

The Effectiveness of Product Placement in Hollywood Movies

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Research Methodology

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i) Declaration

I, Kiara Haripersad declare that this dissertation is of my own original work. Any secondary research material that has been used throughout this dissertation has either been a print source or from the Internet. All sources that have been referenced and accessed for this work have been acknowledged and accurately referenced according to the Harvard referencing technique.

The date, author and page number have been cited for the in-text references and a thorough reference list of all authors mentioned and cited in the work has been included at the end of the article. This includes all written, verbal, digital, audio, visual, audio-visual and other sources. Images, tables and figures have also been referenced adequately in the text as well as in the reference list.

I further declare that this assignment has not been copied from previous students, nor will I give others the right to copy this work for their own benefit.

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Date 17 September 2018

Signed: K. Haripersad

ii) Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my parents for allowing me to further my studies and for their constant support and motivation. In addition, I would like to acknowledge my navigator Alec Bozas and supervisor Carolanda Du Toit for assisting me in the successful completion of this dissertation.

iii) Abstract

A small-scale dissertation had been conducted, investigating the effectiveness of product placement in Hollywood movies. Product placement is an unsaturated method of gaining the attention of the desired target market in an increasingly realistic setting. Essentially, product placement is a means of advertising through the use of subtly placing products in the context of Hollywood movies.

The objectives of the research study were to determine how consumers respond to product placement in movies, how product placement influences the purchasing behaviour of consumers and finally, why product placement is used as a form of advertising. This research had employed an approach that was qualitative in nature having conducted 1 focus group consisting of 5 respondents as well as semi-structured interviews, also consisting of a total of 5 respondents. Stimuli had been provided to those who had participated in the focus group with video clips from two popular movies. The first one being a clip from the movie “The Italian Job” and the second one being a clip from the movie “Home Alone 2”. Focus group participants had watched these two clips and preceded to answer the questions that followed.

The findings had suggested that the placement of brands and/or products in Hollywood movies is an effective means of communicating the brand’s message to mass audiences and gaining a response from these consumers in the form of brand recognition, brand recall or ultimately, making a purchase decision.

Even though the results from the research study could not be generalised to the public at large, useful insights from the dissertation could be acknowledged by marketers when considering whether or not to include their brands and/or products in Hollywood movies.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview

1.1) Background and contextualisation

While the developments in technology continue to evolve, consumers are consequently enabled to skip through advertisements. This then results in increasingly stymied advertisers who have deduced that traditional methods of advertising are somewhat becoming a less effective means to promote brands or their products (Kwon, 2012). In order to gain the attention of existing and prospective consumers, advertisers have adopted another way of promoting brands and their products, known as product placement. Among any other form of media outlets, movies are a notably appropriate medium for reproducing sounds and images simultaneously and thus enables brands to be depicted in an attractive setting (Chan, 2016). Therefore, the following research study will be centred around the effectiveness of product placement, particularly in Hollywood movies.

Product placement first emerged in an 1896 French film which featured an English soap manufacturer by the name of “Lever Brothers”. Since its introduction into the movie space, the concept was neither well-organised nor did it grow at a rapid pace. It was only until the late 1970s when product placement began to gain attention as a form of advertising. Following the use of Reese’s Pieces in the 1982 hit movie “ET: The Extra-terrestrial”, retailers saw the sales of the popular candy expeditiously increase by 65% within a month of the product being featured in the movie. The concept of product placement was officially named and acknowledged during the 1980s (Walton, 2010). The phenomenon is also commonly referred to as “hybrid forms” of promoting a brand’s products and can be defined as a compensated attempt to include the products or services of brands in forms of entertainment media, such as movies or television programmes, in an attempt to persuade consumers who do not explicitly identify the brands. Product placement usually contains some of the elements of a brand’s identity when being featured in entertainment media, specifically movies for the sake of this research study. This includes the brand’s name and logo (or some sort of identifiable trademark) which would be clearly printed on a brand’s product or product packaging. Additionally, product placement may be considered to be the integration of brands into a particular storyline in return for indemnification or various other promotional consideration (Chan, 2016).

According to global media econometrics giant PQ Media, revenue in product placement is expected to reach \$11.44 billion by 2019 (Lafayette, 2015). Although product placement may be seen as a form of advertising, there are significant differences to traditional advertising, such as, the factor of persuasiveness in product placement is usually less explicit as opposed to that of traditional advertising methods. Despite its growing popularity, not much is known about how individuals process the information communicated to them through the act of product placement. Therefore, it may be anticipated that the processing of placement may vary from methods of conventional advertising and that execution styles that differ may evoke cognitive processing to a vacillating extent (Chan, 2016).

Therefore, the current research study will investigate the factors which affect the processing of product placement information and which consecutively influence the persuasiveness of product placement, thus concluding whether the concept is an effective means of brand communication or not.

1.2) Conceptualisation of key terms

Mass media may be defined as the primary source of communication that the majority of the general public utilises in order to acquire their news and information. In other words, mass media may be considered to be technology that is intended to reach a mass audience. The most typical platforms for mass media are newspapers, magazines, radio, television as well as the internet. Communication through the use of mass media is known as mass communication. When communication is regarded in relation to mass media, it may be defined as a consolidated form of communication. It is a process which involves selecting, producing and the transmission of signs in a way that the receiver will understand a message given by the sender in a way in which it is intended it to be understood (Coleman, 2018). For the purpose of this study, mass media had been used to discuss product placement since movies may be considered as a subdivision of mass media (Jowett and Linton, 1991). Along with mass media being used to communicate to masses of people, so does entertainment media. Product placement is utilised in types of entertainment media such as television shows, radio shows, news as well as this research study's prime focus, movies (Vault, 2018).

While discussing product placement in movies, psychological factors that influence consumers' purchase decisions such as memory and cognition had also been considered. In the broader picture, these psychological factors were used to determine whether or not product placement is an effective means of communicating a brand and its products or services to current or prospective consumers (Ajzen, 2008).

For the purpose of this research all of the preceding concepts were discussed in relation to the topic of determining the effectiveness of product placement in movies.

1.3) Rationale

Alternatively regarded as embedded marketing or advertising, the practice of placing products in movies has been around for a significant amount of time and has now become more sophisticated than ever before. Once an apparent form of advertising brands, now, the act of product placement in the entertainment industry is increasingly camouflaged yet still able to be recognised.

The advertising industry has been critiqued by members of the public for its methods ever since the declining popularity of traditional media. However, with a multitude of methods at the disposal of today's marketers, it is somewhat difficult to understand why brands would want to place themselves directly in the way of potential consumers and risk losing brand equity by doing so.

Today's world can be described as "brand-consumerist". Due to this mere fact, when attempting to understand the logic behind product placement, marketers need to understand the psyche of the consumer and how they will interpret messages when it comes to placing brand's products within the world of entertainment (Emerald Insight, 2015).

According to studies which have been readily conducted, researchers have explored the effects on brand attitudes and recall in cross cultural settings and various forms of media, the effects on stock prices and financial returns over a period of time and the effects of product placements on children. Regardless of this impressive stream of research, much is yet to be determined regarding the effectiveness of product placement within a movie context (Balasubramanian et al., 2014).

Thus, this research study was aimed at determining whether product placement is an effective means of communication and if it subsequently serves as a factor of influence to current as well as prospective consumers in making a purchase decision.

1.4) Problem statement

In today's incredibly disorganised and cluttered advertising landscape, it has become increasingly challenging for marketers to solely depend on traditional advertising to target and communicate to consumers. Besides that, consumers are taking much control of where and when they are exposed to stimuli, thus adding to the challenges of marketers (Ntsike, 2016).

In hindsight, there is still little to no evidence of whether or not traditional advertising will become antiquated, nevertheless, it is vital to explore techniques that are less saturated. As previously expressed, product placement is a method that is able to play a significant role in the process of communication. However, there is little information pertaining to if product placement is in fact an effective means of communication and whether or not consumers are persuaded in any way to purchase the products that they are presented with on screen. Therefore, while national and international companies continue to place their brands or products in movies, it becomes important to explore if this strategy is one that is compelling and practical, then providing marketers with enough reason to continue to design advertising strategies of such a nature (Ntsike, 2016).

Hence, it is substantial for marketers to be knowledgeable of as well as understand the variables of this research study in order to close the gap in literature between product placement and its effectiveness.

1.5) Purpose statement

The purpose of this study is to determine the effectiveness of product placement in Hollywood movies. The main goal of the research study will be to investigate whether or not product placement influences consumers to make a purchase decision based on the brand or product they have been presented with in the context of a movie.

1.6) Research questions

1.6.1) Primary research question

Is product placement in Hollywood movies an effective promotional tactic as it aims to gain a prominent audience, sufficient exposure, visibility, attention, interest and evoke a desire to purchase?

1.6.2) Secondary research questions

- How do consumers respond to product placement in movies?
- How does product placement influence the purchasing behaviour of consumers?
- Why is product placement used as a type of advertising campaign?

1.7) Objectives

- To determine how consumers respond to product placement in movies
- To establish how product placement influence consumers' purchasing behaviour
- To analyse why product placement is used as a type of advertising campaign

1.8) Delimitations

Due to time, geographical as well as budget constraints, there were areas within this topic that remain unexplored. The following research study only investigates the effectiveness of product placement among South African consumers, residing in the Durban area, in Hollywood movies. Much of the journal articles and readily published material, relating to product placement, that was analysed throughout this dissertation was largely in reference to American audiences. Even though there is a significant leap between American and South African cultures, educated inferences had been made between the two.

1.9) Chapter outline

Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview

This chapter introduces as well as provides a background into the field of study. The primary and secondary research questions along with the objectives that are to be met through the appropriate research are also stated in this chapter.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter includes the literature review relevant to the topic at hand. The appropriate studies and previous research papers pertaining to the current study are discussed along with the relevant findings.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter contains the research methodology, along with the appropriate research approach and design. The preferred target population, sample size, data collection and ethical considerations are also mentioned and discussed.

