on consumers' attitudes toward placements (path coefficient = 0.232, $t = 4.909$, $p < 0.001$). Hence, H5 was not supported. As expected, the results revealed a positive association between consumers' attitudes toward placements in media content and their purchase intentions (path coefficient = 0.158, $t = 2.565$, $p = 0.010$). Thus, H14 was supported.

The direct relationship between product acceptability and purchase intentions was found to be positive (path coefficient = 0.252, $t = 4.432$, $p < 0.001$). Hence, H15 was supported.

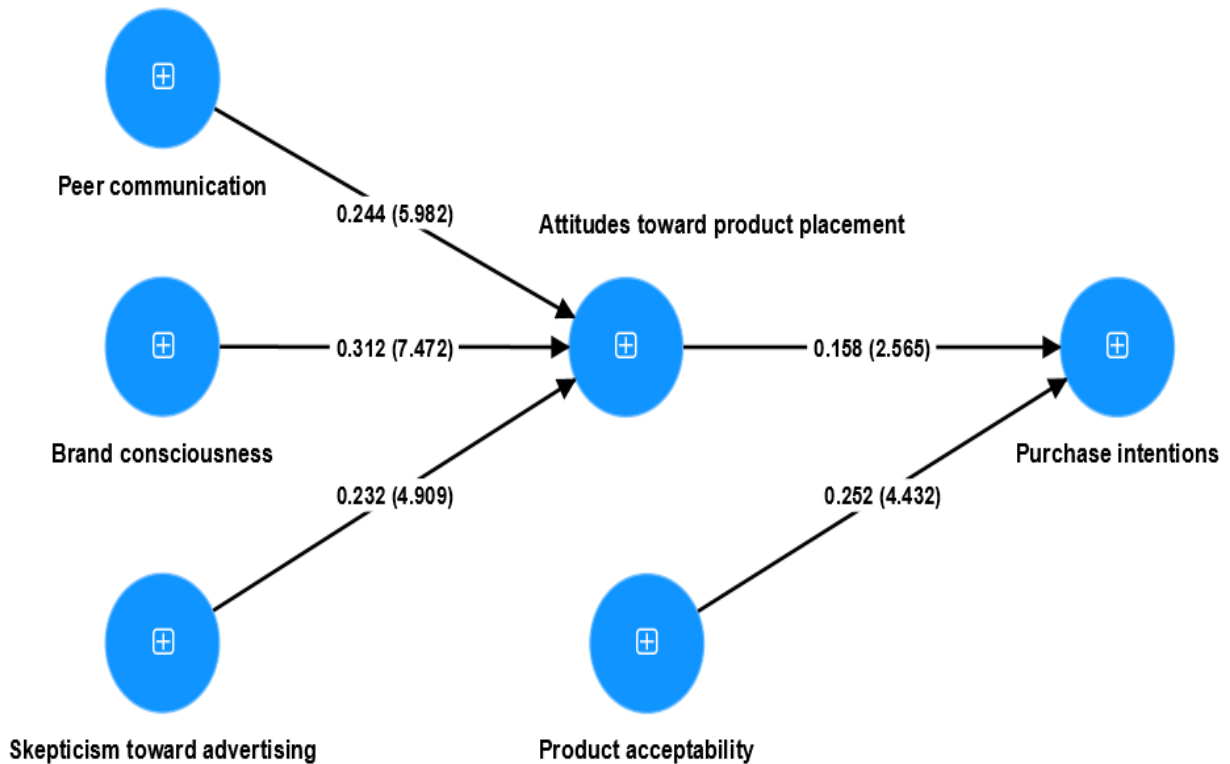


Figure 4.2 Path coefficients and t-values for the hypothesized relationships

Table 4.16 Results of PLS-SEM

The relationship depicted in the model	Path coeff. (β)	t-stat	p-value
Peer communication → Product placement attitudes	0.244	5.982	< 0.001
Brand consciousness → Product placement attitudes	0.312	7.472	< 0.001
Advertising skepticism → Product placement attitudes	0.232	4.909	< 0.001
Product placement attitudes → Purchase intentions	0.158	2.565	0.010
Product acceptability → Purchase intentions	0.252	4.432	< 0.001

Source. Compilation using SmartPLS

Based on the existing theories and studies, seventeen research hypotheses were formulated. Different tools and techniques were used to test the hypotheses. The outcomes were based on descriptive and inferential statistics. Of the seventeen hypotheses, twelve hypotheses were fully supported, one hypothesis was partially supported and four hypotheses were not supported. Table 4.17 shows the summary of hypotheses testing.

