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Consumer Perceptions of Product placement

The Relationship between Perceptions and Attitudes towards Movies and Placed claims

Master's thesis within Business Administration

Author: Melvin Masuwely Fondeson

Tutor: Patrik Wikström

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Author: Melvin Masuwely Fondeson

Tutor: Patrik Wikström

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Abstract

Advances in information and communication technologies, have not only transformed competition into a global concept; nor have they only increased consumers' choices, but rather they have also diverted and transformed their attention, into a scarce resource. Regaining this attention prior to any persuasion attempt became imperative for marketing communication. Product placement, an alliance between marketing and entertainment, with an attention-captivating potential came to prominence within the marketing industry as a way to grab consumer attention. Though being unobtrusive and covert, this strategy contributes to brand awareness and even offsets high fixed-costs for feature films. However, the perception consumers have of this practice could have considerable effects on their attitudes towards the placed brands as well as the feature films.

Through an interview based empirical study, carried out on twenty students and users of the Södertorns Högskola library in the Stockholm County, I was able to investigate consumer perceptions of placements, in view of filling the existing research gap between consumer perception of placements and their consequent attitudes. An adapted conceptual model was built based on the Elaboration Likelihood Model to account for placements in movies and TV shows.

The results revealed consumer perceptions of placements could be either; negative, indifferent, neutral, or positive. Moving from negative to positive, there is high tolerance for placements in feature films as well as positive attitudes towards the brands communicated. Same trend applies to consumers' perception of the strategy which shifts from manipulative to informative and educative. Also noted is that cues low-involvement consumers mostly rely on, are movie storylines though they sometimes rely characters and directors. Thus, achieving the desired effects of placements, product assimilation in which the brand is interwoven with the storyline should be the best possible way forward as it downplays the issue of incongruence. However relationship between perceptions and purchase decisions depends on other things such as consumer viability and the price of substitute products as well as brand advocacy from peers.

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1 Introduction

Advances in information and communication technologies have resulted in dramatic changes in the global marketplace equipping consumers with the ability to acquire market offerings from every corner of the globe. This has transformed competition into a global concept (Clow & Baack, 2010, p. 39). The quest to distinguish products from others in marketplace with so much brand parity, saw a proliferation of marketing communications strategies. *Marketing communications constitutes the various ways in which marketers engage with their audiences* (Fill, 2009, p. 16). Engaging with audiences, conveying messages about attributes of brands, could trigger a variety of responses from an audience perspective. These responses could range from attitudinal to behavioral, depending on the perception audiences have of the message's source.

Earlier marketing communication successes were achieved through advertising but as consumer willingness to pay for attention increased while their willingness to processing traditional advertising dropped, advertising lost its credibility. With the global marketplace crowded with similar brands, getting consumer attention became paramount. An attention grabbing marketing communication strategy was imperative if marketers had to outpace their competitors. This saw an alignment of marketing and entertainment through an unobtrusive marketing communication technique called '*product placement*'. Jean-Patrick Flandé, one of the greatest French placement agents, describes as '*any form of audio-visual commercial communication which constitutes the inclusion of or reference to a product, a service or the trade mark thereof so that it is featured within the programme, normally in return for payment or for a similar consideration*' (cited in Lehu, 2007, p. 150). It is however depicted as a hybrid of advertising and publicity (Balasubramanian, 1994).

Though attention grabbing constitutes the first step of every persuasion process, this alignment is been justified by reasons way beyond the attention catching potential of entertainment. First the ability of enhancing brand image and attitude through positive associations and implied endorsements makes its very lucrative for marketers. Secondly, from a feature film producer's perspective, the possibility of offsetting and covering the high fixed cost associated with the production of movies and TV programs makes its a highly sought after strategy. From both perspectives the wider reach of television as a media vehicle greatly equips this practice with the potential to reach global markets.

Some recent examples of placement deals from both marketers and program producers perspectives include the James Bond movie *Tomorrow Never Dies* which grossed US\$100 million prior to its release, and the Tom Hanks movie *Cast Away* which created new marketing possibilities as the most prominent placement done in the movie, the Wilson Volleyball created a whole new concept for volleyball marketing (McDonnell and Drennan, 2010). However, despite certain successes such the association of the candy Reese's Pieces and Steven Spielbergs movie, *the Extra Terrestrial* i.e up to 65% increase in sales, the consumer perception of the practice is of paramount importance as this could shape their attitudes toward the

media vehicles, the placed products and in some cases the characters associated within the feature films.

1.1 Problem Puzzle

Even though product placement could be a very peculiar marketing communication tool (Nebenzahl and Jaffe 1998), the primary differentiating aspects of this marketing strategy lies within two dimensions. A covert or disguise dimension: which stipulates its potential of disguising both the paid for nature of the message and the identity of the message sponsor. The second, a primacy dimension: i.e the potentiality of the message being interwoven in the main message of communication (cited in Sheehan and Guo, 2005). However, based on these dimensions, there has been major criticisms precisely from anti-consumerists as they thrive to protect consumer and public interests. They argue that placements are unethical and deceptive (Kuhn *et al*, 2010) spurring skepticism around the practice as was spurred around traditional advertising. However, Balasubramanian (1994) reveals that, proponents to the view that placement could over-come skepticism and closer examination of product-related claims, entirely based their arguments on the fact that media productions successfully masks the commercial nature of product placement by incorporating brands into the storyline (cited in Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 106).

Despite all the criticism spurred around placements the practice has been seen to proliferate. Marketing communications literature relates the proliferation of the former to a rise in educational level from a consumer perspective and competition from a marketer's point of view (Li, Kuo, & Russell, 1999; Milewicz & Herbig, 1997) which saw traditional advertising relegated as an outdated marketing communication strategy. This paved the way for this less obtrusive yet presumed unethical form of marketing communication (cited in Kuhn *et al*, 2010).

If the level of education and awareness of a manipulative intent could spur skepticism around traditional advertising couldn't it spur the same effect on consumers' perception of product placement and even on the way they view movies talk less their attitudes towards the placed products? And if this is the case would it have tremendous implications from the marketer's perspective as well as from movie and TV producer's perspective?

These unanswered questions form the basis of the purpose of this research as I'll try to seek ways to come up with insights regarding consumer perceptions of product placement.

1.2 Purpose

This thesis aims at investigating the impact of consumer perceptions of product placements in movies and TV shows; on their attitudes towards movies and TV shows as well as their attitudes towards the placed claims (placed products and services).

1.3 Disposition

This figure below explains the disposition of the following chapters of this thesis.

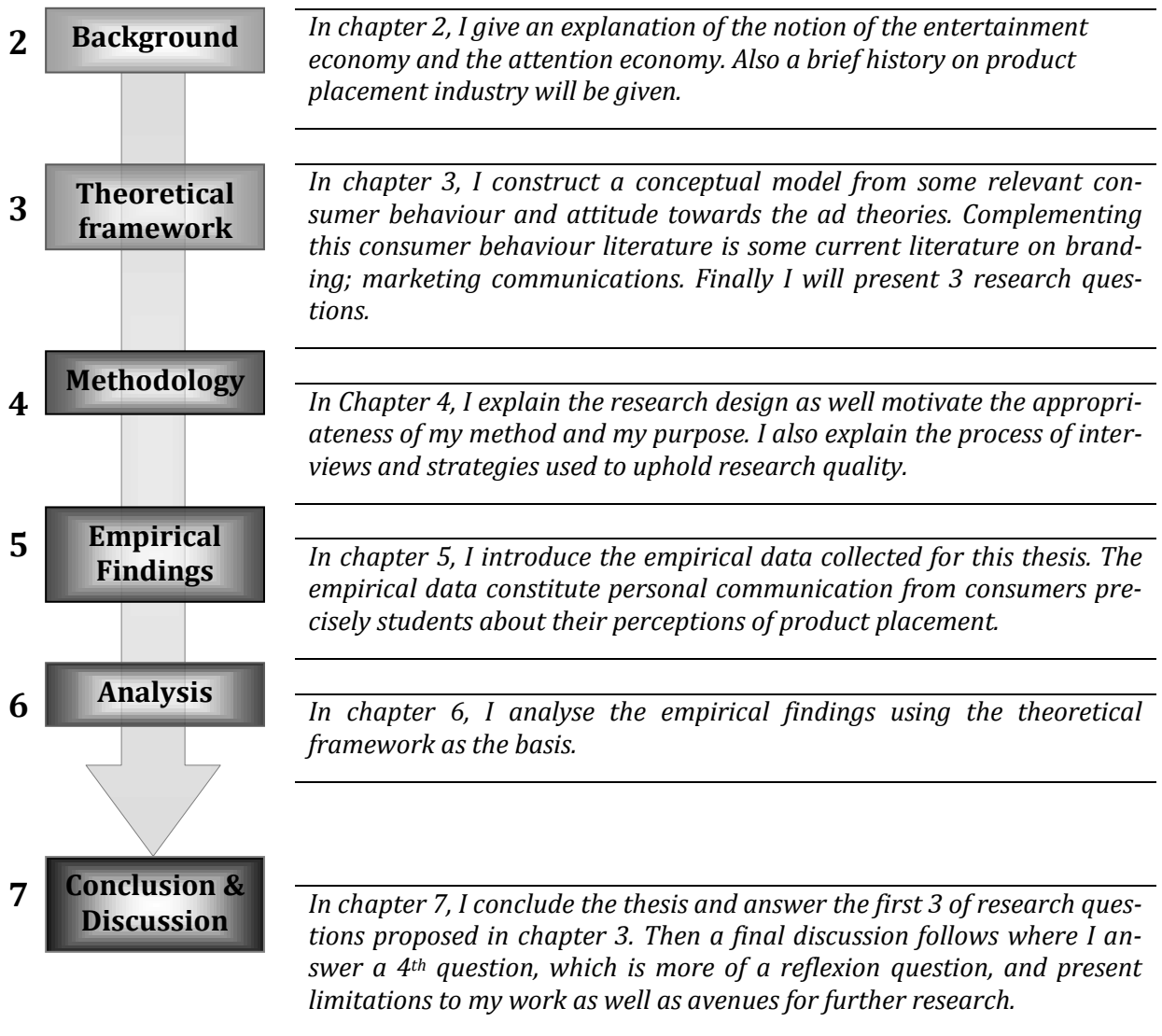


Figure 1-1 Disposition of the various chapters

2 Background

This chapter provides this study with a background on the entertainment industry as the driving force behind the ‘attention economy’. Still in this chapter the alignment between marketing and the entertainment industry as well as reasons that propelled this alignment will be looked at. Further down the chapter, follows a background on product placement, which is presently one of the most efficient ways to bridge marketing and entertainment.

2.1 The Entertainment Economy

Ranked above the clothing and the healthcare industries in the US especially, the entertainment industry has gradually established itself as the fastest growing global economy. This industry owes its growth partly to its potentiality to blur beyond its traditional frontiers into other sectors such as hotels, restaurants and shopping malls, touching every aspect of audiences’ lives (Sayre & King, 2010 p. 143). This has resulted in an increase in demand and supply of entertainment products and services within these sectors. On the other hand, the fierce competition for attention within this industry itself has also contributed to its growth as entertainment artists and entrepreneurs strive for competitive advantage, propelling ground breaking technological advances and innovations. Examples of such innovations include printing press, radio, film, and TV, — which albeit originally aimed at delivering news and information, — were quickly employed to serve entertainment purposes, up thrusting this industry. Like every lucrative business the return on investment on these technologies are greatly reaped as the entertainment industry practically defines and drives the companies that were built on such business models (Sayre & King, 2010 p. 144).

Some theorists and proponents vie for the fact that, the quest for attention rather than the proliferation of information constitutes the driving force of the modern economy, which economist Michael Goldhaber terms, “the attention economy” (cited in Sayre & King, 2010 p. 144). However the entertainment industry, with its potential to actually get audiences to pay for their attention makes pundits to brand this modern economy as “the entertainment economy”. Entertainment however, gratifies its audiences in at least three different ways as it provides: a relief from the anxieties of the everyday life; a basis for social comparison between audiences with the demeanour, possession and behaviour of others; and a means of keeping track with what is transpiring in the world. Comstock and Sharrer (1999) highlight the well-documented nature of this gratification in the case of television. In the latter case, there’s high capability to relief varying measures of stress and interpersonal conflicts, which greatly accounts for the affinity of its consumption (cited in Comstock, 2004, p. 193).

Entertainment Audiences, Potential Consumers

As entertainment through electronic media attained global status, its audience also attained a global status too. Nowadays, entertainment offerings ranging from mediated live performances (such as sports events) to reality TV shows, novels, mu-

sicals (audio and video clips), video games and movies from one part of the globe are consumed on other parts of the globe. This has contributed to changes in audiences' attitudes and perceptions towards foreign cultures, products and services in tremendous ways. However, entertainment audiences are normal people with needs that are fulfilled through consumption of other products and services. As such, marketers capitalize on the attention captivating capacity of the abovementioned mediated entertainment forms to reach out to consumer around the globe. Through these media they hope to persuade audiences to consume a variety of consumer products and services around the world through advertising. However, due to technological advances there has been a shift in control from entertainment producers to consumers who now have the power to zip and zap through the traditional 30-second advertisement spots using devices such as the TiVO, DVRs and remote controls (Lehu, 2007). However, like Ries & Ries (2002) argue, this only goes to confirm the fact that the traditional advertising is losing out if it hasn't already lost its credibility (cited in Lehu, 2007, p. 25).

Marketers thus had to look for efficient ways to relegate audiences to passive roles (Scott & Craig-Lees, 2010 p. 39) yet grabbing their attention. This however, set the ball rolling for a marriage between the entertainment industry and the marketing sector. This alignment could also be explained by the fact that there has been an overabundance of information available to consumers due to increased competition spurred by advances in information and communication technologies. This has however, transformed consumers' attention into a scarce resource (Sayre & King, 2010, p. 144). This left business marketers pondering how well they could capture consumers' attention, and once they have it, how could they add value to their products, so as to make them stand out in a world of similar products getting past the "Who cares" and "must have" test (Wolf, 2003, p. 54)? Since what is entertaining captures our attention (Sayre, & King, 2010, p. 144), for marketers to positively change consumer attitudes towards their products, they must intelligently organize the persuasion process whereby grabbing attention is always the first step (Sayre & King, 2010, p. 16).

Product placements (in movies, TV shows, Novels and songs and music videos), not only constitutes the most efficient point of contact between marketing and entertainment industries, but also shows considerable advantage over devices that downplay the effects of traditional advertising. Placements offer an opportunity for brands to be embedded in the scenes and also be interwoven in the content thus relegating audiences to passive roles and as such are bound to process the marketing communication message.

Following next is a background on product placement and the placement industry in general, highlighting some of the most successful deals.

2.2 Product Placement

According to Jean-Patrick Flandé, interviewed in (Lehu, 2007, p. 150), a well attested product and brand placement expert and founder of *Film Média Consultant (FMC)* the leading player in the French product placement market, in order for fic-

tion to be accepted by the audience it is imperative it shows points of references with reality. Flandé hence defines product placement as “any form of audiovisual commercial communication which constitutes the inclusion of or reference to a product, a service or the trade mark thereof so that it is featured within the programme, normally in return for payment or for a similar consideration”. Flandé claims product placement is a springboard to communication for the brand and it offers the advertiser an average of 30million contacts with its brand. It is also imperative that the role played by the brand, be in line with its attributes else the placement would be incongruent and hence ineffective.

Product placements can assume a wide range of media vehicles i.e. movies, TV shows and series, song lyrics, music videos, novels and plays, and video games. With the above potential, Balasubramanian (1994), calls product placement, a hybrid form of market communication, and a combination of advertising and publicity (cited in McCarty, 2004, p. 47). He also argues that, the fact that placements are paid for shows a close relationship with traditional advertising while the unobtrusive nature of the process (an unpaid persuasion) takes it closer to publicity.

A Brief History

Product placement is an old-age practice and citing Newell *et al* (2006), its been actually over a century ago, a box of Unilever’s Sunlight Soap was deliberately placed in several early *Lumière films* dating back to the 1890s (cited in Sung *et al*, 2009). However, the first ever documented product placements occurred within the same year i.e. before cinema. It was the Jules Chéret painting of celebrity comedian Sarah Bernhardt on stage wearing *La Diaphane powder* for the latter’s brand billboard in the 1890. Another example was the portrait of *Un bar aux Folies-Bergère* (Bar at the Folie-Bergère) by Édouard Manet portraying bottles with labels that were characterized by a red triangle insinuating them as Bass beer (Lehu, 2007, p. 18). According to Lehu (2007) it was needless to wonder if the artist had found himself a potential source of income.

Cinema’s first steps into the product placement world were taken, as on one hand, producers quickly understood the advantages of associating with brands. On the other hand, brand owners and marketers also understood the fact that for their brands to exist they needed to look for a perfect stage where they could be showcased while connecting with audiences. As the mania grew, it stirred up the use of cinema as a vector of both high potential and priority.

Taking a Balasubramanian perspective, Lehu (2007) calls this practice a hybrid as a result of the fact that it uses several parallel media of communication. The practice has grown and evolved into a distinct marketing strategy with well documented strategic values that span from cost effectiveness, potential accessibility of a wider reach, positive associations, implied endorsements, enhancing brand awareness, to changing purchasing decisions (Scott & Craig-Lees, 2010). It also offers credibility to the environment in which it is placed. For example in the futuristic movie *Minority report*, the director Steven Spielberg justifies the integration of brands like Bulgari, Gap, Lexus, Guinness Century 21, Fox, USA Today, Bur-

ger King, American Express, Nokia etc., to emphasize that the action was earth-based and that the familiarity consumers have with these brands would downplay the notion of a far future (Lehu, 2005).

Some product placement classics include as the association of Jack Daniel's and the actress Joan Crawford in what is considered as a masterpiece of *film noir*, the Michael Curtiz's film *Mildred Pierce*. In the movie, the abovementioned actress drinks the famous whisky. Despite such a classic, which dates back to 1945, Mary Cowlett (2000) argues that the practice only got to prominence after an extra-terrestrial was caught on screen eating the candy *Reese's Pieces* in the Steven Spielberg movie *E.T. the Extra Terrestrial*. This association saw the sales of the candy go up by 65% (cited in Lehu, 2007, p. 210) and since then the practice has been considered a very important tool in the promotion mix (Eisend, 2009).

With advances in digital and Internet technologies, media proliferation and fragmentation, as well as audiences' media sophistication, there has been the possibility of the usage of a variety of alternative media, contexts and strategies for market information delivery (Scott & Craig-Lees, 2010). That notwithstanding, the prominence of this marketing strategy is due to audiences' media sophistication which has granted audiences enormous control over their content consumption (Nebenzahl & Secunda, 1993; Solomon & Englis, 1994; Bloxham, 1998; Avery & Ferraro, 2000) downplaying the potentials of traditional advertising.

Being a covert form of marketing communication, Product Placement has also known its fair share of criticisms. A lot of debates concerning regulatory and ethical issues have been raised lately. Anti-consumerists and consumer advocacy groups claim product placements are deceptive advertising due to the fact that consumers are unaware of the persuasive intent of the practice.

