



e-ISSN: 2319-8753 | p-ISSN: 2320-6710

IJIRSET

International Journal of Innovative Research in
SCIENCE | ENGINEERING | TECHNOLOGY



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF INNOVATIVE RESEARCH


IN SCIENCE | ENGINEERING | TECHNOLOGY

Volume 9, Issue 11, November 2020

ISSN INTERNATIONAL
STANDARD
SERIAL
NUMBER
INDIA

Impact Factor: 7.512

 9940 572 462

 6381 907 438

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 www.ijirset.com

Analysis of Product Placement in Web Series on Digital Platform and its Influence on Consumer Buying Behaviour

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ABSTRACT: Brands are rapidly catching up with this changing trend and started merging their products with the help of product placement in entertainment media and digital platforms. Most advertisers and product placement agents consider that in the specific case of brand placement, effectiveness is already gained when the brand gets its way and stay in the spectator's memory. When it comes to taboo-breaking and intellectual video content, web series have been playing a significant role in India. The use of product placement in television shows as a catalyst for product purchasing behaviour. The main findings show that beliefs of a person about product placement can affect the individual's attitude. This research is conducted to know whether consumers are affected by product placement or not. Brands now have to get air time within content making product placement a more effective way to reach a target market in today's digital platform.

KEYWORDS: - advertising, digital platform, product placement, web series

I. INTRODUCTION

We are now living in a digital world. Everyone is using the Internet and mobile phones to stay updated with the latest trends. Web Series is a sequence of scripted or non-scripted shows that releases on the Internet in an episodic form, which is known as webisodes (like four seasons). Product placement is a marketing technique where specific products and brands are incorporated into another work, like TV shows, movies, web series or any digital content (embedded marketing). Medium of entertainment is linked with the Internet, which will help in facilitating a viewer to buy a product, and it will increase the suitability of making purchases, which will also increase the role of product placements. At this rate, product placement may become a dominant marketing strategy in the upcoming years, Product placement is a marketing technique where specific products and brands are incorporated into another work, like TV shows, movies, web series or any digital content. It is also known as embedded marketing. Product placement is done in four ways, first, by mentioning the name of the brand by the characters in the show, secondly, by placing them in the background as a prop in some scenes. Third, by placing them in the 30-58 seconds of advertisement, which is usually paid and cannot be skipped. Lastly, by placing products or brands in the advertisement on YouTube that is generated by Google AdSense based on the user's history. These kinds of advertisements are administrated, sorted and maintained by Google [27]. Product placement can be observed with the help of visual figures, actual product or dialogues spoken by an actor. The popularity of product placement is increasing day by day. Product placement makes way for higher chances of viewership and thus, helps to higher brand recall, giving apparent benefits to the advertisers. First, the product placed in a web series should be subtle, which will increase the trustworthiness of the product in the viewer's mind. Secondly, the medium of entertainment is linked with the Internet, which will help in facilitating a viewer to buy a product, and it will increase the suitability of making purchases, which will also increase the role of product placements. Brands are adopting various strategies in order to compete with other brands in the digital world. Many brands have started sponsoring the web series to target the youth easily as most of the viewers like to watch a genre of series. Branded contents directly relate to the quality of products; thus, it often consists of great deals. With branded content, it is hard to tell whether the viewers are watching a show or commercial as they link their brands smartly in the series and make it a part of the plot as if the characters usually are discussing any product on screen. Companies are using product placements to increase their product sales and brand awareness among viewers. If the product placement is done in a systematic manner, then only it will help the company to generate profits. The ideal situation of product placements should be win-win for the consumers, clients, and media vehicle, product placement agency. Consumers

get to know about new products; clients can do branding at lower costs; media vehicles can get brands for free, and it may reduce their production budget; production placement agency can make money by bringing various parties together.

II. OBJECTIVES

- To study the role of digital platform on product placement in webseries.
- To study the impact of product placement on the consumer buying behaviour.

III. PROBLEM STATEMENT

To understand how branding is being done in the web series. People can predict behaviour from an intention that is produced cognitively; these intentions then cause us to act out immediately as an automatic response.

IV. LITERATURE REVIEW

A study was conducted to find out how attitudes are influenced by product placement types and the number of times they are repeated in a movie. Basically, the aim of the researcher was to find out how consumers' attitudes are changed when they are exposed to brands that are repeated several times and when these exposures appear in a noticeable or a subtle way in the movie. What motivated the researcher to conduct a study on this was due to the lack of research regarding this topic although product placement has become found increased use as a marketing tool.

