

# Impact of Subliminal Advertisement in Bollywood Movies on Consumers

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## ABSTRACT: -

The prime intention of this study is to examine the impact of unconscious messages conveyed in movies about different brands, on the consumer behaviour (subconscious mind). As there are numerous techniques in which the impact of unconscious advertisements can be determined, this study opted an approach to record the responses via questionnaire. The observations recorded have been found significant and mostly subliminal exposure convinces young consumers, and headlong them into the complex relationships through the subconscious mechanism. Besides this, the subliminal advertising has an ultimate importance in determining the purchase intentions and buying tendencies of the customers. Responses under this study have shown very significant differences with their perception and compulsive buying tendency towards the subliminal advertising. This current study has a great significance for knowing to what extent the subliminal advertisements affect the consumers purchase decision.

**Keywords:** - Subliminal advertisement, emotions, cognition, advertisement, subconscious, mind, perception, compulsive, message

## I. INTRODUCTION

A subliminal message is a visual, audio or both types of stimuli that is actually not perceived by one's conscious mind. They are quite often put into advertisements, films or songs, as these can be used to enhance the persuasiveness or can convey something else entirely. These messages are below threshold of the conscious mind. As the subconscious aspect of one's mind represents nearly around 90% of the total brain function, it is apparently a way more powerful than one's conscious mind when it comes to processing of the information.

Birth of the subliminal messages and advertising dates to the year 1957, when James Vicary (a market researcher) placed the words "Eat Popcorn" & "Drink Coca-Cola" in a movie. This term became popular in the year 1957 in a book entitled "The Hidden Persuaders", by Vance Packard. It detailed a study of movie theatres that apparently utilized subliminal messages to increase the sales of their popcorn and drinks (Coca-Cola) at the concession stands. However, the study was a falsify as the author (James Vicary) later admitted.

In the year 1973, the book "Subliminal Seduction" asserted that the subliminal practices were in an extensive use in advertising and conveying messages. Words appearing in an advertisement for a single frame, are apparently long enough for the subconscious mind to pick up, but for the normal viewer, it's too short to be aware of.

A study from Harvard in the year 1999 - subjects played one computer game where a series of words were flashed in front of them for a few seconds. The first group of students had picked positive words like "wise," "astute," and "accomplished." Whereas the second group had words like "senile," "dependent," and "diseased."

Despite of the fact that the words which were flashed were far too quickly to be a proper consciously perceived. The students who perceived positive words left the room faster than the ones who perceived the negative ones. Also, many more types of subliminal studies have been conducted like, whether the anaesthetized patients are completely unaware during the completely asleep/unconscious. Although the patients report about no knowledge of events when they are anaesthetized, many more indirect techniques of examining what can be recall, confirms that

information is adjudged without any conscious awareness.

The subliminal messages might gain a potential influence from the fact that they may be able to avoid the crucial functions of one conscious mind, and it has often been compared that the subliminal suggestions are potentially more powerful than the ordinary ones. This way to influence would be alike to hypnosis wherein the subject is uplifted to be relaxed so that suggestions are routed to deeper parts of the mind; some observers have argued that the unconscious mind is incapacitated of critical refusal of hypnotic or subliminal suggestions.

Advertisements and Bollywood have been considered to be the two sides of the same coin. Every company tries to promote their brand in a plethora of ways and concealed promotion in the Bollywood movies is the most effective way of entering into the subconscious mind of the viewers. There are numerous instances where subliminal advertising has been done by different companies. E.g.: - airtel ringtone in 3 idiots in the climax scene near Pangong lake in Leh with Amir Khan and others, Bournvita in Koi Mil Gaya, Rajdoot bike in the movie Bobby (1973) in the song "Hum Tum Ek Kamre mein band hai", Tide washing powder in the scene of movie "ChupChupKe" where Rajpal Yadav is washing clothes, Coca Cola in the movie "Chalti Ka naam gaadi" (1958).