Table 4.17 Summary of hypotheses testing

Hypothesis	Outcome (based on data analysis)
H1a: Men show more positive attitudes toward placements than women.	Not supported
H1b: Younger viewers show more positive attitudes toward placements than older viewers.	Not supported
H1c: Viewers with lower family income show more positive attitudes toward placements than viewers with higher family income.	Not supported
H1d: Viewers with lower education levels show more positive attitudes toward placements than viewers with higher education levels.	Not supported
H2: Frequency of media exposure is positively associated with viewers' attitudes toward placements.	Supported
H3: Peer communication is positively associated with viewers' attitudes toward placements.	Supported
H4: Brand consciousness is positively associated with viewers' attitudes toward placements.	Supported
H5: Advertising skepticism negatively impacts viewers' attitudes toward placements.	Not supported
H6: Male viewers are more accepting of the placement of branded products than female viewers.	Partially supported

H7: Frequency of media exposure is positively associated with viewers' acceptability of products shown in media content.	Supported
H8: Subtle product placements generate more positive brand attitudes than prominent product placements.	Not supported
H9: Product placements with CPI generate more positive brand attitudes than product placements without CPI.	Supported
H10: Subtle product placements with CPI generate the most positive brand attitudes, and prominent product placements without CPI generate the least positive brand attitudes.	Not supported
H11: Brand familiarity positively impacts viewers' brand attitudes.	Supported
H12: Product involvement positively impacts viewers' brand attitudes.	Supported
H13: Appreciation of media content positively impacts viewers' brand attitudes.	Supported
H14: Viewers' attitudes toward placements positively impact their purchase intentions.	Supported
H15: Higher acceptability of products shown in media content leads to higher purchase intentions.	Supported
H16: Brand attitudes positively impact purchase intentions.	Supported
H17: Brand self-congruity positively impacts purchase intentions.	Supported

4.7 Discussion

Brand names influence consumers' purchase decisions enormously, with well-known brands being popular choices. Brands have become status symbols, especially among young individuals. People want to buy expensive and well-known brands that enhance their self-image. Factors like the increase in people's disposable income, the rise of the upper middle class, steady economic

growth and favorable demographics have made India an attractive market for brands. Also, Indian consumers are willing to experiment with different brands. A growing number of brands are using product placements when targeting Indian consumers. The study, conducted in India, aimed to provide in-depth insights into placement effectiveness by examining the factors influencing consumers' perceptions and responses toward product placements in movies. This research was conducted in Punjab, a state in north-west India. A total of six hundred young adults participated in this study. They were shown the excerpts taken for the study. They were asked to watch the excerpts containing brand placements. Following this, they were asked to fill out a structured questionnaire.

RQ1 intended to examine Indian consumers' perceptions of the practice of product placement in movies. The findings of this study suggest that consumers, in particular young adults, have positive attitudes toward placements in movies ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 0.64$). This is in line with prior studies (e.g., H. Chen & Haley, 2014; Nelson & Deshpande, 2013) conducted in emerging markets. The majority of consumers (85 percent) prefer product placements over commercials. This finding is similar to the findings of Schmoll et al. (2006). Compared to commercials, product placements are less annoying because they do not interrupt the viewing experience. Most consumers (69.5 percent) believe that the presence of branded products in entertainment content makes it more realistic. This finding is similar to the findings of prior studies (e.g., DeLorme & Reid, 1999; Schmoll et al., 2006; Sung & Gregorio, 2008) on product placement. Movies are considered to be a reflection of the different aspects of our lives, and brands have become an important part of our lives. Most consumers (85 percent) do not consider product placements in movies unethical. This finding is similar to the findings of Chan et al. (2017) and Sung and Gregorio (2008), who found that young adults did not perceive product placements as unethical.

The majority of consumers (90 percent) believe that there should be certain restrictions regarding product placement in movies targeted toward children. Children do not have the required understanding to distinguish between advertising and entertainment content. Prior studies (Naderer et al., 2017; Naderer et al., 2018) have demonstrated the impact of brand/ product inclusions on children's choices. Showing movie characters consuming unhealthy or junk foods can negatively affect children's food choices which in turn can lead to health issues such as obesity (Matthes & Naderer, 2015) and dental caries (S. Sharma & Bumb, 2020). However, the

placement of certain products can prove beneficial. The placements can help children understand how the product is to be used or consumed. Some consumers (42 percent) are in favor of placement disclosures at the beginning or end of the movie. This may help consumers realize that the intention of placing branded products is to persuade them. Some advocacy groups argue that consumers have a right to know that a movie contains sponsored content (DeLorme & Reid, 1999). To help consumers be more aware of the persuasive intent of product placement, the practice is regulated in some countries. However, the regulations are less stringent in Asian countries like India.

