



MUSIC PLACEMENT IN INDIAN TELEVISION ADVERTISEMENTS

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Abstract: *Music is very popular in advertising. When watching television, it is almost impossible not to be inundated by a profusion of music in advertising. This research analyzed 245 prime-time television commercials to not only quantify, but qualify the placement of music in advertising. This study facilitates future trending and encourages further investigation of the role of music in advertising effectiveness.*

This research analyzed one hundred and four minutes of prime-time television commercials from STAR PLUS channel in India to determine not only the frequency with which different type of music is placed in commercials, but also, when employed, various aspects of the relationship between the advertised product and the type of music accompanying it. As a central theme, this research examines how music is currently being used in prime-television commercials, and whether or not there are patterns for the inclusion of this music, especially with respect to how it may be contextualized. A number of variables pertain to standard music-genre distinctions, questions of instrumentals versus vocals, original recordings versus new versions of older songs (covers), or silence versus background, generic music beds or needledrop, jingles etc.

Keywords: *Music, Advertisements, Old songs, Indian television, Nostalgia*

JEL Classification: M 31, M37

INTRODUCTION

Music is frequently used by marketers to shape consumer experience. (Kellaris et al 2007). Music can create favorable associations; especially emotional ones which plays an effective role in conveying a brand identity (Yalch 1991). Allan (2008) study pointed out the trend of increasing placement of popular music in commercials. More information about the product can be encoded into the memory if the listener is familiar with the music used in the advertisements because this allows the listener to generate any missing lyrics from memory (Heaton and Paris, 2006).

Advertising with popular music is proved to be more effective stimulus of attention and memory than advertising without popular music (Allan 2008) and is proved to be a fit with the brand into consumer's life (Raghvan 2012).



A study done by Nielsen in 2015 looked at effectiveness of more than 600 television advertisements, more than 500 of which included music. The research indicated that commercials with some form of music performed better across four key metrics—creativity, empathy, emotive power, and information power—than those that didn't.

Chou and Singhal (2017) in their recent publication explored the nostalgia-inducing ability of old songs used in Indian TV ads and compared the advertising effects of different nostalgic types. Their research was based on the fact that innumerable Indian TV ads use old Bollywood songs; however, little research has explored the effects of such songs on Indian consumers.

Their study demonstrated that even for products without recollection/nostalgia components, auditory cues in TV ads (i.e., old popular songs) effectively elicit different nostalgic feelings.

Music and advertising have become virtually inseparable. A 2008 content analysis showed that 94% of prime-time TV commercials in the United States used music and suggested this percentage was on the rise (Allan 2008). It appears to be a general assumption among practitioners that music can be used to affect consumer preferences. Stewart and Furse (1986) lamented the absence of its systematic measurement and set out to provide such documentation. They found music featured in slightly more than 40 percent of 1,000 television commercials they studied.

Appelbaum and Halliburton (1993) analyzed international commercials and found music placed in 89 percent of their sample. Music placement in advertising becomes an economic boon in two ways: first, a commercials' use of music provides a new venue for collecting royalties, and second, the widespread and repeated exposure of commercials provides either for revival of or new interest in the particular songs and/or artists featured—which is music-sales promotion and very much a variation on the phenomenon of product placement (Allan 2008).

INDIAN CONTEXT

In India, right from childhood, most of the thinking is shaped by stories, anecdotes and songs. In a country like India where we have rich oral tradition, music plays a more impactful role.

On Indian television, whether you take the example of Procter & Gamble's Ariel advertisement which used Shahrukh's Khan's song 'Gerua' from the movie 'Dilwale'; or



Nestle Kitkat Ad (2012) which used popular Hindi film song released in 1972, Nissan Micra ads (2011), used old Hindi popular song from a film released in 1972 & 1968, SBI life insurance ad (2009) used a popular song released in 1971, Nestea ad (2011) used another popular song of Hindi film released in 1969. Many advertisements are coming with filmi music or custom music. There are advertisements like Hero Motor Corp which has 'hum mai hai hero' song, or Coke ads with "Ummidon wali dhoop, sunshine wali aasha"; these songs are created specially by the brands in their advertisements. Music has the power to penetrate easily and stays into the minds of the viewers; may be this is the reason why we see many advertisements with music. The essence of romance is stronger when those classic songs are used. It is also a way for advertisements to get noticed among the multitude of cacophonous jingles.