There is an interesting trend of putting the brand name in the movie itself. E.g.: Brand Ferrari in the movie "Ferrari ki Sabari", Maruti in the title of the movie "Meri Dad ki Maruti".

In some cases, brand is told in the part of a story like players go to lunch to McDonalds in the movie "Chak de India", Sharukh Khan telling about Nokia Lumia in the train scene in the movie "Chennai Express".

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

\*Jamie Lynne Wilfong Spring 5-11-2002: Founded that the subliminal messages have nearly no critical effects on the feelings, attitudes, or purchase intentions of the viewers. The findings were consistent with previous study of the same area. Therefore, the study gave more facts and evidence that the subliminal messages are not effective for advertisement.

\* Taylor, 1987: Public viewed the subliminal messages as a channel that indirectly establishes

anti-social behaviour like early sex stimulation in children, a change in value system of an individual, any cultural change, suicidal acts etc.

\*Cheesman and Merikle, 1986: Psychodynamic Activation theory stated the way how these subliminal messages work for an individual. The subliminal message provides a kind of stimulation which a conscious mind may be unaware of, to either the visual or auditory cortex of the human brain. According to them, the subliminal message detour the entrance area of the conscious mind and inserts those information (messages) into an individual's mind (into subconsciousness part).

\*Urban, 1992: The effect of visual subliminal stimulation is real in psychology; however, some conflicts and disagreement continue to occur on the effectiveness of these messages. The visual stimulus can either be in terms of graphics or videos or both on the other hand, the auditory includes some audio message like a background message in music and music itself.

\*Balota 1983; Fowler et al. 1981; Marcel 1980, 1983a; McCauley et al. 1980: The two alternate patterns of results emerged from their studies involving masked priming of stimuli. The results from one group of studies proposed the meaning of prime as like it is perceived when it is impossible to decide if the stimuli have been presented or not.

## OBJECTIVES

The proposed study is aimed to achieve the following specified objectives:

- To recognize the buying behavior of the consumers with respect to subliminal advertisement.
- To perceive the responsiveness towards subliminal advertisement.

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As in the study descriptive research design has been used the source of collection of data was primary using the questionnaire as a tool. The survey was conducted with the people living in Bhubaneswar. The responses were collected online from 119 people from different parts of the city. Data collected were analysed using charts and graphs and a chi-square test is conducted to know whether there is any relationship between brand recall from subliminal advertisements and purchase decision.

#### IV. DATA ANALYSIS

Table 1

Row Labels	Count of What is your Gender?
Female	43
Male	76
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>119</b>

How many male and female respondents have participated in the study is mentioned in Table – 1. We can see that there are 43 females and 76 male respondents participated in the study. It can be clearly seen in the below bar chart (Chart -1).

Chart 1

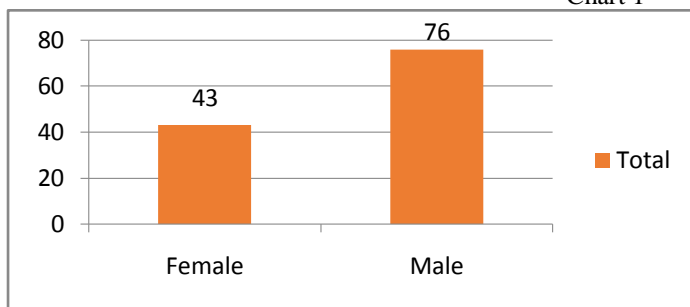


Table 2

Row Labels	Count of What is your Age?
18-25	28
26-35	31
36-45	39
46 and above	21
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>119</b>

On the basis of age we have categorised the respondents into different groups which can be seen from Table – 2. It can be observed that there are 28 respondents in 18-25, 31 respondents in 26-

35, 39 respondents in 36-45 and 21 respondents in the age group of “46 and above”. This can be clearly seen in the below bar chart (Chart -2).