RQ1 also intended to investigate the impact of audience characteristics on Indian consumers' attitudes toward product placements. To answer RQ1, we used t-tests, ANOVAs and SEM. H1, concerning the impact of gender, age, income, and education level on attitudes toward product placements, was not supported. H2, concerning the impact of media exposure on attitudes toward placements in movies, was supported. People, especially young adults, watch movies for amusement. The more individuals spend time watching movies, the more they develop favorable attitudes toward the practice of product placement in movies. This finding is similar to the findings of prior studies conducted in emerging markets (Fan & Li, 2010; R. Kaur et al., 2021), which suggested that media consumption was positively related to consumers' perceptions of advertising messages, including brand/ product inclusions. H3, concerning the impact of peer communication on attitudes toward placements in movies, was supported. Peers are considered an important source of information. People, especially young adults, discuss brands with their peers. Communication with peers, both offline and online, shapes a person's attitudes toward product placement. Our finding is similar to the findings of prior studies conducted in emerging markets (Abu-Ghosh et al., 2018; R. Kaur et al., 2021), which suggested that peer communication was positively related to consumers' perceptions of advertising messages, including brand/ product inclusions.

H4, concerning the impact of brand consciousness on attitudes toward product placements, was supported. Similar findings were reported by Nelson and McLeod (2005), who found that high brand-conscious individuals showed greater liking of brand/ product inclusions in entertainment content than low brand-conscious individuals. H5, concerning the relationship between advertising skepticism and attitudes toward the practice of product placement, was not supported.

The findings of this study suggest that consumers, in particular young adults, are skeptical of overt advertising ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 0.73$). The findings suggest that consumers who dislike overt advertisements tend to hold favorable attitudes toward product placements. The more people dislike overt advertisements, the more they hold favorable attitudes toward product placements. Our findings contradict the findings of Winkler and Buckner (2006), who found that negative attitudes toward overt advertising were related to negative orientations toward product placements.

RQ2 intended to investigate the impact of audience characteristics on Indian consumers' acceptability of products placed in movies. To answer RQ2, we used repeated measures ANOVA. Hypotheses (H6 and H7), concerning the impact of gender and media exposure on product acceptability, were supported. Different product categories produce varying levels of acceptance. Among neutral products, young adults consider cosmetics least acceptable and automobiles most acceptable for placement in movies. The more individuals spend time watching movies (or consuming entertainment content), the greater the likelihood of higher levels of acceptance. Our finding is consistent with the findings of existing studies (Gupta & Gould, 1997; M. S. Kim & McClung, 2010) suggesting a positive relationship between media exposure/ usage and acceptability of products shown in entertainment content. In general, men are more accepting of the placement of neutral products in movies. This finding is similar to the findings of prior studies on product placement (Brennan et al., 2004; Sung et al., 2009), which suggested that the acceptability of neutral products varied among the sexes.

The present study focused on consumers' affective (i.e., brand attitude change) and behavioral responses (i.e., purchase intentions) to product placements. Through product placements in entertainment content, marketers often try to improve brand attitudes. By examining the change in consumers' brand attitudes after being exposed to the entertainment content, we were able to understand whether product placements in entertainment content help achieve this goal. The inclusion of purchase intention as the key dependent variable allowed for the investigation of whether placement attitudes, placement acceptance, brand attitude change, and brand self-congruity play a role in consumers' intention to purchase the placed products after being exposed to entertainment content containing product placements.

RQ3 intended to investigate the impact of execution factors and individual-difference factors on Indian consumers' brand attitudes. To answer RQ3, we used repeated measures ANOVA and regression analyses. Our findings revealed that the placement of brands in movies leads to improved attitudes toward the placed brands. We took a closer look at the conditions under which brand attitude change was more positive. H8, concerning the effect of prominence on consumers' brand attitudes, was not supported. Contrary to our hypothesis, prominent placements generate more favorable brand attitudes than subtle placements. Similar findings were reported by Hudders et al. (2012) and Vashist (2018), who found that prominence positively influenced consumers' brand attitudes. According to our findings, consumers do not react negatively to prominently placed brands. This may be due to consumers' positive attitudes toward placements in movies ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 0.64$). Consumers do not respond negatively when the practice of product placement is considered appropriate (Wei et al., 2008). H9, concerning the effect of CPI on consumers' brand attitudes, was supported. Similar findings were reported by Kamleitner and Jyote (2013) and M. Yang and Roskos-Ewoldsen (2007), who noted that placements with CPI evoked more positive affective responses than placements without CPI. The physical interaction between a character and a branded product positively impacts consumers' affective responses by facilitating meaning transfer from the character to the branded product. H10, concerning the effect of the interaction between CPI and prominence on consumers' brand attitudes, was not supported. Based on our findings, prominent product placements with CPI generate the most favorable brand attitudes. This may be due to the association with characters and the visual attention attracted by such placements.

