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Product Placement by Companies in Films and its Impact on Consumer Behaviour

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Abstract:

Nowadays, brands are looking for new ways to advertise because people often skip or ignore regular ads. One of the popular methods is product placement, where brands are shown naturally inside movies. This paper tries to understand how product placements influence people's memory, emotions, and buying decisions. The study is based on surveys filled out by different types of people. It looks at how things like age and movie-watching habits affect their response. Results show that if the product fits well into the movie, it increases trust and makes people more likely to buy it. The study gives useful tips for marketers who want to connect with customers through films.

Introduction

Advertising has changed a lot, especially because people now have options to skip ads. To tackle this, brands are using product placements where their products become part of the movie story. Whether it's a hero driving a cool car or sipping a soft drink, these placements catch attention without disturbing the audience.

This research tries to find out how product placements impact brand awareness and consumer behavior. It looks into whether viewers feel emotionally attached to brands when their favorite characters use them. Also, it studies which groups of people notice these placements more and what makes them feel natural instead of forced.

Statement of the Problem

Even though product placement is getting very popular, we still don't fully know how much it affects consumer behavior. Are people really influenced, or do they just watch and forget?

This study will try to answer:
- Does product placement help people remember brands?
- Does it make products feel more trustworthy and desirable?
- Does it actually push people to take action like searching or buying?

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out if product placement helps in brand recall.
2. To see which product types are noticed the most.
3. To understand how it affects trust, desirability, and buying decisions.
4. To check how age and film-watching habits change responses.
5. To know what makes a placement effective according to viewers.

Hypothesis

- H_0 (Null Hypothesis): Product placement does not significantly impact consumer buying behavior.
- H_1 (Alternative Hypothesis): Product placement significantly impacts consumer buying behavior.

Literature Review

Product placement means putting branded items naturally into films so that people notice them without feeling like they are being sold something. Balasubramanian (1994) called these "hybrid messages."

Research by Gupta & Lord (1998) showed that how much people remember a brand depends on how obvious the placement is and how emotionally connected they are to the character. Russell (2002) also found that when viewers relate to characters using a brand, the placement works better. Karrh (1998) said that if a brand fits well into the story, people accept it more easily.

Overall, studies show that emotional connection and natural fit are very important for product placements to work.

Research Methodology

This study used a simple survey method to collect information.
- Tool: Google Forms
- What we asked about: Age, Gender, Occupation, Movie-watching habits, Brand recall, Emotional reactions, Actions after noticing brands
- Sampling method: Convenience sampling
- Number of responses: 84
- Analysis: Mainly percentages and charts

Findings and Analysis

This section presents the core data insights, supported by visual charts and thoughtful interpretation.

1. Most Frequently Recalled Product Categories
Food & Beverages was the top category people remembered (over 60% mentioned brands like Domino's or Coca-Cola). Electronics, Cars, and Fashion were also very noticeable.

Key Point: Products that fit into everyday moments are remembered more.

Highlight: Brands integrated into natural, everyday film moments — especially food, tech, and lifestyle — are most easily remembered.