Williams, Petrosky, Hernandez, (2011) made research on outline the many purposes of product placement in the entertainment industry. Its purposes include "achieving prominent audience exposure, visibility, attention, and interest; increasing brand awareness; increasing consumer memory and recall; creating instant recognition in the media vehicle and at the point of purchase; changing consumers' attitudes or overall evaluations of the brand; changing the audiences' purchase behaviours and intent; creating favourable practitioners' views on brand placements; and promoting consumers' attitudes towards the practice of brand placement and the various product placement vehicles". Because of the many ranging purposes of product placement, there are many different ways in which to define the effectiveness of product placement. Purposes of Product Placement and assessing its Effectiveness although the ultimate goal of product placement is to encourage consumers to buy the featured product, there are many contributing purposes that help to reach this goal.

Nelson and McLeod (2005) presents a powerful research on Investigated the link between brand consciousness and product placements. In their research, they indicate, "brand consciousness or sensitivity has been studied as a concept to manage brands, as a way to understand consumer socialization processes, and as a method to gauge how consumers feel about or process information related to imitation brands". Throughout their study, they examined how certain media platforms, such as television and movies, influence the perceived brand consciousness of featured products as an outcome of product placement. By featuring products in television shows and movies, viewers are more likely to become conscious of the brands and products due to exposure time. They also discovered that viewers who considered themselves to be highly brand-conscious were also those who were "most aware of and favourable towards product placements". Thus, viewers who have previously been exposed to a particular brand before viewing it as a placement tend to have a more positive interpretation of the brand after viewing the placement. By demonstrating a prior awareness and liking toward the product and by perceiving positive outcomes from the product, the viewer is more inclined to have a greater overall liking of the placement after viewing it within an entertainment setting.

d'Astous and Chartier (2000) made research on the obviousness of the placement has a more positive effect on liking when the placement is well integrated into the scene than when it is not. This is one reason why product placements tend to be viewed more favorably than television commercials. When it comes to television commercials, viewers are consciously aware that they are constantly being sold a product. Thus, television commercials have been seen negatively and "viewers have come to accept commercial ads as necessary evils". Because viewers are aware of the persuasive techniques used in commercials, product placements become a more persuasive way of advertising to the viewer.

Bressoud, Lehu, and Cristel (2010) Dealt with a similar topic in their study, discovering products that were integrated within the plot of a movie were shown to be better remembered than those that are not well integrated with the plot of a movie. However, this study also found that this does not hold true if there are more than one product placements shown at a time. Furthering this, they discovered that product placements connected to the storyline were recognized most often by the viewer, compared to products that were used by the main character were remembered second most, and products in the background were remembered least often.

Shrum et al. (2009) Discovered that in order for the viewer to form a positive impression of the product, they must be able to recall the product. If they recall the product, there will be a positive effect because the portrayal of the brand in the advertising content is invariably positive.

Williams et al. (2011) suggest that brands integrated in a movie or television scene enjoy higher brand recall than those that are not, and found that “46.6% of viewers recognized a brand from watching only a television spot of the brand”. This being said, the product must be effectively placed to allow for recollection in order to see a positive correlation between product placements and viewer recollection.

Homer (2009) investigated the use of prominent versus subtle product placement of McDonalds products in movie clips. After viewing movie clips with McDonalds product placements, participants thought more poorly of McDonalds after they viewed repeated prominent product placements but not when they viewed repeated subtle product placements. The results indicated that people were more likely to think that repeated prominent product placements were distracting and that they made the movie feel less authentic and real, whereas a moderate repetition of subtle product placements did not significantly influence people’s feelings on distraction or how real the movie felt.

Dens and De Pelsmacker (2010) explain that watching a television program over several seasons provides a good opportunity to develop more favorable impressions of the product. The more one is invested in a program, the more they deem the product to be more noteworthy and exceptional.