Despite the criticisms associated with the covert nature of product placement the growth of this marketing strategy could be seen with the proliferation of product placement organizations such as Entertainment Resource Marketing Association (ERMA), which has registered an increase in members to 100 since its establishment in 1991; and the Entertainment Marketing Association in the UK. However, these trade groups are composed of placement agents, studio representatives and marketers (Karrh, 1998; Curtis, 1999). The UK however, had rules against product placement, which saw marketers furnish production sets with products as props free of charge. Very recently the first product placement under UK's advertising rules took off when a Nescafe coffee machine was featured in ITV daytime program at the cost of £100,000 3 months after the ban on covert placements were uplifted. Though there are still some attached ethical strings which prohibit the placements for gambling, alcohol, and junk food, medicine and baby food as well placements on children's shows, news, current affairs and religious shows (Castillo, 2011a) it is a giant step for the industry since the UK constitutes a huge market.

The Industry, Its Players and the Numbers

From a financial perspective, the (PQ Media, 2007) reveals, global spending in placements were within the neighbourhood of US\$3.36 billion and were predicted

to achieve growth of 30.3% by 2007 to make US\$4.38 billion while adding up the exposure value of gratis placements pushes this figure up to US\$7.76 billion with an anticipated growth of 20.3% making the value of US\$9.93 billion by same year.

The US is the largest paid product placement market accounting for two-thirds of the spending while other countries like Brazil, Mexico, Australia, Japan India and China complete the queue as emerging players in the industry (Nelson & Devanathan, 2006; PQ Media, 2006; PQ Media, 2007). However, these figures only go to confirm the ability of this practice to subsidize the cost for feature films as it could cover the production cost in contents by up to 25% (Renner 2003). This thus could be hell of good business for the program creators who receive money “up front” following the uncertainty of success of many productions on one hand, and on the other hand, the fact that refunds as a result of poor performance is often out of the equation (Weaver and Oliver 2000). The big question was then *‘How could Marketers reap of their ROIs?; and How good is this practice as a marketing strategy in an increasingly competitive marketplace?’*.

The Trends

Most recent trends in the industry have seen advertiser not only try to reduce these uncertainty surrounding experience goods. Rather, they have been trying to gain some control in the production as they tend to help in designing TV shows by ensuring their brand become more than just accessories to the content through *‘product assimilation’*. The latter is a new trend in which the product becomes the storyline as seen with the series the *“Airlines”* (Sheehan and Guo, 2005). Another rising trend is *‘virtual placement’* which permits advertisers to digitally place images of brands following the initial release of the movie or TV program. Thus, based on the initial audience, advertisers can better segment their markets and better position their products within the targeted segment before the movie is released to the rest of the market (McDonnell and Drennan, 2010). With these developments, one could ponder as questions as to whether product placement could actually constitute a source of competitive advantage for brand owners, keep popping up. However, whatever be the answers to these questions marketers should also try to answer questions about consumer perception of product placements too as these perceptions could determine their attitudes towards the placed claims. However marketers must bear in mind that having their attention through greatly entertaining experiences could constitute both an advantage and a setback.

2.3 Summary

In this chapter I have presented a background of the entertainment industry as the backbone of attention, which constitutes the first step for persuasion. Also a brief history of placements was provided. The relevance of this chapter is to ease understanding of the idea behind product placements and the reason for its proliferation as well as looking at possible future directions of the marketing strategy. Further in the next chapter, which is the theoretical framework, I’ll add some more flesh to the notion of product placements, as I’ll try to look at literature on theories that support this study.

3 Theoretical framework

This chapter constitutes the core of this study, as concurrently with this study's purpose, it provides a theoretical framework to aid in explaining the findings and extend the existing knowledge on consumer perception of product placement as well as their resulting attitudes and behaviours regarding feature films, and the products and services communicated within them. Since products are being communicated more or less as brands, this chapter will have as building blocks the concepts of branding, marketing communication as a way of communicating brand attributes, as well as product placement, which constitutes the most efficient way to communicate products and services (brands), through feature films. However, these concepts will form basis of an adapted conceptual consumer behaviour model, which will aid in making sense of the attitudinal connections between consumer perceptions and their resulting attitudes towards communicated brands (products and services).

3.1 The Applied Conceptual Model

Based on theories most relevant to this study, the following applied conceptual model, is proposed to better make sense of the attitude formation, and change that could result from consumer perceptions of product placements.

I will call the model the Adapt Elaboration Likelihood Model; see schematic illustration in figure 3-1 below. The choice of the name is due to the fact that model was built from the basis and some alterations of the Petty and Cacioppo's (1981) Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), which I will explain in the course of this chapter. But first I thought it was imperative to make sense of the choice to alter the traditional ELM, which is highly acclaimed in the social psychological realm.

However, the choice to alter the Petty and Cacioppo's (1981) ELM is based on certain limitations to the model. Even though the model constitutes a framework for attitude formation and change, it does not specify the particular type of marketing communication and the media vehicles used.

Secondly, the Petty and Cacioppo's (1981) model only describes the attitude formation and change as a process that results from a motivational state. It does not specify a particular motivational state. Based on the purpose of this study the applied conceptual model will assume different consumer perceptions as a motivational state base on which consumers decide which route to persuasion they pursue.

Furthermore, in other to relate the model to product placement, it was also important that I specified some important peripheral cues, which the traditional ELM model does not elaborate on. For the purpose of this study, the Adapt-ELM will have cues such as movie storyline, directors, actors and actresses, brand designs etc.

Lastly in order to explain the reason why some consumers still show different attitudes (that range from positive through neutral to negative), even after taking the

central or peripheral routes to persuasion, it was imperative that ideas be drawn from (Friestad and Wright, 1994) Persuasion Knowledge Model PKM, section 2.2.5, which adds perceived tactics as a cue which constitutes a basis to justify why certain central cues but most especially peripheral cues result in certain attitudes and behaviours.

I believe combining these two models will better establish a model that will answer questions such as why consumers based on their different perception of placements show different attitudes towards placed claims as well as the movies and TV shows they are placed in.

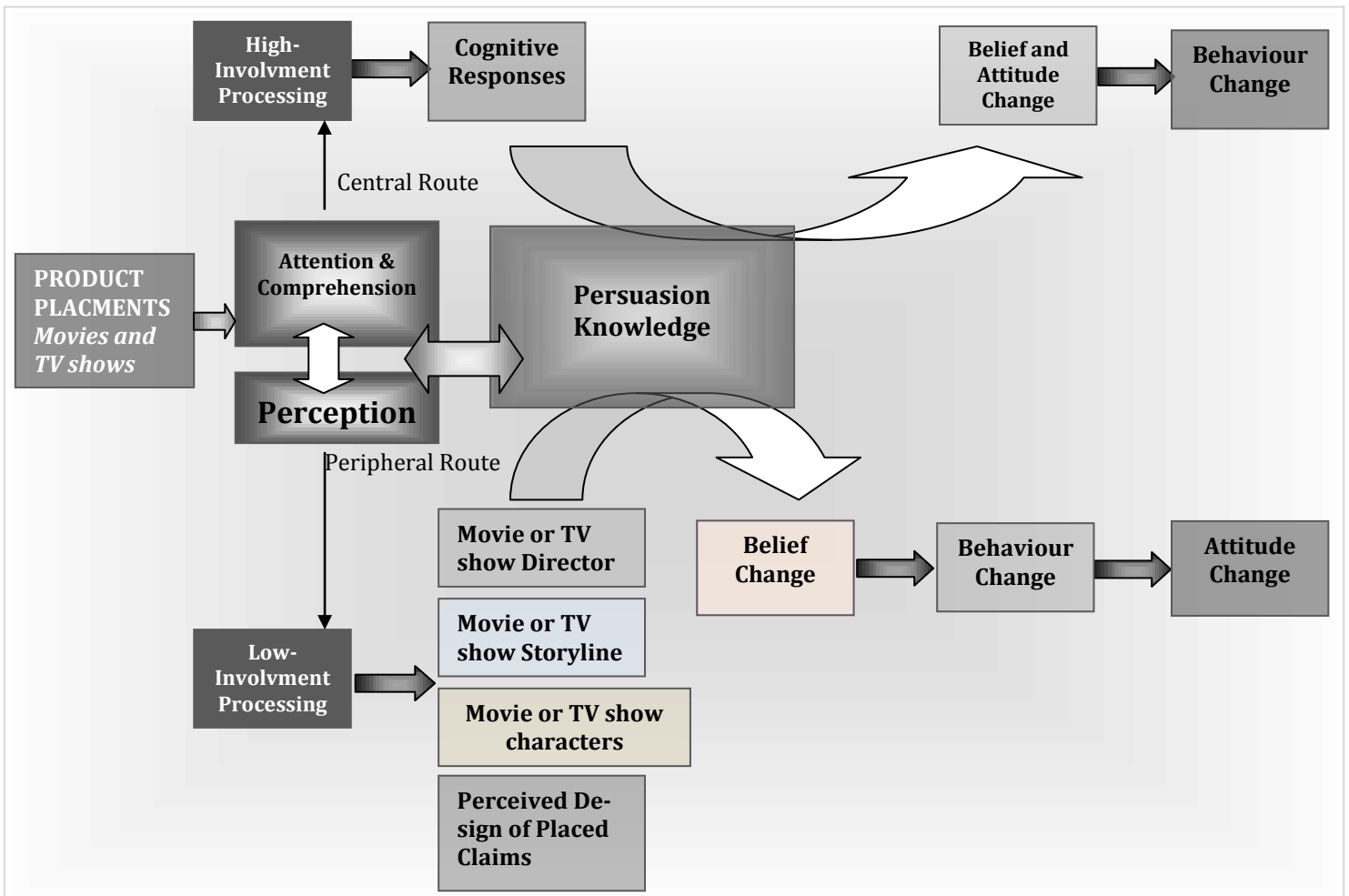


Figure 3-1 Applied Conceptual Model: Adapted Elaboration Likelihood Model (Adapt-ELM)

Further down this study I will try to shed some light on the various underlying concepts and models on which this conceptual model was built. I believe this will aid a lot in easing the understanding of the Adapt-ELM.

3.2 Branding

In order to popularize i.e. ease the understanding of the rationale behind product placement, I thought it was worthwhile to use the logic behind branding as a

springboard for this theoretical framework as it would ease the sense making process of the Adapt-ELM for product placements.

As modernization takes an upscale, production and consumption have been increasingly concerned with creating brands (Salzer-Mörling, 2010, p. 531). However deceptive, the simple concept of branding could be, due to complexities associated with defining the brand (Kapferer, 2000, 2001, p. 3), Kapferer feels, the brand incorporates a mixture of meanings; ranging from the name by which a product is called, the added value, the product image, consumer expectations, values, and most often the differentiating mark of a product and consumer badge. Thus the above meanings of the brand, makes it clear there is no brand without a product (Kapferer, 2000, 2001, p. 3). Despite all these meanings, one aspect of the modern brand stands out. The brand helps to distinguish a company's product within the marketplace. Marketing communication through advertising has been a way to achieve this differentiation as it enhances the image and fame of the brand (Kapferer, 2000, 2001, p. 4). If traditional marketing communication such as advertising could enhance brand image and fame, then how better can an even sophisticated marketing communication model, enhance both values? And what would be the consequences of consumers' perception of such a model on their attitudes towards the communicated brands?

The Brand, its Meaning and Image

Contemporarily seen as corporate asset associated with a value that is supposed to be created with the use of sophisticated and strategic design, unlike traditional marketing, which focused more on use-value in consumption, the emergence of the brand associates consumption with expressive values, transforming consumers' choice of a particular brand into a way of fashioning their personalities and inventing their lifestyles. Expressive values are concerned with what the branded product or service expresses (Salzer-Mörling, 2010, p. 531). So to speak, a strong brand is nothing without its meaning (expressive value), image and personality, i.e. *the set of traits consumers attribute to a product as if it were a person* (Solomon, 2006, p. 205). With the brand incarnating such expressive values, communicating the brand requires an understanding of how brand meaning is created. Thus, how then has marketing communication developed in its quest to better communicate and distinguish brands from an increasingly populated brandscape (the contemporary marketplace as classified by Salzer-Mörling)?

Differentiating the brand within the marketplace requires enhancing the perceived image customers have of the brand. Marketers have been able achieved this by *co-branding*; associating such brands with objects that encompass desired attributes, or *implied endorsements*; through the use of celebrities through a suitable strategy and media vehicle, who might transfer the meaning bestowed upon their image onto the product (Fill, 2009). One of such is the association of the Tom Hanks character and the Wilson volleyball in the movie *Cast Away* (Lehu, 2007).

Role of the Brand from a Consumer Perspective

Encompassing such expressive values it is only logical to think that brands play key functions from a consumer perspective as well. Brand expressive values correlates with consumers' self-concepts and through consumption of certain products consumers shuttle between their *actual selves* (a more realistic appraisal of consumers' have and don't have from a quality perspective), and their *ideal selves* (consumers' conceptions of their desired selves) as they try to bridge the gap between both selves Solomon (2006). Social comparisons as a result of exposures to marketing communications are thought to boost the self-image and thus lead to change in attitudes towards the communicated brands as well as characters associated with them (Solomon, 2006, p. 157).

Faced with varying choices, consumers are faced with certain risks ranging from physical through technological advances, to financial risks (increased prices). The main function of brands for consumers is that it *reduces their perceived risks*. On the other hand a good brand positioning *make life easier for consumers* as strong brand identity reassures and simplifies consumers faced with a problem of choice for example *Volvo* is associated with solidity and safety as brand identity and *Fiat* positioned as inexpensive and attractive (Kapferer, 2000, 2001, p. 21) and Kapferer, further claims that the functions of the brand makes consumers to even want to take more risk as in trying new technologies with reassuring brand names. However, Olin (2005), talks of the role of brands in reinforcement of consumer individuality through the meanings they convey onto the market (cited in Salzer-Mörling, 2010, p. 542). Conveying the right brand meaning for marketers requires more than just an eye-catching brand design. Contrarily, how the attributes of the brand are communicated, and the chosen medium, is of utmost importance. It is for this reason that marketing communications will constitute the next building block of this theoretical framework.

3.3 Marketing Communications (MCs)

What's the big deal of creating a brand if it's not to be communicated?; and what better way should it be carried out? Traditionally, brands have been communicated through advertising. However, for any form of advertising to be effective it has to be seen, read, listened to; then made believed, remembered and even acted upon (Copley, 2004, p. 105). This could constitute a means of gaining and sustaining a competitive advantage in the marketplace. Positive brand positioning could also result from a good communication strategy.

Marketing communications constitute the managerial process through which organizations engage their various audiences. Through a perfect understanding of an audience preferred communication environment, firms try to develop and present messages, for their different identified stakeholder groups before evaluating or acting upon any responses. However, conveying messages of significant value, triggers attitudinal, emotional and behavioural responses from the targeted audiences (Fill, 2009, p. 16).

Thus, reaping the competitive advantage encompassed within marketing communications, a mastery of the basic theories such as the basic communication model is imperative. Since the association a brand with objects, other brands or through implied endorsement i.e. brand associations with celebrities and experts, enhances the image of a brand through *meaning transfer*, consumer perceptions of the marketing communication tools used to communicate brands, becomes ultra important. These perceptions could have a great impact on their attitudes towards communicated brands. Thus for a choice of a media vehicle and marketing communication strategy such as the television and product placement respectively, what attitudinal consequences could the consumer perception of both the strategy and media vehicle have on the communicated brands? However, to shed light on this, it is important to have some knowledge on product placement and the logic behind the strategy. Thus in addition to what has been laid down on the background, complementing additional information on placements will be given after elaborating on some important media evaluative criteria.

Media Evaluative Criteria

There, exist several media evaluative criteria on which marketers base their communication strategies to be able to meet the demands of an increasingly fragmented consumer world. However, the choice of the media vehicle is paramount for marketing and marketers have always tried to answer questions such as; 1) *who is the target audience?*; 2) *what is the message intended for them?*; 3) *how best can this message be gotten across to them?*; and 4) *how cost effective would it be to get across to them?* However, concomitant to the purpose of this study, I feel much light should be shed on the question, *What perception does the targeted audience have of the marketing communication tool?*, when trying to answer the question, *How best can this message be gotten across to them?*

Cost Efficiency

From the marketer's perspective, cost efficiency is one of the most important criteria considered when choosing a media vehicle (Fill, 2009). Two types of are costs in this case; *absolute cost*, which constitutes the actual cost for the time and space bought in a particular vehicle, whereas the *relative cost* is the cost incurred in trying to contact each member of the targeted audience. The former, is paid for up front and has a direct impact on the marketer's cash flow. Though placements are though television and have a huge absolute cost, the access of a mass audience ensures that the absolute cost per number of receivers results in an extremely low relative cost (Fill, 2009, p. 712). Since films are best portrayed on television due to the audio-visual effects, television thus constitutes a very cost effective medium (Porter, 2004).

Communication Richness

The way in which the message is delivered to the targeted audience determines the impact level on the audience. The impact level in turn correlates with the dimensional nature offered the communicated message by the media vehicle. Multi-dimensional media vehicles, such as television i.e. a combination of sights, sounds,

and movements, could be liable to generate greater impact creating different moods and feelings. Although certain products during their life cycle might require different media in order to get their message across to targeted audiences, a product in the early stages of its lifecycle could actually need to be staged to get the audience to understand its usability downplaying the need for further educative lessons. This makes television a media vehicle that stands out in this category as well (Fill, 2009, p. 712). However, though product placement best fit this high impact image-medium, which enhances brand image, product placement in movies and TV shows are considered to have a low impact.

Interactive Properties

The interactivity of communications is also a very important issue in marketing communications and technological advances such digital technologies have greatly enhanced interactivity, which Ballantyne (2004), tips as a dialogue and in turn relationship building block (cited in Fill 2009, p. 712). However, due to the nature of the market not all marketing communications seek an *active* or interactive audience. The nature of the product and the objective of the campaign may warrant a passive media and a monologic format (Fill, 2009, p. 712) limiting the audiences' to a passive receiver with less power to perceive the message. The more activity demanded by a media vehicle, the lesser the possibility that the audience interactivity. Thus given a movie or a TV show's passivity, placing products or brands in these media would be a strategic move.

Audience Profiles

Audience profiles constitutes an important factor in the choice of a media vehicle but again here it depends on the objective of the campaign, demographics such as sex and age and the number of people within a target audience reachable are of paramount importance here. Targeting is very much possible within magazines and other print media. Television could access a mass, and it is hard but it is possible to segment audiences through criteria such as age or sex, or housewives, Television been a mass strategy, product placement which aims at primarily increasing brand awareness and enhancing image and attitudes towards brand best fits this medium (Fill, 2009).

Based on the above media evaluative criteria which tip in favour of product placements, it is obvious product placement is a very efficient marketing communication strategy. But the question is, it business healthy to look at this strategy just from the marketer's point of view? Wouldn't it be reassuring to look at the different perceptions consumers have of the strategy and the consequences such perceptions might have on the media vehicle, the communicated brands etc. This paper tries look at theses aspects but first its worth shedding some light on product placements.

3.4 Product Placement (PPL)

As the point of origin of the applied conceptual model designed for this study, the Adapt-ELM (see figure 3-1 above), this section complements the background on

product placements and gives a broader view of the rationale behind a covert marketing strategy.