H11, positing a positive association between brand familiarity and consumers' brand attitudes, was supported. Our finding is similar to the findings of prior studies (Verhellen et al., 2016; Wei et al., 2008), which suggested that familiarity with the brand positively impacted consumers' attitudes toward the placed brand. Unknown brands are less likely to benefit from product placements than well-known brands. When consumers are exposed to brands in movies, they are relatively more critical in evaluating unknown brands compared to well-known brands (Chan et al., 2016). H12, concerning the effect of product involvement on consumers' brand attitudes, was supported. Our finding is consistent with the findings of Vashist (2018), who found a positive association between product involvement and consumers' attitudes toward the branded product placed in media content. H13, concerning the relationship between appreciation of media content

and consumers' brand attitudes, was supported. Our findings reinforce the findings from existing studies (Delattre & Colovic, 2009; Lord & Gupta, 2010) suggesting a positive relationship between appreciation of entertainment content in which brands are shown and consumers' attitudes toward the brands. A likely explanation for the positive relationship between appreciation of media content and consumers' brand attitudes can be found in the affect transfer mechanism. The favorable attitudes toward the media content may have been transferred to the placed brands. Thus, marketers should place branded products in media content that evokes positive attitudes.

RQ4 intended to investigate the impact of product acceptability, product placement attitudes, brand attitudes and brand self-congruity on Indian consumers' purchase intentions. To answer RQ4, we used SEM and regression analyses. H14, proposing a positive association between consumers' attitudes toward placements in movies and their purchase intentions, was supported. Our findings reinforce the findings from existing studies (e.g., M. S. Kim & McClung, 2010; Morton & Friedman, 2002) suggesting a positive impact of product placement attitudes on purchase intentions. An effective advertising strategy is (i) perceived favorably by consumers and (ii) capable of eliciting favorable consumer responses. People tend to get emotionally involved in the content they watch and associate the brand/ product with the actor/ character using it. It is natural for people to develop a liking for the brand/ product that is being used by a popular or favorite actor/ character. People are tempted to purchase the placed brands/ products, making product placement an effective advertising strategy. H15, positing a direct relationship between consumers' acceptability of products placed in entertainment content and their purchase intentions, was supported. The results suggest that product acceptability is positively related to purchase intentions; higher product acceptability translates into higher purchase intentions.

H16, concerning the association between consumers' brand attitudes and their purchase intentions, was supported. Our finding is similar to the findings of prior studies on product placement (Catalán et al., 2019; Muzellec et al., 2013; M. Yang & Roskos-Ewoldsen, 2007), which suggested that consumers' brand attitudes were positively associated with their purchase intentions. H17, concerning the association between brand self-congruity and purchase intentions, was supported. Our finding is consistent with the findings of existing studies on product placement (Adis & Jun, 2013; Adis et al., 2015), which suggested a positive association

between brand self-congruity and purchase intentions toward brands placed in entertainment content. Thus, a brand should focus on creating a clear and distinctive image in consumers' minds. Also, marketers should be concerned about the brand personality being portrayed through product placements.

4.8 Summary of the Chapter

The fourth chapter deals with the testing of the research hypotheses. Before starting the analysis process, it is important to check for CMB, multicollinearity and normal distribution. This chapter presents details regarding descriptive statistics, CMB, data diagnosis, reliability and validity. The findings are presented according to the research objectives and hypotheses. Based on the study findings, the chapter mentions the status of each hypothesis. The study findings are also compared with the findings of existing studies.

Chapter 5

Implications, Limitations and Future Directions

Advertising is one of the most important aspects of promotions. Due to fierce competition and constant changes in the marketplace, brands are leaving no stone unturned in attracting new customers and retaining their existing customers with the help of advertising strategies. Marketers adopt different advertising strategies to persuade consumers. The ultimate aim of any advertising strategy adopted by a brand is to boost sales. Advertising strategies can be categorized into two types: overt advertising and covert advertising. Consumers have started distrusting and avoiding advertising messages, especially overt advertising messages. Thus, marketers are shifting their attention from overt advertising techniques to covert advertising techniques. The practice of product placement, a covert advertising technique, has been gaining momentum in recent years (Quinn & Kivijarv, 2020). However, research on this topic is limited. As brands spend huge amounts of money on advertising, it is important to understand product placement effectiveness.