Muzellec, Kanitz, and Lynn (2013) they discovered that brand placements were seen favorably if they were incorporated into a favored television show, even if the brand was a fictional brand. While watching a television program, “a connection between the spectator and the television program, and often also between the spectator and the main characters of the program, develops”. Participants were surveyed on the familiarity with the television programs Friends and How I Met Your Mother, and the fictional brands within the programs, ‘Central Perk’ and ‘MacLaren’s Pub.’ The results of this study confirmed a positive relationship between attitudes towards the television program, perceived service quality and fictional brand identification. This provides evidence that, even with fictional brands, viewers can be influenced by product placements and identify with brands through favored television shows. This could then result in viewers imitating the behaviors of characters in the television program. They further explain how this phenomenon may be extended to the consumption of brands featured within a television program and associated with favored characters. Often times, viewers establish a sense of identification with a brand, referred to as “self-connection”.

One study, conducted by Nebenzahl and Secunda (1993): It is found that U.S. university students generally find product placements to be acceptable, even enhancing a show’s realism, except for when they appeared to be excessive, repetitive, and used in inappropriate (out-of-context) ways. Thus, there are many factors that influence the perceived effectiveness of product placements; however, the three main factors researchers take into account when assessing effectiveness of product placements are: brand consciousness, plot integration, and product prominence.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Hypothesis: -

H1: Product placement on digital platform has significant impact on customer purchase behaviour

H0: Product placement on digital platform has no significant impact on customer purchase behaviour



Primary data: -

Primary data includes the collection of information from the selected respondents by the help of well-designed and structured Questionnaire

Secondary data: -

The secondary data is collected using International Journals, Company website and Articles for the overall study.

Research design: -

Descriptive Research design has been employed to Analysis of Product Placement in Web Series on Digital Platform and its Influence on Consumer Buying Behaviour.

Sampling design: -

Convenience sampling method has been adopted to collect the

data. Sample size: -

Data is collected from 139 respondents through Google Forms.

Statistical tools: -

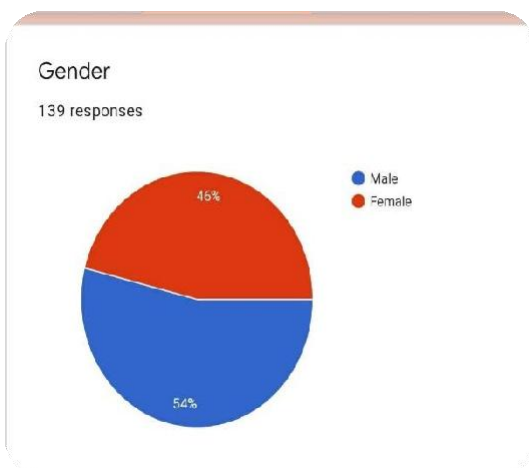
The responses from the respondents were fed in SPSS 14.0 statistical software program and the statistical tests are conducted at 5 percent level of significance. To evaluate the buying behavior of consumer, LIKERT's scale were used for rating.

V. DATA ANALYSIS

Demographic analysis

- Gender analysis:

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid MALE	74	53.6	53.6	53.6
FEMALE	64	46.4	46.4	100.0
Total	138	100.0	100.0	



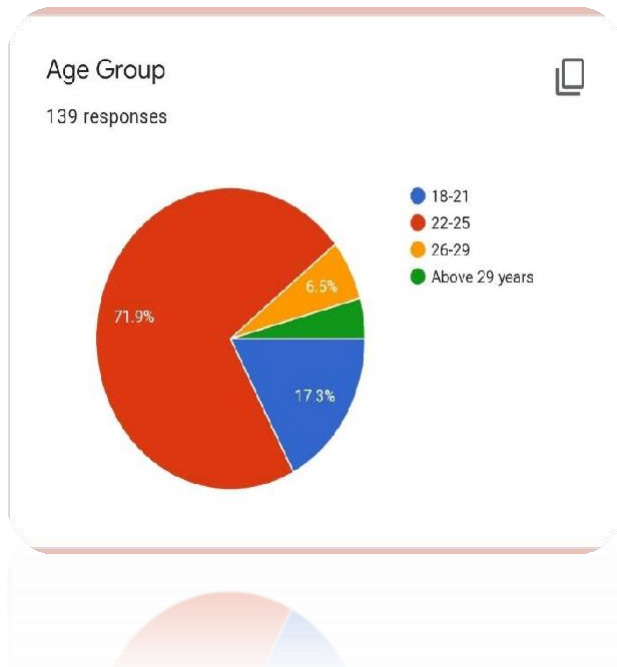
Interpretation:

As the above diagram deciphers the representation of gender of my respondents i.e. 46.4% were female and 53.6% were male. Which show that male is the most important factor In our research.



