

## Impact of Product Placement in Entertainment Media of Nepal

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### Abstract

This study examines the impact of product placement in entertainment media of Nepal. Consumer purchase intention is the dependent variable. The selected independent variables are product visibility, cultural relevance, audience familiarity, celebrity endorsement, brand recognition, and perceived authenticity. The primary source of data is used to assess the opinions of respondents regarding product visibility, cultural relevance, audience familiarity, celebrity endorsement, brand recognition, perceived authenticity, and consumer purchase intention. The study is based on primary data of 125 respondents. To achieve the purpose of the study, structured questionnaire is prepared. The correlation and multiple regression models are estimated to test the significance and importance of product placement in entertainment media of Nepal.

The study showed a positive impact of product visibility on consumer purchase intention. It indicates that better product visibility leads to increase in consumer purchase intention. Similarly, the study showed a positive impact of cultural relevance on consumer purchase intention. It indicates that more cultural relevance leads to increase in consumer purchase intention. Likewise, the study also revealed a positive impact of audience familiarity on consumer purchase intention. It indicates that better audience familiarity leads to increase in consumer purchase intention. Further, the study observed a positive impact of celebrity endorsement on consumer purchase intention. It indicates that more celebrity branding or celebrity advertising leads to increase in consumer purchase intention. In addition, the study observed a positive impact of brand recognition on consumer purchase intention. It indicates that higher the brand recognition, higher would be the consumer purchase intention. Moreover, the study showed a positive impact of perceived authenticity on consumer purchase intention. It indicates that better perceived authenticity leads to increase in consumer purchase intention.

*Keywords:* product visibility, cultural relevance, audience familiarity, celebrity endorsement, brand recognition, perceived authenticity, consumer purchase intention

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### 1. Introduction

Advertiser can merge or place the product into the scenes of the drama, movie or show which is in progress now these days which is called product placement which refers to the “practice of including a brand name product, package, signage or another trademark merchandise within a motion picture, television or other media vehicles for increasing the memorability of the brand and for instant recognition at the point of purchase. When consuming narrative media (e.g., television, film, literature, music), individuals are often exposed to paid advertising presented as non-advertising content (Snyder, 1992). Entertainment marketing does not refer to the marketing of entertainment rather the term is used primarily to describe any means of inserting brands and brand references into entertainment vehicles. Entertainment marketing has been far more successful than advertising when it comes to media, because the consumer does not engage with the brand in the obviously contrived setting, but in a far more powerfully suggestive context in an entertainment setting (Hackley and Tiwsakul, 2006). According to D’Astous and Chartier (2000), there are three main reasons why marketers see product placement in movies as a highly successful vehicle for products. These three reasons include: watching a movie is a high attention activity, the environment associated with movie theaters is unparalleled for consumer attention, and moviegoers expend effort and money into

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going to see a film; therefore, they are very engaged in the movie.

The techniques, motives, and desired outcomes of product placement advertising distinguish it from established advertising methods like television commercials and print advertisements (Tiwsakul *et al.*, 2005). For example, while traditional advertising methods make little effort to mask their attempts to persuade viewers, persuasive attempts in product placement advertising are often much more difficult for viewers to recognize (Wei *et al.*, 2008). Similarly, clear product descriptions are commonplace in traditional advertisements and less common in product placement advertising, as attempts to include detailed descriptions in product placement advertising have been shown to decrease brand evaluations when individuals become aware of the persuasive episode (Cowley and Barron, 2008). Product placement advertising is therefore more closely aligned with native advertising, broadly defined as paid advertising that is designed with a similar form and appearance to non-advertising content (Wojdyski and Evans, 2016). By placing brands and products in video games, marketers expect to influence cognitive, affective, and conative consumer outcomes including brand salience, brand recall, brand recognition, brand attitude, brand choice or purchase intention (Balasubramanian *et al.*, 2006). In online video games marketers can also track consumer interactions gaining a better knowledge in consumer behavior (Herrewijn and Poels, 2013).