Chart 2

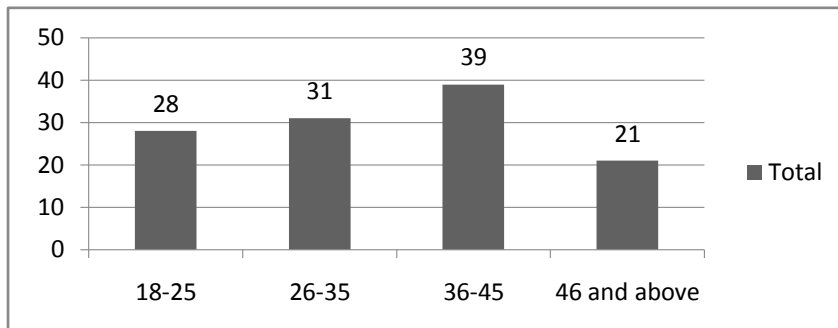


Table3

Row Labels	Count of Are you aware about the concept of Subliminal Advertising?
NO	44
YES	75
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>119</b>

Count of whether the respondents are aware of the concept “subliminal advertisement” is analysed from the data and it is depicted in Table – 3. It can be observed that there are 44 respondents who are not aware of the concept “subliminal

advertisement”. But there are 75 respondents who are aware about the concept of “subliminal advertisement”. This can be clearly represented in the below bar chart (Chart -3).

Chart 3

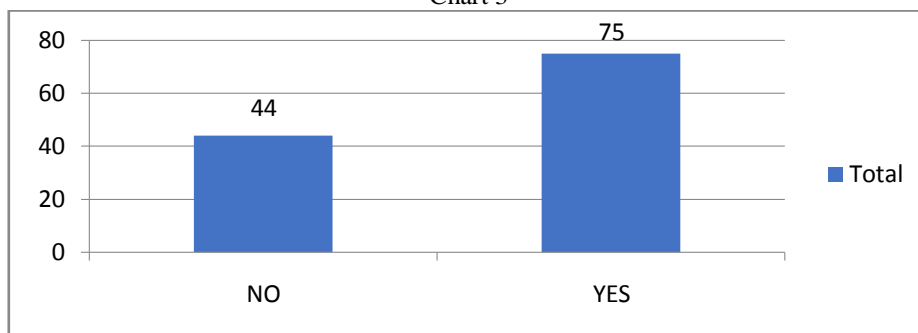


Table4

Row Labels	Count of Do subliminal Advertisements change your perception about the products? (Any cognitive change you experience?)
Agree	63
Disagree	8
Neutral	48
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>119</b>

Opinion of the respondents regarding “whether the subliminal advertisements change their perception about the brands” can be seen in Table – 4. It can be detected that there are 63

respondents who agree that it has changed their perception. 8 respondents disagree and 48 respondents were of neutral opinion. This can be clearly shown in the below bar chart (Chart -4).

Chart 4

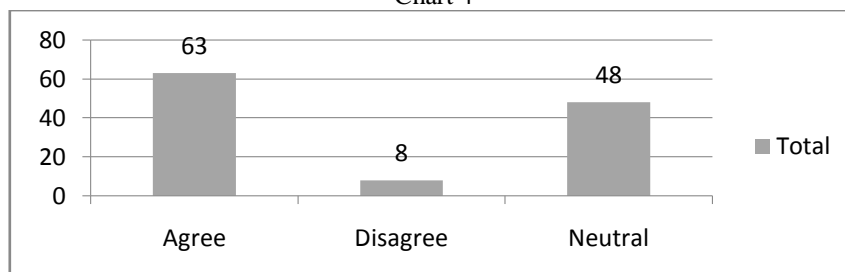


Table 5

Row Labels	Count of Do you buy or dismiss any product after watching a Subliminal advertisement?
Agree	65
Disagree	9
Neutral	45
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>119</b>

Table - 5 indicates whether the respondents buy or dismiss the brand after watching a subliminal advertisement. Opinion of the respondents regarding “whether they buy or dismiss a brand after seeing subliminal advertisement” can be seen in Table – 5. It can be

noted that there are 65 respondents who agree that they buy, 9 respondents disagree means they dismiss the idea of buying and 45 respondents were of neutral opinion. This can be clearly observed in the below bar chart (Chart - 5).