CURRENT RESEARCH

Music in advertising consists not only of song or background, but also voice and all sound effects, which build the whole perception. Good music is able to shape attitudes towards the advertisement and make a strong impression on the audience. Marketers are using nostalgic songs (popular generic songs) as well as custom songs. It is said that the response to a well-known song is usually positive, but the awareness of the brand may not necessarily increase. (Kubaki and Croft 2004). Therefore marketers are making effort to create the sonic identity of their brand name with a custom song or sogo (sonic logo). When we talk about generic music, marketers can use the original song or needle drop (tweaked lyrics), jingles (unique novel lyrics written for a particular ad", Wallace, 1991) or background songs or unique custom songs.

The current research examines how music is currently being used in prime-television commercials, and whether or not there are patterns for the inclusion of this music.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to understand the 'Music Placement In Prime-Time Television Advertising on premise of the leading Hindi Entertainment Channel, Star Plus as per the FICCI-KPMG 2015 report.

It was designed to understand the type of music that was being used in the Indian advertisement industry currently with a microscopic view focused exclusively on ads telecasted on Star Plus, prime time. The general trend of the advertising industry in terms of evaluating the dominating presence of one of the following set of music i.e. 'Background



Music' or 'Foreground Music' and to determine the use of 'Instrumental Music' or the use of 'Vocals' being used by advertisers during the peak viewership hours. The study also undertakes category wise assessment of the trend of the use of music in ads.

SAMPLING DESIGN

Determining the sample size and nature was the first crucial step. In accordance with the nature of the study i.e. one channel i.e. Star Plus was chosen out of the various Hindi and English entertainment channels on offer in India. The decision for choosing Star Plus was because Star Plus is India's No. 1 Hindi General Entertainment Channel (GEC) (courtesy the FICCI-KPMG_2015). Also of all the television viewing hours, only prime time was considered as part of the study due to high viewership during this period. The criterion reserved was; the chosen channel should compulsorily require to air popular Hindi shows due to the mass appeal and following of the same in majority of the Indian households.

To assess the music placement in television advertisements, a grid was first constructed to collect the necessary information.

The grid was than divided into six parts:

Part One:

- Number Of Ads Studied : – Total number of ads that would be studied during the course of the research
- Brand Name/ Company Name –Brands/ Companies whose advertisement would be studied during the course of the research

Part Two:

In this section a 'grid' for the analysis of music in TV-commercials was presented. A 'grid' can be constructed on different grounds, and for the present purpose a rather intuitive and listener-oriented approach is taken inspiration from for the initial impression, that some music seems to attract attention and some do not. A concept of distinctiveness shall be introduced to qualify this impression in more analytical terms. For example a distinction can be made on grounds of a distinction between so called background music and foreground music; Generic Music/Popular Music; Canned Music; or Custom Music i.e. Jingles, Songs, Needledrop, Singout and SoGo.

Distinctiveness can be qualified as being relatively low or high, and the following two aspects are important for the impression and qualification of extent of distinctiveness:

Generic Music/Popular Music - Generic Music/Popular music is music that has (had) a



history outside the commercial and is available in public domain. Generally popular songs from movies, albums or television soap operas title track are considered as generic music.

Custom Music - Custom music is music that has been composed uniquely for the given product/brand generally for the commercial purpose. It can be either a jingle or a song or a signout. Some brands now a days creating their sonic identity by using SoGos (sonic logos)

Part Three:

This part of the Grid, studied the type of music that was being used in the ads being observed. That is, the presence of 'Background Music' and the presence of 'Foreground Music'.

Part Four:

This part of the Grid, studied the type of music that was being used in the ads being observed. That is, was 'Instrumental Music' being used or were 'Vocals' being used.

Part Five:

This part of the Grid, studied the appeal that was emerging out from the ads being studied i.e. did they have an 'Informational Appeal' which translates into the Cognitive path (creating awareness, educating about brand use, explaining how it can solve a consumer problem). Or did they have a 'Transformational Appeal' which translates to Affective path (creating or changing a brand image or personality; creating or changing attitudes and brand liking; igniting a desire or need. Creating or strengthening an association; striking an emotional chord).