Pre-occupied by achieving distinctive competitive advantage over competitors in this ever increasingly competitive global marketplace, marketers have been pushed towards entrepreneurial marketing communication strategies. As a result, they have gone beyond conventional forms of marketing communication channels towards contemporary channels of communication such as product placement (McCarty, 2004, p. 45). The latter designates the placing of branded products in movies or television programs in view of increasing brand awareness. However, until much recently this process was done with a lot of passivity hoping it would just be viewed but much recently the brands are being actively woven into the plots of the programmes in which they are placed i.e. 'branded entertainment' (Fill, 2009, p. 692). Still within placements, testimonials and endorsements could also be performed by movie stars and other celebrities (Segrave, 2005, p. 3) through implied endorsement. This does not only establish credibility for a range of high-involvement and low-involvement decisions, however, it also helps in grabbing consumers' attention in such markets where brand parity reduces the consumers' motivation to decide between competitive products. These testimonials and endorsements are however, very successful with entertainment and sporting celebrities who practically transfer their images onto the products they endorse (Fill, 2009, p. 509).

Near past and Current trends

With the entertainment and the marketing industries getting closer (Donaton, 2004) some near past and contemporary trends could be remarked. *Placements in credits, Co-creation and lobbying, Mini-films dedicated to brands, Original advertising placements, Brand integration and Virtual placements.*

Though very brief, some productions reserve spots for brands within their *credits*. Identification in such cases is the brand colour codes of placed brands. The successful series *NYPD Blue*, by Steven Bochco and David Milch had over 261 episodes from 1993 to 2005 with spots in the credits retained for advertising board for Coca-Cola. In cinema or movie industry, examples of such placements could be seen in *Star Trek Generations* in which the opening credits rolled while a white floating space crossed the screen several times until it was identifiable as Moët et Chandon, Cuvée Dom Pérignon, Vintage 2265 (Lehu, 2007, p. 194).

As marriage between marketing and entertainment industries intensifies, there has been some kind of *lobbying* by specialized marketer agents who present their products to movie producers. As they inform them of their products and brands, they try to present the advantages of these brands and the benefits they encompassed if placed in their movie (Lehu, 2007, p. 199). An example of such a case is cited by Robert P. P. Laurence (2005) of a US agency, 1st Approach which sent a model of AutoTape (the latest automatic tape measure from Black & Decker to 1000 contacts such as Hollywood screenwriters and some months later the tape appeared in episodes of the series *Still Standing* and *The Kings of Queens* (cited in

Lehu 2007, p. 199). In such a case the placement is gratis i.e. not a paid for exposure but most often both the producer and the marketers benefit from environmental credibility and brand awareness. Donaton (2004) also talks of *co-creation* in which special creation deals are made between the marketer and the producer in the early stages before the film release. Such deals grant the marketer the possibility to look at the scripts in view of seeing where products and brands could be placed. Such deals are often paid for or could be barter placements for example the I Robot production was supplied with special constructed vehicles.

Original advertising placements have also been a recent trend as seen with the Jeep Rubicon advertisement that was done on the movie set of *Tomb Raider: Cradle of life (2003)* in which featured Angelina Jolie as Lara Croft. Jeep was provided for the movie but in return the Jeep benefited from the movie set and the star for its original advertisement in some form of indirect Jeep commercial. On the other hand the production also benefited as the advertisement of the Jeep also served as advertisement for the movie (Lehu, 2007, p. 44). *Mini-films dedicated to brands* also constitute a significant trend.

Potential benefits

The overwhelming strategic value of product placement makes it a highly sought-after strategy by advertisers. It is actually not a communication technique reserved for the world's leading brands as smaller actors can also make good use of it (Moser *et al*, 2004). Lehu (2007) argues that Apple's tiny communications budget as compared to Dell, HP, NEC or Microsoft has in line with its positioning always been the reason its always tried to communicate differently adopting product placement appearing in movies like *Trust the Man* (Bart Freundlich, 2006), *Big Momma's house* (John Whitesell, 2006), *Monster-in-law* (Robert Luketic, 2005), *The Recruit* (Roger Donaldson, 2003), *The Ring* (Gore Verbinski, 2002), *Ocean's Eleven* (Steven Soderbergh, 2001), among others.

However, Lehu (2007) groups the strategic values of product placements into four categories, *A technique accepted by the audience*, *A potential vector of positive image*, *A highly variable price and a relatively low cost* and as *A possible influence on purchasing behaviour*.

Many studies conducted in this regard; show audience tolerance to the practice. Nebenzahl & Secunda (1993) talk of audience appreciation especially where there is successful integration (cited in Lehu, 2007, p. 64) especially among regular viewers (Gupta & Gould, 1997). Also when it is logically placed respecting the rule of a tolerable and justified presence the tolerance is even greater such as the association of the Knorr brand and the cookery program the *Next Great Chef* in Canada 2005.

A well orchestrated placement could result in a world of benefits for the brand. *Brand awareness* could be achieved while *brand image* greatly enhanced in some cases. According to Pardun and (McKee 1996), the impatient wait for *New York Times* by Al Pacino playing a playwright along with his cast members, cited and presented an absolute reference (cited in Lehu 2007). Unlike traditional

advertising, and according an analysis of Richard Heslin, professor of psychology at Purdue University (cited in Lehu, 2007, p. 63) the subtlety of product placement lowers viewers' anti-advertising 'defences' offering brands the perfect and competitive opportunity to communicate.

Placements, of products or brands in a film does not only build their awareness which is very beneficial to the marketer, but also it offers credibility to the movie. The credibility of the source within the communication model can be better improved and the brand image reinforced. Implied endorsement due to association of the brand with a celebrity could result in transfer of meaning from the celebrity to the product as the audience try to associate itself with the environment depicted in the movie (Fill, 2009, p. 694). Isabelle Fontaine (2005), claims this makes product placement a potentially powerful vector of positive image and could generate positive consumer attitudes towards the product or the brand (cited in Lehu, 2007, p. 68) since these attitudes are greatly enhanced by meaning and image transfer due to the aforementioned implied endorsements. In this light, the association of James Bond with the Evian Brand in *Casino Royal* (Lee Tamahori, 2006), was very positive for Evian as the agent's good image (sportive and elegant) could be transferred on to the brand while it gives the agent credibility as the Evian brand is also known for its quality mineral water (Lehu, 2007, p. 68).

From the branding point of view it also constitutes a cost effective form of advertising following the ever growing global audiences due to advances in technology as movies move from box-office to video/DVD and to television reaching over a hundred million viewers in no time, even though according to McKechnie and Zhou (2003), the pricing are highly variable as it increases depending on whether the placement is a classic visual placement, whether it is spoken mentioned or used by an actor (cited in Eisend, 2009). Ford actually outbided BMW by several million dollars (US\$30-40 million in total) (Lehu, 2007, p. 70) to see Aston Martin reappear in *Die Another Day*. This is cost effective with respect to its minimum CPM (cost per thousand comparison of medium efficiency) (Lehu, 2007, p. 92), owing to the long lifespan of movies and their global reach.

As an aggregate effect of brand awareness, image and positive attitude and meaning transfer, product placement shows a possible influence on purchase decision. This is justifiable by the case of the staples wall clock used as a prop in the Stephen Freear's film *Dirty Pretty Things* (2002) with a usual price of US\$8.98. Later on the said clock became one of staples' best-selling products. Another example is the candy Reese's Pieces, used in the Steven Spielberg film, *The Extra-Terrestrial* (1982). The candy, registered sales increase of up to about 65% after the movie release. Positive influence on purchase behaviour could be said about the 50% rise in sales for the Ray-Ban sunglasses worn by Tom Cruise in the Paul Brickman film, *Risky Business* (1983) (Lehu, 2007, p. 48).

With technological advances and virtual placements market segmentation and proper targeting could be achieved as well as global brand positioning.

However, from a consumers' perspective, the potential benefits of placements could be seen on a *personal relevance* level as they might try to connect themselves with the characters in the movie or TV show. Also through explicit (brand mentions) and implicit (actual usage) i.e. implied endorsement consumers could generate attitudes towards products associated with these celebrities. Brands also being social symbols, with expressive values, consumers could display or reinforce their self-concepts through social comparison. This role of product placement could be hugely enhanced given a well chosen context that concords with the viewer's self-concept. Product placements could also intensify the authenticity of the used medium thereby playing a experiential/empathy or projective function. The *projective function* could be defined as the audience's vicarious emotional identification with TV programs or films. Further more product placements could also play an *informative* function as the practice informs consumers about branded products, their deployment with a given social practice, as a brand's usability could be associated with friendship (a character could offer a beer to another), romance (the bond character and the bolinger brand in James bond movie Casino Royal) or expertise (use of a brand to signify group knowledge) (Hackley and Tiwsakul, 2006).

Disadvantage

From a consumer perspective a potential set back could stem from the incongruence in a placement. This could result in the distortion of the anticipated consumer entertainment experience that comes with watching a movie or a TV show. And as most anti-consumerists claim, the commercialization of movies has transformed art for art's sake, to art for ad's sake.

Placement Efficacy

Generally, for product placement, the perceived source is usually a credible media that successfully hides sponsors' identity. Several elements influence the efficacy of placements but however, these constituent elements are expected to impact effectiveness as a whole. This section examines the influence of the message, the media and the consumer characteristics on placement efficacy (Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 107).

Influence of the Message characteristics

Within these criteria it is imperative to look at the *fit of the placement with the context* and *strength of the placement*. Borrowing from the branding literature, which posits, the successful transfer of attitudes from parent brands to brand extensions, Aaker and Keller (1990) claim that the degree of fit between the placed brands and the context within which they appear greatly determines the extent to which attitudes are transferred from the context over to the placed brands (cited in Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 107). Thus a good fit between actors or the context and the placed products should facilitate a transfer of positive attitudes from the actors or context to the products. Also, attention to memory for and believability of brand portrayals and depicted claims could be greatly enhanced (Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 107). In the case of the BMW's Z3 roadster associated with the James Bond charac-

ter in the movie *Golden Eye*, both the car and the character encompassed sexiness and sophistication attributes, which represent a good fit. In case of a good fit, attitudes from one component could be transferred to the other, through meaning transfer. Contrarily, a misfit i.e. brands that doesn't quite fit into the storyline are likely to raise suspicion of persuasive intent when noticed, and thus a high possibility negative scrutiny will be spurred. This will result in lower level of consumer trust in brand claims and media credibility (Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 108).

The *strength* or the *intensity* of the message also enhances the efficacy of placements and this could be manipulated in variable ways which range from the number of mentions of brand name, visual or verbal inclusions or both, as well as foreground or background appearances, actual usage, and brand integration with the context. Price tags for placement are directly proportional to the strength of placements. However, looking at brand mentions, the measures of brand efficacy such a recall and recognition are thought to rise with the number of mentions, but as this will lead to efficacy up to a certain point. Beyond this threshold i.e. increase in number of mentions would lead to scepticism and thus a decline in efficacy. However, efficacy in placements resides in the subtlety i.e. the way it blends with the context as too obvious attempts, results in consumers inferring manipulative intent (Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 109).

Influence of Media Characteristics

Due to the persuasive agendas of placements, which unlike traditional advertisements are covert, media characteristics play a vital role. According to Balasubramanian (1994) the believability and persuasiveness of a message is to a very high degree associated with it's perceived source (cited in Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 110). In the case of product placements, the medium used constitutes the source. The degree of consumer scepticism surrounding a particular source is directly proportional to the level of *consumer awareness of a persuasive intent* associated to that source (medium used). This could have a tremendous effect on the persuasiveness. Higher media credibility will increase the chances of the believability of the placed claims. *Credible media*, are media considered honest in their reporting (cited in Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 113). However, when consumers believe the source is less credible, they tend to resist to the persuasive intent and there could be a backlash fuelled by consumer resentments (Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 113).

Influence of Consumer Characteristics

Consumer influence could be seen at the *level of consumer involvement* with a product. The level of importance of a message to a consumer has a high probability to spur scrutiny from such a consumer. In cases of high involvement, consumers will ignore cues such as media credibility and scrutinize the placed claims directly. While in low involvement situations, consumers will rely on cues like media credibility to be able to process the persuasive message. The less credible the latter is, the more scepticism is spurred (Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 113). However, in this study consumer involvement with product placement is elaborated upon in section 3.2, The Elaboration Likelihood Model, above.

However, despite the gains in popularity or awareness associated with product placements, the integrated nature of both the marketing and promotion mix downplays the use of solely placements for promotional campaigns. As an example the integrated marketing plan for the BMW's Z3 roadster launch shows a joint promotional activity which constituted the placement of the roadster in the James Bond movie *Golden Eye*, and other supporting promotional activity such as television and print advertisements that cross promoted the car with the movie, public appearances by actors, plugs on television talk shows and also features within the Neiman Marcus Christmas. (Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 104) and figure 3-2 above, shows the product placement branded entertainment continuum and the stakes.

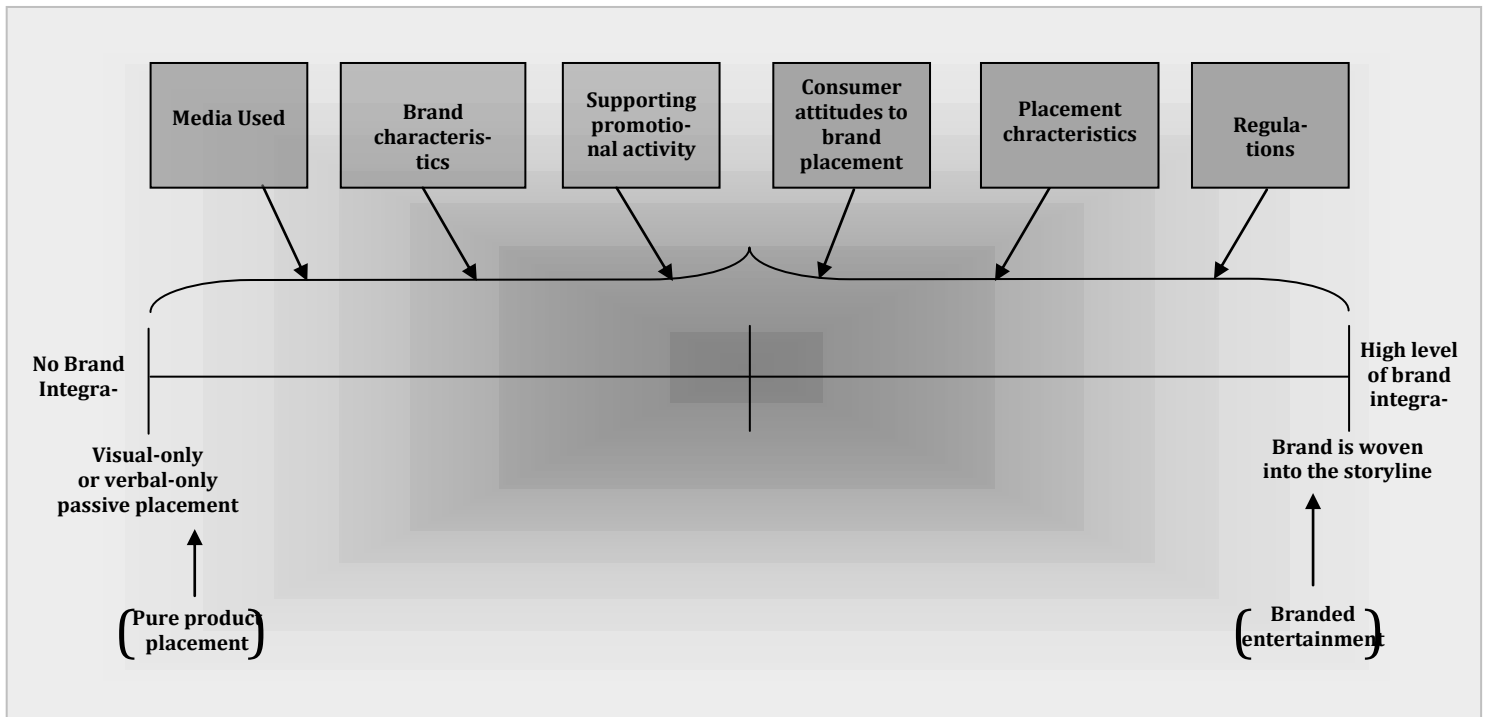


Figure 3-2 The product placement-branded entertainment continuum, Hudson and Hudson (2006)

Efficiency, Ethicality and Product Placements

The highly extolled virtues of placements by researchers are very much associated with the concealed nature of the practice and the seamless integration possibilities within the media content. However, the arguments forwarded as advantages of placements over traditional advertising lies in the assumption that, consumers are unaware of the commercial intent behind the process. There will however, be an implicit conflict between the efficiency and ethicality associated with placements as marketers strive for efficiency while regulatory bodies on the other hand strive to protect consumer from being misled. As Miller (1990) highlights, these bodies question the creative integrity, the commercialization of entertainment and the influence on vulnerable groups such as children (cited in Kuhn *et al*, 2010). However, some scholars base arguments for the ethicality of placements on the fact that

some consumers are very sophisticated and they realize the commercially placed brands within media content. Such consumers, aware of commercial and persuasive intent accept placements as legitimate forms of marketing efforts engaged in critical thinking thereby downplaying the need for government legislation (Bhatnagar, *et al*, 2004).

3.5 Attitude towards the Ad

Consumer attitude formation and change models constitute the next building block for the Adapt-ELM but first a little brief on attitudes towards the ad will be presented.

Exposures to product placement like any other marketing communication or advertisement, could result in attitudinal changes, which could be positive or negative. Understanding consumer attitudes towards advertising requires proper knowledge of the process itself. Advertising is a non-personal form of mass communication that offers marketers a high level of control over the design and delivery of the advertising message. However, advertising has certain characteristics such as; the ability to persuade the targeted audience to think and behave in a particular way is suspect through advertising and the effect on sales is extremely hard to measure. There is also a low credibility as audiences are less likely to believe messages delivered through this medium than through other tools and word-of-mouth communications.

Being so flexible, advertising through television could be used to gain nationwide access as well as particular specialized segments. Most especially, though the cost could be extremely high, an appropriate medium such as feature films with wider reach, the actual cost per person could be reduced. Though advertising on TV is arguably the most cost effective tool amongst the tools in the marketing communication mix (Fill, 2009), attitude formation and change towards a strategy such as product placements could very well spring up from the perception consumers have of the marketing strategy owing to its covert and assumed deceptive agenda.

Scholderer (2010) defines an attitude as the positive or negative evaluation of an object where the "object" most precisely an attitude object could be either concrete or abstract. But however, most consumer research separates attitude objects into product and services including the related or associated attributes, issues, people, communications, situations, and behaviours (Scholderer, 2010, p. 211). Consumers' increasing scepticism about traditional advertising as they acquired better knowledge and understanding of marketers' persuasive intentions resulted in negative attitudes towards traditional advertising. Seen basically in consumers zipping and zapping of 30sec spot marketing communications on TV, it could be explained by the fact that the salient nature of an advertisement could have resulted in a backlash as audiences quickly noticed the persuasive intent of the advertisement thereby creating a barrier against procession of the message. The following models will be used to explain attitude formation and change towards marketing communications.

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM)

Due to the great deal of attention focused on attitude formation and change towards products and services in marketing literature, the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) was put up by (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981) as a framework to conceptualize the diverse results in attitude change research. The ELM has its background to marketing and psychology (Bitner and Obermiller, 1988). See figure 3-3 below for a schematic illustration of the ELM.