Rovella *et al.* (2015) observed viewer perception of product placement in comedic movies. The study concluded that increases in viewers' mood were positively related to attitude toward the brand, the type of placement did not make a difference in the viewers' acceptability of the product placement, and that although the type of placement may not matter, the mood of the viewer is important. Similarly, Gillespie and Joireman (2016) examined the role of consumer narrative enjoyment and persuasion awareness in product placement advertising. The study identified that product placements significantly influence consumers' narrative enjoyment, positively impacting their attitudes. Likewise, Srivastava (2016) assessed the promoting brands through product placement in successful and unsuccessful films in emerging markets. The finding of the study showed that product placement in films positively influences consumer attitudes toward brands, brand recall, perception changes, purchase intentions, and satisfaction. Further, Davtyan and Cunningham (2017) analyzed the brand placement effects on brand attitudes and purchase intentions: Brand placements versus TV commercials. The study concluded that people have a more positive attitude toward brand placements than toward traditional television commercials. In addition, Van Reijmersdal *et al.* (2017) investigated the effects of disclosing television brand placement on adolescents. The study identified that brand placement disclosure has fundamentally different effects on adolescents than on adults the disclosures had less effects on activating persuasion knowledge and mitigating persuasion among adolescents than among adults.

Aziza and Astuti (2019) examined the effect of YouTube advertising towards young customers' purchase intention. The study concluded that more entertaining and the more informative the YouTube advertising, the higher the YouTube advertising value and the YouTube advertising value significantly positively influenced the customers' purchase intention and was partially mediated by brand awareness. Similarly, Gerhards (2019) investigated product placement on YouTube: an explorative study on YouTube creators' experiences with advertisers. The findings of the study showed the widespread prevalence of product placement on YouTube, with a significant majority (64.9%) of surveyed creators

having already engaged in such practices. Likewise, Guo *et al.* (2019) analyzed the product placement in mass media: A review and bibliometric analysis. The study identified three major clusters of product placement research: focusing on basic concepts, fundamental research frameworks, and empirical studies in movies and television programs, examining product placement in games, particularly focusing on children and food product placements and investigating the effects and underlying mechanisms of product placement disclosures. Further, Shoenberger and Kim (2019) examined the product placement as leveraged marketing communications: the role of wishful identification, brand trust, and brand buying behaviors. The study identified that wishful identification does, in fact, persist beyond the viewing experience.

In the context of Nepal, Neupane (2019) investigated the effect of social media on Nepali consumer purchase decision. The findings of the study showed that both male and female preferred online services (Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter etc.) for social connection. Further, Ojha (2022) examined the factors influencing perceived advertising values among customers of automotive companies in the Kathmandu Valley. The study concluded that information, credibility, and entertainment, have a significant influence on advertising value customers associate with and expect in social media advertisements of automotive companies in Kathmandu Valley.

The above discussion shows that empirical evidences vary greatly across the studies on the impact of product placement in entertainment media. Though there are above mentioned empirical evidences in the context of other countries and in Nepal, no such findings using more recent data exist in the context of Nepal. Therefore, in order to support one view or the other, this study has been conducted.

The major objective of the study is to examine the impact of product placement in entertainment media of Nepal. Specifically, it examines the relationship of product visibility, cultural relevance, audience familiarity, celebrity endorsement, brand recognition, and perceived authenticity with consumer purchase intention.

The remainder of this study is organized as follows: section two describes the sample, data, and methodology. Section three presents the empirical results and final section draws the conclusion.

## 2. Methodological aspects

The study is based on the primary data which were collected from 125 respondents through questionnaire. The study employed convenience sampling method. The respondents' views were collected on product visibility, cultural relevance, audience familiarity, celebrity endorsement, brand recognition, perceived authenticity, and consumer purchase intention. This study is based on descriptive as well as causal comparative research designs.

### *The model*

The model used in this study assumes that consumer purchase intention depends upon product placement in the entertainment media. The dependent variable selected for the study is consumer purchase intention. Similarly, the selected independent variables are product visibility, cultural relevance, audience familiarity, celebrity endorsement, brand recognition, and perceived authenticity. Therefore, the model takes the following form:

Consumer purchase intentions =  $f$  (product visibility, cultural relevance, audience familiarity, celebrity endorsement, brand recognition, and perceived authenticity).