age group analysis:

age group	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 18-21	24	17.4	17.4	17.4
22-25	99	71.7	71.7	89.1
26-29	9	6.5	6.5	95.7
ABOVE 29	6	4.3	4.3	100.0
Total	138	100.0	100.0	



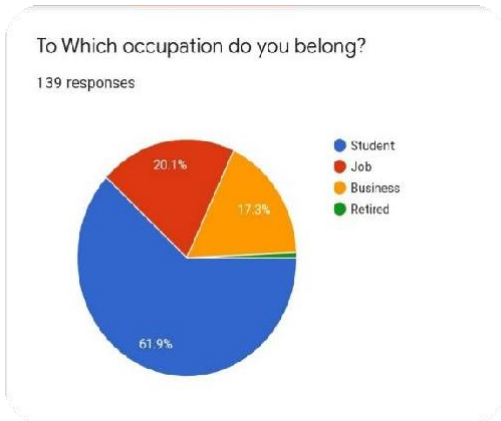
Interpretation:

In the above diagram 1= 18-21 2=22-25 3=26-29 4=above 29,So from above table we can interpret that only 4.3%isabove29,17.4%isbetweentheagegroupof18-21, 71.7% is between the age group of 22-25 and 6.5% is between 26-29. So much of our respondent falls in age group of22-25.

OCCUPATION ANALYSIS:

To Which occupation do you belong?

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid student	86	62.3	62.3	62.3
job	28	20.3	20.3	82.6
business	23	16.7	16.7	99.3
Retired	1	.7	.7	100.0
Total	138	100.0	100.0	



RELIABILITY TESTING:

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.750	6

Interpretation:

Interpretation:

So, from above chart it is clear that 62.3% of our respondents are student,20.3%are having a job,16.7%are businessmen,0.7are retired.

All items are responded to on a Likert scale of 1-5, where 1 = Strongly agree and 5 = Strongly disagree. This is so throughout the scale a high score on a question indicates a high belief in perceived task value. To know whether the questions in the questionnaire are reliable or not we have to apply Cronbach’s alpha from SPSS to check the reliability but before all we have to select our population of respondents and ask them to fill our questionnaire. And when our respondents respond, then by collecting data we can check the reliability by applying Cronba chalpa. The table you need to look at in your output is the Reliability Statistics table. This gives you your Cronbach’s alpha coefficient. You are looking for a score of over 0.6 for fair internal consistency. In this case, $\alpha = 0.750$, which shows the questionnaire has high internal consistency.



Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28.509	6	4.751	9.485	.000 ^a
	Residual	66.124	132	.501		
	Total	94.633	138			

a. Predictors: (Constant), [Features], [Original Content], [Ease of use], [Brand awareness], [Social Influence], [Subscription Cost]

b. Dependent Variable: Q.8 What rating will you give to the products placed in web series as compared to the products displayed in commercial advertisement on the basis of your purchase experience.

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	2.174	.371		5.859	.000	1.440	2.908
	[Subscription Cost]	.228	.090	.260	2.519	.013	.049	.407
	[Brand awareness]	.318	.080	.373	3.966	.000	.159	.477
	[Ease of use]	-.057	.069	-.078	-.834	.406	-.194	.079
	[Original Content]	-.198	.072	-.281	-2.732	.007	-.341	-.055
	[Social Influence]	-.054	.069	-.079	-.774	.440	-.191	.083
	[Features]	.256	.074	.272	3.463	.001	.110	.402

a. Dependent Variable: Q.8 What rating will you give to the products placed in web series as compared to the products displayed in commercial advertisement on the basis of your purchase experience.

Descriptive statistics:

Descriptive statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Q.8 What rating will you give to the products placed in web series as compared to the products displayed in commercial advertisement on the basis of your purchase experience.	4.23	.828	139
[Subscription Cost]	3.41	.946	139
[Brand awareness]	4.00	.971	139
[Ease of use]	4.29	1.124	139
[Original Content]	3.35	1.178	139
[Social Influence]	3.25	1.222	139
[Features]	4.26	.879	139



Model Summary

Model		R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
						R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change
dimension0	1	.549 ^a	.301	.269	.708	.301	9.485	6	132	.000