Chart 5

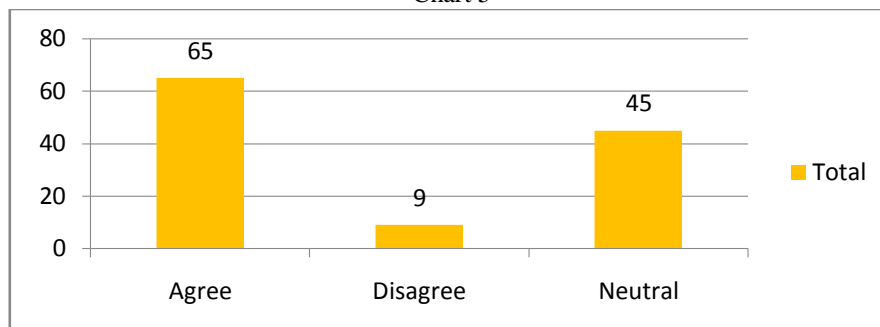


Table 6

Row Labels	Count of What is the influence of celebrities endorsing any Subliminal Advertisements on you ?
Average	41
High	44
Low	9
Very High	18
Very Low	7
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>119</b>

Table - 6 shows whether the celebrities are influencing respondents to buy or dismiss the brand after watching a subliminal advertisement. Opinion of the respondents regarding “whether the celebrities influence to buy or dismiss a brand after seeing subliminal advertisement” can be observed in Table – 6. It can be mentioned that there are 41

respondents who say the influence of celebrities is average, 44 respondents say that it is high, 9 respondents say it is low, 18 respondents say it is very high and 7 respondents say it is very low. This can be clearly seen in the below bar chart (Chart - 6).

Chart 6

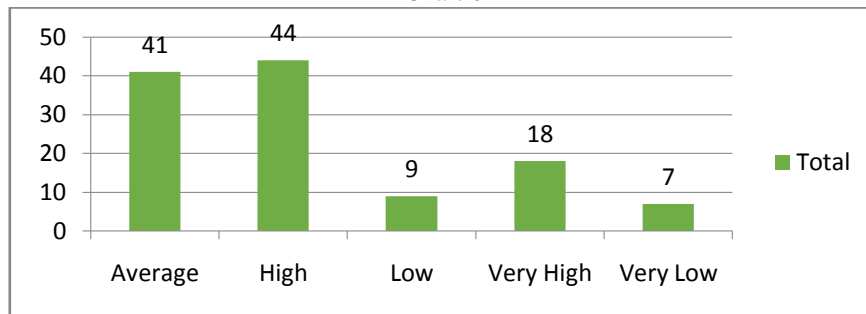


Table 7

Row Labels	Count of Do Subliminal ads creates any impulsive buying impact on you?
No	32
Sometimes	20
Yes	67
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>119</b>

Table - 7 depicts whether the subliminal advertisement creates any impulsive buying impact on the respondents. Opinion of the respondents regarding this is analysed and it can be seen in the above table. It can be noted that there are 67 respondents who say yes it creates an impulsive

buying impact, 32 respondents say no it does not create any impulsive buying impact, whereas 20 say it sometimes create an impulsive buying impact on them. This can be clearly observed in the below bar chart (Chart - 7).