Top Recalled Product Categories (Filtered, %)
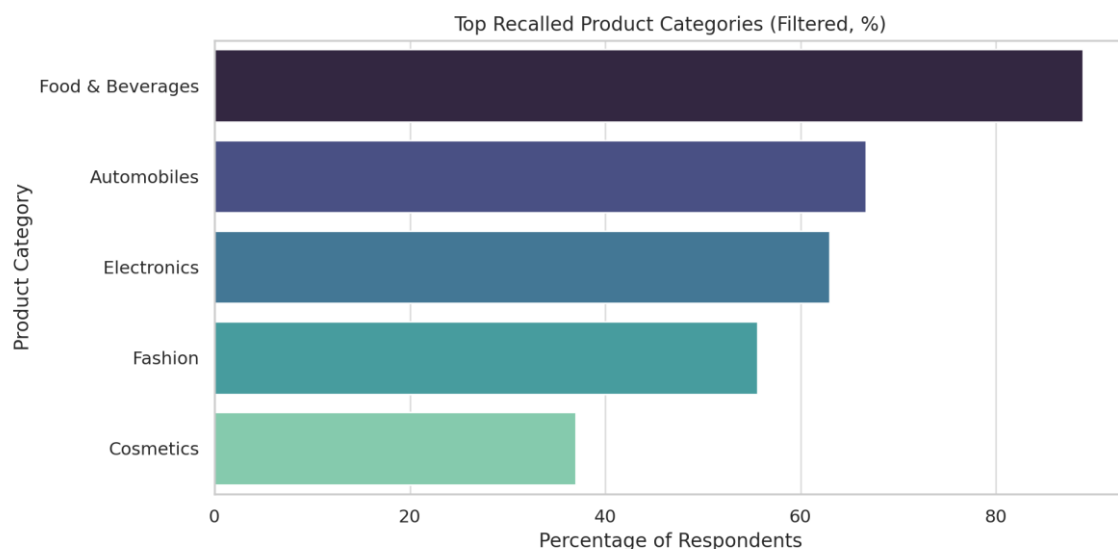
2. What Makes Product Placement Effective
People felt it works best when a main character uses the product naturally in the story.
Key Point: Around 50% said product placement feels right when their favorite characters use the product.
Highlight: Nearly 50% of viewers say product placement works best when used by a key character.

## What Makes Product Placement Effective (%)
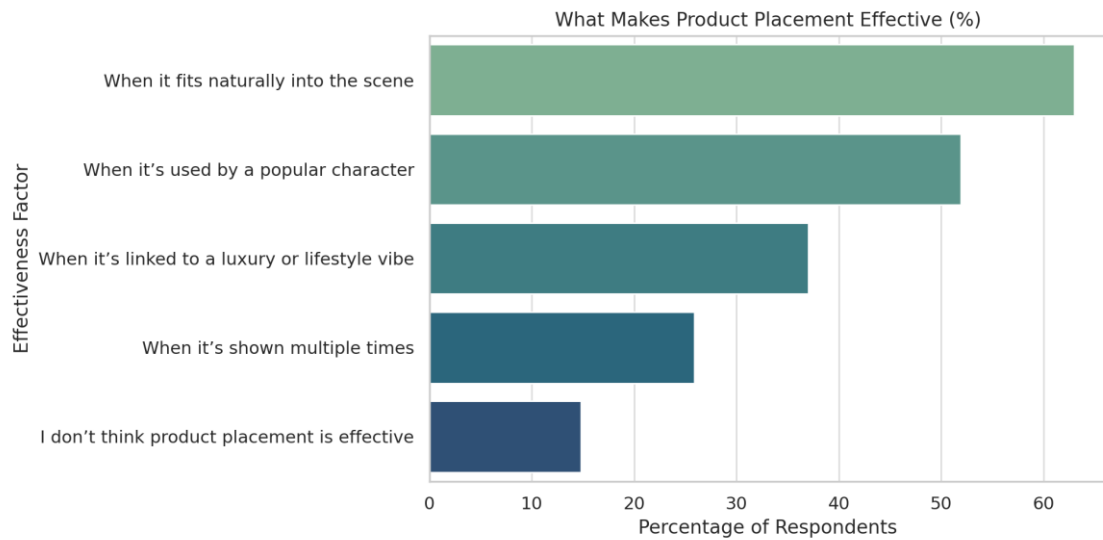
3. Actions Taken After Seeing a Product in a Film

About 40% said they looked up the brand online. Some even thought about buying or discussed it with friends.

Key Point: Placements don't just create awareness but also trigger action.

Highlight: Product placement sparks curiosity, conversation, and potential purchases.