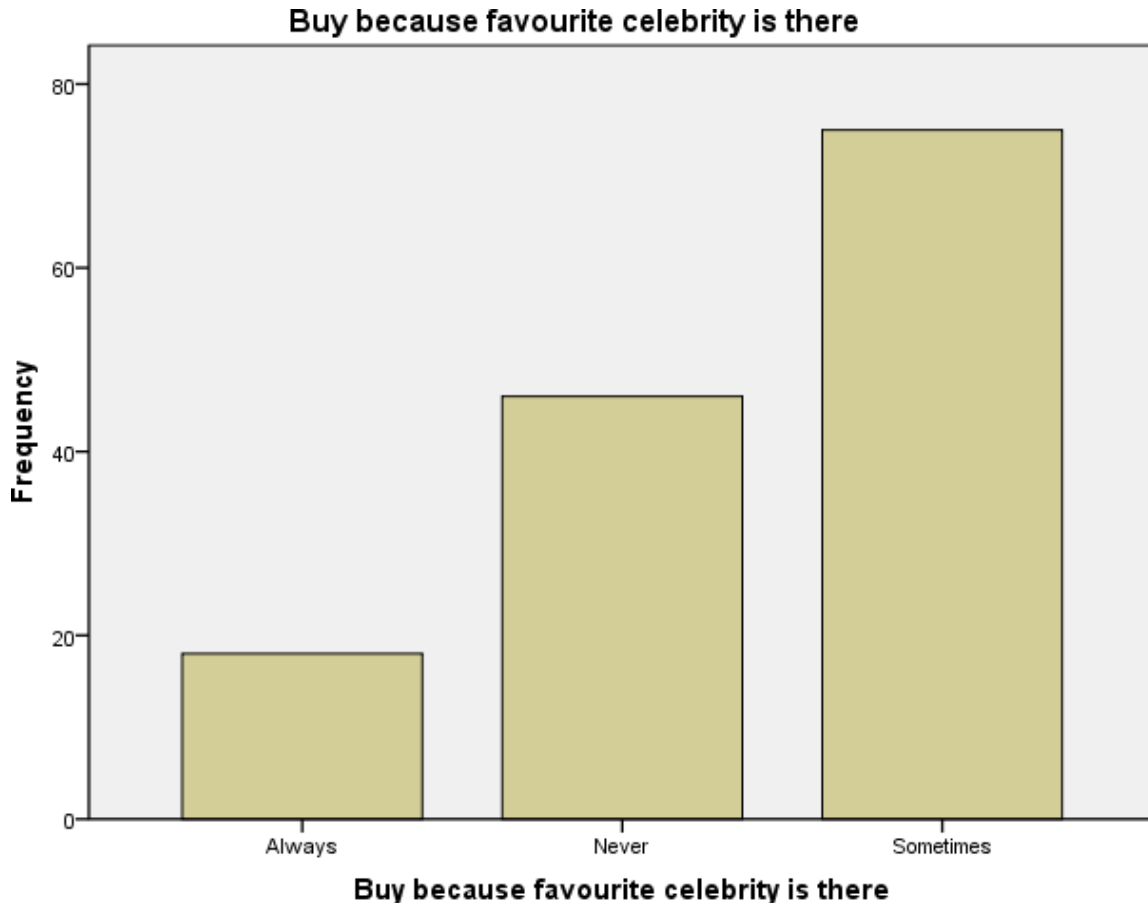
a. Predictors: (Constant), [Features], [Original Content], [Ease of use], [Brand awareness], [Social Influence], [Subscription Cost]

Interpretation:

From the above Table, we observe that R square value is 0.301 i.e 30.1% of variance in the independent variable i.e overall consumer buying behavior of the respondents is explained by the dependent variable.