More specifically,

$$\text{CPI} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{PV} + \beta_2 \text{CR} + \beta_3 \text{AF} + \beta_4 \text{CE} + \beta_5 \text{BR} + \beta_6 \text{PA} + e$$

Where,

CPI = Consumer purchase intentions

PV= Product Visibility

CP = Culture Relevance

AF = Audience Familiarity

CE = Celebrity Endorsement

BR = Brand Recognition

PA = Perceived Authenticity

Consumer purchase intentions was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include “After considering the visibility of a product, I am more likely to intend to purchase it”, “Knowing that a product is endorsed by a celebrity increases my intention to purchase it” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.975$ ).

Product visibility was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include “The visibility of a product influences my likelihood to purchase it”, “I am more inclined to purchase a product that is prominently displayed” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.977$ ).

Culture relevance was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I am more likely to purchase products that reflect my cultural background”, “Products that resonate with my cultural values are more appealing to me” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.982$ ).

Audience familiarity was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I am more comfortable purchasing products from brands I am familiar with”, “Familiarity with a brand influences my decision to purchase its products” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.972$ ).

Celebrity endorsement was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include “A celebrity endorsement positively impacts my

perception of a product”, “Knowing that a product is endorsed by a celebrity makes me more likely to consider purchasing it” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.981$ ).

Brand recognition was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I am more inclined to purchase products from well-known brands”, “Recognizable brands are more trustworthy in my opinion” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.981$ ).

Perceived authenticity was measure using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “Products that are perceived as authentic are more appealing to me”, “I am more likely to trust and purchase products that I perceive as authentic” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ( $\alpha = 0.971$ ).

The following section describes the independent variables used in this study along with the hypothesis formulation.

#### *Product visibility*

Product visibility is central to a successful merchandising strategy and refers to how customers find and engage with your products. Vianna *et al.* (2016) found a positive values for the relationship between consumer perception of social media advertising, viral marketing, brand awareness, and purchase intent. Similarly, Lu *et al.* (2014) found that when products recommended in blog posts are search goods or have high brand awareness, consumers have highly positive attitudes toward sponsored recommendation posts, which improves purchase intention. Likewise, Hutter *et al.* (2013) found that engagement with a Facebook fan page has positive effects on consumers’ brand awareness, WOM activities and purchase intention. Further, Waheed *et al.* (2018) found that product packaging has a significant effect on consumer purchase intentions. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a positive relationship between product visibility and consumer purchase intention.

#### *Cultural relevant*

Culturally relevant means incorporating awareness, understanding, and responsiveness to the beliefs, values, customs, and institutions (family, religious, etc.) and ethnic heritage of individuals. Garcia *et al.* (2015) found that there is a significant evidence that proves the moderating effect of national culture on several relationships of the model proposed. Similarly, Chatterjee *et al.* (2022) revealed that there is a significant impact of cross-cultural factors in the international market on customer engagement, which in turn impacts customers’ purchase intention in the international market. Likewise, Rosillo-Diaz *et al.* (2020) found that in the case of e-commerce platforms, the cultural dimensions uncertainty-avoidance and collectivism exert a significant influence purchase intention. In contrast, Ramadania *et al.* (2023) stated that cultural sensitivity has a negative influence on consumer ethnocentrism and purchase intentions of domestic brands. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive relationship between cultural relevant and consumer purchase intention.

*Audience familiarity*

Audience familiarity refers to the degree to which an audience is knowledgeable about or accustomed to a particular topic, concept, brand, or piece of content. Afifah (2022) found that audience familiarity has a positive influence to purchase intention. Similarly, Khan *et al.* (2019) revealed that the familiarity of music in advertisements significantly influences young audiences' decision-making processes. Further, Wu *et al.* (2024) found that streamers' environmental knowledge positively influences the effect of low brand familiarity on consumers' green perceived value. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>3</sub>: There is a positive relationship between cultural relevant and consumer purchase intention.

*Celebrity endorsement*

According to Amos *et al.* (2008), celebrity endorsement involves a well-known individual using their public recognition to promote a product, service, or brand, leveraging their reputation and influence to enhance brand awareness, trust, and consumer purchasing intentions. Khan (2019) found that three aspects of celebrity endorsement (i.e. celebrity attractiveness, credibility and product match-up) promote purchase intentions. Similarly, Jamil and Rameez (2014) revealed that endorsement through local and Indian celebrities has similar and not much significant influence on purchase intention in Pakistan. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>4</sub>: There is a positive relationship between celebrity endorsement and consumer purchase intention.