To understand product placement effectiveness, the research examines whether and how placements in entertainment content impact consumers' responses. This study focuses on consumers' affective and behavioral responses to product placements. Since there is a dearth of research on product placement effectiveness in the context of Asian emerging markets, the present study has been conducted in India where there is a rising trend of placing branded products in entertainment content. The growth of the Indian M&E industry has created ample product placement opportunities. As movie consumption has been rising consistently, the research attempts to expand the current understanding of Indian consumers' attitudes and behaviors toward products placed in movies. The relationship between different variables has been hypothesized based on the available literature. Purchase intention has been used as the key dependent variable to evaluate product placement effectiveness because it is considered the best predictor of consumer behavior. The study attempts to fill the research gap by treating placement prominence and CPI as distinct execution factors and by examining the effect of the interaction between these execution factors. The study also investigates the previously unexplored association between product acceptability and purchase intentions. The research uses different

theories to explain consumers' responses to brand/ product inclusions. Based on the study findings, this chapter provides implications and discusses the scope for future research.

5.1 Theoretical Implications

Given that consumers come across a lot of product placements while consuming entertainment content, the research is timely and important. Based on the existing literature, this study proposes and tests a research model to understand the factors influencing consumers' perceptions and responses toward product placements. The research provides insight into how existing theories/frameworks, such as the consumer socialization framework, PKM, theory of planned behavior and self-congruity theory, help understand consumers' perceptions and responses toward product placements.

The research contributes to the available literature on consumer socialization and brand/ product inclusions by analyzing how social structural variables (gender, income, age and education level) and socialization factors (peers and media exposure) impact consumers' attitudes toward brand inclusions in media content. The findings reveal that social structural variables may or may not impact consumers' attitudes. Based on the results, gender and age do not influence consumers' attitudes toward product placements, whereas income and education level influence consumers' attitudes toward product placements. The findings reveal that both socialization factors influence consumers' attitudes toward placements. Peers and media help shape consumers' attitudes toward placements. The results imply that higher media exposure leads to higher susceptibility to advertising messages, including brand inclusions. We attribute the positive association between peer communication and consumers' attitudes toward product placements to the collectivistic culture prevalent in India. Consumers in collectivistic cultures are highly susceptible to peer influence (R. Kaur et al., 2021; N. Singh et al., 2003). The research also contributes to the available literature on consumer socialization and brand/ product inclusions by analyzing how gender (a social structural variable) and media exposure (a socialization factor) impact consumers' acceptability of products shown in entertainment content. The findings show that gender and media exposure influence consumers' acceptability of products shown in entertainment content. The present study expands the current understanding of consumers' attitudes toward brand/ product inclusions by investigating the role of brand consciousness and

advertising skepticism in shaping product placement attitudes. The findings suggest a positive effect of brand consciousness and advertising skepticism on product placement attitudes.

The research contributes to the available literature on brand/ product inclusions by analyzing how two key execution factors- CPI and placement prominence- impact consumers' affective responses. The findings reveal that CPI, placement prominence, and the interaction between these execution factors have a significant influence on consumers' brand attitudes. Our findings verify that placements with CPI elicit more positive brand attitudes than placements without CPI. However, contrary to our hypothesis, consumers do not react negatively to prominently placed brands; prominent placements generate more positive brand attitudes than subtle placements. The findings suggest that consumers may have difficulties recognizing the commercial intent of product placements. Thus, product placements may not activate persuasion knowledge due to their covert nature. Consumers' response to prominent placements has been justified based on their attitudes toward product placements in movies. However, there can be other reasons why consumers do not react negatively to prominently placed brands. Further research is needed to determine those reasons and understand the role of persuasion knowledge in the context of product placements. This research also contributes to the available literature on brand/ product inclusions by analyzing how three individual-difference factors, namely brand familiarity, appreciation of media content and product involvement, impact consumers' affective responses. The findings reveal that brand familiarity, appreciation of media content and product involvement have a positive influence on consumers' brand attitudes.