Buy because favorite celebrity is there

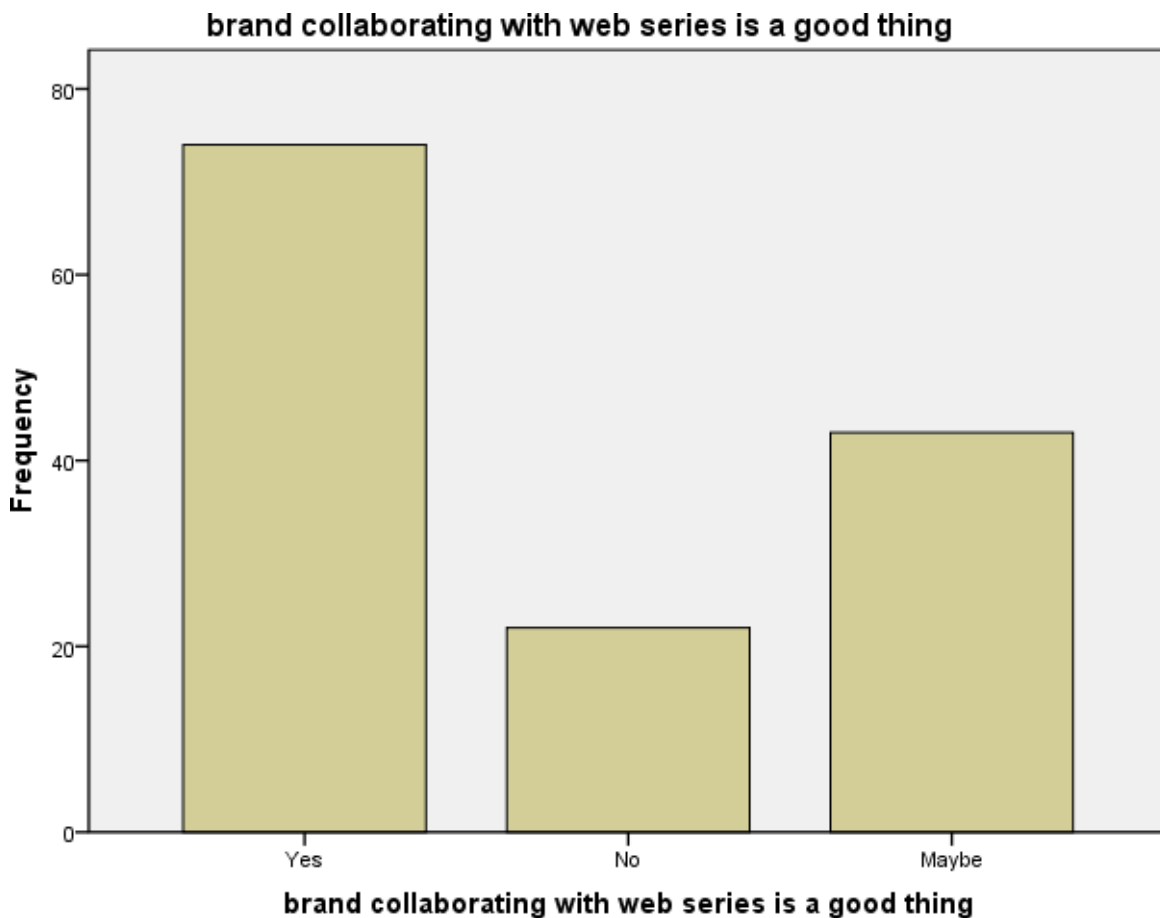
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Always	18	12.9	12.9	12.9
	Never	46	33.1	33.1	46.0
	Sometimes	75	54.0	54.0	100.0
	Total	139	100.0	100.0	





brand collaborating with web series is a good thing

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	74	53.2	53.2	53.2
No	22	15.8	15.8	69.1
Maybe	43	30.9	30.9	100.0
Total	139	100.0	100.0	



VI. CONCLUSION

Product placement relies heavily on not being noticed but being remembered by the consumers at the time of purchasing a product. It acts as a great supporting tool in the combined effort of integrated marketing communication, where it helps to promote a brand safely and comparatively cheaper than the traditional advertisements. Web series is suitable for experiment purpose for a brand as they have short episodes and seasons, which appears to be more useful to the viewers. After doing this research, it has been found that the respondents, in general, had a positive perception of product placement in web series. Ultimately, when a viewer sees a favored television character using a certain product, the viewer is more likely to purchase that product than if it were a placed product in the background of the television show. This study has concluded that in order to fully motivate audience members to purchase a product seen in a television show, a favored character in the show must also promote the product; unless commercial advertisements would be a better alternative for the product advertised, in which case seem to be more influential than product placements. A conclusion can be drawn from the entire paper is that show producers need to keep two key factors in mind when placing a product in web series. Firstly, they should

to know which age group to target through the placement of products and secondly, they should mention the product and its features verbally in the series. It is also becoming a popular method of advertising as it brings a good return on investment and it significantly increases brand awareness. However, product placements are still seen to have some effect on viewers when paired with a favored television character

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