*Brand recognition*

Behe *et al.* (2017) found that plant brands did not significantly influence purchase intention. Proven Winners, a national brand, captured attention as effectively as the fictitious brand Unicorn. Similarly, Khurram *et al.* (2018) showed that brand recall and brand recognition have a positive relation to actual purchase. No moderating effect of price consciousness was found. Likewise, Azzari *et al.* (2021) found that brand awareness does not directly impact purchase intention. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>5</sub>: There is a positive relationship between brand recognition and consumer purchase intention.

*Perceived authenticity*

According to Beverland (2005), perceived authenticity is the extent to which consumers believe a brand to be faithful to itself, true to its customers, motivated by caring and responsibility, and able to support consumers in being true to themselves. Yoon and Kim (2017) found that the management of Chinese restaurants should develop unique food names and stories about a dish's origin, as these are pivotal elements contributing to customers' perceptions of authenticity and purchase intention. Similarly, Kim *et al.* (2022) showed that the authenticator of authenticity claims and restaurant ownership type influence the perceived credibility of authenticity claims. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H<sub>6</sub>: There is a positive relationship between perceived authenticity and consumer purchase

intention.

3. Results and discussion

Correlation analysis

On analysis of data, correlation analysis has been undertaken first and for this purpose, Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients along with mean and standard deviation has been computed and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients matrix

This table presents Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients between dependent variable and independent variables. The correlation coefficients are based on 125 observations. The dependent variable is CPI (Customer purchase intention). The independent variables are PV (Product visibility), CR (Cultural relevance), AF (Audience familiarity), CE (Celebrity endorsement), BR (Brand recognition), and PA (Perceived authenticity).

Variables	Mean	S.D.	CPI	PV	CR	AF	CE	BR	PA
CPI	3.482	1.097	1						
PV	3.491	0.987	0.692**	1					
CR	3.480	1.098	0.682**	0.914**	1				
AF	3.526	1.085	0.670**	0.926**	0.946**	1			
CE	3.448	1.076	0.690**	0.885**	0.942**	0.919**	1		
BR	3.514	1.057	0.679**	0.907**	0.946**	0.956**	0.938**	1	
PA	3.506	1.081	0.708**	0.904**	0.948**	0.942**	0.946**	0.966**	1

Note: The asterisk signs (\*\*) and (\*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent levels respectively.

Table 1 shows that product visibility is positively correlated to consumer purchase intention indicating that better product visibility leads to increase in consumer purchase intention. Similarly, cultural relevance is positively correlated to consumer purchase intention. It indicates that more cultural relevance leads to increase in consumer purchase intention. Likewise, audience familiarity is positively correlated to consumer purchase intention. It indicates that better audience familiarity leads to increase in consumer purchase intention. Further, celebrity endorsement is positively correlated to consumer purchase intention. It indicates that more celebrity branding or celebrity advertising leads to increase in consumer purchase intention. In addition, brand recognition is positively correlated to consumer purchase intention. It indicates that higher the brand recognition, higher would be the consumer purchase intention. Moreover, perceived authenticity is positively correlated to consumer purchase intention. It indicates that better perceived authenticity leads to increase in consumer purchase intention.

Regression analysis

Having indicated the Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients, the regression analysis has been carried out and the results are presented in Table 2. More specifically, it shows the regression results of product visibility, cultural relevance, audience familiarity, celebrity endorsement, brand recognition, and perceived authenticity on consumer purchase intention.



Table 2

**Estimated regression results of product visibility, cultural relevance, audience familiarity, celebrity endorsement, brand recognition, and perceived authenticity on consumer purchase intention**

The results are based on 125 observations using linear regression model. The model is  $CPI = \beta_0 + \beta_1PV + \beta_2CR + \beta_3AF + \beta_4CE + \beta_5BR + \beta_6PA + e$  where the dependent variable is CPI (Consumer purchase intention). The independent variables PV (Product visibility), CR (Cultural relevance), AF (Audience familiarity), CE (Celebrity endorsement), BR (brand recognition) and PA (Perceived authenticity).