The research supports the association between consumers' attitudes and their behavioral intentions in the context of product placements. In line with the theory of planned behavior, the findings suggest that product placement attitudes have a positive influence on purchase intentions. The findings also suggest that brand attitudes and brand self-congruity have a positive effect on consumers' purchase intentions. A major contribution of the research is the investigation of the relationship between purchase intentions and product acceptability.

5.2 Practical Implications

Some important practical implications result from this research. The findings of this study have implications for policymakers, marketing professionals and content producers. Consumers'

attitudes and behaviors toward placements in media content are relevant to marketers as heavy investments are made in advertising strategies, particularly product placement. The findings of this study can enable marketers to understand the reasons for the failure or success of product placement in media content. This study can help practitioners formulate more effective product placement strategies to reach the audiences.

The findings of this study indicate that consumers have positive attitudes toward placements in movies. The consumption of entertainment content among Indians has been rising consistently and is expected to continue to rise in the future (Jha, 2018; Madnani et al., 2020). Consequently, marketers should make good use of this opportunity to advertise the products to a large audience by placing the products in movies. The use of product placements can help marketers break through the clutter of advertising messages and reach target audiences. However, it is necessary to ensure that the products do not look out of place and the use of product placements adds realism to a movie. It is also necessary to consider the ethical aspects of placements in entertainment content directed at children. Content producers and marketing professionals should be careful when placing products in movies that target children. As the practice of product placement is gaining popularity, policymakers need to constantly monitor this practice. Further research is needed to ascertain whether policymakers should issue strict guidelines and impose restrictions on placements in movies. With the growing popularity of brand placements in movies, the perceived need for specific policies governing this practice may become stronger. As per the policies, producers may be required to provide disclosures at the beginning or end of the movie. Meanwhile, self-regulatory measures should be adopted.

Since social structural variables can influence consumers' attitudes toward product placements, marketers can segment and target consumers based on social structural variables. Product placement efforts can be targeted toward adults with higher education levels and higher incomes. These audiences are more receptive to product placements in movies. The findings of this study indicate that socialization factors can influence consumers' attitudes toward product placements. Therefore, marketers need to take into account socialization factors while making decisions and formulating product placement strategies. Consumers can be categorized based on their media consumption habits. Since media consumption is positively related to consumers' attitudes toward product placements, consumers can be targeted based on their media consumption habits.

Moreover, marketers can initiate peer communication, in online and offline settings, as it positively influences consumers' attitudes toward the practice of product placement. Creating a buzz around the placed brand/ product through online and offline means can prove beneficial.

The findings of this study indicate that product placements in movies can favorably influence consumers' responses. Thus, product placements can be leveraged by marketers to enhance consumers' relationships with brands and influence consumers' brand attitudes. In this study, the change in brand attitudes is positive for all four conditions: subtle-with CPI, prominent-with CPI, subtle-without CPI and prominent-without CPI. However, it should be noted that the ability of product placement to favorably influence consumers' brand attitudes depends on its execution. To get the best possible outcomes, it is, therefore, necessary to consider how execution factors impact brand attitude change. The research shows that product placements with CPI engender more positive brand attitudes than product placements without CPI. Products held, consumed, or used by movie characters tend to appeal to consumers more. The research also shows that prominent product placements engender more positive brand attitudes than subtle product placements. The standard practice seems to be consistent with what would be suggested based on the findings of this research. The cost of product placements often depends on their prominence, where prominent placements are considered more impactful and thus more expensive than subtle placements (Dens et al., 2012; Verhellen et al., 2016). As per the findings, the interaction between CPI and placement prominence significantly impacts consumers' brand attitudes. When the brand's objective is to improve consumers' brand attitudes, prominent placements with CPI should be considered. While making decisions and formulating product placement strategies, it is necessary to take into account consumers' familiarity with the brand that is to be placed. Well-known brands are more likely to benefit from product placements than unknown brands. Marketers should avoid using product placement strategies for brands/ products that are not known to the target audience.

Product placement can favorably impact consumers' purchase intentions and thus should be considered seriously by marketers as a potent advertising strategy. The findings of this study indicate that consumers are tempted to purchase brands/ products appearing in movies. Marketers should not ignore the impact of placement attitudes, product acceptability, brand attitude change, and brand self-congruity on consumers' intention to purchase the placed

products. Since consumers' acceptability of products shown in entertainment content is positively related to their purchase intentions, it is important to take into account product differences while making decisions and developing product placement strategies. The suitability of a product category for placement should be considered before signing a deal. As brand self-congruity is positively associated with purchase intentions, marketers should use product placements to communicate the right brand personalities. Marketers need to ensure that the brand's perceived personality corresponds to what the brand intended to communicate. Communicating the right brand personalities would help consumers connect with brands, leading to higher purchase intentions.