The fact that this model associates persuasion and attitude formation and change with motivation and involvement makes it appropriate as the backbone for the theoretical framework for this study, the Adapt-ELM. Other consistency theories of attitudes such as Heider’s (1958) *Balance Theory*, and the *Social Judgment Theory* which both look at perception and motivation as the basis for attitude formation, could have been used but for the fact that they ignore the aspect of involvement.

This model however, posits that, based on the different interests consumers have in most communicated product categories and as well on their perception of the information and how important they find the information in the persuasive message (Petty and Cacioppo 1981), and also based on their involvement with the communicated claims which could be placed claims in case of product placement, an exposure to a marketing communication could result in the activation of different cognitive processes (cited in Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 111) and the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) proposes that there are two routes to persuasion: The highly involved consumers, take the central route to persuasion and through which they carefully and actively think about the arguments presented in the message, and generate cognitive responses to arguments used (Solomon, 2006, p. 291).

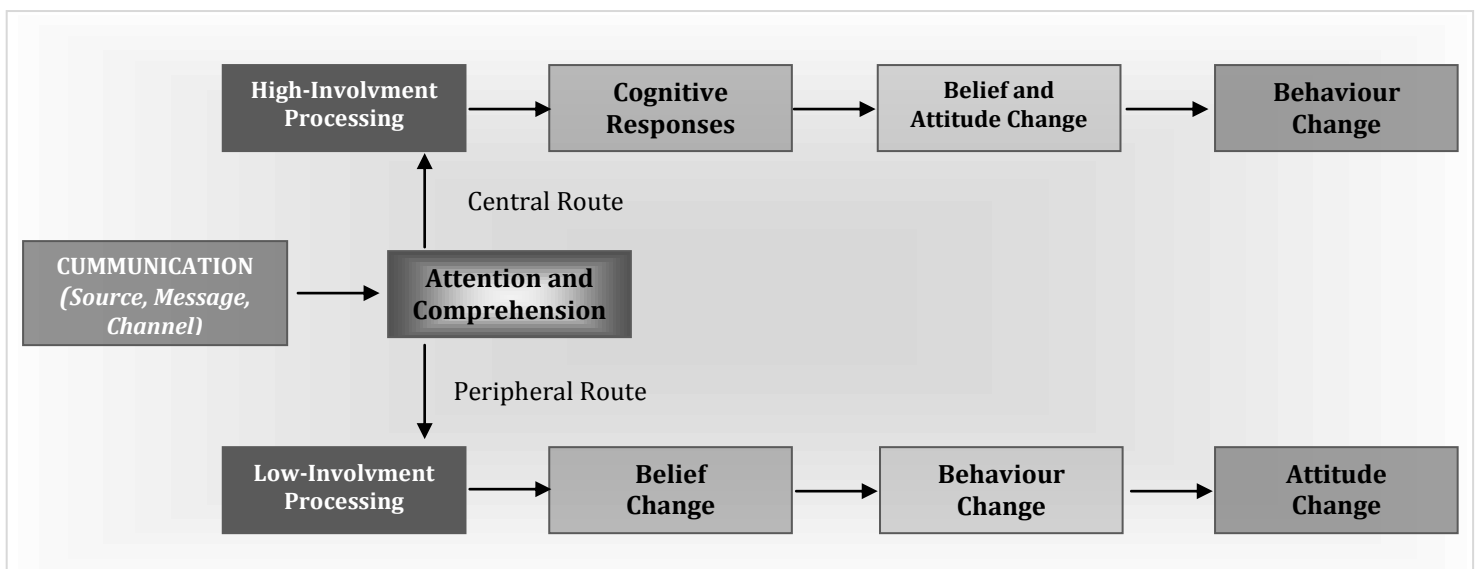


Figure 3-3 The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), (Solomon, 2006)

Targeting highly involved audiences it is imperative that the marketer’s emphasis is placed on the attributes related to the accuracy and relevance claims in order for

greater and consequent persuasion to occur (Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 111). Contrarily, Petty, Cacioppo & Schumann (1983) claim that less-involved consumers tend to use the peripheral route to persuasion, as they are not motivated to attend to the message content. In this case they rely on cues for discerning message suitability (cited in Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 111). Within the context of marketing communications such as product placements, examples of such cues could include attitudes towards and perceived credibility of specific media vehicles and specific media sources (such as specific movies), perceived endorsers (such as actors using products within a movie and TV shows). As such, it is imperative that marketers take such cues into consideration as especially, with less-involved consumers who might want to use source credibility as a cue to determine their trust for the message or the source. According to this model, trust and consequent persuasion are expected to be greater for low-involvement audiences when associated with credible media (Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 111).

Attitude towards Cues

Based on the Adapt-ELM for product placements, there are four cues used by low involvement consumers. These are *movie directors*, *movie actors and actresses*, *movie storyline*, and last but not least, the *perceived design and usability* of the communicated of brand. Attitude formation towards these cues could be classified into categories following the effects they generate on consumers.

Mere-Exposure Effect

Though familiarity arguably brings contempt, psychological research shows, people are more prone to like things they are more familiar with, despite not being keen on them initially and psychologist term this phenomenon the *mere-exposure effect* (Solomon, 2006, p. 281). Janiszewski (1993) refers to the mere-exposure effect as the formulation positive effects towards brands as a result of brief exposure (cited in Law and Braun-LaTour, 2004, p. 71). However, this effect is an affective effect of *implicit processing* or *priming* which constitutes the tendency for a recently presented stimulus to facilitate subsequent judgement or behavior (Law and Braun-LaTour, 2004, p. 69). In relation to product placements, this stipulates that subliminal visual cues such as the design and the usability of a product could result in the desired behavior in the case of a low-involvement consumers. Thus such exposure of brands (their designs and usability) on screen in product placements could benefit from this effect. However, the subtlety will also be of great importance as the strength of the message could result in a backlash whenever consumers infer manipulative attempts.

The Cultivation Effect

Linked to the social construction of reality theory, Gerbner's (1973) *Cultivation Theory* posits, exposure to media results in a cultivation effect on viewers. Based on two components Gerbner (1973) argues that, whether through "fiction" such as soap operas or "fact" such as news, television content presents a systemic distortion of reality as viewers tend to see the world as constructed by television. The other component stipulates that viewing the world through media constructed

lenses, stimulates *internalization* within the viewer and which claims more exposure results in development and shaping of values, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions that are consistent with this mediated reality. Marketers have learned to tap the positive effects of internalization through varying forms of marketing communications and most especially product placement by seamlessly placing brands within television content hoping viewers in which case potential consumers who rely on the cues like *movie storyline*, will through internalization develop or change their attitudes towards these brands based on the placed contexts (Bhatnagar, *et al*, 2004, p. 105).

Meaning Transfer

In addition to the exposure and cultivation effects consumers may attribute different *brand meanings* — the perceptions consumers have of different brands — to the exposed brands, which go beyond the utilitarian and functional. Such brands are thought to be value-expressive as they appeal to the self. Products within the clothing, automobile and mobile telecommunications industries constitute examples of such products which recently have been loaded with utilitarian, personal and social meanings (Laaksonen, 2010, p. 193). Marketers, *celebrity endorsements* (promotion of brands using celebrities) have successfully conferred meanings consumers allocated to certain celebrities onto their brands. Thus the success of an endorsement will greatly depend on the meanings the endorsers brings with her from other aspects of her life to the association such as attractiveness, familiarity, and likeability (Halonen-Kight and Hurmerinta, 2010). Thus through meaning transfer low-involvement consumers could generate attitudes towards certain feature films as well as the products placed in them based on celebrity cues like *movie directors and characters* associated with the feature film.

However, it's worth noting that adverse consumer attitudes could arise from mere-exposure and cultivation effects and meaning transfers. The congruence of an advertisement could spur manipulative inferences, leading to negative consumer perceptions of the marketing strategy. Incongruence in this case could be use of bad choice of celebrity. But could this perception in the case of placements be conveyed onto to placed claims?

However, celebrity endorsements have ceased from being unidirectional as celebrities who are gradually becoming brands also benefit from associations with other brands through *co-branding* or *composite brand extensions* though sometimes called brand integration they both constitute brand *extension strategies* and more precisely are the alliances between two or more but rather differentiate brands to create something new (Park *et al*, 1996).

It is also worth noting that highly-involved consumers when faced with a credible media, turn to scrutinize and once any persuasive intent is inferred, there possibilities of backlashes as they pay much attention to the message. And just like in the case of traditional advertising, the detection of the underlying manipulative intent in the case of placements could generate feelings of betrayal which could lead to a backlash particular when the utilized medium is perceived as credible

(Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 111) such as movies. In this case consumers will tend to develop a barrier against the intended persuasion attempt.

The Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM)

The Persuasion Knowledge Model by Friestad and Wright (1994) constitute the next building block of the Adapt-ELM. This model tries to look at how consumers react when exposed to advertisement. It posits that consumers develop dynamic structures about persuasion when faced with persuasive attempts from others (see figure 3-4 below, for an adapted model).

Typical of such structures is persuasion knowledge, which enables them to cope with the aforementioned attempts. Persuasion knowledge however, constitutes the consumer’s belief about persuasion such as trying to determine what marketers goals are; what tactics the marketer put in place to achieve these goals and how they affect psychological mediators such as getting attention, generating interests or eliciting emotions and how she effectively deals with the persuasion attempt. Also referred to as the “schemer schema” by Wright (1984), persuasion knowledge could also be activated when the consumers regard marketer’s claims with greater suspicion thus inferring that the marketer is deceptive and manipulative or using a particular tactic (cited in Wentzel *et al*, 2010).

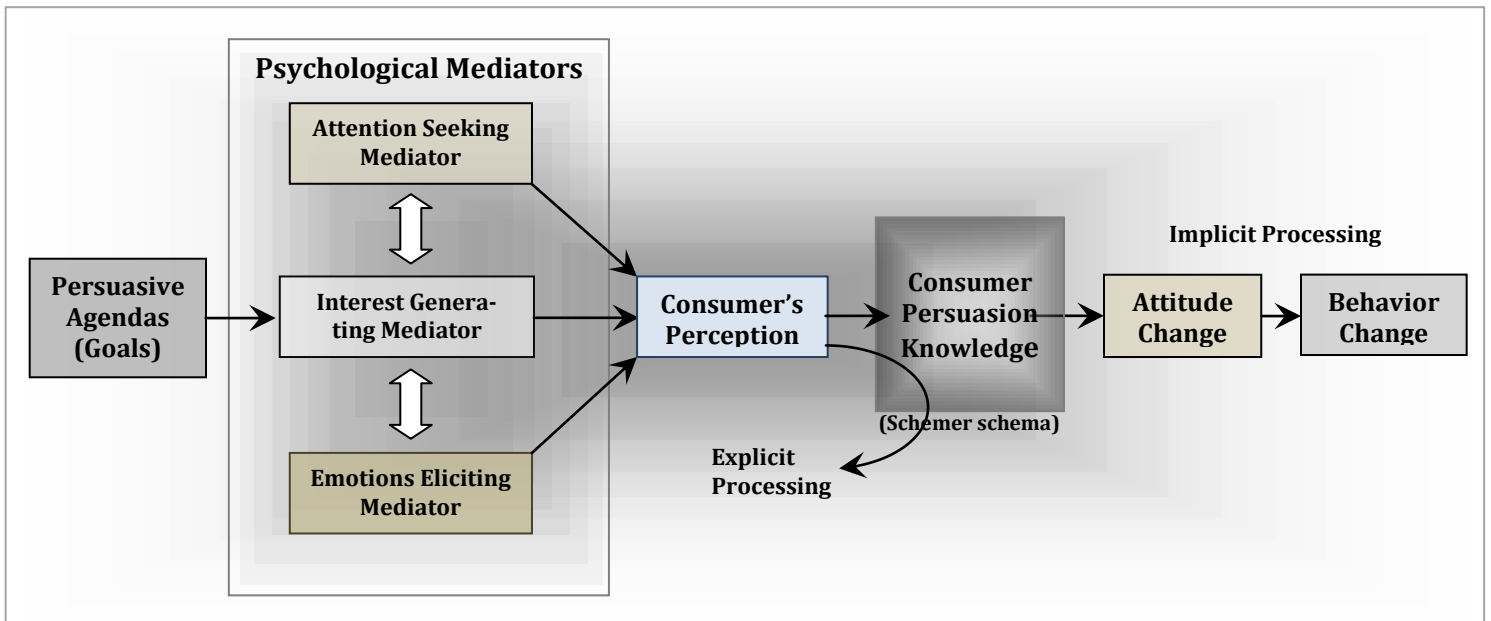


Figure 3-4 An Adapted Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM) (Melvin Masuwely Fondeson)

However, consumers do not always activate their “schemer schema” faced with an influence attempt. On the contrary the degree of the manipulative intent of the source, in the case of the placements, the media used and the saliency of placed claims i.e. too obvious placements could result in consumer activation of the “schemer schema”. Highly salient placements, due to incongruence of the message or other cues such as the characters the consumers might activate their perception

knowledge and thus resisting to the persuasion attempt (Wentzel *et al*, 2010). In such a case the message will hit the schema i.e. being explicit processed. Whereas in some cases the message goes through the schema even though the consumer is aware of an influence attempt in which case it is implicit processing.

Despite the route to persuasion consumers adopt, exposures to marketing communications are aimed at altering and shaping consumers' attitude to communicated brands in view of enhancing their purchase behaviors. However, exposures to an ad generates forms of feelings (affects) and judgements (cognitions), which subsequently affect their attitudes and beliefs towards the ads and then their attitude and beliefs towards the communicated brand. There's however a positive relationship between attitude towards the advertisement and consumer (Schiffmann & Kanuk, 2007). As a general outcome, the communicated message could have a wide range of effects on the receiver and the Advertising Exposure Model (see figure 3-5 below) elaborates on this various effects post-consumer exposure to a Ad as a marketing communication.

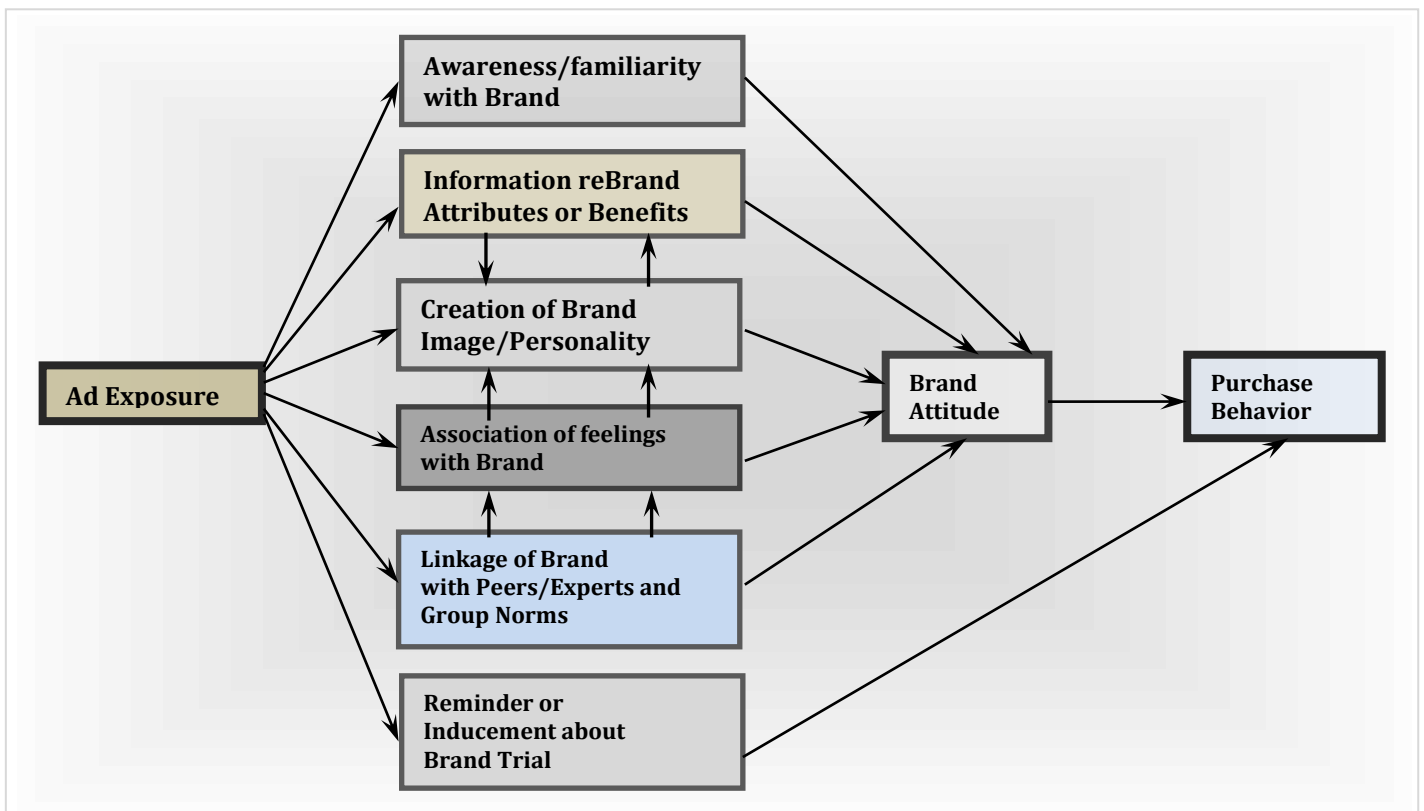


Figure 3-5 The Advertising Exposure Model (AEM), (Batra *et al* 1996)

The model proposes that five outcomes could be depicted and they can be explained as follows; First of all, the ad-exposure could create brand *awareness* initiating a feeling of familiarity with the brand. Secondly, ad-exposure could offer better communication of brand benefits and *attributes* on which the benefits are based. Thirdly, ad-exposure generates association of *feelings* with the brand or its

consumption within the audience. Subsequently, adequate ad-exposure with the help of a good choice of spokesperson and other executional devices could lead to creation of a *brand image* or better known as *brand personality*. This is then followed by the fact that the ad could create an impression that admired experts and desirable celebrities or peers whose status are worth emulating, love the brand.

However, the five effects could create favourable liking or attitude towards the brand which could in turn lead to purchasing action. Sometimes advertisers will try to spur purchase behaviour by communicating incentives for purchase through reminders (Batra, *et al*, 1996).

3.6 Research Questions (RQs)

Guided by the frame of reference, my aim is to seek suitable answers to a few specific questions towards fulfilling the purpose of the thesis.

1. *How do different consumers perceive product placement?*
2. *How does their perceptions affect the way they view movies and TV shows?*
3. *What implications could these have on their consumption habits?*

RQ₁; aims at finding out what the different consumer perceptions of product placements are? It is very important to note that legal practitioners, as well as anti-consumerist activists have raised growing concerns about the covert nature of product placement and thus terming it deceptive and misleading from a consumer perspective while marketer rely on this same covert nature to create brand awareness. It is thus imperative to fill this research gap by trying to understand what consumer themselves think of product placement.