Chapter 4: Results and Findings

This chapter details the results from the research conducted in order to uncover the findings and insights gained during the research process.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

This chapter presented the research conclusions obtained from both the secondary research as well as the primary research conducted. Furthermore, recommendations were discussed and linked to each objective.

1.10) Summary

Product placement is becoming a more prevalent form of communication for brands in the world today. Chapter 1 has set the scene for research into the effectiveness of product placement in Hollywood movies along with presenting the problem, the relevant objectives and has stated the purpose of the research that had been conducted. Chapter 2 highlights the relevant theories and literature analysed in accordance with product placement that support the research study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1) Introduction

A theory is defined as a well corroborated explanation of aspects in the natural world which may integrate laws, hypotheses and facts. Not only does a theory explain facts, but it allows researchers to make predictions of what they should observe if the theory is said to be true (American Museum of Natural History, 2005). By nature, theories are abstract and are not content-specific. This is due to the fact that the notion of broad assumption is critical when it comes to testing various phenomena against a theory (Glanz, 2008). The theories which have been identified and which are discussed in relation to product placement are the subliminal messaging theory, the hypodermic needle theory as well as the culturalist theory. The theories were discussed together with the relevant, accompanying literature and was placed in context of its augmentation to understanding the research problem of whether or not product placement in movies is effective (USC Libraries, 2012).

2.2) Subliminal Messaging theory

A subliminal message may be described as a perception that permeates the objective threshold (as in it is contradistinguished by the senses) but fails to permeate the subjective threshold (as in it is unsuccessful in reaching conscious awareness and is not able to be expressed in a verbal manner) (Greenwald et al., 1996). In essence, the message being communicated may be inaudible to the conscious mind or an image being briefly transmitted and unperceived consciously may in fact be perceived in an unconscious manner. This definition presents a division between the conscious and unconscious mind which may in fact be misleading. In retrospect, it may be more fitting to suggest that subliminal messages are perceived by deeper components of the integrated mind. In daily life, subliminal messaging is said to be prompted in advertising techniques and for the use of propaganda, for instance, political campaigns (Merikle, 2018).

During the late 1950s market researcher James Vicary's marketing business was slowly diminishing, thus, he proposed the concept of subliminal messaging. It was only until after the publication of the popular book 'Hidden Persuaders' by Vance Packard (1957) which had included details of Vicary's experiments that Vicary himself admitted that the results from each of his experiments had been fabricated.

In his supposed experiments, Vicary had administered a host of unusual studies pertaining to the psychology behind female shopping habits. His studies were relatively nondescript except for an experiment he had supposedly conducted at a movie theatre in New Jersey during the summer of 1957. Vicary was known to have placed a tachistoscope in the projection booth of the theatre, and all through the screening of the movie 'Picnic', every five seconds, he flashed a few messages on screen. These messages were presented for a fraction of a second, which is far less than individuals' threshold of conscious perceptibility. The messages which were said to have been displayed included that of "Drink Coca-Cola" and "Hungry? Eat Popcorn", which had apparently resulted in an incredible 18.1% increase in the sales of Coca-Cola and an amazing 57.8% boost in popcorn sales. Hence the power of subliminal messaging to persuade unwary buyers into making a purchasing decision they may not have initially made, was successfully demonstrated (Haberstroh et al, 2011).

In 1973, yet another book on the topic had been published, this time by the name of 'Subliminal Seduction' by Wilson Bryan Key. This book had claimed that subliminal messaging had been predominantly featured in advertising. Due to the content being covered in the book, it had resulted in public concern with regard to the dangers of subliminal messaging. This was enough to cause the Federal Communications Commission to hold hearings and declare subliminal messaging "contrary to public interest" as it had been viewed as "intentional deception" of the public (Haberstroh et al, 2011).

All in all, the investigation on the topic had pursued as researchers continued to ask "Is the entire message sensed and comprehended completely, or perhaps, only its main and simpler features?" There are two popular schools of thought which could answer this question, the first one being that only the elementary features of unconscious signals are perceived. The second being that the unconscious perception is comprehensive and that much more can be perceived than is able to be verbalised. Due to these ongoing investigations, subliminal messaging may gain potential from the fact that they may be able to mislead the analytical functions of the conscious mind. It has been frequently argued that subliminal messaging therefore poses a much more authoritative nature, as opposed to ordinary methods of communicating information to an audience (Merikle, 2018).

However, psychologists have conceded that flashing words at a rapid pace is too much for the brain to register and may have a limited effect on the overall impression on the consumer. According to a team of psychologists who conducted research at the University of Utrecht in 2006, subliminal advertising was only effective with products that were known to consumers and if they had a desired preference towards those brands or their products. Their work suggested that flashing of the brand name made it more “cognitively accessible” so that this approach would be unsuccessful with brands of a high stature, for example, marketers cannot possibly make a brand such as Coca-Cola any more familiar to consumers than it already is (BBC News, 2015).

However, in retrospect, even though the results from Vicary’s “experiments” had been concocted, it had been too late to remove the idea of the concept from the American psyche. The concept of subliminal messaging has continued to remain as part of modern culture, sometimes as a source of paranoia, sometimes as a subject of comedy and other times as an inspiration for genuine efforts at persuasion. As for Vicary’s original idea, legitimate research indicates that it too is possible, at least under controlled laboratory situations. For instance, in 2005, scientists organised for a group of individuals to observe as the brand name “Lipton Ice” had been flashed subliminally before them. Afterwards, the group had been given a choice of three beverages, one of which had been Lipton Ice Tea. 85% of individuals had selected Lipton over and above a mere 20% of individuals who had chosen other beverages and had not been exposed to the subliminal message (Mlodinow, 2012).

In relation to the study and movies in this particular context, in the film “Spider- Man” a can of Dr Pepper had been featured for approximately four seconds when Spider-Man had shot a spider web from his wrist towards the can. Although it may be likely that few of the tens of millions of people who had been exposed to the message consciously registered or remembered it, the marketers at Dr Pepper reckon that it would have had a subliminal effect (Mlodinow, 2012).

Since product placement may be viewed as a type of subliminal messaging, researchers have deemed that it has the potential to immensely boost sales. Considering the fact that product placement is growing in popularity, it can be anticipated that through the research findings, even though most of these subliminal messages go unnoticed by individuals watching a movie, the brand name or product

will register in their subconscious and cause them to remember or be influenced by it simply because their subconscious tells them to (Witch, 2015).

2.3) Hypodermic Needle theory

The Hypodermic Needle theory, also known as the Magic Bullet theory was enunciated by political scientist and communications theorist, Harold Lasswell in the 1920s. This theory may be described as a linear model of communication and discusses the media's power on an audience. In the theory, the message being communicated is seen to be powerful in a sense that the media is able to 'inject' ideas into the minds of people who may be seen as weak and passive and as a result, could be easily influenced by any given message (Businessstopia, 2018).

In earlier studies the audience had been viewed as a "mass" group of people who all consume the same "mass" message. This concept became omnipresent at the time of Nazi Germany, when the Nazis and the Communists in the Soviet Union utilised the media as a propaganda tool. Thus, the Nazis were successful in asserting their views and 'injecting' a multitude of people with their messages. The Frankfurt School consisted of German Marxists who, in the 1930s, regarded the success of Nazi propaganda and subsequently in 1950s America, of commercial television. The media was seen as a force that would be utilised to pacify a population as well as controlling the lives of the public by 'injecting' a mass culture which functioned as a diversion from the humdrum of ordinary life (Rayner and Wall, 2008).

Although in America a lot of the manipulation occurred within the space of advertising and the appeal for consumerism, it had been similarly suggested that as it had taken effect in Germany, the mass media could also be used to manipulate people into accepting specific views. With the introduction of commercial television and more particularly advertising, the notion of 'injecting' the audience with a message seemed to be relevant. This was because advertisers could convince people to purchase particular brands and their offerings by frequently and vociferously repeating the message, thus employing a 'hard sell' approach (Rayner and Wall, 2008).

Consumers are accustomed to having a plethora of advertising messages bombard their daily lives. Thus, by introducing messages into the things people interact with on a regular basis, marketers can easily trigger a response, even if consumers are unaware of it happening. An instance in which this may be done is with product

placement in movies. The brands in movies are introduced in a manner that is implicit, however a somewhat subliminal message is utilised in an attempt to get consumers to buy into that brand (Ghent, 2018).

In contrast to this, the media can have varying effects on consumers based on the consumer's attitudes towards what is being directed to them. An active consumer will carefully examine the messages being expressed to them through the media. They will ask questions and make knowledgeable decisions as well as construe the information in the way in which they deem fit. In opposition, a passive consumer will simply accept all messages being expressed through the media. They will not consider asking any questions and will accept whatever it is they are being told. Many media producers wish for their audiences to be passive, this may even be the case for filmmakers. Essentially, filmmakers want to make stories as believable as possible in order to sell that story. They want consumers to be completely captivated by the world being articulated on screen. When consumers or movie watchers begin to ask questions about the occurrences on screen, it brings into light the realism of the product itself (Ghent, 2018). For the purpose of this research it had been deduced that, this then breaks away from both the subliminal messaging theory as well as the hypodermic needle theory which are both constructed around the idea that the audiences at which these messages are being directed towards are largely passive. It can also be said that the hypodermic needle and subliminal messaging theories are only effective if the consumers engaging with the messages being communicated are in fact, passive.

2.4) Culturalist theory

Mass media has a direct effect on culture in the modern world. The attitudes and behaviours of society are largely determined by messages communicated through mass media channels. Mass media and advertising affect people's actions, thoughts and values. Thus, mass media creates and reflects modern culture. A look back through history will reveal that society was not always influenced by media. This is mainly due to the fact that the current level of media saturation had not always existed and is a fairly new phenomenon. Television, the most prominent medium of mass media, was not as dominant in the 1960s and 1970s. This was because even if people could afford to own a television set, only three channels were available for public viewing. In addition, there were incredibly few public broadcasting networks aimed at

the public, as radio and television programmes were primarily directed to audiences with exceptionally high moral values. As mass media began to expand in effectiveness and popularity, it began to emerge into a capitalisation of the leisure industries and ultimately become the dominator of mental life in modern society. In the 1960s, a majority of the research conducted leaned towards television. Television was known to be the most ubiquitous medium (Dean, 2010).