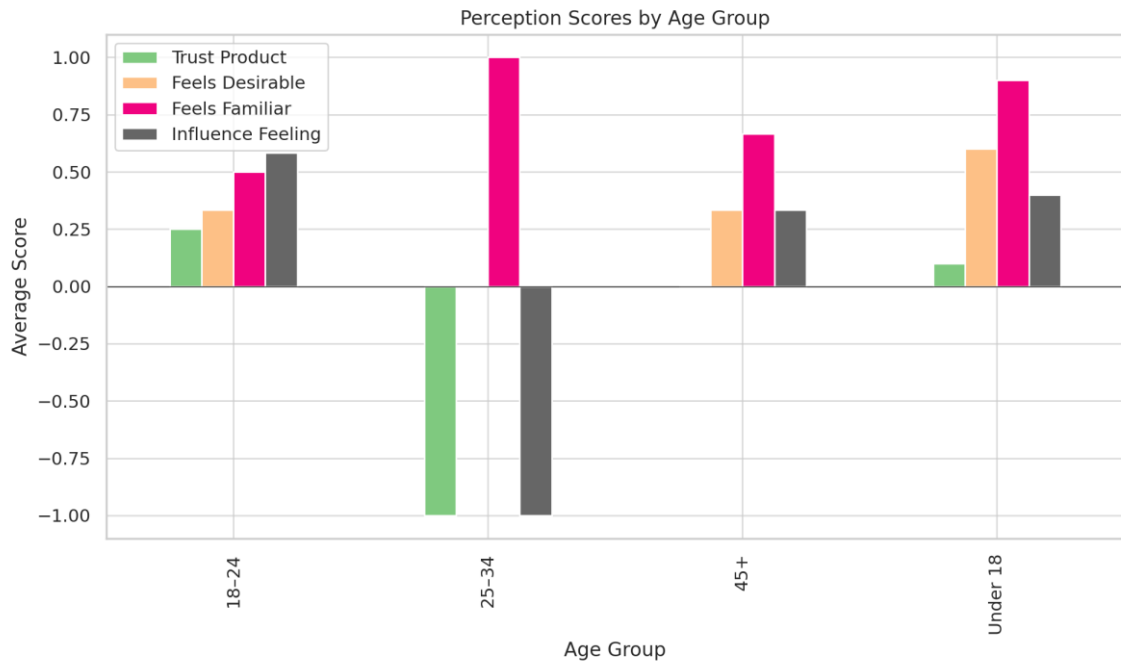## Actions Taken After Seeing Product Placement (%)
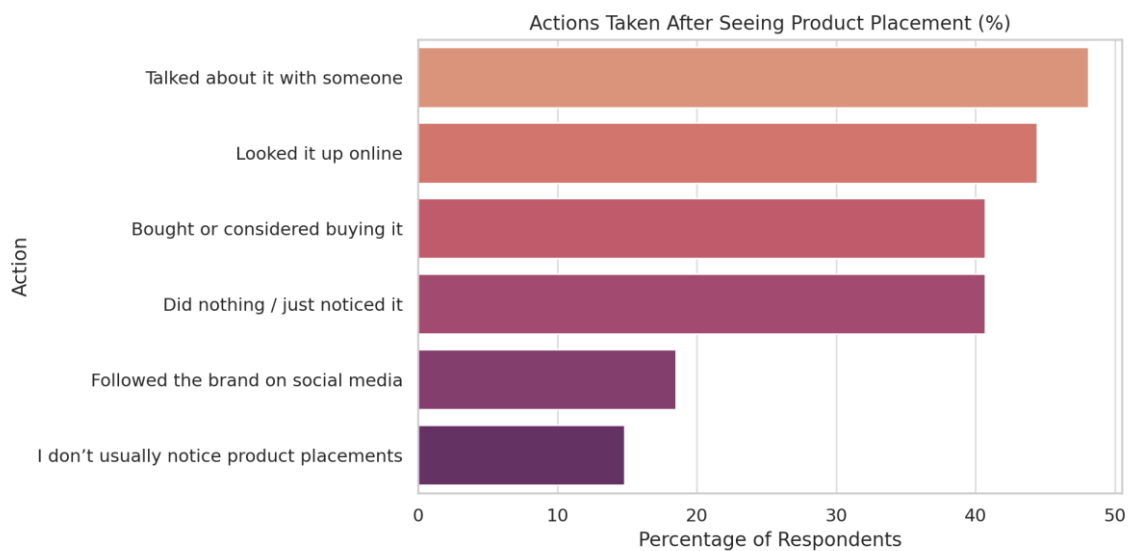
4. Perception Scores by Age Group

Young adults (18–24) trusted, liked, and desired brands more after seeing them in movies.