RQ₂; aims at looking at the effects a positive or negative perception of product placement could have on consumer attitudes toward movies and TV shows as a whole. Also here it is imperative to note that consumers through entertainment derive variety of gratification and these media movies and TV shows (sources) have been void of any marketing persuasive intentions until recently. It is thus very important to understand what could be the resulting consumer attitudes towards these gratifying forms of entertainment assuming they have noticed the manipulative use of movies TV shows as marketing communication carriers.

RQ₃; after looking at the consumer perceptions of placements and the resulting effects on their attitudes towards movies and TV shows which, in this context are the sources of the message it is only logical that this study looks at if there could be a change in consumer attitudes towards placed brands.

3.7 Summary

Chapter is in fact crucial for this study and this is solely because within it, I have constructed a conceptual model (the Adapt-ELM for product placements), from the already existing PKM and ELM models and other attitude towards the ad models.

More so, I have also constructed three research questions, which I hope to answer using my empirical findings. Complementing the consumer behaviour literature used to explain the attitude towards the ad models, much light was shed on branding, marketing communications and product placements. The next chapter constitutes the methodology chapter within which I will explain how I plan to conduct my research. I will use this adapted model to make sense of my empirical findings.

4 Methodology

This section of this paper, based on the aforementioned theoretical framework, and the background information, focuses on explaining how the empirical study was conducted, and it offers information on the choice of research method, design, data collection method, handling and analysis.

4.1 Research Philosophy and Approach

According to Saunders *et al.* (2009, p. 108), the choice of a research philosophy, constitutes important assumptions about the researcher's view of the world and they greatly underpin the research strategy choice and the research method. However, this study takes an interpretivist philosophy. Positivism could have been an option but according to Saunders *et al.* (2009, p. 111), interpretivism constitutes the best strategy when the researcher's goal is to understand the subjective meanings motivating actions of social actors.

In addition, this study takes an inductive approach which is most applicable for interpretivist philosophy (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p.124) and the research design will be based on the notion of subjectivism. Adam *et al.* (2007, p. 81), practically refers to the research design as the blueprint that facilitates the fulfilment of research objectives and answering the research questions. It is in other words, the ground plan specifying the methods and procedures for data collection and analysis. The strength of the inductive research approach which makes it preferable for this study other than the deductive approach lies in the fact that it permits the understanding of how humans interpret the social world. It also constitutes a theory building approach from collected and analysed data. Though it is however possible to end up with the same theory, this approach usually leads to a perfect understanding of the utilized theory and is perfectly suited for studies on small samples (Saunders *et al.*, 2009, p. 126) such as this.

This paper will actually try to make sense of Petty and Cacioppo's (1979) Elaboration Likelihood Model in view of seeking an understanding of the implications of consumer perceptions of product placement as an attitude object, on movies and television programs (the source) and the implications this might have on their attitudes towards the placed claims.

4.2 Research Strategy and Method Choice

According to Saunders *et al.* (2009, p. 139) a research project may be multi-purposed i.e. it could be either exploratory or explanatory and descriptive.

The descriptive research however, has an objective to provide description for various phenomena concerned basically with understanding why a behaviour is the way it is and it is used to set baselines of how the world is viewed. The descriptive research strategy is always the starting point into phenomena which the researcher has little knowledge about i.e. an exploratory research study. Explanatory research aims at developing a precise theory which can be used to explain the empirical findings and it aims at describing a behaviour and why it is

the way it is (Adams *et al*, 2007, p. 20). However, this study adopts a descriptive and exploratory purpose (Saunders *et al*, 2009, p. 140).

Based on the type of research questions, the amount of control placed over the observation process, and last how focus the study is on contemporary issues, Yin (2009, p. 8) proposes five research strategies specifically; experiments, case studies, surveys, archival analysis and history. Actually, three of them could have been useful for this thesis due to their ability to investigate contemporary phenomena as product placement and these are a case study, experiment and survey. The experiment could have been an even better choice but since I simply focus on consumer perceptions, the survey was quite appropriate.

With the above research design or philosophy, purpose and strategy, I resulted in the choice of a single method the qualitative study. Both the qualitative and quantitative methods of approach have their strengths and the other cannot be held better than the other. However, appropriate to this study, is a qualitative research method since I do not seek quantitative results, but rather just connections and consistency in the established theories, that I will use to try to answer my research questions.

4.3 Data Collection Technique

Yin (2009) proposes six sources of evidence that could be the focus of data collection for case studies: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts.

Data Collection

Documentation is the different types of documents such as statistics, registrations, official publications, letters, diaries, newspapers, journals, branch literature, and brochures. And they are mostly used for secondary data collection. *Archival Records* on the other hand are service records, organizational records maps and charts, survey data and personal records and they also serve for secondary data collection. *Interviews*, mostly open-ended nature that an investigator asks key respondents for the facts of the matter as well as their personal opinions. Interviews could also be focused interview in which case the interview takes a short time such as 1hour and the questions could be more structured along the lines of a formal *survey*. *Direct-observations* could entail the observation of meetings, sidetalk activities factory work classroom and so on. And this is mostly used to provide additional information about the studied topic and in this case reliability is ensured buy having more than one observer to make the observation whether in a formal or causal case. *Participant-observation* constitutes a special mode of observation in which the investigator takes the role of a passive observer and in such a case he may play different roles within the case study situation as well as participating in the studied event. *Physical artifacts* constitute the final source of evidence and it could be physical or cultural artifact such a technological device, a tool or instrument a work of art or better still some other physical evidence. Collection of such artifacts could be performed as part of a field visit and constitute a method that has been used extensively for anthropological research.

Saunders *et al.* (2009, p 324) proposes some kinds of questioning methods which could have been useful for a survey and they are; questionnaires, telephone interviews, face-to-face personal interview, internet mediated interviews questioning through emails. However, *questionnaires* are sent to respondents and they answer them without any explanation or influence of the researcher. They shouldn't be too long and exhaustive however since respondents might get bored to answer. *Telephone interviews* however reduces the geographical barriers and the interviewer can pose more complex questions and explain any misunderstanding though the time is often limited and the interviewer cannot judge the interviewee's mood. *Face-to face interviews* reduce chances of any misunderstanding through misjudgment of moods and the interviews could even be longer. *Internet-mediated* interviews could be through recent communication technologies like *Skype* and it works same as the telephone interview but with both vocals and visuals. Questioning through emails involve the researcher emailing questions to the respondent and wait for the reply and this could be time consuming as the respondent might take so much time to reply.

Face-to-face interviews were the choice for questioning instead of questionnaires partly because all the participants were closer and were contacted in time otherwise telephone interviews could have been used but most importantly because most respondents are reluctant to respond to self-administered questionnaires, establishing personal contact was of high relevance. The interviews lasted about (40minutes) and this enabled me to clear all misunderstandings while making sure the respondents understood all the questions. The same interview guide (see Appendix 1) was followed for every interview as this contained the main issues developed based on the conceptual framework (Adams *et al*, 2007, p. 145).

Primary and Secondary data Selection

Adam *et al.* (2007) talk of two types of data that can be collected for a research. *Primary data* is that gathered for a specific research in response to a particular problem such as interviews distribution of questionnaires or other types of observations while *Secondary data* is that which may have been collected for another purpose. As mentioned above we used face-to-face interviews to collect primary data that helped us acquired deeper knowledge on our case and the interviews were recorded with permission from respondents. Secondary data were collected and used for the background of branding, marketing communication, and product placements. These secondary data sources have all been academic articles and studies concerning my subject.

Presentation of Empirical Findings

The empirical presentation will follow a consistent structure with the initial ideas of conducting the research. However, the data from each interviewee will appear in block formats of information according to source and in a way that will be consistent with the purpose of the study. However, the choice of the structure could be criticized but I feel it will ease readability, as data from each source would be easily

identified. However, the interviewees are all consumers and it makes no difference whose data comes first.

4.4 Sample Selection

According to Adam *et al.* (2007, p. 87), sampling is the process or technique used to selected a suitable sample in view of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population and this technique is essential in situations associated with the impracticalities of collecting data from the entire population such as time, money and access restrictions (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). However, how representative the research sample is may pose a common question as researchers always try to draw a representative sample to draw conclusions about the real world (Adam *et al.*, 2007, p. 87). And due to the fact that samples are not perfect representatives of the population it is difficult for the researcher to draw conclusions that will generalize to the real population. Two basic types of sampling techniques exist and these constitute probability and non-probability sampling. The former ensures selected elements have equal chances of selection from the population while the latter constitutes a sampling technique through which elements are selected based on personal judgment (Adam *et al.*, 2007; Saunders *et al.*, 2009). I limited my sample to consumers who used the Södertörns Högskola library, in Stockholm. 20 elements were chosen at random irrespective of demographics and ethnicities and they were asked for permission to be interviewed after having notified them why they were selected and the aim of the research (Adam *et al.*, 2007, p. 146).

Actually the selection was random and the 20 participants were selected as they entered the library within the hours of 13:30 – 14:30 for a five weekdays (Monday – Friday). This time was chosen to make sure these students were back from lunch and will be very receptive. Sitting in the library close to the entrance I stopped the elements as they entered the library, with an interval of 10 minutes. The ten minutes gave me enough time to introduce myself and tell a little about my research while asking each element if they could grant me an interview. Once the element accepted we proceeded on setting a date place and formalities such as possibility of recording the session.

4.5 Method of Analysis

Following the research type, i.e. descriptive and exploratory study, data analysis assumed a trend that stems from viewing the light of the theoretical framework of the study and however, reflecting on the empirical data, there is a great connection with the theory and drawing allusions from points of connection with the theories in use. By looking at consumer behaviour consistency theories I hope to be able refine the Petty and Cacioppo's (1979) Elaboration Likelihood Model to be able to analyze how consumer perception of placements affect their attitudes toward movies, TV shows and placed claims.

According to Yin (2009), it is imperative to base every research on an analytical strategy and this help the research to prioritize what he/she needs to analyze and for what reasons. The way in which data is analyzed is of paramount importance

for our study it will involve analyzing words from personal (face-to-face) interviews and for a qualitative study data analysis focuses on data in the form of words and it constitutes of three stages. *Data reduction*, the process of data selection, simplification abstracting, and transformation so as to organize it in a way that final conclusions can be drawn and verified. *Data display*, organizing and compressing the reduced and displayed data to ease means of drawing conclusions. Conclusions drawn/verification deciding what things mean and what were important noting regularities patterns explanations possible configurations and propositions.

However, using the within-case analysis, data collected for each research question was reduced and simplified and this empirical data of from my study was compared to our conceptual framework (Yin, 2009) and once the data was reduced and displayed conclusions on each research question were been drawn based on the findings of this study.

As mentioned before, the structure of the analysis part of this study is highly based on the theoretical framework and the subsequent chapters after the research questions, especially the analysis part were fully structured after conclusions had been made to ensure coherence between the different chapters of the study.

4.6 Research Quality

Criticisms towards qualitative research methods mainly stem from positivistic and quantitative approach adherers as they claim the qualitative approach always falls short of validity, and reliability.

Generally, reliability refers to the ability of the data collection techniques as well as the analysis procedure to yield consistent findings and this could be accessed by posing three subsequent questions; 1) *Will it yield the same result on other occasions?*, 2) *Will similar observations be reached by other observers?*, 3) *Will there be transparency in the sense making process from the raw data* (Saunders *et al*, 2009, p. 156)? In the case of in-depth and semi-structured interviews, problems in reliability could stem from the lack of standardization, *interviewer bias* i.e. the case where the interviewer's tone or non-verbal behavior creates bias in interviewee response to questions asked; and *interviewee bias* i.e. interviewee perception about the interviewer and the revelation of partial information are all call for concern (Saunders *et al*, 2009, p. 326). Owing to the complexity of this strategy in relation to replication by other researchers notes about the design and the reasons behind the choice of strategy and methods as well data obtained will be made to downplay reliability related quality issues. In ensuring reliability our main goal is to try to minimize the errors and biases of our study (Yin, 2009, p. 45)

Validity could be divided into three different types, which are basically *construct validity*, *internal validity*, and *external validity* or better still generalizability.

Construct validity refers to the accuracy in establishing operational measures for the concepts being studied and to test this I chose triangulation in other to obtain evidence from multiple sources after haven't showed the interview guide to other people to make sure they were understandable. (Yin 2009, p. 41).

Internal validity refers to the accuracy and trustworthiness of the instruments, data and research findings and it raises concerns as to whether the findings are really about what they appear to be (Saunders *et al*, 2009, p. 157). Unlike for the case of explanatory case studies where threats to internal validity will be the inability of a researcher to establish causal relationships between findings such as how and why one event led to another (Yin 2009, p. 42), this logic is inapplicable to descriptive and exploratory studies whether case studies, surveys or experiments, if at all they are concerned with this kind of causal situation (Yin 2009, p. 43). However, with the case of interviews the investigator must seek ways to answer questions as to, 1) *Whether the inference made were correct* or 2) *Whether the evidence is convergent* and 3) *If they appear to be airtight?*

Also regarded as generalizability, external validity constitute the type which raises questions as to whether the research findings could be generalizable beyond the immediate study i.e. equally applicable to other research settings such as consumers from other cultural backgrounds as well as other media vehicles (Saunders *et al* 2009, p. 158).

In order to fulfill the test of trustworthiness as regards reliability, and the different types of validity I intend to document the research process and the interview with the approval of the interviewees nonetheless, as it is important to catch them in their own words.

4.7 Delimitation

Due to the existence of different media vehicles that carry placements recently, such as novels, websites, billboards, games, and magazines the choice to focus on just movies and TV shows is considered as delimitation for this thesis. Second focusing just on student also delimits the thesis further. However, both choices were made basically since the chosen media vehicles are the most used and the fact that I wanted to find out if having some level of education could condition consumers' perception on placements as well as shape their attitudes towards the above media as well as the placed products.

4.8 Summary

It is imperative to call to attention that the contemporary nature of the product placement, coupled with my research questions greatly shaped my choices of research purpose and strategy. As mentioned earlier in this chapter a descriptive and exploratory purpose was appropriate for this study. I resulted in a qualitative method, precisely qualitative interviews since I need to get in-depth information from my selected interviewees. However, a set of questions will be developed based on the research questions and the theoretical framework. These questions will be pilot tested to see how adequate they answer the research questions without leading interviewees to answers there by reducing biases. Corrections will be made until results were satisfactory and the interviews will then be carried out in a way that minimizes biasness and ensure research quality.

The following chapter will also provide information on the empirical findings and how the interviews were conducted. The data will be presented starting with demographics and background information of every interviewee.

5 Empirical Findings

As mentioned in the above section, this chapter presents the empirical data collected for this thesis. It constitutes personal communication through face-to-face interviews with 20 randomly selected consumers. The latter are practically students and users of the Södertörns Högskola library in Stockholm. Some of the interviews were complemented with a phone interviews, following unavailability for a face-to-face interview. As stipulated in the previous chapter data from each interview will be presented as block formats of each source according to the order the interviews were carried out.

5.1 Marco, 21

*2nd year Undergraduate Student, Real Estate Management,
University of Gavle (Marco, personal communication 2011-05-03)*

Marco is a great movie and TV show fan but reveals he watches more TV shows than movies and especially comedy shows. He is mostly attracted by good storylines and fun-filled movies/TV shows though some particular actors and actresses could have this same effect. Always goes to cinemas to watch a good movie rather than wait for DVD versions but still watches DVD versions of movies and TV shows he loves. Through TV shows, he perfects his English language. He admits noticing more of the big brands in movies and TV shows today such as Apple, Coca Cola etc. He knows practically very little about placements but his idea about it revolves around the use of products in movies/TV shows basically for the marketing purposes. He is of the opinion that movies and TV shows today have become more of a marketplace for products reason why he associates bigger movies and TV shows to the money marketers pay in exchange for placements of their products. However, his perception of placements in movies and TV shows is good as he sees placements in movies and TV shows as more of an educative and informative way of portraying new products and their usability especially with technological products where qualities are been portrayed onscreen. Brands onscreen do not have a negative effect on the way he views movies or TV shows according to him do not interfere with the plot as such this doesn't take away the entertainment experience and he doesn't really mind seeing brands in this way. He recalls when it comes to a desired product categories, he usually pays much attention and depending on the characters onscreen he liked or disliked he could generate positive or negative attitudes toward the products but however in case of a positive attitude, his purchase behaviour could only be enhanced if he is viable and if he finds out for himself the product is actually good. He loves music and consumes songs of his favourite artists on *Spotify* and streams their videos as well as watches them on TV and it would not bother him if he sees brands in their videos so long as the marketing intent is not obvious. He is however very mature to let the mediated reality shape his views of the world even though he sometimes finds himself enveloped by the movie experience.

5.2 Milhaud, 21

1st year Undergraduate Student, *Economics*

Södertörns Högskola, Stockholm (Milhaud, personal communication 2011-05-03).

Milhaud is not a big movie fan though the really big movies like *Avatar*, usually makes him go to cinemas and with the smaller films he will rather wait for DVD versions. He thinks most TV shows especially the comedy-centred ones are not good and the one show he loved, *the Journey Man* was taken off the air. He relates his attraction to movies with the quality of the plot rather than some particular characters even though his favourite actors will definitely make him want to watch their movies. When he thinks about brands in movies too much he starts to see them, and he recalls of High-tech Ericsson cell phone associated with the James Bond Character in *Casino Royal*. A little more knowledgeable about placements, he sees the practice as a growing marketing strategy within the entertainment industry and his perception of placements is that, it is a manipulative marketing strategy. Based on this opinion, he sees movies and TV shows as more of marketing avenues today. Milhaud however, thinks that placements of cutting edge technologies such as the high-tech Ericsson cell phone in the James Bond movie are pretty cool as they inform about new releases in which case he feels such placements could be educative and informative and movies in general could be as well, but very obvious audio mentioned placements are very annoying and depending on the level of congruence, his annoyance could get beyond the movies to the brands in case where he perceives that the brand is really pushing it. This could result in him not wanting to watch such movies never again, nor recommend to a friend. In case of a desired product, he usually pays attention to products within the same category. Seeing them onscreen and if their functionality and design were portrayed as cool, and if a favourite actor like Morgan Freeman endorses these products in the movie then his purchase behaviour could definitely be affected though this will also be affected by his financial power. On the contrary, actors he disliked will spur a negative attitude towards their movies TV shows and products or brands they are associated with. He also discounts the idea of movies and TV shows shaping his view of the world. He loves music and he streams music videos of his beloved artists but since he thinks placements are bad obvious placements could turn his love to hate.

5.3 Irin, 23

Final Year, Undergraduate Student, *Media and Communications*

Södertörns Högskola, Stockholm

Irin loves movies but not TV shows and she is no crazy movie fan and she will never go to a cinema to watch a newly released movies due to the huge crowds. She waits patiently without rush for DVD versions and might even wait for over a year for them. She loves old educative movies as she feels recent movies carry no message. When asked what attracted her towards movies she said the storyline as she didn't even have a particular celebrities or movie stars she liked. She notices brands in mostly recent movies and TV shows. These brands of mostly cars,

dresses actresses wear. However, cell phones and laptops of mostly *Apple* mark are other products she notices and she dislikes the idea of brands popping up in her face. Being so versed with placements, she doesn't like mainstream Hollywood movies due to high level of marketing, with little or no cultural aspects. She obviously has a very negative perception of placements as she thinks this deceptive and manipulative marketing strategy ruins her movie experience. Every time she sees a brand in her face while watching a movie she develops a very negative attitude towards such a brand. If she needs a product she usually relies on friends or she just goes and get from in a boutique rather than rely on a movie character. She watches movies to distract herself from the routines of life but depending if the movie is educative she might compare herself with the situations in the movies. She thinks the music industry too is very much more of marketing and there is a lot of Americanization in the music industry so she really does not listen to much music.