The utilisation of mass media has become a permanent part of modern society. However, the extent of mass media has become the topic of much debate and even though theories such as the Hypodermic Needle theory states that the media 'injects' messages into the minds of consumers which may be considered as a type of propaganda, both legislature as well as media executives combine knowledge and construct reports which state that mass media is not responsible for shaping society, as noted in the Culturalist theory (Dean, 2010). As one of the most dominant sociological prospects that define the role of media, the Culturalist theory merges two previously composed theories, those being the 'Limited Effects theory' and the 'Class-dominant theory'. Hence, the Culturalist theory, developed in the 1980s and 1990s, stated that people create their own meanings and images based on their interactions with media. This theory involves the active role of the audience in relation to what it is they consume from mass media. Theorists argue that audiences are aware of what they watch and therefore choose what it is they allow themselves to consume. They also make conscious decisions about what they choose to mute or record over. Studies conducted by both sociologists and linguists conclude that when people approach content, be it in the form of text or audio, they interpret those messages based off prior knowledge and experience. Therefore, while conducting research, when researchers ask a group of people to interpret the meaning of a song or video, they respond with their personal interpretations based on age, gender, race, ethnicity as well as religious background (Khan, 2012).

The basis of the Culturalist theory contradicts the previous two theories. This is because here, audiences are known to have an active engagement with the content that they consume. Because consumers are aware of the brands and products being placed in movies, the use of product placement may either enhance or depreciate from the consumption experience of the media programming. There are two views which offer support for product placement in entertainment media which enhances the

consumption of entertainment media programming hence resulting in increasingly positive consumer reports. Firstly, consumers believe that product placement is essential in creating realism in programming. This is imperative as consumers are more inclined to aim their attention at personal relevance while assessing a movie. One of the most frequent ways in which product placement may be utilised to increasing realism in programming is to simply permit viewers to notice the familiar. This is important as consumers are increasingly likely to be drawn toward movies that are made accessible by morality of their greater realism in representing settings that are familiar. Thus, consumers are known to be increasingly engaged in the plot of a movie if they perceive the programming to be progressively realistic. Increased enjoyment and positive attitudes to what is being represented on screen should thus correlate with more positive consumer interpretations (Meyer, 2016).

Secondly, previous research has shown that consumers have encouraging opinions about product placement in general. Additionally, those who consume material in the form of movies are even more familiar with the phenomenon of product placements and are more likely to enjoy seeing products being utilised in movies. As discussed by well-known film maker Brian Graser, product placement is able to increase the enjoyment of consumers with substantial brand associations. He goes on to state that brands hold an emotional context and by linking them to a movie, this assists in adding to its emotional resonance. As stated before, if consumers show favourable signs towards the presence of brands in movies, then as a result, consumer evaluations should be favourable as well (Meyer, 2016).

However, with regard for the research study at hand, it can be said that the relationship between product placement in movies and consumer reviews may not necessarily always be positive. Even though there are arguments that suggest that many consumers support the placement of products in entertainment media, there are also several other studies which state that product placement may disrupt the consumer's movie viewing experience as the consumer is distracted by the intent of the placed product. Usually, consumers are not particularly fond of excessive product placements and thus disapprove of it. Producers should be cautious when it comes to oversaturating the movie space with brands and their products, as this may lead to the consumer's diminished inclination toward their movie viewing habits.

2.5) Summary

The literature that had been reviewed above is relevant to the topic at hand and pertains to the research objectives of the study. The literature has played a major role in creating a firm foundation of knowledge and has provided strong guidance throughout the research study. Chapter 3 introduces the research methodology.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1) Introduction

The sole purpose of the research methodology is to deduce the final result of a given problem on a specific matter through the use of primary research (Industrial Research Institute, 2010). The research methodology will include the suitable research paradigm and its motives. The research methodology will also present the strengths and weaknesses of the research that is to be conducted as well as the steps taken to complete the research study.

3.2) Research paradigm

As described by historian Thomas Kuhn (1962), a research paradigm may be defined as a set of beliefs and agreements for which scientists or researchers of a particular discipline influence what it is that should be studied, how the research should be executed as well as how the resulting information should be interpreted (Patel, 2015).

According to philosopher Jürgen Habermas, there are a variety of ways of engendering knowledge. These methods are distinguished by what he refers to as three very distinctive cognitive interests. These cognitive interests may be technical, practical or emancipatory in nature. In this sense the word 'cognitive' refers to the mental process of acquiring a perception of, or, knowing something. Therefore, Habermas believes that there are three specific ways of knowing about something depending on what is previously known. The three cognitive interests correspond with the three most prevailing research paradigms. These being, empirical-analytical sciences which is closely related to a positivist approach. The critically oriented sciences which is related to critical realism and finally the historical-hermeneutic sciences which is related to interpretivism.

Due to the nature of this study, an interpretivist approach will be employed. Interpretivism was birthed out of the limitations of positivism which may customarily be defined as the approach of the natural sciences. Early positivists concluded that science had the strong ability to enlighten people and at the same time had the power to make the world a better place. On the other hand, a prevailing concept on which the approach of what interpretivism is based, is that people are unconditionally different to objects. Consequent to this, humans cannot be studied in the same way as objects in natural sciences can be studied. This is because, unlike objects in the

natural world, human beings are invariably changing, adapting as well as being influenced by the environments in which they exist (du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014).

Interpretivism has been shaped by a variety of intellectual traditions among which the three most predominant ones are hermeneutics, phenomenology and symbolic interactionism. Hermeneutics is a doctrine of interpretation and understanding and as such, is involved with the theory and method of understanding human action. Phenomenology examines the way in which individuals adhere to their surrounding environment and finally, symbolic interactionists view reality as progressively symbolic and constructed (du Plooy-Cilliers et al, 2014).

The interpretivist paradigm is appropriate for addressing the research questions as well as the phenomenon being investigated. This is because the phenomenon, which seeks to explore the effectiveness of product placement in Hollywood movies, is profoundly entrenched in the human world and thus requires a paradigm in human sciences in order to address it richly as well as in context. Such an opportunity is hence provided by the interpretivist paradigm. Deliberation of the effectiveness of product placement in this research is largely based on the interpretation of previous literature as well as of the perspectives of the respective research participants. The interpretive paradigm is rooted in the philosophy of idealism where great emphasis is placed on embodied knowing as an element of social reality, with acknowledgement of multiple constructed realities. Within this paradigm significant emphasis is placed on the various ways of understanding human phenomena, particularly in relation to how consumers respond to product placement in movies and how it influences their purchasing behaviour, while recognising that there are a variety of ways in which these phenomena may be viewed. With the choice of utilising the interpretive paradigm for this research, allows for a prime focus on disclosing contextualised, professional craft knowledge gained through secondary research, as well as personal exploratory knowledge gained through primary research (Paterson and Higgs, 2005).

3.3) Research design

A coherent research process needs to be divided sequentially, even though these steps may be analogous, which provided the researcher with a methodical approach to engage in the various processes of research. Given the nature of the study, the

chosen design methods are considered to be the most concise and appropriate to be applied to the research study at hand.

3.3.1) Phenomenological studies

Phenomenological studies focus on the manner in which individuals experience the world, also known to be “lived experiences” (Maree, 2016). The word “phenomenon” relates to a situation or experience while the word “logical” appertains to a path toward understanding. Therefore, an experience and a path lead to a way of observing a phenomenon from the viewpoint of an individual (Research Rundowns, 2009). This type of research is used to investigate areas in which there are limited knowledge. During phenomenological research respondents asked to elaborate on their experiences as perceived by them. In order to understand the lived experience from the perspective of the subject, it is imperative that the researcher considers their own feelings or beliefs. The researcher needs to identify what it is they expect to uncover and then consciously put aside these ideas, by a process known as bracketing. Only once the researcher has stepped away from their subjective view pertaining to the phenomenon, is it possible to view the experience from the eyes of the individual who has lived through it (Qualitative Research Designs, 2018).

3.3.2) Case studies

Case study research may be defined as an empirical inquest which explores a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life situation, when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not completely apparent and in which a diversified number of sources are utilised (Maree, 2016). Ultimately, a case study can be described as an in-depth investigation of people, events as well as relationships confined by any unifying factor (Research Rundowns, 2009). Data through the utilisation of case studies may be collected in a variety of ways such as questionnaires, interviews, observations as well as written accounts by the subjects (Qualitative Research Designs, 2018). This method provides researchers with numerous opportunities to triangulate data to enhance the research findings and conclusions (Maree, 2016). One type of analysis used in the analysis of the data is known as content analysis. Content analysis includes the exploration of communication messages by searching for patterns and themes within the data (Qualitative Research Designs, 2018).

3.3.3) Action research

Action research is a method that is utilised for improving practice. It involves the action, evaluation and critical reflection. Once this process has been carried out, based on the evidence gathered, changes in practice are then enforced. This type of research is participative and collaborative in nature and is initiated by individuals who have a common interest. It is situation-based, content specific and cultivates reflection based on discernments made by the participants. Through the process of action, knowledge is created at the point of application which can then aid in problem solving provided that the solution of the problem results in the improvement of practice (Koshy et al., 2010).

3.4) Deductive and inductive reasoning

The process of thinking about something, in a rational manner, so as to draw conclusions that are valid, is known as “reasoning” (Surbhi, 2017). In research, there are two broad methods of reasoning known as the deductive and inductive approaches (Social Research Methods, 2006). Deductive reasoning utilises information that is already available, facts or premises to obtain a conclusion. Conversely, inductive reasoning follows a specific flow or behaviour so as to reach a supposition (Surbhi, 2017). For the sake of the research study being conducted, an inductive approach will be utilised.