5.3 Limitations

Though this research provides insights into consumers' responses to placements in movies, it does have certain limitations. First, the present study was restricted to a certain geographical location. This probably limits the generalizability of the findings. Second, the research focused on product placements in a particular medium (i.e., movies). This also probably restricts the generalizability and applicability of the research findings. Third, the research focused only on the placement of neutral products in movies. The participants were inquired about their acceptability of neutral products. Also, the stimuli used for the research contained the placement of neutral products. The findings of the research might have been different if ethically charged products were considered. Fourth, this study used a single item to capture the change in brand attitudes. Although this self-reported measure of change has been employed in previous studies (Nelson et al., 2006; Reijmersdal et al., 2010), the brand attitude changes may not have been accurately reported by the research participants. Fifth, to conceal the research purpose, we chose to measure participants' attitudes toward the practice of product placement after exposing them to the research stimuli. However, this can influence the research findings. Finally, the study used a quantitative research approach to answer the research questions and test the research hypotheses. This probably limits the understanding of the practice of product placement.

5.4 Future Research Directions

The limitation of this study could be addressed in future research. Researchers could replicate this study in different geographies to test the generalizability of the research findings. They could

also undertake comparative studies to analyze differences in consumers' responses across countries. There is a need for comparative research that examines the impact of cultural factors on consumers' responses. An examination of possible confounding variables (e.g., movie genre and experience with the brand) could help gain deeper insights into consumers' perceptions and responses toward brand/ product inclusions in movies. The practice of product placement is becoming increasingly common in media other than movies. Therefore, the research could be extended to other media (e.g., video games, television shows and books) to see whether the findings could be replicated in different contexts. Future studies could also determine how consumers' responses to brand/ product inclusions vary across media types. This could provide comprehensive insights into the efficacy of the practice of product placement. Future studies could examine the impact of other demographic characteristics (e.g., age, income and education level) on product placement acceptance. Consumers come across placements of ethically charged products while consuming entertainment content, including movies, produced in different parts of the world. Therefore, the research could be extended to other products, particularly controversial or ethically charged products.

To ensure the accuracy of study findings, future studies could capture brand attitude change by subtracting the pre-exposure brand attitude score from the post-exposure brand attitude score. Researchers could ask the participants to move to the next question if they had not noticed the brand/ product in the audio-visual clipping. Future studies could consider measuring participants' attitudes toward the practice of brand placement before exposing them to the research stimuli, taking into consideration the issue of revealing the research purpose. Future studies could measure behavioral responses by offering the respondents a fictitious budget and then asking them to indicate their willingness to pay. Future studies could consider using qualitative research methods or mixed methods to gain deeper insights into consumers' perceptions and responses toward brand/ product inclusions. The use of such methods could help researchers get insights into the underlying mechanisms that explain consumers' perceptions and responses. The use of such methods could help researchers understand the subliminal effects of product placements. Moreover, future studies could consider using attention checks to improve response quality. These checks can help identify inattentive respondents. However, it is necessary to ensure that the attention checks do not negatively impact respondents' moods or psychological states.

5.5 Summary of the Chapter

The fifth chapter presents the theoretical and practical implications. The study findings have implications for policymakers, academicians, marketing professionals and content producers. The chapter also highlights the limitations of the present study and offers suggestions for future research. The limitations of this study can be addressed in future research.

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Product placement is a promotional strategy where the brand name, logo, or product is integrated into the media content. It is done for the marketing of branded products and services. The product can be mentioned, used by the character/actor, or shown in the background. For example, a movie character drives a BMW car with the logo visible on the screen, a television show character uses an iPhone in a particular scene, or a banner appears in a video game with Coca Cola written on it.

I would appreciate it if you take a few minutes to complete this survey regarding product placement in movies. All responses are voluntary and will be kept confidential. Thank you for your cooperation.