Key Point: This age group is the most emotionally affected by product placements.

Highlight: Young adults are most emotionally influenced by on-screen branding.

Perception Scores by Age Group

5. Perception by Film-Watching Frequency

People who watched movies 2–4 times a week showed stronger emotional responses. Those who watched daily trusted brands but didn't feel much familiarity, maybe because of overexposure.

Highlight: Moderate exposure (2–4 times/week) creates deeper emotional brand impact.

Perception Scores by Film Watching Frequency
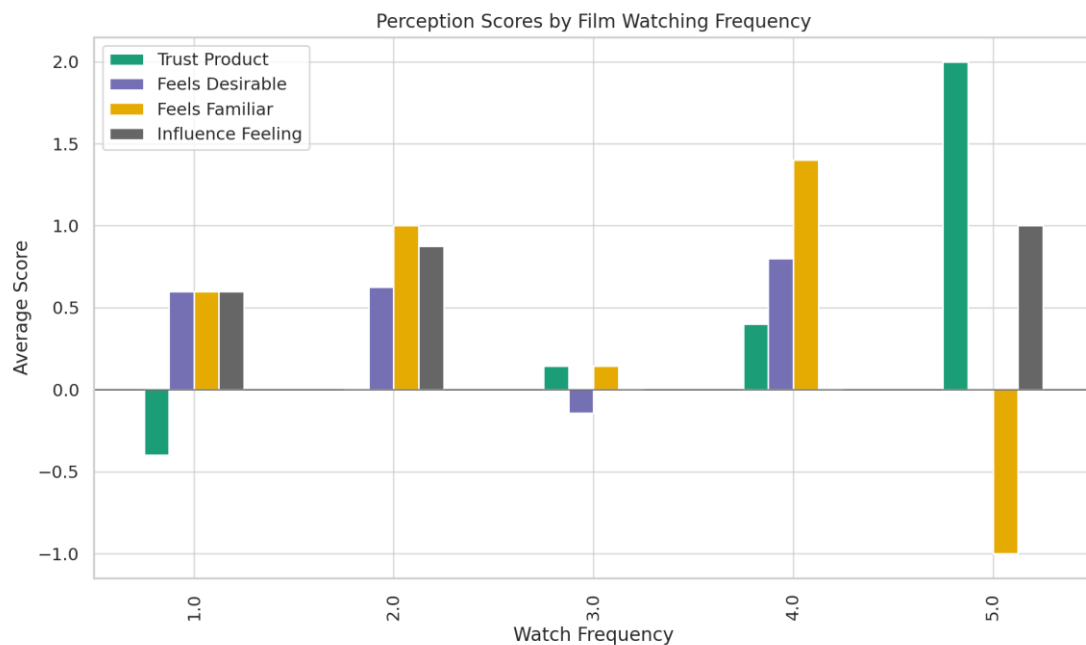
The study rejects the null hypothesis (H_0) and accepts the alternative (H_1) — meaning product placement does significantly affect consumer buying behavior.

Recommendations

1. Show products naturally, especially with important characters.
2. Focus on young adults and frequent movie-watchers.
3. Avoid overdoing it; too much exposure can backfire.

4. Make sure the product fits the story.

5. Track online search and conversations after placements.

Conclusion

Product placement is a smart and effective marketing tool today. When done properly naturally blended into stories and used by characters people love it can really influence how people feel about brands and even their buying choices.

Young viewers and regular film-watchers are the most influenced, so brands should target them carefully.

Significance and Limitations of the Study

This research gives good suggestions for marketers and filmmakers. Brands can connect emotionally with audiences, and filmmakers can keep their stories real. But the study had some limitations — only 84 people responded, most were from similar regions, and answers were self-reported. Future studies can explore how placements work differently in various movie genres or use experiments.

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