In research, the inductive approach to reasoning insinuates a logical process, in which particular instances are observed or analysed in order to determine general principles. This process is utilised in order to establish an understanding, on the basis of noticing regularities to establish how something works. However, these arguments are uncertain and describes the extent to which the conclusions determined, are deemed credible (Surbhi, 2017).

In inductive reasoning it is possible that the conclusions that have been determined are false, even if the assumptions are true. The reasoning bestows on experience as well as observations that encourages the supposed truth of the conclusion (Surbhi, 2017).

3.5) Population

A research population is determined by a considerable number of individuals or objects which are the primary focus of a scientific inquiry. It is for the benefit of the population that the research is being conducted. There are two primary groups of population in research these being: the target population and the accessible population. The target population includes the entire group of individuals or objects that the researcher is interested in generalising the conclusions. The accessible population on the other hand, is the population to which the researcher may apply their conclusions. It is from the accessible population that the sample is drawn (Explorable, 2009).

The target population that is intended for this study will be that of male and female consumers between the ages of 20-50 years of age who have an interest in cinema and enjoy watching Hollywood movies. These people will also have to be represented by the socio-economic measurement (SEM) groups 7-10. The reason for choosing individuals between the vast age group of 20-50 years old and within the higher SEM groups is due to the fact that these people may be inclined to product placement advertising, as well as are most likely be able to afford the products that are presented to them in Hollywood movies.

These parameters will be utilised in the selection of the sample, interviews as well as focus groups.

3.6) Sampling

By virtue of the nature of this research study, non-probability sampling techniques such as purposive sampling will be used to provide clear theoretical reasons for the chosen case of units to be included in the sample. Non-probability sampling further requires the use of subjective judgements, drawing from academic literature as well as practice (Maree, 2016).

Purposive sampling is a method of sampling that is utilised in conditions where the sampling is consummated with a particular purpose in mind for instance, in the case of this particular research study the research aims to find out the effectiveness of product placement in Hollywood movies among the target consumer profile of 20-50-year olds within the SEM bracket of 7-10. Ultimately, the goal of purposive sampling

is to concentrate on specific characteristics of the population of interest, which will best answer the research questions (Laerd Dissertation, 2012).

Specifically, the type of purposive sampling that is used during the course of the research process is that of homogeneous sampling. This type of purposive sampling technique aims to attain a homogeneous sample whose units share the same or incredibly similar traits in terms of factors such as age, gender, background and occupation to name a few (Laerd Dissertation, 2012).

3.7) Data collection methods

The study will consider two primary methods of data collection in order to gain the appropriate insights from the research. The data collection methods that are used in this study are that of semi-structured interviews as well as focus groups. Since triangulation had been utilised while collecting the data, so it increases the validity and credibility of the data collected by cross verifying the same information. Thus, resulting in an increasingly strengthened research study (Write, 2018).

Semi-structured interviews are often used to substantiate the data collected from a variety of other sources. In this type of interview, there are certain open-ended questions which are asked and are then followed by additional probing and clarification. It is vital that the researcher had been attentive to the responses from individuals as new and emerging lines of inquiry that are directly related to the phenomenon may be identified and further explored (Maree, 2016).

Additionally, semi-structured interviews allow for respondents to feel free in expressing their views in their own terms which may then provide reliable, comparative qualitative data (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2008). The semi-structured interviews were conducted with five respondents who are known to the researcher and lie within their personal acquaintances. In addition, these respondents fit the target consumer profile. The interviews were based on questionnaires which consisted of a set of predetermined questions which were referred to as interviewer-administered questionnaires consisting mainly of open-ended questions (du Plooy Cilliers et al., 2014).

The second method of data collection, being focus groups, share various common features with semi-structured interviews, however, consist of more than just merely

collecting similar types of data from various individuals at once. In the context of this research study, the focus groups had been used to generate information on collective views and opinions about whether or not people notice product placement in Hollywood movies and if they are influenced by the brands or products that they are presented with in these movies. Focus groups will also be useful in generating a considerable understanding of the experiences of those participating in the study as well as their beliefs (Gill et al., 2008).

A focus groups consisting of 5 people had been held among participants who lie within the target consumer profile. These participants also consisted of people who are known to the researcher and lie within their personal acquaintances, however are different to those who have participated in the semi-structured interviews.

A copy of the interview questions as well as the focus group questions can be found in the appendix.

3.8) Data analysis methods

Thematic analysis is one of the most common methods of data analysis in qualitative research and was the chosen method of data analysis following the data collection. A thematic analysis is a method that looks across the collected data in order to identify, analyse, organise, describe as well as report on themes found within a set of data (Nowell et al., 2017).

Through the theoretical freedom presented by utilising this method, thematic analysis administers an approach that is highly flexible which is able to be modified for the specific needs of the research study, providing a detailed and abundant, yet intricate account of data. The key stages in a thematic analysis are as follows:

- 1) Read and annotate transcripts: Here, preliminary observations are made without providing an overview of the data (Patton and Cochran, 2002).
- 2) Identify themes: This step involves looking at the data in detail and identifying themes with regard to whatever it is the interviewee is referring to (Patton and Cochran, 2002).
- 3) Developing a coding scheme: This step involves coding which is the process of carefully reading through the data, thereby dividing it into meaningful analytical units (Maree, 2016). The themes developed in the previous step can be

gathered to create a coding scheme. This involves the list of all identified themes and “codes” that will be applied to the data. It is beneficial to begin the coding scheme as soon as the initial data has been collected as this early analysis is able to shape and assist future data collection (Patton and Cochran, 2002).

- 4) Coding the data: The fourth and final step is to begin applying these codes to the entire set of data by recording codes in the margins of the transcripts. Ideally, the entire set of data should be coded. This ensures that the data analysed is done so comprehensively (Patton and Cochran, 2002).

Once the process has been completed, it is imperative to take extracts of data out of their initial context (the transcripts of the interviews and focus groups) and place them together with previously collected data pertaining to the same topic and look for patterns across all sets of data. It is also important to make sure that the themes across all sets of data interrelate and be viewed narratively (Patton and Cochran, 2002).

3.9) Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is a key point to consider when conducting research of a qualitative nature. Assessing the trustworthiness of the study is the definitive test of the data analysis, findings and conclusions. There are four criteria which should be considered by qualitative researchers in pursuit of a trustworthy research study, these are, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

Credibility: refers to how confident the qualitative researcher is in the truth of the results of the research study. Credibility of the research can be determined by triangulation and the fact that more than a single method of data collection (interviews and focus groups) will be utilised during the research study.

Transferability: refers to whether or not the research study’s findings are able to be applied to various “other contexts” being similar situations, similar populations, as well as similar phenomena. In context of the study, this information could not only be used by researchers to understand the effectiveness of product placement but the information could also be utilised by brands, marketers, filmmakers as well as psychologists who wish to examine the human psyche and understand trends in consumer behaviour.

Confirmability: may be described as the degree of neutrality in the research study's findings. This ultimately means that the findings are based solely on the responses of the participants and not on any potential bias or personal motivations of the researcher. In order to successfully establish confirmability, an audit trail will be provided in order to highlight every step of data analysis which is to be completed, in order to create a rationale for the decisions made. This will be done to ensure that the findings of the research study are a meticulous portrayal of the responses of the participants.

Dependability: is referred to as to the extent that the study is able to be repeated by other researchers and that the findings will be consistent. Ultimately, if one wishes to conduct a research study of a similar nature, they should have enough information from the existing report to do so as well as obtain findings similar to that of the existing report (Olivia, 2018).

3.10) Anticipated contribution

Upon completion of the research study, it had been expected that the findings lead to an enhanced understanding of the nature and characteristics of product placement in Hollywood movies and whether or not these methods of advertising entice consumers to make a purchase decision. Additionally, it was anticipated that the research study that had been conducted acts as an appropriate research tool in contributing to the body of literature on product placement in the world of marketing and advertising. The study was also anticipated to serve as a valuable source of information to prospective brands and marketers who wish to explore the use of product placement in order to effectively market their brands, products or services. Finally, the study had been anticipated to be useful to those who have already adopted the product placement strategy as a means of advertising and may use it to determine whether or not product placement is increasing the brand's presence in the hearts and minds of consumers.

3.11) Ethical considerations

There are several reasons as to why it is vital to comply to ethical norms in research. Ethical norms promote the aims of the research study. Since research involves a great amount of cooperation and coordination among a variety of people from different institutions and fields of discipline, ethical standards reflect the standards and values that are fundamental to collaborative work. Ethical norms also assist in that

researchers may be held accountable to the public in cases of misconduct, conflict of interest, human protection as well as animal use and care. On the contrary, public support is created as well as moral and social values are promoted by the application of ethical norms (Resnik, 2015).

With regard to the research study at hand, it is imperative that ethical standards consider all aspects pertaining to the research participants and the data gathered from them. Participants should not be subject to harm in any way whatsoever and should voluntarily wish to participate in the research study. Respect for the dignity of each of the participants should be of utmost priority. Full consent should be acquired from each and every participant prior to the study. The protection of the privacy of the participants should be ensured along with an adequate level of confidentiality. In addition, all participants will be requested to complete an informed consent document in order to be interviewed or participate in the focus groups. All digital data will be stored on a password protected computer and all hard copies of data will be securely stored under lock and key. All data pertaining to the research study will be destroyed after five years and all electronic copies will be erased. Finally, all data will be analysed scientifically and objectively, ensuring that bias is avoided at all costs (Research Methodology, 2018).

3.12) Limitations

Although the research study is expected to reach its objectives in the following chapters, it is undeniable that limitations had been experienced. Due to the time limit and limited access to resources due to the study a hand being a small-scale research study, the research was conducted on only a small size of the population who reside in the Durban area. Therefore, the results are limited and in order to generalise the findings to a larger population, a larger sample size need to have been considered. Additionally, it was difficult to investigate the causality between various phenomena. Qualitative research is complex and had therefore been difficult to analyse the difference in the quality and quantity of the information obtained from various respondents. Thus, arriving at conclusions may have been non-consistent (Datt, 2016).