5.4 Nathan, 25

*2nd year Undergraduate Student, Electronics and Computer Engineering
Royal Institute of Technology, KTH, Stockholm*

Nathan loves scientific, fictional and inspiring movies with a little political touch. However, he doesn't love TV shows though he watches them at times. He neither goes to cinemas nor buys DVDs. He rather prefers to streams movies on the Internet. He places more emphasis on the storyline but actors he liked such as Denzel Washington would be attracted to watch some movies. He also recalls noticing products in movies and he feels it is good for someone like him who dreams of successfully career as placed brands are mostly recent innovative and technological products such as the inspiring 3D technology used in the *Avatar* movie. He has knowledge of the reason behind brand and product appearances in movies is for marketing purposes but has never heard of the term product placement. Even though he sees movies of today as more of a marketplace for technological innovations, he has a positive opinion of product placements. His positive perception of placements is closely related to the informative and educative functions of brand appearances as they could inform a lot about the recent technologies, their usability and also how the world has evolved technologically. He feels global financial downturns that resulted in rising production cost of feature films, could be a legitimate reason for producers to recover the huge sums invested through sponsors. As such, placement of brands which do inform, educate and definitely do not interfere with the movie plot is a very positive marketing strategy in his opinion. Depending on the way a product is portrayed on screen coupled with its perceived quality and design his attitudes towards a desired product could be affected and associating such product with his favourite character definitely scores the product a plus and if he is viable enough and the purchase reasonable enough his purchase behaviour could be enhanced. He acknowledges, sometimes he dreams of success stories and living certain lifestyles he sees in movies but tries hard not to let the shape his view of the real world. He love music, uses Spotify to stream songs of favourite artists and watches their videos on Youtube seeing inspiring products in their videos wouldn't change his attitude towards them.

5.5 Adna, 24

*Final year Undergraduate Student, Rhetoric
Södertörns Högskola, Stockholm*

Adna is a crazy movie fan; with many favourite movies but presently the movie *For Colored Girls* (Tyler Perry, 2010) has taken her breath away. She loves TV too shows and would go to cinema with friends and yet still stream them online during her spare time. Most often storyline and sometimes characters like Jenifer Lopez and Tom Cruise could increase her appeal to watch a movie but yet she feels there are many beautiful movies with excellent unpopular actors too. Being usually enveloped in the storyline, seldom does she concentrate on brands nor could she recall particular brand names when she sometimes notices them. Her knowledge of placements is limited, as she has no idea of product placements prior to my interview. She always thought products in movies and TV shows were there because the character had to use them. However, she has no opinion about it and the appearance of brands in movies and TV shows does not affect her attitude towards them, talk less resulting in a purchase. It was only after talking to me that she then began to see that movies and TV shows of today had more products in them, laptops, cell phones and then she recalled that in *For Coloured Girls* most of the actresses had Apple iPhones. She however, cares less about them being marketing or informative; good or not; since she only watches movies to distract herself, learn about other cultures and as such she pays much attention to the plot and only the plot and in this way she gets a full dose of the entertainment experience. Since Adna doesn't focus on products while watching movies or TV shows nor those used by her favourite celebrities, she relies on brand advocacy from her peers when she desires a product. And no matter how much she likes or dislikes an actor or an actress they wouldn't shape her attitudes towards products because of them claiming she only loves them for their works and not the brands they endorse. Her envelopment by the movie plot doesn't cloud her judgement of the real world. She loves music a lot and *Britney Spears* and *Lady Gaga* are her favourites and she recalls *Spears'* latest music video "*Hold it Against Me*" was all about the names of her hand bags, her perfume, etc. but however still says that doesn't affect her since she buys what she thinks is good for her and not what a celebrity uses.

5.6 Maydaak, 20

*1st year Undergraduate Student, Social Works
Södertörns Högskola, Stockholm*

Maydaak likes movies a lot and loves to go to cinemas though not often as it is expensive. She loves to watch TV and when she does have the time she watches the typical girly TV shows like *Desperate Housewives*. She watches downloaded versions of movies by peers. She says some movie and TV stars are really great in addition the storyline are very important for her and could attract her to watch their movies. She recalls noticing brands in movies and TV shows but she claims that even though she didn't think about them, they get to stick to her memory. However, when watching a movie without thinking about these brands, she barely no-

tices them but when she thinks about them she sees them all over the place. She sees product placement as some kind of tricky secret commercial and she thinks it is not very good though it works as this definitely makes her think about these products. On this note, she says movies and TV shows of today are more of some lifestyle commercial though they are ok when just viewed as movies. Contrarily, paying attention to what the characters say or do in movies makes her infer a manipulative intent. This of course is not good and that makes her start to think it is something else. She feels she's indifferent seeing brands onscreen assuming they play an educative and informative role but yet she feels when these brands are all over the place they could constitute a distraction. She might not want to watch such movies or TV shows anymore or even future movies associated with the same characters. She unconsciously pays attention to desired products and those of the same products categories while watching movies. If characters within a series she loves and watches very often, had a particular product there is a high possibility she will develop an interest towards that product and thus assuming her finances are good her purchase behaviour might be enhanced. The reverse is true for a movie star she didn't like. She sometimes depending on the situation of the movie get to relate herself to the plot but however, she never lets her views of the real world being shaped by the movies though some real life touching stories could very well shape her views to an extent. She loves music and her favourite musical groups are *the Killers* and *Deaf Punk* though she doesn't watch their videos but however has their songs on Spotify.

5.7 Matias, 40

Basic Level Student, *Russian*
Dalarna University

Matias loves movies and he only watches movies in the cinema. He neither buys DVDs nor streams and he does not watch TV shows either. He is much more attracted to movie director than the actors and actresses though sometimes these characters could entice him to watch a movie and in the nutshell the plot and the storyline are very important as well. He doesn't often see brands in movies though he talks of haven noticed brands maybe ones or twice mostly in recent movies. According to him when brands appear in movies he is watching they spur a negative attitude towards the movies and those brands. With a little knowledge of placements he describes the placements "*as the fact that, different companies pay to put their brands in movies*". His perception about placements is very negative and he doesn't associate any educative or informative role with the practice rather seeing brands in movies are very disturbing no matter for what purpose they might be? As according to him they take away the entertainment experience. On this note he sees movies of today as more of marketing since he has only seen brands in modern movies. Matias however, cited that he has a negative attitude towards two brands *Coca-Cola* and *Livonia Coffee* after watching a movie where they appeared onscreen and since then whenever he hears these brands mentioned he recalls that experience thus has a negative attitude towards these brands. Not really sure if he will pay attention to a brand onscreen but he feels when he needs a product he

could but would depend on the experts associated to it and not some movie stars as he doesn't like or dislike any particular movie star. He admits he usually gets carried away by situations in movies and these sometimes could change his views a little bit mostly if it is some kind of documentary kind of film or political based movie but claimed he has seen a lot in his life and travels around the world to let movies shape his views about the reality he lives in. He also loves music but mostly classical music though he rarely watches classical music shows whether live or on TV.

5.8 Tomas, 25

*1st year Master Student, Geography
Södertorns Högskolan*

Tomas loves movies a lot and he is an active member of 'Söders Bio' (the movie club at the Södertorns University). He claims through movies he's been learning a lot, politically, culturally and other stuff and improving his English language. He used to be a big cinema fan — and what attracts him the most is the storyline and the directors not the actors or actress — but he doesn't go to cinemas anymore because most movies today are mainstream Hollywood movies and they are more of business, they lack the cultural aspects which he fancies and most are a repetition of others with just slight differences. He watches TV shows sometimes but mostly are cartoons and documentaries. He sometimes notice products and brands in movies but however he recalls seeing Tom Cruise with either a Motorola or Nokia high-tech cell phone and he feels if this products are to educate viewers about the usability of that could be of importance to him. He has an idea about the integration of brands in movies but never knew the practice was termed product placement. His perception of placements is very negative as he feel some of them take away the desired entertainment experience. However, though he has a bad image of brands in movies he wouldn't mind seeing brands in movies but if he sees a particular brand many times in a movie then he starts to think that there's something wrong with the movie this would probably affect him negatively since he will think the movie can't portray anything important. He also claims some movies portray brands that have no relation with the movie in a very negative situation, which could be damaging to the brand and that is not something enjoyable. He pays attention to products of onscreen mostly desired products but however it is just to see the functionality or usability of the product and he feels his negative perception placements could spur dislike on a too obviously manipulative brand or product onscreen even if his favourite character handled or used the product since he will think they have been sold into corporations. As for characters he didn't like he wouldn't even care about the message talk less about making a purchase despite having the means to purchase these associated products. Tomas also discounts the fact that mediated reality shapes his view of the real world claiming he is not naïve as such. He loves music mostly the legendary such as Bob Marley, and Jacob Miller even though they were of blessed memories he would love to obvious brand in their videos.

5.9 Siam, 25

1st year Undergraduate Student, *Social Works*
Södertörn Högskolan

Siam loves movies a lot though she doesn't go to cinemas very often. She could be very attracted to certain movies by the actors and actresses and she feels the story-line is very important to her. She also loves TV shows such as the *Tyra Banks Show* and she definitely, recalls seeing brands onscreen though she couldn't recall the names of most brands she's been seeing. However though she didn't recall whether it was in a movie or TV show she had seen Britney Spears drink *Star Bucks*. She also did not know of the term product placement and definitely is indifferent concerning the appearance of brands in movies and TV shows. She feels appearance of brands in movies are good mostly for the companies but for her she doesn't care so much about them but feels they help to educate and inform about these products but whatever be the case, she doesn't really care seeing them in movies or TV shows since this doesn't annoy her and she feels their appearances do not interfere with the movies. When asked about her perception of movies today she says movies are more of entertainment as in her opinion these brands haven't got so many places in the movie to interfere with the entertainment experience. Siam says if she wanted a product she pays attention to other products within the same category and the design, the perceived quality and the way the product is portrayed on-screen especially if movies stars and other celebrities handled them she would want to buy them citing the case of her favourite celebrity like Britney Spears' association with Star Bucks brand makes her want to drink Star Bucks; and Jenifer Lopez has always had her an effect on her as she consumes products of the J-Lo brand especially her *Sunkissed Glow fragrance* and watches her movies a lot. Consuming such brands is for her is a way to relate to her favourite stars. However, stars she dislikes maybe because of their personal life will have an adverse effect on her and she wouldn't want to watch their movies nor consume any brands associated with them. She says at times she puts herself in movie situations and she feels it's like a therapy though this doesn't really changes her perception of the real world as she only watches movies to distract herself a bit from the stress of real life and learn about other cultures too. She loves music she watches music videos of her favourite music stars, and also compares herself with them [Laughing].

5.10 Jennifer, 19

1st year Undergraduate Student, *Dental Technology*
Karolinska Institute KI, Stockholm

Loves movies and TV shows but due to the expensive price tags on movies in the cinema she rather streams or downloads movies online if she felt they were really good or someone recommended it to her. Her favourites are comedies such as *Two and a Half Men* and the storyline is much more important for her than the characters though the latter matter too. She admits she sometimes notices products and brands in movies and TV shows but tries not to think about them because she sometimes thinks it is just a way to get her to buy these products. She definitely

has adequate idea of placements of brand in featured films but not familiar with the term product placement and she thinks it is more of a marketing strategy than a way to educate and inform about new brands and stuff. She however, says she doesn't feel the portrayal of brands distort her movie experience though she could perceive the manipulative intentions when she sometimes thinks about the characters and the brands they use but since she knows about the marketing intentions she tries not to think of them. She doesn't mind seeing these brands and it wouldn't change her attitude towards movies that carry them rather she concentrates on the storyline and tries to learn from the movie and enjoy the moment. Jennifer was very clear on the fact that depending on the kind of products she needs she will most probably go directly to the store and get them and at times not even her favourite stars like *Jennifer Aniston* could change her attitudes towards products or stimulate her purchase behaviour. Reason being that she is not the kind of person who consumes products because others consume them. She feels even if she dislikes a movie or TV star she wouldn't let that affect attitude towards products associated with them, nor the context in which the brand is portrayed because it might also be a case of bad marketing which has nothing to do with the quality of the product. She usually relates herself to situations in movies but that doesn't shape her views of the real world but however reality shows like *The Doctors* with the educative and informative setting could somehow shape her views but that notwithstanding she always makes further inquiries about products portrayed on such shows and if there any contradiction she will definite generate negative attitudes towards the shows and the products as well. She loves music too and her favourite artist is *Christina Aguilera* whom she associates with a wonderful voice. She listens to her songs and watches her music videos a lot and wouldn't care seeing brands in her videos but yet again she says it is just about her being a good singer with a wonderful voice and not about what she consumes, wears or endorses.

5.11 Silvania, 27

*1st year Master Student, Bioentrepreneurship
Karolinska Institute KI, Stockholm*

Loves both movies and TV shows to a fault and can't wait to go the cinema to watch her favourite movies and could stay up all night to watch her favourite TV show when she is on holidays. She believes even though the storyline is important but the choice of a character could make or break a movie. She sometimes notices many brands in movies but is mostly the big brands and those associated with technology like cars, mobile phones of the bigger marks but she can't really recall the exact movies but she always check out what actresses wear. Her knowledge was that of a layperson and her perception is somewhat mixed since she thinks placements are both a marketing strategy and also a way to educate and inform about new brands and stuff. She doesn't feel the portrayal of brands distort her movie experience though she could perceive the manipulative intentions when it is too obvious and she tries not to think about the characters and the brands they use since she knows about the marketing intentions surrounding them. Embedding

brands in an emotional situation could change her perception and attitude towards them and even change her attitude towards movies that carry them. However she concentrates on the storyline and tries to learn from the movie and enjoy herself. Most often when she perceives her dream products like the BMW mini cooper or the maybe some products she desires like the iPhone4, in a movie or TV show, she pays much attention and it could stay on her mind for days especially if some character she admires were associated with them. She often compares herself to characters onscreen depending on the situation and at times gets carried away by the plot and she feels depending on certain plots her views about certain things could be changed but not everything about the real world. She loves music and she streams songs and music videos of her favourite artist Chris Brown, and also watches them on TV and wouldn't care if she saw brands in his videos.

5.12 Amstrong, 27

*1st year Master Student, Economics
Södertörns Högskola, Stockholm*

Loves movies and TV shows but however, never been to the cinema, he feels it a cultural thing since he's African. However he expresses his love for movies by streaming them when DVD versions are not yet out but gets them as soon as they are out since the streams are sometimes of very poor quality. He is very much attracted to movies by the storyline but has a soft spot for good actors and actresses. He loves seeing brands in movies especially the recent technologies within telecommunications and automobile industries. Has a good knowledge of placements he call placement the movie producers bad necessity. He say movies of today are more of marketing but that is because production of movies are getting costly as time goes by and producers must actually seek ways to share the risks of uncertainty associated with movie production by bringing in sponsors. He says depending on the product type or category, placements could be informative and educative and destructive culturally especially placement of innovative products informs viewer of latest technologies or products like drugs could have a negative societal outcome on younger generations who can't judge for themselves what is good or bad. He wouldn't mind noticing few brands since he understands without sponsor most movies will end as scripts but too obvious placements would spoil his movie experience and will negatively enhance his attitude for the movie and maybe the brand. He claims he doesn't know how the arrangements are done but there should be experts who are able to do excellent placements. He sometimes pay attention to some products especially technological products and his favourite characters might enhance his attitude towards them but not get him to buy them since some of these products are expensive and purchasing them sometimes is unrealistic. Mediated realities sometimes shape his views especially movies based on real life stories and reality TV shows. He loves music and Jamie foxx is his favourite celebrity and he streams his songs and videos and has a positive attitude towards his movies and brands he is associated with.

5.13 Mathew, 33

2nd year Master Student, *Entrepreneurship and Innovation Management*
Royal Institute of Technology KTH, Stockholm

Mathew loves movies but no genre in particular reality TV shows like *American Idols* and *X factor* are very appealing to him. He streams movies using his online and once in a while he goes to cinema if he needs to watch a good movie he can't acquire online and he never buys DVDs. The plot and storyline are most attractive by the, as he feels movies make actors though some acclaimed actors like Sean Connery could singlehandedly make a movie. He sometimes notices brands in movies but always sees them on reality TV shows, which are all about sponsors. Mathew is very familiar with the term, placements and his positive opinion appearance of brands stems from the informative and educative appearances of bleeding edge technologies in recent movies though it is also a source of revenue for the production team. He says the high cost of production of feature films could be one of the reason why he sees movies and TV shows as more of marketing than art but yet it is good if they place brands in a more realistic way. On this note, he says if he desires a product the way this product is portrayed onscreen in a movie or reality show such as how it fits with the storyline, he could generate positive attitudes towards brand and the movie as he will infer artistic prowess to the direction team and actors don't really change his attitudes towards products. His entertainment experience can only be distorted by too obvious placement otherwise he wouldn't bother if he saw an inspiring brand onscreen. The mediated reality sometimes shape his view especially when he watches reality TV shows but with movies he is sometimes carried away by the storyline but that end with the movie as it doesn't shape his vie of the real world. Mathew love music and Elton John is his favourite artist. He rare watches his videos but he streams his songs on Spotify.

5.14 Emad, 32

Final year Undergraduate Student, *International Business*
Södertorns Högskola, Stockholm

Emad loves movies and TV shows a lot but most often those with adventure storyline. He neither goes to cinema nor buys DVDs rather he streams both movies and TV shows on available websites. He is much more attracted by movie directors and the storyline as he also feels actors are made by movies which are in turn a function of the storyline and the competence of the director. He rarely sees brands in movies but he says most TV shows he has watched recently have brands all over the place especially mobile communication brand and music stream devices as well as gaming device such as Xbox. With a business background he is familiar with the term product placements he calls it a revenue stream for feature film producers. He claims depending on what perspective he adopts, he has two opinions of placement first of he tries to understand movie producers as they seek external financing to realized their certain unrealistic projects like *Avatar* and *Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter* as a result of serious financial downturns that has hit our economic landscape in the recent decades. In addition to the former case, which

sounds positive, placements could also play informative roles about new products and also get marketers to better generate brand awareness. He says from a consumer perspective apart from the above positive aspects doesn't count, as the strategy remains deceptive, as most audiences do not have the idea they are targeted. He however thinks the strategy is growing mostly as most films are more about marketing brands and even though he sympathizes with the movie industries he wouldn't like to see too obvious brand placements in movies as they distract him. He says he is not a materialist and it didn't really matter what brands celebrities wore or other products they endorse onscreen since he sees their world as unrealistic and making a purchase based on that is the most unrealistic thing he could do. He loves music but has no particular artist he really liked presently. However he loves to listen to Bob Marley songs and he has a collection of all his songs in a four CD pack.