Model	Intercept	Regression coefficients of					PA	Adj. R_bar <sup>2</sup>	SEE	F-value
		PV	CR	AF	CE	BR				
1	0.830 (3.173)**	0.764 (10.586)**						0.474	0.792	112.057
2	1.139 (4.753)**		0.678 (10.310)**					0.461	0.802	106.287
3	1.119 (4.495)**			0.675 (9.979)**				0.449	0.814	99.574
4	1.085 (4.534)**				0.699 (10.5411)**			0.477	0.794	111.123
5	1.039 (4.134)**					0.700 (10.206)**		0.456	0.806	104.161
6	0.994 (4.211)**						0.714 (11.077)**	0.497	0.775	122.706
7	0.850 (3.281)**	0.458 (2.608)**	0.302 (1.911)					0.486	0.784	59.073
8	0.850 (3.268)**	0.464 (2.322)*	0.311 (1.480)	0.015 (0.065)				0.481	0.787	39.060
9	0.802 (3.097)**	0.440 (2.220)*	0.070 (0.283)	0.099 (20.426)**	0.367 (1.826)			0.491	0.780	30.698
10	0.792 (3.022)**	0.437 (2.192)*	0.056 (0.221)	0.138 (0.519)**	0.343 (1.585)	0.083 (0.306)		0.487	0.783	24.390
11	0.804 (3.109)**	0.410 (2.081)*	0.034 (0.133)	0.170 (0.647)**	0.202 (0.900)	0.224 (0.733)	0.590 (2.051)*	0.501	0.772	21.578

Notes:

- i. Figures in parenthesis are t-values.
- ii. The asterisk signs (\*\*) and (\*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent level respectively.
- iii. Consumer purchase intention is dependent variable.

The regression results show that the beta coefficients for product visibility are positive with consumer purchase intention. It indicates that product visibility has a positive impact on consumer purchase intention. This finding is consistent with the findings of Vianna *et al.* (2016). Similarly, the beta coefficients for cultural relevance are positive with consumer purchase intention. It indicates that cultural relevance has a positive impact on consumer purchase intention. This finding is consistent with the findings of Yoon *et al.* (2019). Likewise, the beta coefficients for audience familiarity are positive with consumer purchase intention. It indicates that audience familiarity has a positive impact on consumer purchase intention. This finding is consistent with the findings of Afifah *et al.* (2022). Further, the beta coefficients for celebrity endorsement are positive with consumer purchase intention. It indicates that celebrity endorsement has a positive impact on consumer purchase intention. This finding is consistent with the findings of Frimpong *et al.* (2019). In addition, the beta coefficients for brand recognition are positive with consumer purchase intention. It indicates that brand recognition has a positive impact on consumer purchase intention. This finding is similar to the findings of Chun *et al.* (2020). Moreover, the beta coefficients for perceived



authenticity are positive with consumer purchase intention. It indicates that perceived authenticity has a positive impact on consumer purchase intention. This finding is similar to the findings of Kim *et al.* (2022).

#### 4. Summary and conclusion

Product placement, a prevalent marketing tactic in the entertainment industry, entails seamlessly incorporating brands and their products into various media like films, TV shows, and video games. In short and simple statement, we can say that product placement factor is consisting of advertiser, marketer or company related content to achieve the specific product target selling goal in a fixed time. Advertiser can merge or place the product into the scenes of the drama, movie or show which is in progress now these days. Product placement refers to the “practice of including a brand name product, package, signage or another trademark merchandise within a motion picture, television or other media vehicles for increasing the memorability of the brand and for instant recognition at the point of purchase.

This study attempts to examine the impact of product placement in entertainment media of Nepal. The study is based on primary data of 125 respondents.

The major conclusion of the study is that product visibility, cultural relevance, audience familiarity, celebrity endorsement, brand recognition, and perceived authenticity have positive impact on consumer purchase intention. It indicates that higher the product visibility, cultural relevance, audience familiarity, celebrity endorsement, brand recognition, and perceived authenticity, higher would be the consumer purchase intention. The study also concludes that product visibility is the most significant factor followed by perceived authenticity that influences the consumer purchase intention.

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