3.13) Summary

Chapter 3 has provided a clear and detailed overview of the research design, approach and ethics that were considered throughout the research study. A qualitative approach had been selected by the researcher in order to gain sufficient depth and insight based on the effectiveness of product placement in Hollywood movies. The target population and sample size for the research had been considered. Additionally, the trustworthiness of the research study had been discussed and thoroughly acknowledged, ensuring the credibility of the research. Ethics pertaining to research was also considered in this chapter. Chapter 4 introduces the findings from the primary research conducted.

Chapter 4: Presentation and Discussion of Findings

4.1) Introduction

This chapter contains the presentation and discussion of the results obtained from the semi-structured interviews and focus group. All the data is analysed and discussed accordingly to allow for easy interpretation and understanding of the data collected. All the results are discussed to create a deeper understanding into the findings. Analysis of the data had been conducted as per the research methodology discussed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

The findings obtained from this qualitative study yielded meaningful and valuable insights which were gained from consumers who make purchase decisions, watch Hollywood movies, are 20-50 years of age and who lie within SEM bracket 7-10. The utilisation of triangulation in the research findings by the use of more than a single method of data collection confirmed that the credibility of the study was carried throughout the research process. However, it is important to note that this is a small-scale qualitative study and is therefore not statistically sound. Thus, the findings and recommendations are not able to be generalised to a greater population with any degree of confidence.

4.2) Presentation and discussion of findings

Discussions, graphs and word clouds have been presented based on the research findings to emphasise the common themes identified during the research process. It is important to note that even though the data had been collected in a qualitative manner, the graphs utilised have a qualitative approach and assist in recognising common themes and patterns. The findings are presented in accordance to how the research questions and research objectives are related.

4.3) Methodology applied

4.3.1) Focus group

A total of 5 individuals participated in a focus group. The focus group consisted of 3 male and 2 female respondents aged between 35 and 50 years old.

4.3.2) Semi-structured interviews

A total of 5 individuals participated in the semi-structured interviews, 4 of which were female and 1 of which was a male. These respondents were between 20 and 30 years of age.

4.4) Results and discussions from the focus group

The respondents were exposed to two clips from two different movies, the first being a clip from the movie *The Italian Job* where the main product featured had been a Mini Cooper. The second clip being that of a scene from *Home Alone 2* where the prominent product being featured was Coca-Cola. After having shown these clips to the respondents, their responses had been recorded.

4.4.1 Question 1: If you were consciously aware of the product placements in the clips, can you recall and name the brands you saw?

This question tested whether or not consumers were conscious about the products being advertised to them in the respective movie clips. When analysing the data, a common theme of the respondents remembering the brands that had been placed in the clips had been identified.

4.4.2 Question 2: How familiar are you with the brands in each scene?



Figure 4.1- Words associated with consumers' familiarity of the brands in each of the two scenes

This question had tested brand recognition and familiarity. All respondents had been previously exposed to some sort of branding, thus leading them to recognise each of

the brands as they are both well renowned on a global level. For them, Coca-Cola, having the reputation that the brand does, is something they purchase on a frequent basis. Mini Cooper, on the other hand, is a brand that none of the respondents own however, according to them it is an aspirational brand pertaining to status and image. Therefore, having been previously exposed to these brands, it made it easier for the respondents to recognise these brands in particular when watching the clips.

4.4.3 Question 3: Does the affection for a particular actor or film influence your judgement on product placement?

According to a majority of the respondents, their affection for a particular character would influence them to buy into a specific brand. However, the remaining respondents did state that they would not be enticed to purchase a particular product or brand simply because a famous actor had been interacting with or using any specific brand in a movie scene. This is because they are aware of the fact that the brand had paid for its intentional placement in the movie. Thus, the actor interacting with the brand in the scene does not hold a true reflection of what that person actually thinks of the brand. Alternatively, these respondents will purchase brands according to their personal preference and not the actor's or character's preference.

4.4.4 Question 4: After having been exposed to products in movies, will you make an effort to purchase the product or buy into the brand? Why or why not?

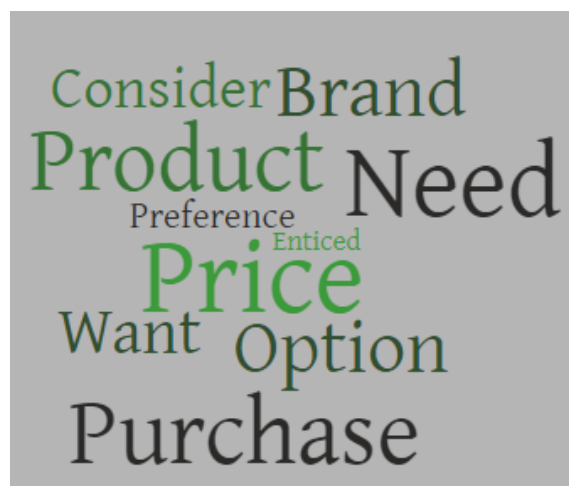


Figure 4.1- Words associated with whether or not consumers will make a purchase decision after having been exposed to the products in movies

According to respondents they would be enticed to purchase a product after having seen it in a movie setting. The brand being depicted in the movie would offer

respondents an opportunity to consider the brand as an option if there comes a time when they need to make a particular purchase decision. Furthermore, they would have to have a preference towards the brand and/or the brand's product, a want or a need to purchase that brand and/or its products and the brand and/or its products need to fit within each respondent's price range.

4.4.5 Question 5: How do you feel about the integration of a brand or product in a movie?

According to a single respondent within the focus group, they felt as if product placement is an effective way for brands to advertise their products. However, this respondent had provided additional insight and had stated that product placement may have a negative effect on certain families who do not have the finances to purchase these branded products for the younger members of the family. These younger family members are increasingly likely to be influenced by what brands a particular actor may be interacting with in a movie setting. On the other hand, respondents stated that the promotion of alcohol brands by influential actors in movie settings may also pose a negative effect on the youth. Young members of society may think that it is somewhat 'cool' to consume placed alcohol brands since their favourite actors are doing so as well.

4.4.6 Do you think that placing a brand or product in a movie setting makes it any more attractive as opposed to it being advertised over other forms of media?



Figure 4.2- Words associated with whether a brand or product in a movie setting makes it any more attractive as opposed to traditional advertising

To answer this question respondents said that it would not make a significant difference had the brand or product been advertised to them on a different type of

media. For them, the brand's appeal would depend on factors such as their favourability towards that brand, whether or not they are able to afford that brand as well as a preferential need or desire to use the brand and/or its products. On the other hand, if it were food or restaurant brands being featured in Hollywood movies, respondents had stated that they were more likely to want to experience that brand and its products, particularly American brands such as Starbucks, Burger King and Krispy Kreme, especially if these brands are new to the South African market.

4.5) Results and discussions from the semi-structured interviews

4.5.1 Question 1: Approximately how many Hollywood movies do you watch a month?

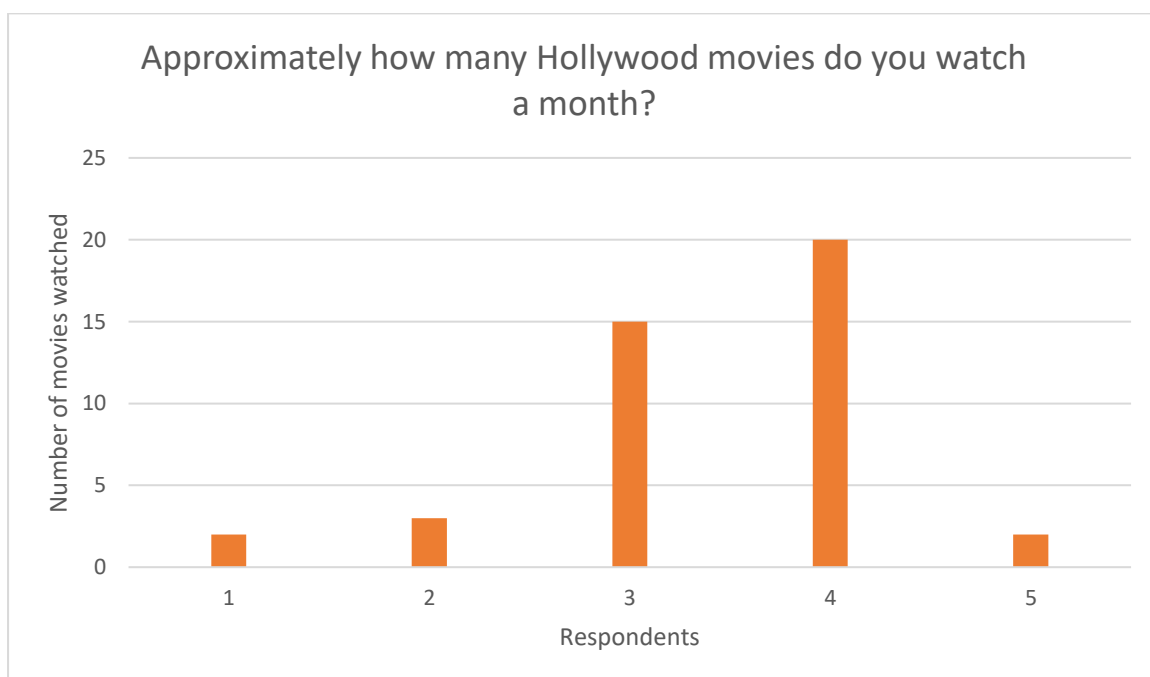


Figure 4.3- Number of Hollywood movies each respondent watches a month

4.5.2 Question 2: In general, when you are confronted by advertising (television, radio etc) in your daily life, how do you react to it? (ie: do you pay attention, do you avoid it etc?)

Although the responses to this question varied, a common thread that can be recognised relates to the fact that respondents only recognise advertising that may be intriguing and evokes a feeling in them. This can be analysed in accordance to the Hypodermic Needle theory which states that the media 'injects' messages into the minds of consumers.