5.15 Daisy, 35

*Doctorate Student, Media and Communications
Södertorns Högskola, Stockholm*

Used to be a great movie fan but that was in her twenties when she had all the time to go to cinemas with her husband, nowadays she watch just educative TV shows like *The Doctors* and other. For her it is more the Direction team storyline that attracts her to movies. She says depending on the kind of movies and her involvement with the plot she notices different brands but most recently mobile devices of mostly the Apple, Sony, and Samsung brands appear a lot. Sometimes she will see brands of baby stuffs like pamper and some foodstuff and coffee brands, table wines. She says she is much more affected by these brands as she sometimes wants to try them as situations in movies sometimes increases her desire for certain products. Very familiar and knowledgeable about placements she thinks it has both negative and positives sides. She claims big movies like *Avatar*, *Lord of the Rings trilogy* and movies of the *James Bond* series will still be scripts today if not for the sponsors who place their brands on these movies in exchange for financing. She hails the effectiveness and subtlety of the strategy but again says it could be very disturbing if the brand doesn't fit the plot or play a role in the movie. She is however indifferent of brands in movies as she claims she only watches the big movies since she is sure or what big Directors like James Cameron, Catherine Bigelow, and Quentin Tarantino could deliver. She loves music and Marc Anthony amongst other melts her heart, she will stream their songs and listen to them on Spotify. She watches their music videos and she thinks music videos are taking a movie turn and she wouldn't be surprised to see placements done on them. However, she only calls for an expert job as too obvious placements could ruin images of smaller artists

5.16 Haliyah, 24

*1st year Master Student, Geography
Södertorns Högskolan*

Haliyah loves movies and all types of TV shows but she is no crazy movie fan and she would go to the cinema to watch a movie. She'll rather stream and download since the cost almost nothing or watch them on DVD versions or TV if she seeks quality. She loves the Girly TV shows and romantic movies are what she likes best. According to her the characters, the plot and the directors all sum up to attract her interest as she can guess the quality of a movie based on these aspects. She feels Tyler Perry is synonymous to the best African American movie. However she feels recent movies are a mixture of marketing, culture and technology. But she is usually focused on the storyline and rarely on the brands, which she however sometimes notices. Not familiar with placements though, but she thinks marketers must be paying for their brands to appear onscreen so as to get consumers to notice them and this really works since she notices brands of mobile devices, brand names of boutiques and beauty products and restaurants but she doesn't think much about as she focuses much on movie plots. She has a very neutral perception of placements as she thinks though it could be deceptive and manipulative marketing strategy the fraction of time they appear can't really ruin the movie experience rather even though she feels brand sometimes she feels when they appear so many times in her face while watching a movie she starts to think about the brand and this takes her entertainment experience away but its been a long time she felt like that. In situation of a desired product her sister and friends those she goes to and though sometimes depending on the product she will search on the internet make her own judgement based on findings rather than seek products in movies since she thinks they are some kind of motion billboards neither would she rely on a movie character. Movies for her are just distractions from the stress of the everyday life but depending if the movie is educative she might compare herself with the situations in the movies. She loves music and *Kelly Rowland* and *Mary J. Blige* are her favourites. Without all their songs her iPod is like any other she claims and she'll watch their videos over and over. She also streams their songs on Spotify.

5.17 Erik, 25

*1st year Master Student, Geography
Södertorns Högskolan*

Erik loves movie as well as TV shows fan but loves the former more. He is mostly attracted to movies and TV shows by the storyline and how funny the movies or TV shows are. Some actors also contribute for his attraction to certain movies like *Johnny Depp* since he is an acclaimed actor and for a movie to cast him means it is a serious movie. He usually goes to cinemas to watch a good movie and can't wait to watch the new *Pirates of the Caribbean movie: On Stranger Tides* he lacks the patience to wait for DVD version he will rather stream. However, Erik is the type who gets immersed into the plot so he claims he seldom notice brands even though the most brands he has seen in movies are the recent movie. He perceives movies and TV shows of today as more of a market for the big brands like *Apple*, *Coca Cola*, and luxurious car brands like *Ferrari*.

Not very familiar with the term product placement, he however, has an idea and though he wasn't quite sure he called it the exposure of products in movies and TV

shows in exchange for financing. He however, has a positive perception of placements because he feels placements of products in movies and TV shows helps him to know more about the latest products in the market within certain product categories and some cases, where qualities are been portrayed onscreen, the usability of the products could sometimes be emphasized. He claims placements do not have a negative effect on the way he views movies or TV shows with brands onscreen as these brands rarely interfere with the plot and as such this doesn't take away the entertainment experience and as such wouldn't mind seeing brands in this way. When Erik desires a product he sometimes unconsciously focus on products within the same category everywhere around him, in trains buses as well as movies, and in the case of movies the focus is usually enhanced when some attractive person uses them and reverse is true for characters he felt were less worthy and less attractive as he wouldn't even focus on them nor their movies and products associated with them. However he claims his attitude could move towards positive but his purchase behaviour will depend on his viability. He claims even though he lets himself carried away by the movie plots the movies and real life are two separate worlds and he is mature enough to know that. He loves music, watches musical videos but has no particular artist he considers his favourite. He feels music like movies all need the support of sponsors, and so long as the songs are meaningful and the videos well directed brands in them could have a positive meaning.

5.18 Emelie, 28

*1st Year, Master, Environmental Communications & Political Decision-Making
Södertörns Högskola, Stockholm*

Emelie loves both movies TV shows and she is a crazy movie fan. Through movies she perfects her English and distracts herself from the everyday stress associated with life. She always goes to a cinema to watch newly released movies such as the *Twilight Sage; the Eclipse*, which made serious waves here in Sweden. She also watches DVD versions and might even wait for over a year to watch them. She loves very educative movies and shows and she feels recent movies are more of marketing and brands reason being why she usually watches movies she is sure she will focus on the storyline and so as to ensure she enjoys the experience. On this note, she claims the storyline and the director attracts her most to watch a movie but for TV shows it really doesn't matter since some of them are just crazy fun-filled experiences. She also recalls she always notices brands in mostly recent movies and TV shows and they are mostly cars, dresses actress wear but most of electronic appliances and hates the fact that some are too obvious. A little familiar with the term product placements, she thinks that is why most mainstream Hollywood movies lack cultural aspects, as they have become more of marketing tools. She obviously has a very negative perception of placements as she thinks this deceptive and manipulative marketing strategy ruins her movie experience every time she sees a brand in her face while watching a movie and this has resulted in her having very negative attitude towards brand she sees too often in movies mostly when they see irrelevant to the scene. She further claims if she needs a product she usually relies on her peers or her boyfriend for a good choice then she

gets them from a boutique or shop rather than rely on a movie character. Though she feels placements could inform of latest products in the market but it doesn't change the fact that it is a deceptive and manipulative form of marketing. She loves music and Celine Dion is her favourite artist and she streams her songs on her Spotify account and she watches music video once in a while on her iPod. However she says will be annoyed to see Celine Dion do placements in her music video as that will make her feel she loosing inspiration as well as power over her fanfare.

5.19 Salimatou, 36

*Final Year, Undergraduate Student, Media and Communications
Södertörns Högskola, Stockholm*

Salimatou loves TV shows and used to be a crazy movie fan but not anymore. She claims as a single mom and a student she barely has the time to spend with her kids talk less going to the cinema. She hopes to start going to cinema when she is done with school. She loves mostly educative movies and other recent movies with good message as she claims every A-list actor started somewhere at the bottom so directors and the storyline is most important to her. She recalls she always notices brands in some recent movies and but mostly on reality shows and they are mostly cars, dresses actress wear but most of all cell phones and laptops of mostly *Apple* that she doesn't like it at all. Being very familiar with the term product placement she claim thinks that it is a growing market strategy even in Swedish reality shows but very common in mainstream Hollywood movies. She used to have a negative perception of the manipulative intent as she thought placements as a deceptive marketing strategy but however the movies she has watched recently like the *Twilight Saga* the brands didn't really ruin her movie experience since they seldom interfere with the movie plot and this has resulted in her having very attitude towards placements as she thinks without them the movies the *Twilight Saga* won't have been this big. Whenever she desires a product she usually relies on friends or she just goes and get from in a boutique or shop rather than rely on what she sees in movie she however claims for baby and health products she relies on experts and brands present on shows like the *Doctors* could score higher points on her mind but she must read about them before making purchases. She usually watches TV shows as stress relief and her choice of movies and TV shows are dependent on her moods. If the movie is educative she might compare herself with the situations in the movies. She loves music and she thinks it is food for the soul, her favourite artist is Celine Dion and she has her videos on her iPod and streams them on Spotify. She however wouldn't mind seeing brands in her videos as far as she doesn't infer a persuasive intent from her part.

5.20 Jens, 25

*1st year Master, Environmental Communications & Political Decision-Making
Södertörns Högskolan*

Jens is a big movie fan and loves TV shows but not as much as movies he plays a big role in his University's Movie Club. He is a big cinema whether for the small or

big films and he will rather stream than wait too long for DVD. He loves TV shows especially the comedy, such as *30 Rock*. The quality of the set i.e. directors and actors, the plot will definitely make him want to watch a movie or a TV show. He recalls noticing brands in recent movies he has watched like car brands and computers and other mobile devices like cell phones, MP3 players. Very familiar with placements he sees it as a necessary tool within the entertainment industry and but however from a consumer perspective his opinion of placements is that, it is a manipulative marketing strategy and based on this opinion he sees movies and TV shows as more of a shelves for products and brands. Jens however, thinks that placements new technologies other culturally ethical brands could be positive if they inform about new releases and usability of new products in which case he feels such placements could be educative and informative and movies in general could be as well. On the contrary, too obvious and irrelevant placements could very annoying and depending on his mood he could transfer his negative attitude on the placed brand, and with regards to the movie he will associated the movie directors with limited prowess and this could result in him not wanting to watch the movies never again nor recommend to a friend. Whenever he desires a product he usually pays attention to products within the same category when he sees them in on-screen and if these products have a good design. He claims since placement only last for a fraction of seconds the functionality and stuff, are hardly portrayed but however if a product is as cool and if his favourite actor like *Colin Farrell* endorses this product in the movie then his purchase behaviour could definitely be affected but this will matter if it is within his financial power he will search online for specification depending on the type of products while the opposite reaction will be the case for actors he disliked. He also discounts the movies and TV shows shaping his view of the world. He loves music and he streams music videos of his favourite artists but since he thinks placements should be left out of music videos except they are well done.

5.21 Summary

As mentioned in the methodology I presented the empirical findings from the interviews as seen above, in block formats from each interviewee. However, another way to present this would have been according to the different sections of the questionnaire. However, I feel this format eases readability and also offers a possibility to express each interviewee's answers to the various questions.

However, the next chapter carries analysis of the empirical findings and these analyses will be made according to the different parts of the questionnaire, which makes up for not presenting the data as such. I feel analysing in this way will best answer the research questions.

6 Analysis

As mentioned in the concluding paragraph of the previous chapter, this chapter fruits this paper with analyses of the empirical findings. Based on the research questions and the theoretical framework, I will try to make analyses with the different parts of questionnaire as building blocks. Analysing in this way I believe will set a platform for better understanding of consumers' perception of placements and the relative effects these may have on the placed claims and movies in general. Further down this chapter I will use the Adapt-ELM model to make an understanding of the relationship between the consumer perception of product placement and their attitudes towards movies and placed claims.

6.1 Consumers, Movies and TV shows

Consumers spend their spare time doing recreational activities such watching movies and TV shows. Marketing communication through placements in movies could really benefit from the attention catching potential of movies and TV shows.

There is a trend that cues that attracts consumers to movies and TV shows also varies with the demographics of consumers. Movie characters mostly move younger as well as female consumers while the older consumers fancy more the directors. However, on a general scale, most consumers prefer movies with good storylines.

6.2 Perceived Usefulness of movies and TV shows

In as much as movies are for recreational purposes and distraction from the routines of daily life, most consumers consider movies as an avenue for knowledge acquisition and as such expect to learn a lot from movie experiences. From the empirical findings it was noticed that most of the consumers learn about different cultures through movies and TV shows. Those with English as a foreign language use Hollywood movies and TV shows to perfect their English.

6.3 Knowledge and Perception of Product Placements

Based on the empirical findings, it was observed, consumers had varying perceptions of product placements and these different perceptions generated different attitudes towards the marketing strategy.

Most consumers are not familiar with the term product placements though some could understand the reasons why brands appear on screen in movies and TV shows. Those that understood the concept saw it as a marketing strategy though were ignorant if marketers paid for brand exposures or what the arrangements were. From this point of view one could see that there is a growing knowledge about the basis of appearance of brands in movies and TV shows.

Even though, consumers perceive placements as a form of advertising, most had either; neutral, indifferent, and positive or negative perception about it. However,

the empirical findings show that, most consumers fall within the indifferent category.

Indifferent perception consumers are those who wouldn't care to see brands in movies so long as it doesn't interfere with their movie experience, and these consumers were more of movie fanatics. They mostly focus on the storyline rather than cues such as movie characters onscreen. Thus keeping a grip on such consumers requires marketers ensure placements are congruent else they might generate negative attitudes towards the movies.

Positive perception consumers associate placements with informative and educative functions. They feel onscreen placements of products and services showcases recent technologies and their usability. They are mostly young consumers (20-25) highly involved with recent technological products and see movies and TV shows not only as positive but also as a market shelf for recent and inspiring technologies in technological changes even though they most lack the viability to consume them. Targeting consumers will be advisable for marketers to do more than congruent placement as well but the movies to carry the placements should well appreciated by the younger generation.

Negative perception consumers associate perceive placements as deceptive and a manipulative marketing strategy. Most of them do not watch recent movies as they feel these movies constitute too much of marketing than culture. However, a majority of consumers from this category were not crazy movie fans. These consumers who associate manipulative intent to product placements could be considered as haven been negatively internalized or have a negative cultivation effect, 3.5.2, However, some of these consumers may change their attitudes towards the placed products as a result of the mere-exposure effect. Some also rely on cues such as likeable directors or actors and actresses to generate the appropriate attitudes 3.5.2.

Neutral perception consumers have little or no idea about placement or what it entailed and though they kept noticing brands in movies or TV shows they never care to think whether they represented a way to get them to notice and possibly generate attitudes towards them. Adna, 24; a typical of this class doesn't really care about brands on screen and seldom sees them. In this light, this category could be associated to those who completely immerse themselves into the movies and TV shows. In this case the desired outcome of placements such as brand awareness could be achieved by incorporating the placement into the storyline.

However surprisingly, despite the different perception categories, age didn't really mattered when generating opinions about product placements. The old and the young were seen taking the same consensus to this respect. *Matias, 40* and *Irin, 23*, both had same strong negative opinions of placements though their love for movies differed. *Jennifer, 19* and *Marco, 21* both quite young, would have been associated with the same opinions but rather they had different opinions. Jennifer was indifferent while Marco had a positive opinion of placements.

However, educational background could also influence consumers' perceptions. Some with business background or knowledge understood the fact that movie producers had to rely on sponsors to realize certain projects but however, didn't change their perceptions of placement. Such consumers, which in most cases were associated placements to the distractive, deceptive, and manipulative discourses.

6.4 Consumers Attitudes toward Movies and Placed Claims

Again, separating our consumers based on the above categories of perception, the empirical findings reveal that; consumers with positive perception of placements had positive attitude towards movies with brands in them. Some of them feel the appearance of certain brands contribute to the size of the movie (Marco 21, personal communication 2011-05-07) though majority of the brands they noticed in movies they watched were brands and products within telecommunications, sports and automobiles industries. Associating these products or brands with certain cues such as likeable characters, which they considered cool could eventually led to positive attitude towards such brands and depend on their viability their purchase behaviour could be affected too. However, the reverse is true for characters they didn't like.

Indifferent consumers on the contrary, claimed their attitudes towards movies weren't shaped by their perception of placements. Some feel their knowledge of the marketing intentions prevents them from thinking about the brands (Jennifer, 19; personal communication 2011-05-08). Others claimed they could generate a negative attitude towards movies if the brands were pushing it to hard and became too obvious (Milhaud 21 personal communication 2011-05-07). In the latter case, the brand could also suffer the effect of such change in attitudes. Consumers such as Jennifer might be the type who activates her persuasion knowledge whenever she watches a movie or a TV show and as a result her strategy to cope with the persuasive attempt is to ignore the products and concentrate just on the storyline.

Looking at consumers with neutral perceptions they see nothing wrong with placements and thus generate no attitude towards movies in which they notice brands. Here it could be justified by the fact that they are usually too focused on the storyline. It could also be justified that the quality of the placements ensures congruence of the brand with most movies they watch reducing their interference with the movie experience (Adna, 24 personal communications 2011-04-18).

Negative perception consumers quickly spur negative attitudes towards movies or TV shows with brands in them. Some claim it is annoying and no matter what purposes brands serve, their appearances onscreen, constitutes a distraction (Matias, 40; personal communications 2011-05-08), as they infer a manipulative intent from the marketers and producers alike (Irin, 23; personal communications 2011-04-20). Some feel, no matter how much the liked a character, seeing them associated with placements will mean they have been bought by corporations.

6.5 Consumer Attitudes towards Cues

Generally, within marketing communication, cues could be the source, which in most cases is a likeable personality. However, the empirical findings reveal that, consumers' attitudes towards TV shows and movies particular are greatly shaped by the storyline and directors associated with them. However, some acclaimed actors and actresses could also attract them to watch a movie or a TV show. The association of certain directors give a re-assurance of the quality of the movie (Daisy, 35; personal communications 2011-05-15). However, the findings reveal that despite the varying perceptions of placement consumers may have, as well as the different age group they may belong to, movie consumers are attracted by similar cues in which case is the storyline. Thus in order for marketers and placement agents to get the desired outcome of a placement the most appropriate strategy will be to incorporate the placed claim within the storyline in which case it becomes product assimilation. The resulting cultivation effect on internalized consumers could be transferred onto brands incorporated within the storyline. An additional advantage for such product assimilation is that it downplays any possibilities of incongruence and prevents consumers from inferring a manipulative intent rather than a classical placement where the brand appears on screen interfering with the movie experience.

6.6 Effect of Perceptions of Placements on Movies or TV shows and Placed Claims

As stipulated by the applied conceptual model built for the purpose of this study, I will try to adapt the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) in order to make an understanding of the relationship between consumer perceptions of product placements the movies and TV shows which serve as sources for the communicated message and placed claims.

Adapt-ELM for Product Placements

Based on the theoretical findings, it was observed that most consumer noticed brands when they were having a movie experience. From a marketing communication perspective, it could be assumed that the message is received from the source (the movies and TV shows), through product placements as the communication strategy.

The Adapt-ELM stipulates that changes in attitudes towards movies with placements and the placed claims has a lot to do with the perception consumers hold of product placement as a marketing strategy (see figure 5-1 below) for a schematic illustration.

Based on the consumers' perceptions of product placements, they pay attention to the message, try to comprehend the message. Furthermore depending on their level of involvement, they may assume either the central route to persuasion as in the case of high-involvement consumers. In such a case, there is a high risk that such consumers, will scrutinize the message through different cognitive responses and an inference of any manipulative intent will result in the activation of their

persuasion knowledge. Activation of the latter, could result in them ignoring the message or processing it. In both case scenarios, there is the risk of belief and attitude change as well as behaviour change towards the source (movies and TV shows) and the placed claim.