Chart 7

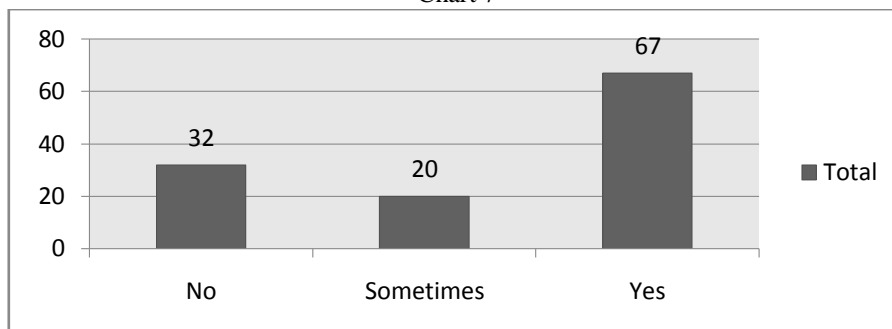


Table8

Row Labels	Count of I can remember brands shown in a film
Agree	36
Disagree	19
Neutral	18
Strongly Agree	29
Strongly Disagree	17
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>119</b>

Table - 8 depicts whether the respondents remember subliminal advertisement. Opinion of the respondents regarding this is analysed and it can be observed in the above table. It can be seen that

there are 36 respondents who agree, 19 disagree, 18 say neutral, 29 say strongly agree and 17 say strongly disagree. This can be clearly observed in the below bar chart (Chart - 8).

Chart 8

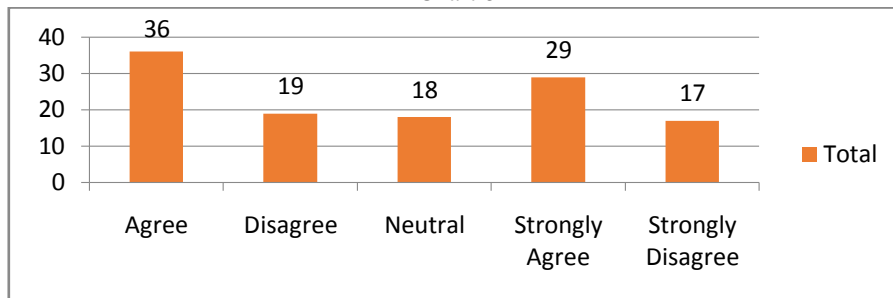


Table 9

Row Labels	Count of I recall a brand shown in a film while purchasing something
Agree	34
Disagree	22
Neutral	17
Strongly Agree	34
Strongly Disagree	12
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>119</b>

Table - 9 represents whether the respondents recall a brand before purchasing. Opinion of the respondents regarding this is analysed and it can be seen in the above table. It

can be noted that there are 34 respondents who agree, 22 disagree, 17 say neutral, 34 say strongly agree and 12 say strongly disagree. This can be clearly observed in the below bar chart (Chart - 9).

Chart 9

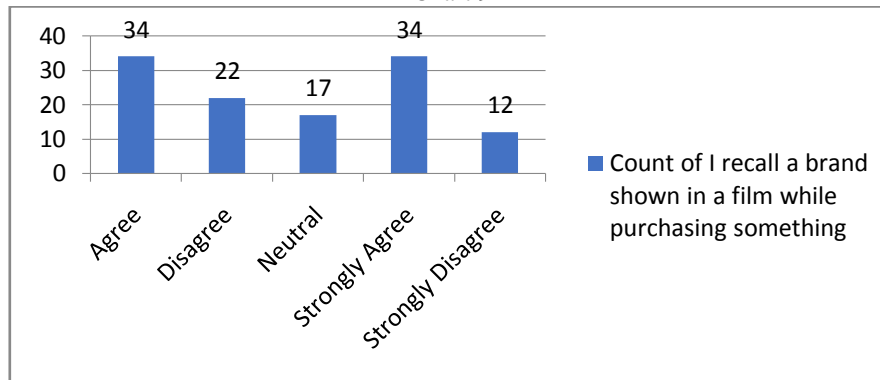
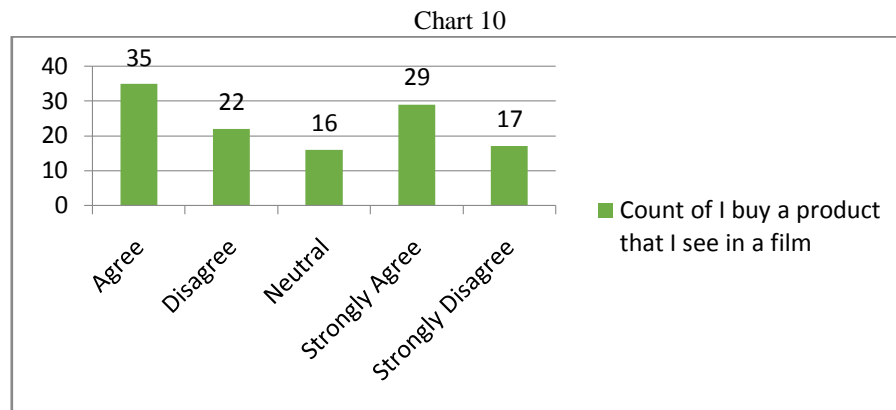