4.5.3 Question 3: What do you think about using product placement in movies as opposed to traditional advertising?



Figure 4.4- Consumers' perception of product placement in movies as opposed to traditional advertising

An interesting aspect that had been discovered among the responses of this question underlines the opinions of each respondent pertaining to the cleverness and effectiveness of utilising product placement as a form of advertising. Much of the respondents' state that it may be an effective method of gaining prominent audience exposure, visibility, attention, interest, increased brand awareness as well as increased consumer memory and recall. Since these respondents feel positively towards this type of advertising, it may be inferred that they do not mind being advertised to using product placement in Hollywood movies.

4.5.4 Question 4: How can the affection for a movie or an actor influence your judgement on product placement?

A common thread had been discovered that these respondents would be positively inclined towards a brand based on its associations with a desired actor in a movie setting. The following quotes were taken from the semi-structured interviews.

"In the James Bond movies, seeing the fancy cars that he drives makes me aspire to want to have that car."

"If I like an actor, I would most probably like the brand."

“If a celebrity is associated with a product, I tend to like the product even more as I would assume that it is a good product if they are using it.”

4.5.5 Question 5: Have you discovered any new brands through product placement and if so, can you name them?

This question had tested brand recognition in relation to the Culturalist theory. When analysing the responses to this question, a common thread had highlighted that new brands could not be recalled. Some respondents were able to name brands that they had frequently seen in a movie setting, such as Coca-Cola and Pepsi, however, none of which were anything that they had not seen before. An additional interesting insight that had been noted among the responses was that many respondents had recognised that many brands are blocking out the brand names and products to not be made prevalent in movies.

4.5.6 Question 6: What are the types of brands or products that you notice the most in movies?

This question had tested brand recall, also relating to the Culturalist theory. Upon analysing the responses from this question, it had been discovered that all consumers had remembered a variety of different types of products as well as different names of brands. The most common brands noted being Coca-Cola and Apple. To support this are some quotes obtained from the semi-structured interviews.

“I definitely recognise clothing brands such as Tommy Hilfiger and shoe brands such as Jimmy Choo.”

“I notice car brands. The movie Jurassic Park had been sponsored by Mercedes Benz and so all of the cars present in the movie were all Mercedes Benz. I also remember seeing McDonalds which is a food brand.”

“I would definitely say Apple and Coca-Cola. I cannot remember specifics; however, I do remember seeing fashion magazines, probably like Vogue. Car and food brands are also prevalent in movies.”

4.5.7 Question 7: How do you think that the act of product placement in movies facilitates its memorisation? (Is it in any way more memorable in a movie setting as opposed to if you would see a brand being advertised on other types of media?)

More than half of the respondents state that the act of product placement in Hollywood movies does in fact facilitate its memorisation. This statement is supported by the following quotes from the semi-structured interviews.

“For me, product placement in movies is more effective as opposed to if the advert was placed on a billboard. I recognise many details in the scene of a movie and would probably remember brands if it was placed right in front of me.”

“Of course, visuals help in remembering something. Remembering a movie, especially if you’re a fan of the movie might help you remember the products that are being placed and cause you to remember products if you had to encounter them in the supermarket while shopping.”

“It is definitely more memorable because I associate the brand with the movie I saw it in. Often when I talk about a movie I had seen, I would recall the brands I saw in it, or if I see a particular brand, I would recall the movie I saw it in.”

4.5.8 Question 8: Do you remember the last placement you noticed in a movie and if so, do you remember which movie you saw it in?

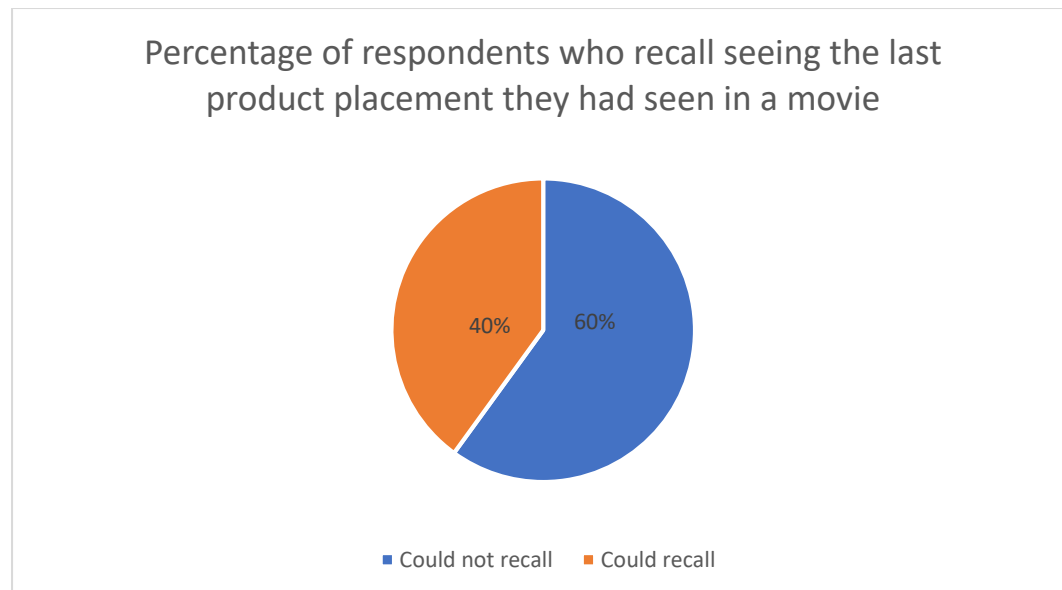


Figure 4.5- Percentage of respondents who recall seeing the last product placement they had seen in a movie

Here, most respondents could not recall the last product placement they had seen in a movie, however, the other two did in fact recall the last movies they had seen along with the products placed in the movies.

4.5.9 Question 9: When you notice a brand or a product in a movie, do you ever look for more information about that brand or product?

More respondents state that they have or will look for more information about a particular product or brand once they have seen it in a movie setting. This does however naturally depend on the consumer's interest in the product or brand being advertised in the scene. Just like the response marketers would expect from traditional forms of advertising, consumers do the same when being advertised to in movies.

4.5.10 Question 10: Have you ever purchased a product after having seen it in a movie?

This question had ultimately tested all 3 theories, whether respondents have been persuaded through a mass message, have they been persuaded subliminally or have they made a conscious effort to choose whether to consume what has been advertised to them in the context of Hollywood movies. Even though most respondents have not purchased a product after having seen it in a movie, the remainder have. This indicates that these respondents are, to some extent, influenced to make a purchase decision after having been advertised to through product placement in Hollywood movies.

4.6) Concluding remarks

The research that had been conducted provided ample findings and insights relating to the identified research problem. The findings that were detailed on this chapter related to the problem statement as well as revealed and in depth understanding as to how each of the theories related to how the research problem and objectives needed to be solved. The primary research consisting of the focus group along with the semi-structured interviews provided triangulation, thereby assisting the researcher in uncovering the apparent truth which are successfully motivated by the findings of the study.

Chapter 5 summarises all the research findings and relates them back to the research objectives in context of the research method applied.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1) Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusions and recommendations in relation to each of the research objectives presented in Chapter 1 of this research study. The findings are presented under each of the three objectives and consequentially draws on the literature discussed in Chapter 2 along with the research conducted in Chapter 4, which are succeeded by a recommendation and conclusion for each objective.

5.2) Objective 1

To determine how consumers respond to product placement in movies.

5.2.1) Findings from the literature

As previously mentioned, the utilisation of mass media has become an integral part of society today. With the introduction of commercial television and advertising, the act of “injecting” consumers with messages, as stated in the Hypodermic Needle theory, seemed to be deemed admissible. In addition, when the mass of consumers had been presented with the Dr Pepper brand in the “Spider-Man” movie, marketers confidently suggested that the message would have had a subliminal effect on unsuspecting audiences (Mlondinow, 2012). Consumers would have responded positively to these types of messaging as they would have then considered or even made purchase decisions based on the mass messages they had been presented with in Hollywood movies. However, this statement may even be contradicted by the Culturalist theory which declared that audiences are aware of what they watch, see and listen to, therefore actively engaging with the content they choose to consume (Khan, 2012).

However, based on further secondary findings, in the modern era, the brand has been clearly articulated into the storyline of the movie. With that being said, it had been noted that consumers who watch movies at home may have a divided attention span due to the many distractions in their personal space whereas in a cinema, product placement is seen to be increasingly impressionable due to the audience’s undivided attention.

5.2.2) Findings from the research

Results from the primary research highlighted a number of factors pertaining to how consumers respond to product placement in movies. As noted in the focus group, consumers are familiar with brands placed in movie scenes and are increasingly familiar with the brands that they see, thus indicating that the use of product placement is prominent movies. Besides acknowledging the placement of brands in movies, consumers from the focus group indicated that they would consider purchasing a brand they had been presented with in the context of a Hollywood movie when having to make a purchase decision.

Through the semi-structured interviews, it had been found that placements in movies were seen as clever and thus consumers would not mind being advertised to through the use of product placements in Hollywood movies. Because these consumers do not mind being advertised to while watching a Hollywood movie, this indicates that these consumers are aware of the fact that they are being advertised to. Thus, acknowledging the types of content that they allow themselves to consume, once again advocating the Culturalist theory. Consumers continue to respond favourably to product placement in movies as, according to these consumers, placements are noted to be more memorable than that of traditional advertisements.

Even though consumers may not recognise any new brands being advertised to them in the context of movies, they still respond by acknowledging and remembering the product placement of those brands that are renowned on a global level. Some of these brands include that of Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Apple and Samsung to name just a few. In addition, the respondents who had been interviewed were likely to look for more information about a brand or its products after having been exposed to it in a movie setting, provided that they possess a desired need or want for the brand or product that had been placed in the movie.