Ravineet Kaur

Ph.D. candidate

Thapar Institute of Engineering & Technology

Section-A

1. Gender		
Male	Female	
2. Age		
18 and above- below 24 years	24 and above - below 30 years	30 years and above
3. Education level		
Bachelor's degree	Master's degree	Other
4. Family Income		
Up to 5 lacs	5 lacs to 10 lacs	Above 10 lacs

5. Number of movies watched in a month					
Less than 3	3 to 5	More than 5			
6. Rate the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 = "Strongly disagree" and 5 = "Strongly agree":					
Peer communication					
I talk to my peers about the branded products shown in movies.					
I ask my friends about the brands they buy.					
I listen carefully to the product/ brand recommendations made by my peers.					
I read the reviews given by my peers about different brands and their products.					
I gather information about different products from my peers.					
Brand consciousness					
I pay attention to the brand names of the products I buy.					
Sometimes I'm willing to pay more money for products because of their brand name.					
Brand names tell me something about the quality of products.					
I sometimes judge people based on the brands they use.					
Skepticism toward advertising					
When I'm watching television, I switch channels to avoid the commercials.					
When I'm watching videos or shows on YouTube, if possible, I skip the					

commercials.					
When I'm reading a magazine, I don't look at the advertisements.					
I don't rely on advertising as a source of information when I have to buy a product for the first time.					
If a claim is made in an advertisement for a product that I am considering buying, I check out the truth of the claim either by asking friends who have used the product or by trying out the product myself.					
I tend to distrust ads that use movie stars, famous models, or sports celebrities as spokespeople.					
When an advertisement appears on television, I stop looking at the screen until the program starts again.					
I watch movies at a theater or download them to escape from the barrage of TV ads.					

Section-B

7. Indicate your attitudes toward product placements in movies by rating the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 = "Strongly disagree" and 5 = "Strongly agree":					
I don't mind if branded products are shown in movies unless their presence is excessive.					
I don't think that movie producers are misleading people by showing branded products in movies.					
I don't mind if a movie actor/ character uses a branded product or mentions a brand name for advertising purposes.					
The presence of branded products does not distract me while watching					

movies if they fit the scene.					
The presence of branded products adds realism to a movie.					
In movies, I prefer seeing real brands over fictitious brands.					
I don't consider product placement in movies unethical even if it is done for commercial purposes.					
I believe that product placement is more effective than traditional commercials.					
The placement of branded products is not annoying if they are well-integrated into movies.					
I start liking the product/ brand that is used by movie characters.					
In movies, I like seeing branded products that I use.					
I would not avoid watching a movie just because multiple brands/products are shown in it.					
The viewers are subconsciously influenced by the brands they see in movies.					
If producers receive payment for placing branded products in movies, this information should be disclosed at the beginning or end of the movie.					
There should be certain restrictions regarding product placement in movies targeted toward children.					
8. Indicate your acceptability of different product categories for placement in movies on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 = " Very unacceptable" and 5 = " Very acceptable":					
Food and beverages					

Automobiles					
Electronic gadgets					
Apparel					
Footwear					
Cosmetics					
Fashion accessories					

Section-C

9. Rate the A/V clipping on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 = "Very negative" and 5 = "Very positive"	1	2	3	4	5
10. Indicate your familiarity with the following brands on a 5-point scale where 1 = "Not at all familiar" and 5 = "Very familiar":					
Apple					
Ray Ban					
Tag Heuer					
Sunsilk					
11. Indicate your level of involvement with the following products (or products of this brand) on a 5-point scale where 1 = "Of no concern" and 5 = "Of concern":					
Apple					
Ray Ban					
Tag Heuer					

Sunsilk					
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Section-D

12. Indicate the change in your attitude towards the following brands/ products after seeing them in the A/V clipping on a 5-point scale where 1 = "Very negatively" and 5 = "Very positively":

Apple					
Ray Ban					
Tag Heuer					
Sunsilk					

13. Rate the following statements related to brand self-congruity on a scale of 1 to 5 where 1 = "Strongly disagree" and 5 = "Strongly agree":

Apple caters to people like me.					
Ray Ban caters to people like me.					
Tag Heuer caters to people like me.					
Sunsilk caters to people like me.					

14. Indicate your likelihood of buying the following brands after being exposed to them in the A/V clipping where 1 = "Very unlikely" and 5 = "Very likely":

Apple					
Ray Ban					
Tag Heuer					
Sunsilk					

Publications

S. No.	Title of paper	Journal	Year of publication	Impact factor
1.	Antecedents and consequences of consumers' attitudes towards product placements: evidence from India	International Journal of Emerging Markets	2022	3.422
2.	The persuasive effect of product placements: Evidence from an emerging market	Journal of Media Psychology	2022	2.310

Conferences Attended

S. No.	Title of paper	Year	Name and place of conference
1.	Students' attitudes toward product placements: An Indian perspective	2022	International Academic Conference on Economics, Business Management and Social Sciences (IACEBMSS) held in Amritsar, Punjab, India
2.	Students' behavioral response to product placements in movies	2022	International Conference on Social Science and Humanities (ICSSH) held in Chandigarh, India