Table 10

Row Labels	Count of I buy a product that I see in a film
Agree	35
Disagree	22
Neutral	16
Strongly Agree	29
Strongly Disagree	17
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>119</b>

Table - 10 depicts whether the respondents buy a particular brand seeing in the movie. Opinion of the respondents regarding this is analysed and it can be observed in the above table. It can be seen

that there are 35 respondents who agree, 22 disagree, 16 say neutral, 29 say strongly agree and 17 say strongly disagree. This can be clearly shown in the below bar chart (Chart - 10).



**H0:** There is no significant relationship between brand recall and buying decision

**H1:** There is a significant relationship between brand recall and buying decision

Table11(A)

Count of Purchase Labels	Column Labels	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Grand Total
Agree		15	3	5	10	2	35
Disagree		6	9	1	4	2	22
Neutral		4	5	2	4	1	16
Strongly Agree		6	3	7	11	2	29
Strongly Disagree		3	2	2	5	5	17
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>34</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>119</b>

Table – 11(A) represents the cross table of brand recall and buying decision. To know whether there is any relationships exist between brand recall and purchase decision, a chi-square test is conducted. Table 11 (B) is showing the result of chi-square test along with the p-value. The values

are all expected data in Table – 11 (B). The p-value in the table is mentioned as 0.036. This value is less than 0.05. So we can conclude that the null hypothesis is rejected and there exist a relationship between brand recall and buying decision.

Table11(B)

Count of Purchase Labels	Column Labels	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Strongly Agree	Strongly Disagree	Grand Total
Agree		10	6.470588	5	10	3.529411765	35
Disagree		6.285714286	4.067227	3.1429	6.285714286	2.218487395	22
Neutral		4.571428571	2.957983	2.2857	4.571428571	1.613445378	16
Strongly Agree		8.285714286	5.361345	4.1429	8.285714286	2.924369748	29
Strongly Disagree		4.857142857	3.142857	2.4286	4.857142857	1.714285714	17
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>34</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>chi-test</b>		<b>0.036442131</b>					



## V. CONCLUSION

The subliminal messages might gain a potential influence from the fact that they may be able to avoid the crucial functions of one conscious mind, and it has often been compared that the subliminal suggestions are potentially more powerful than the ordinary ones. This way to influence would be alike to hypnosis wherein the subject is uplifted to be relaxed so that suggestions are routed to deeper parts of the mind; some observers have argued that the unconscious mind is incapacitated of critical refusal of hypnotic or subliminal suggestions.

From the analysis above it was seen that 53% of the respondents say that subliminal advertisements change their perception of a brand. 55% of the respondents either buy or dismiss a brand after seeing subliminal advertisements. 52% of the respondents were influenced by the celebrities endorsing subliminal advertisements. 56% of the respondents said that subliminal advertisements create impulsive buying impact on them. 55% said that they can remember brands shown in a movie. 57% can recall the brands seen in a movie before buying. 54% respondents buy the brands that they used to see in a movie. So we can conclude that the impact of subliminal advertisements shown in bollywood movies have definitely a positive impact on the viewers.

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