5.2.3) Conclusion

It can be concluded that consumers respond in a favourable manner to product placements in Hollywood movies. A common theme that had been recognised was that even though the intention of placing products and brands in movies, which is a mass medium, is to persuade them to purchase that particular product or brand, consumers are still consciously able to decide as to whether or not they choose to be

influenced by the messages they are being presented with in the context of a Hollywood movie.

5.2.4) Recommendations

The study that had been conducted was done so on a small scale, therefore it is recommended that marketers conduct further investigations as to whether or not their audiences respond in a favourable manner to their brands being advertised in a Hollywood movie setting.

5.3) Objective 2

To establish how product placement influence consumers' purchasing behaviour.

5.3.1) Findings from the literature

Even though James Vicary had forged the results from his supposed experiments, the subject had already gained enough potential and could not be forgotten. Several studies later suggested that subliminal messaging was in fact possible, at least under controlled laboratory conditions (Haberstroh et al, 2011).

Since product placement can be considered as a form of subliminal messaging, researchers suppose that it has the potential to significantly boost sales. Considering product placement's growth in popularity, even though most of these subliminal messages go unnoticed by individuals watching a movie, the brand name or product registers in their subconscious and causes them to remember or be influenced by it merely because their subconscious tells them to (Witch, 2015).

As stated earlier on in the research study, through the Hypodermic Needle theory, marketers could easily influence consumers to purchase specific products or brands based on the frequent and vociferous repetition of the brand's message and ultimately the adoption of a "hard sell" approach (Rayner and Wall, 2008). Through the continuity of communicating the brand's message, consumers would eventually become persuaded to give in and purchase the placed brand's products.

On the other hand, the Culturalist theory contradicts the previous theories stating that a number of media executives suggest mass media is not responsible for shaping modern society. This is because consumers are aware of the placement of products and brands in movies. Because of this awareness, product placement may either

enhance or depreciate from the consumers' consumption and hence, purchasing experiences (Meyer, 2016).

5.3.2) Findings from the research

The findings from the primary research conducted highlighted that most consumers would in fact purchase products based on their affection for a particular actor who may be interacting with a particular brand in a movie scene. This may be due to the fact that consumers believe that product placements enhance the realism of the programming, thus relating to the audience's favourable consumption of the messages being communicated through them through Hollywood movies. This then relates to the Culturalist theory. In addition, after having seen a placement in a movie, consumers would be influenced to purchase it, provided that the brand or product being advertised meets the desires or needs of the consumers. Even though consumers feel positively towards product placement in movies, results from the focus group show that brands being placed in movies do not in any way make them any more attractive than if it were shown in a traditional advertisement. This is because these consumers would purchase the brand or product based on whether they need it or not and not solely based on if they had seen the brand or its products being advertised.

Findings from the semi-structured interviews show that consumers attribute positive emotions towards a brand that has been utilised by a favourable actor within a movie setting. They would be increasingly inclined to purchase a brand or its products had it been associated with a famous, favourable figure. Additionally, this facilitates the brand's memorisation thereby reminding consumers of the brand if there comes a time when they need to make a purchase decision. Even though product placement may be viewed as a form of advertising, many of those interviewed would still not make an effort to purchase the product after having seen it in a movie.

5.3.3) Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be stated that consumers and prospective consumers are exposed to multiple brand and product communication messages from product placements in movies. Therefore, they would consider purchasing a product or buying into a brand that they might have seen in a Hollywood movie, if they ever recognise a need or want for a product as such. However, the consumer would not make an effort

to purchase the product after having been advertised to in the context of a movie if they do not identify a need or want for the product or brand being advertised.

5.3.4) Recommendations

In order to affirm and ratify the results, it is advised that further research should be conducted. A study of a larger scale, containing more participants should be conducted. These participants should be exposed to much more product placements in movies and should then be questioned and/or observed in order to gain an accurate representation of whether or not product placements in movies evoke consumers to make a purchase decision.

5.4) Objective 3

To analyse why product placement is used as a type of advertising campaign.

5.4.1) Findings from the literature

Subliminal messaging is known to permeate through the objective threshold however, fails to permeate through the subjective threshold. Since product placement may be seen as the act of communicating messages subliminally, it is viewed as an effective method of persuading consumers to react to and thus purchase the brands that they see on screen, in a Hollywood movie (Greenwald et al., 1996).

Even though the Hypodermic Needle theory was initially used to “inject” mass messages to mass groups of people, the same concept had been applied to product placements in movies. Consumers and prospective consumers had no choice but to consume the media they were being exposed to. This type of advertising may be seen as effective as there had been no way for consumers to avoid the brands and products being advertised to them in a movie setting.

5.4.2) Findings from the research

According to responses gained from the focus group, product placement in movies is an effective method of advertising for marketers. However, placing products in movies may be inefficient for some families who have to purchase branded products because the younger members in the family have become influenced by the brand in the movie or by the actor utilising the brand in the scene of a movie. Even though this might not be ideal for select families, product placement is most certainly effective in

communicating brand messages as a type of advertising campaign based on this insight gained from this respondent's perspective.

The findings from the interviews indicate that some consumers watch at least two movies a month while some watch approximately twenty. This indicates that placing brands and products in Hollywood movie settings is effective in gaining prominent exposure among the brand's targeted audiences. As previously discussed, positive brand and product associations made with actors in the movie setting is an effective way of enabling consumers to purchase a brand's products. In addition, many consumers are able to recall the brands they might have seen featured as a type of advertising campaign in Hollywood movies. They would also look for more information about a particular brand or product after having seen it in a movie, thereby learning more about that brand or product, then enabling brand recall and recognition when about to make a purchase decision.

5.4.3) Conclusion

Through the use of the subliminal messaging and hypodermic needle theories, it can be concluded that product placement enables reach, brand recall, brand recognition and embeds the brand in the minds of consumers. These attributes are the primary reason as to why marketers utilise product placement as a type of advertising campaign.

5.4.4) Recommendations

Recommendations going forward suggest that future researchers carry out the research on a much larger scale over a longer period of time and with a larger sample population in order to gain increasingly significant results which may be generalised to the broader population. This will in turn simplify the lives of marketers when seeking reliable data as to why product placement is used as a type of advertising campaign if their brand is considering placing their brand or products in a movie.

5.5) Suggestions for further research

The research that had been conducted emphasised a variety of factors that contribute to the answering of the research objectives. Since the study had been conducted on a small-scale, the sample group chosen had consisted of a small group of people. The stimuli that the sample group had been exposed to, in the form of clips from the

respective Hollywood movies, was limited. Hence, this did not clearly represent a real-life Hollywood movie viewing experience, be it in the comfort of one's home, or at a cinema.

The long-term effects of the study have yet to be uncovered. Thus, the concept of whether or not product placement in Hollywood movies is actually effective or not could be further investigated by utilising a larger sample population, more stimulating factors and the study should be carried out over a longer period of time.

Product placement in Hollywood movies are only a single aspect of product placement and recent years has seen the evolution of the concept of product placement. Therefore, future researchers conducting investigations on a similar topic have the potential to explore untouched aspects of product placement and alternate methods of advertising.

5.6) Concluding remarks

In the modern world, there is no model for mass media, particularly Hollywood movies, that guides marketers when faced on whether or not they should invest in placing their brands or products in movies. This is because the effectiveness of product placement had yet to be proven which is why the research study aimed to answer the question of whether or not product placement is effective or not. A research study that was qualitative in nature, consisting of a focus group and several semi-structured interviews had been conducted.

Through the research study at hand, several factors had pointed towards the effectiveness of product placement. The findings had revealed that consumers' opinions of product placement in the context of Hollywood movies were mostly encouraging. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of product placement in Hollywood movies is effective as the advertising method gains significant exposure, visibility, attention, interest and increased brand awareness. This enables marketers to confidently integrate their brands and/or products into the scenes of movies and expect to gain meaningful results and consequentially, a return on investment.

The researcher had thoroughly enjoyed conducting the research and composing the dissertation. It is a topic that the researcher has gained an interest for and hopes to encounter an experience in their future career where the knowledge gained from this

dissertation could be of use. Even though the results from the research study could not be generalised to the public at large, useful insights from the dissertation could be acknowledged by marketers when considering whether or not to include their brands and/or products in Hollywood movies.

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Annexure A- Explanatory information sheet and consent form for participants

The following documents attached are that of the participant consent forms for the focus group and semi-structure interviews.

EXPLANATORY INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS

To whom it may concern,

My name is Kiara Haripersad and I am a student at Vega School of Brand Leadership. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Carolanda Du Toit about The Effectiveness of Product Placement in Hollywood Movies. I hope that this research will enhance our understanding of the nature and characteristics of product placement in Hollywood movies and whether or not these methods of advertising entice consumers to make a purchase decision.

I would like to invite you to participate in my study. In order to explain to you what your participation in my study will involve, I have formulated questions that I will try to fully answer so that you can make an informed decision about whether or not to participate. If you have any additional questions that you feel are not addressed or explained in this information sheet, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. Once you have read and understood all the information contained in this sheet and are willing to participate, please complete and sign the consent form below.

What will I be doing if I participate in your study?

I would like to invite you to participate in this research as your contribution will allow me to gain insight and gain an understanding in the way in which product placement affects consumer purchase decisions. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to answer some questions either as a semi structured interview or in a focus group. If you decide to participate in this research, I would like to understand that your input would be incredibly valuable in gaining significant consumer insights with regard to the topic.

However, you can decide whether or not to participate in this research. If you decide to participate, you can choose to withdraw at any time or to decide not to answer particular interview questions.

Are there any risks/ or discomforts involved in participating in this study?

Whether or not you decide to participate in this research, there will be no negative impact on you. There are no direct risks or benefits to you if you participate in this study. You might, however, indirectly find that it is helpful to talk about your consumer

purchasing behaviours. If you find at any stage that you are not comfortable with the line of questioning, you may withdraw or refrain from participating.

Do I have to participate in the study?

- Your inclusion in this study is completely voluntary;
- If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so;
- Even if you agree to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision.

Will my identity be protected?