Some other consumers after noticing brands in movies, will based on their low-involvement, pay less attention to the message. Such consumers rely on cues such as the storyline, movie characters onscreen, and directors etc. to be able to understand the source. However, based on the meanings they confer onto these cues, their perception of source credibility will vary. However, they could either build their persuasion knowledge once they infer a manipulative or deceptive intent. This inference could be a misfit between the context and the placed claims. However, they could still process the message, which could lead to a belief change, behaviour change and attitude change.

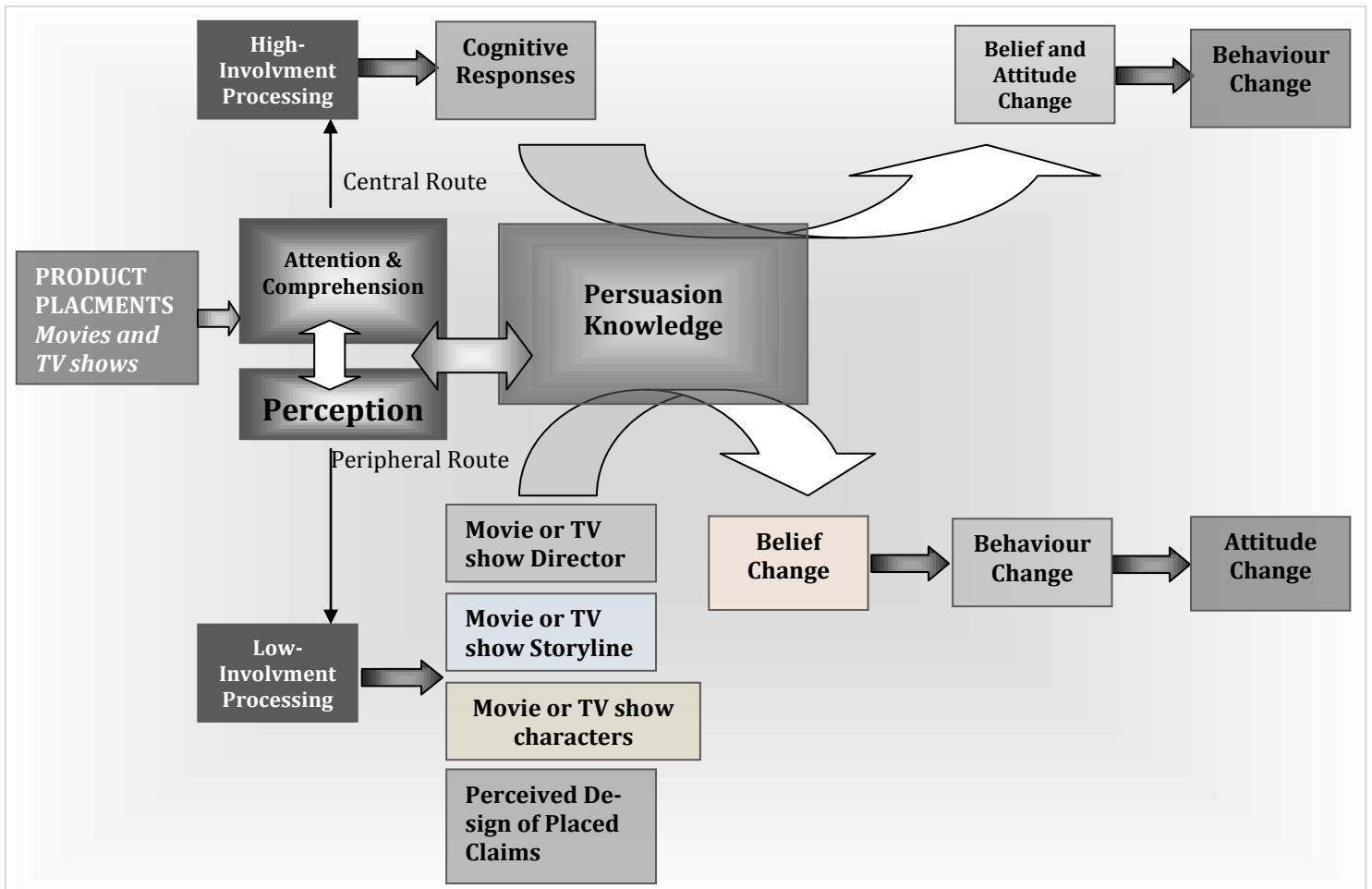


Figure 6-1 Applied Conceptual Model: Adapted Elaboration Likelihood Model (Adapt-ELM)

6.7 Consumer Attitudes towards Placed Claims

Do the different perception categories, shape consumer attitudes towards the communicated products and services? The following schematic illustration (Figure 6-1) below, tries to give an idea how consumer perceptions of product placements could shape attitudes towards the communicated brands.

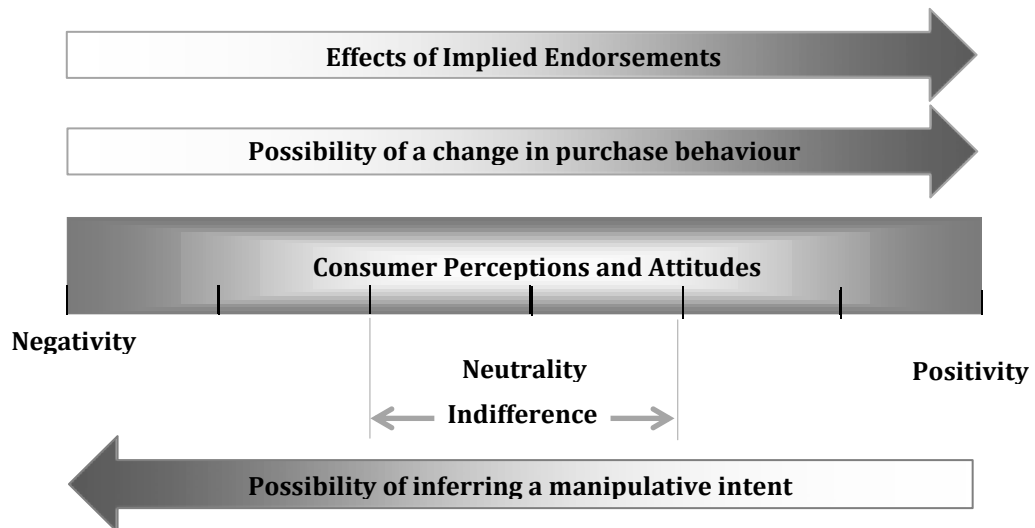


Figure 6-2 A Range of Consumer Perceptions, Attitudes and Possible Purchase outcome

The main agenda of communicating brands within feature films is to increase their awareness but most of all try to enhance consumers' purchase behaviour. Looking at figure 6-2 above, it could be seen that consumer attitudes towards communicated brands show certain relationships with consumer perceptions of and attitudes towards product placements. This could be explained using three perspectives, i.e. change in purchase behaviour, effectiveness of implied endorsements, and inference of a manipulative intent (depicted in the above figure 6-1).

The possibility of a change in purchase behaviour towards the communicated brands increases with a change in consumer perceptions and attitudes towards placements, from negativity to positivity. Purchase behaviour could also be determined by other things such as price of substitute goods as well as consumers' viability. However, negative purchase behaviour could be seen as the consumer perceptions and attitudes towards placements move towards the negativity end of the consumer perception and attitude scale. This could be explained by the fact that negative perception consumers quickly infer a manipulative intent and thus as a result of an activation of their persuasion knowledge, they do not only prevent processing of the message but rather develop negative attitudes towards the brands and cues as well.

There are certain consumers who wouldn't easily develop any change in any attitude towards placed brands nor negatively enhance their purchase behaviour towards them. These are the neutral and indifferent perception consumers. However, the neutral perception consumers are a subset of the indifferent perception

consumers only that the latter group are prone to changes depending on the congruence of the placement.

Neutral perception consumers being unaware of any manipulative intent associated to placements do not generate any attitudes or a change in purchase behaviour towards brands placed in feature films. As explained in section 6.3, these set of consumers concentrate on the movie and do not notice brands easily and whenever they do, they pay less attention to it since they are so enveloped in their movie experience.

Though both neutral and indifferent perception consumers occupy the central part of the consumer perception and attitude towards placements scale, the latter category actually notice brands in movies and TV shows. However they quickly infer a manipulative intent and thus activate their persuasion knowledge. However, this does affect their attitudes towards the brands as it shifts from positivity towards neutrality. Because these consumers don't really care about brand appearances in movies except they interfered with their movie experiences i.e. as a result of incongruence, in which they start to develop negative attitudes towards such brands. Interesting it should be noted that indifferent consumers constitute the edges of the neutrality zone and the slight change incongruence could result in an intensely negative attitude while effective implied endorsements and exposure of brand designs and usability could sway their attitudes towards positivity and maybe a change in purchase behaviour depending on their viability and the price of substitutes.

It could be noted that the effectiveness of meaning transfer through implied endorsements increases as consumer perception and attitudes towards product placements changes from negativity to positivity. Despite, their different perceptions on the appearance of brands in movies some consumers will definitely rely on their favourite characters to generate positive or negative attitudes towards certain brands when these characters are a bit disliked. These attitudes could result from the fact, that based the perception they have of placement as a marketing tactics or as an educative or informative process and as well as their perception of the imbedded cues, they had activated their persuasion knowledge and had generated a strategy to cope with the persuasive attempt. This strategy was either to ignore the placed claims, or generate a positive attitude towards them even though purchasing behaviour was only determined by their viability.

6.8 Summary

In this chapter I have tried to look into the empirical findings, analyse the different trends as well as used an adapted model of the Elaboration likelihood Model to make sense of the relationship between consumer perceptions of product placements and their attitudes towards two very used media vehicles, movies and TV shows and also the effects of these perceptions on the placed claims.

The next chapter carries the conclusion and discussion and within this chapter I will try to use the insight I was able to get from the empirical findings, to wrap up

this thesis by answering my research questions as explicitly as possible while proposing avenues for further research.

7 Conclusion and Discussion

This chapter wraps up this thesis in two parts. First it draws conclusions on the empirical findings and provides best possible answers to the research questions. Secondly a discussion led by answers to the reflective research question *RQ4*, as well as critical analyses of the limitations of my work. Wrapping up this chapter are things I would have done if I had to carry the research again while presenting avenues for further studies.

7.1 Conclusion

RQ1: How do different consumers perceive product placements?

Consumers have varying perceptions of product placement. These perceptions range from neutral, indifferent, positive to negative. However, on a general scale most consumers are of an indifferent stance i.e. they care less about the appearance of brands onscreen. Consumers with positive perceptions justify their stance with the informative and educative role of placements and movies and TV shows in general. Negative perceptions were seen from consumers who associated product placements with a deceptive and manipulative marketing strategy. Some fraction of consumers could be though to have a neutral perception due to their limited knowledge of neither the term product placements nor its purpose.

RQ2: How does their perceptions affect their attitudes towards movies and TV shows?

Consumer attitudes towards movies and TV shows have a strong relationship with their perceptions of product placements in these media vehicles. On a scale these attitudes show a range from negativity, to indifference, to neutrality and to positivity.

Negative perceptions of placements will spur negative attitudes towards movies and TV shows. The justification here is that appearance of brands onscreen constitutes a distraction and takes away the pleasure of a movie experience. Also the deceptive nature of movie or TV show as a source put the credibility of these media vehicles to question.

Neutral perception like will spur no particular attitudes towards the media vehicles as the seldom notice placement during their movie experiences. Consumers with positive perception show positive attitudes towards movies and TV shows with placements on them and could handle some degree of incongruence between the placed claims and the placed context. These positive attitudes could be associated with their reliance on cue like the storyline, directors and likable characters.

Indifferent consumers show an indifferent attitude, as they wouldn't care seeing brands onscreen insofar as it doesn't interfere with their movie experiences.

RQ₃: What implications could this have on their consumption habits?

Despite the different consumer perceptions of product placement, the consumer attitudes towards placed claims (products or services) depend on a whole range of other things. Depending on their viability, consumers with positive perception and attitudes towards movies are more prone to making a purchase. This possibility of a positive change in purchase behaviour gradually decreases as the consumer perceptions and attitudes towards product placements move towards negativity. Neutral and indifferent feature film consumers will rely on the storyline to consume the movies and TV shows. As for the placed claims, depending on other cues such as design, implied endorsers some might change their attitudes but there is no guarantee. However, viability is more or less an important factor as for consumers in the positive class.

Negative consumer perceptions and attitudes will not only result in a negative trend in the consumption of certain movies and TV shows but also the products and services placed in the particular movies. However, based on the degree of manipulative intent inferred by these set of consumers characters associated with products onscreen may also get a fair share of negative consumer attitudes.

7.2 Discussion

Most consumers agreed they notice brands in movies and TV shows. Though some of them activate their persuasion knowledge, impeding them from processing the message, this implies brand awareness could be achieved through product placements. However, since few consumers perceive product placements as manipulative and a distraction during a movie experience. Rather, most of them associate an educative and informational function to placements. This however, implies marketers could use movies and TV shows to educate and inform consumers about the usability of certain products and services.

Though sometimes movie characters may increase movie consumption, the most reliable cues for movies and TV shows consumption today are; the storyline, the director and the plot. Thus ensuring the consumers' attention is fully exploited, marketers must seek movies and TV shows with good storylines and good directors as well as good plots to associate their products with.

Marketers must consider the fact that consumer awareness of product placements as a marketing strategy could very well be on a rise. Though most consumers associate placements with an educative and informative function, the choice and role of the brand is also of paramount importance. Congruence between the placed claims and the plot must be ensured to prevent them from inferring a manipulative intent and possible backlashes (Bhatnagar *et al*, 2004, p. 111) section 2.2.5. The latter could be achieved by incorporating the placement into the storyline. However, and other cues like characters must be well chosen if there is to be an implied endorsement. This will ensure only positive aspects are conferred on to the placed claims.

Acceptance of placements within the movies industry could be very much effective in the music industry since likeable artists may through their music videos generate positive attitudes within their fanfare. Nevertheless, the placements must be well done and the artist should have a good private life else the consumers may transfer the meaning they hold of her through meaning transfer.

Based on the findings one could see that not up to 30% of consumers had negative perception of placements. With an increasing knowledge about the realities of realizing movies and TV show, the acceptance to good placements might even increase. This however implies with the global reach of movies and Television, marketers have been equipped with an even better way to achieve local and global brand awareness. A good distinctive and sustainable competitive advantage in an increasingly competitive global marketplace could also achieved through building a good brand image by association with characters with outstanding attributes on-screen.

Lastly the high reliance on storyline and plot stipulates that product assimilation is the way forward for placements. More so with most young men, very much interested in recent technologies virtual placements of such brands could be used to target such audiences since it could have a high effect on the attitudes.

Limitations

This study has mainly taken into account certain aspects such as communication from source to the receiver, from a consumer perspective. More so, it ignores the fact that consumers' attitudes and behaviours are psychological as well as cognitive and cannot be explained by them. That is to say some consumers do not know why they recall certain brands they only had a glimpse of (mere-exposure effect) during a movie. It is thus difficult to predict if such consumers will build positive attitudes or not towards merely glimpsed brands, talk less of a change in purchase behaviour since that also depends on other things like viability.

The sample size and choice of participants also limits this study since it comprises of only twenty participants and basically students. Even though the selection resulted in selected students having varying educational backgrounds, this study limits findings only to consumers with some education. However, the choice was made to downplay any effect of lack of education in the result. Maybe be if it were a survey of people of different works of life around Stockholm with questionnaire as a questioning technique the results could have been different.

Some criticism could stem from the fact that not all of the theories listed in the theoretical framework are mentioned in the empirical discussion preceded by analyses and conclusion. However, as the name implies, the theoretical framework, is a frame, or a platform on which the empirical study and analyses are based. Topics brought up in the theoretical framework, but perhaps not repeated further on in the study; fulfill the purpose of illustrating patterns of thinking assumed to be much valuable given the context.

Future Outlook!

If I had to carry out this study again will I do it differently? The answer is a *Yes!* And as a matter of fact this section could serve as avenues for further research.

Initially I wanted to have a Tri-perspective study, i.e. a consumer's perspective, a marketer's and a placement agent's. Due to busy schedules, I couldn't get hold of a marketer and a placement agent to talk to me after several attempts. I strongly feel my analyses could have had more weight and precision, had I talked to a marketer and a placement agent.

Based on perceived increasing trend in consumer knowledge about product placements, it will be worthy for marketers to seek perceptions of consumers of other works of life, which this thesis didn't have the chance to verify. However this study made advances in seeing how a certain level of education could shape consumers' attitudes towards certain marketing strategies.

Another avenue of research could be to try to investigate the level of credibility consumer associate with different media vehicles such as Internet web pages, videogames, billboards, music videos etc. This could enable marketers and placement agencies to understand how consumers rely on these media vehicles, thus help them predict future efficient media vehicles for product placements if movies and TV shows lose their credibility.

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Appendix 1 A Road Map for Consumer Interviews

Background Information: Consumers Movies and TV shows

1. *Introduction by interviewee*
Name, program studied and level.
2. *Do you love for movies?*
Do you go cinema or you wait for DVD and TV versions to watch movies?
3. *How is your love for TV shows?*
Do you have any particular TV shows you love?
4. *Is your love for Movies or TV shows determined by some particular characters or is it due to quality or the storyline?*
5. *Do you usually notice products or brands in movies and TV shows when watching them?*

Perceived Usefulness of movies and TV shows

6. *Does it occur to you to compare yourself to characters or relate yourself with situations in movies and TV shows?*
7. *Do situations in movies and TV shows have an effect on the way you view the world?*
8. *What exactly can you say is the reason behind you degree of love for movies?*

Knowledge and Perception of Product placements

9. *Are you familiar with the term product placement?*
10. *Do you have an idea about the concept of Product Placements?*
What exactly do you think it is?
11. *What is your perception/opinion/view about Product Placements?*
12. *Based on this perception/opinion/view, what is your view about Movies and TV shows in general?*
How do you see movies and TV shows today?
13. *Do you feel the portrayal of products could increase the knowledge about products or brands and their usability?*
14. *Do you think appearance of brands and products have any effects on the entertainment experience of movies and TV shows?*
15. *Do you mind seeing brands in movies you really love?*

Attitude towards Placed Claims

16. *Assuming you desire a product/service, does it occur to you to pay much attention to products/services within the same categories you see in movies or TV shows?*
17. *Do you feel the way a product/service is portrayed onscreen can have an impact on your attitude towards them or even make you want purchase this product or service?*
18. *Could your opinion of appearance of brands in movies or TV shows, have an effect on the way you view brands portrayed in movies and TV shows?*

Attitudes towards Cues

19. *Do you have particular movie and TV stars you love?*
What is your attitude towards their movies and TV shows?
20. *Do you have any particular movie and TV stars you don't like?*
What is your attitude towards their movies and TV shows?
21. *Could the above love and dislike have an impact on the brands associated with them in these movies and TV shows?*

Relating to the Music Industry

22. *Do you love music?*
Do you have any favourite artists?
23. *How do you listen to their songs and music videos?*
Do you stream, buy DVDs, or consume them through other forms?
24. *Will you like to see brands appear in their music videos?*