I promise to protect your identity. I will not use your name in any research summaries to come out of this research and I will also make sure that any other details are disguised so that nobody will be able to identify you. I would like to ask your permission to record the interviews, but only my supervisor, I and possibly a professional transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings. Nobody else, including anybody at Vega School of Brand Leadership, will have access to your interview information. I would like to use quotes when I discuss the findings of the research but I will not use any recognisable information in these quotes that can be linked to you.

What will happen to the information that participants provide?

Once I have finished all interviews, I will write summaries to be included in my research report, which is a requirement to complete my BA Honours in Strategic Brand Communication. You may ask me to send you a summary of the research if you are interested in the final outcome of the study.

What happens if I have more questions about the study?

Please feel free to contact me or my supervisor should you have any questions or concerns about this research, or if there is anything you need to know before you decide whether or not to participate.

You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable with the procedures followed.

My contact details are as follows: Kiara Haripersad, 061 673 1810, kiaraharipersad@gmail.com. **The contact details of my supervisor are as follows:** Carolanda Du Toit, carolanda@vodamail.co.za.

Consent form for participants

I, _____, agree to participate in the research conducted by Kiara Haripersad about The Effectiveness of Product Placement in Hollywood Movies which's main goal of the research study will be to investigate whether or not product placement influences consumers to make a purchase decision based on the brand or product they have been presented with in the context of a movie.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. I agree to be interviewed for this research.
2. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
3. My participation in this research is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. There will be no repercussions should I choose to withdraw from the research.
4. I may choose not to answer any of the questions that are asked during the research interview.
5. I may be quoted directly when the research is published, but my identity will be protected.

Signature Date

Consent form for audio-recording/ video recording

I, _____, agree to allow Kiara Haripersad to audio record my interviews as part of the research about The Effectiveness of Product Placement in Hollywood Movies which's main goal of the research study will be to investigate whether or not product placement influences consumers to make a purchase decision based on the brand or product they have been presented with in the context of a movie.

This research has been explained to me and I understand what participation in this research will involve. I understand that:

1. My confidentiality will be ensured. My name and personal details will be kept private.
2. The recordings will be stored in a password protected file on the researcher's computer.
3. Only the researcher, the researcher's supervisor and possibly a transcriber (who will sign a confidentiality agreement) will have access to these recordings.

Signature Date

Annexure B- IIE ethical clearance form

The following document is that of the ethical clearance as provided by the Independent Institute of Education. The document was signed by Navigator, Alec Bozas as well as Supervisor, Carolanda Du Toit.

23 July 2018

Student name: Kiara Haripersad

Student number: 15010276

Campus: Vega School of Brand Leadership Durban



Re: Approval of BA Honours Strategic Brand Communication Proposal and Ethics Clearance



Your research proposal and the ethical implications of your proposed research topic were reviewed by your supervisor and the campus research panel, a subcommittee of The Independent Institute of Education's Research and Postgraduate Studies Committee.



- Your research proposal posed no significant ethical concerns and we hereby provide you with ethical clearance to proceed with your data collection.
- There may be some aspects that you still need to address in your proposal. If this is the case, feedback will be provided to you in writing. You will need to address these aspects in consultation with your supervisor.

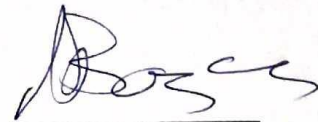
In the event of you deciding to change your research topic or methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure that all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued in such instances.

We wish you all the best with your research!

Yours sincerely,



Carolanda Du Toit
Supervisor
Coordinator



Alec Bozas
Campus Postgraduate

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Annexure C- Concept Document Table

Concept Document Template PROVISIONAL

TITLE: *What is my study about?*

Research Purpose/ Objective	Primary Research Question	Research Rationale	Seminal Authors/ Sources	Literature Review – Conceptual Framework	Paradigm	Approach	Data Collection Method(s)	Ethics	Anticipated Findings	References
The purpose of this research is to determine the effectiveness of product placement in Hollywood movies.	Is product placement in Hollywood movies an effective promotional tactic as it aims to gain a prominent audience, sufficient exposure, visibility, attention, interest and evoke an interest to purchase?	Please refer to page 9 for further information.	Subliminal Messaging Theory (Vance Packard) Hypodermic Needle Theory (Harold Lasswell) Culturalist Theory	Theme 1: Hypodermic Needle Theory Theme 2: Subliminal Messaging Theory Theme 3: Culturalist Theory All the theories are explained in relation to the relevant literature	For the purpose of this study, an interpretivist approach will be adopted. Please refer to page 16 for further information.	For the purpose of this study a qualitative approach will be adopted.	Semi-structured interviews	Participants should not be subject to harm in any way. Respect for the dignity of the participants should be a priority. Consent by the participants should be obtained prior to conducting the study. Please refer to page 26 for further information.	It is anticipated that product placement may influence consumer purchase decisions, but not immediately after having been presented with the brand or product in the context of a movie.	Please refer to pages 49-53 for further information.
						Population	Focus Group			
Research Problem	Secondary Questions/ Hypotheses/ Objectives	Key Concepts	Key Theories			Sampling	Data Analysis Method(s)	Limitations	Anticipated Contribution	
Please refer to page 10 for further information.	How does product placement influence the purchasing behaviour of consumers? Please refer to page 11 for further information.	Product Placement Mass Media Advertising Consumer Purchase Decisions	Hypodermic Needle Theory Subliminal Messaging Theory Culturalist Theory			By virtue of the nature of this research study, non-probability sampling techniques such as purposive sampling will be used to provide clear theoretical reasons for the chosen case of units to be included in the sample. Please refer to page 25 for further information.	Thematic analysis is one of the most common methods of data analysis in qualitative research and will be the chosen method of data analysis following the data collection. Please refer to pages 27 for further information.	Due to the time limit and limited access to resources due to the study a small-scale research study, the research was conducted on only a small size of the population who reside in the Durban area. Please refer to page 30 for further information.	The study may be useful to those who have already adopted the product placement strategy as a means of advertising and may use it to determine whether or not product placement is increasing the brand's presence in the hearts and minds of consumers. Please refer to page 29 for further information.	

Appendix 1 - Focus group and Semi-structured interview schedule

Focus Group

Welcome and thank you for participating in this focus group today. My name is Kiara Haripersad and I will be the moderator in today's discussion. The purpose of this gathering is to obtain consumer feedback about The Effectiveness of Product Placement in Hollywood Movies. As a consumer, you have a better understanding of what factors influence your product consumption patterns and thus as a researcher, I would like to obtain deep meaningful insights that will assist me in developing the appropriate conclusions about the topic at hand.

A focus group is a conversation that focuses on specific questions in a safe and confidential environment. I will guide the conversation by asking questions that each of you are able to respond to. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, however, your honesty when answering these questions will be greatly appreciated. If you wish, you can also respond to each other's comments, like you would in any ordinary conversation. It is my job to make sure that everyone here gets to participate and that we stay on par. Before we get started, I want to let you know two important things. Firstly, the information I learn today will be compiled into a final academic dissertation report. Secondly, you do not have to answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable with. This focus group is anonymous and confidential. "Anonymous" meaning that I will not be using your names and you will not be identified as an individual in my dissertation. "Confidential" means that what is said in this room should not be repeated outside of this room. As you can see, I will be tape recording this focus group. The recording will only be used to make sure my notes are correct and will not be heard by anyone outside of this focus group. This focus group should take approximately 30 minutes depending on the length of each of the participants answers.



The Italian Job (7/8) Movie CLIP - Helicopter Chase (2003) HD

281,181 views

307 24 SHARE ...

Image 1: The clip that had been shown from the movie The Italian Job



Home Alone 2 Lost In New York Pizza Scene

2,366,224 views

8.4K 702 SHARE ...

Image 2: The clip that had been shown from the movies Home Alone 2

After having shown the participants a clip each from *The Italian Job* and *Home Alone 2* respectively, the following questions were asked to participants of the focus group:

Focus group questions

- 1) If you were consciously aware of the product placements in the clips, can you recall and name the brands you saw?
- 2) How familiar are you with the brands in each scene? (in terms of advertising, do you see any advertising, do you recall seeing any advertising)
- 3) Does the affection for a particular actor or film influence your judgement on product placement?
- 4) After having been exposed to the products in a movie, will you make an effort to purchase the product or buy into the brand? Why or why not?
- 5) How do you feel about the integration of a brand or a product in a movie?
- 6) Do you think that placing a brand or product in movie setting makes it any more attractive as opposed to it being advertised over other forms of media?

Semi-structured interview questions

My name is Kiara Haripersad and as a student at Vega School of Brand Leadership, I humbly request your input on consumer purchasing behaviour with regards to my research topic of “The Effectiveness of Product Placement in Hollywood Movies” in order to complete my BA Honours in Strategic Brand Communication.

I would like to ask you some questions about whether or not you are influenced to make a consumer purchase decision when presented with product placement in context of Hollywood movies. I hope that this information will assist me in gaining useful findings and as a result, deep meaningful insights with regard to the topic at hand. The interview should take approximately 20 minutes.

Product placement consists of placing a brand and/or its products into a movie scene where it is able to be seen and/or its name heard (Bressoud and Lehu, 2008).

- 1) Approximately how many Hollywood movies do you watch a month?
- 2) In general, when you are confronted by advertising (television, radio) in your daily life, how do you react to it (ie: do you pay attention, do you avoid it etc)?
- 3) What do you think about using product placement in movies as opposed to traditional advertising?
- 4) How can the affection for a movie or an actor influence your judgement on product placement?
- 5) Have you discovered any new brands through product placement and if so, can you name them?
- 6) What are the types of brands or products that you notice the most in movies?
- 7) How do you think that the act of product placement in movies facilitates its memorisation? (Is it in any way more memorable in a movie setting as opposed to if you would see it in traditional advertising?)
- 8) Do you remember the last placement you noticed in a movie, and if so, do you remember which movie you saw it in?
- 9) When you notice a brand or a product in a movie, do you ever look for more information about that brand or product?
- 10) Have you ever purchased a product after having seen it in a film?