Part Six:

This part of the Grid, studied the factor of 'Dissonance Only'(sounds considered unpleasant) or 'Consonance Only' (sounds that are pleasant) or 'Dissonance & Consonance' (combination of sounds considered unpleasant and sounds that are pleasant. It can be in a sequential form, that is either dissonance would follow consonance or vice versa or even a combination of both at the same time)

DATA COLLECTION

The primary data for the study was collected with the help of the grid designed. The necessary data was collected by means of observing the ads telecast on Star Plus (Hindi General Entertainment Channel) during the prime time 17:30 PM to 21:00 PM. As the researchers wanted to study the ads that are telecasted exclusively during the prime time due to the high viewership that occurs during this time frame, hence this particular prime



time of 17:30 PM to 21:00 PM was chosen.

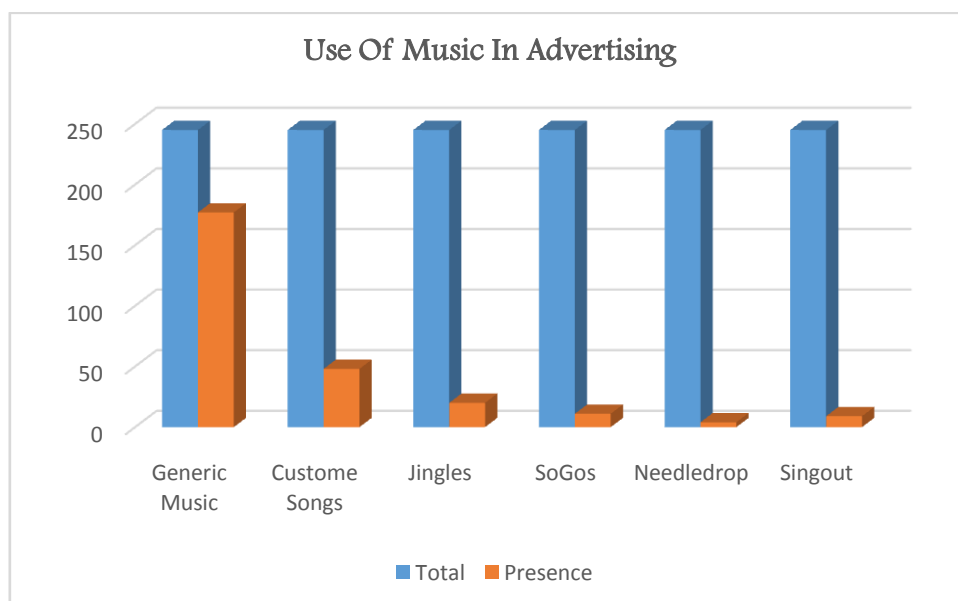
Analysis

The grid started in general with the header 'Total Number Of Ads Viewed'.

A total of 245 commercials telecasted on Star Plus (Hindi Entertainment Channel), during the prime time 17:30 PM to 21:00 PM constituted the part of this header.

The grid then intended on classifying the ads based on their 'Brand Name/ Company Name'. This header in the Grid was created in order to further assign the telecasted 'Brand Name/ Company Name' to their broad category classifications.

Grid population was completed and then the data was tabulated into database for further analysis. The analysis and the interpretation of each of the variable from the grid was done separately. Below section presents the analysis in graphical forms with the help of pie charts and bar graphs for better understanding. The grid presented the data with regard to the 'Use of Music' in the ads telecasted during the period of the study.



As is apparent by the data illustrated above, out of the total 245 ads telecasted during the period of the study, the majority of the ads used 'Generic Music/ Popular Music' as part of its ads (72% of the ads). Customized music with 'Songs' being the leading force in the customized music segment by earning a share of 20% of the total usage; 'Jingles' followed at 8%. 'SoGo' and 'Singout' shared the collective figure of 4% each. The list ranker in the customized music category was 'Needledrop' at just 2% usage.

Thus it may be understood that advertisers and marketers advertising are more inclined towards the usage of Generic Music/ Popular music followed by custom Songs.

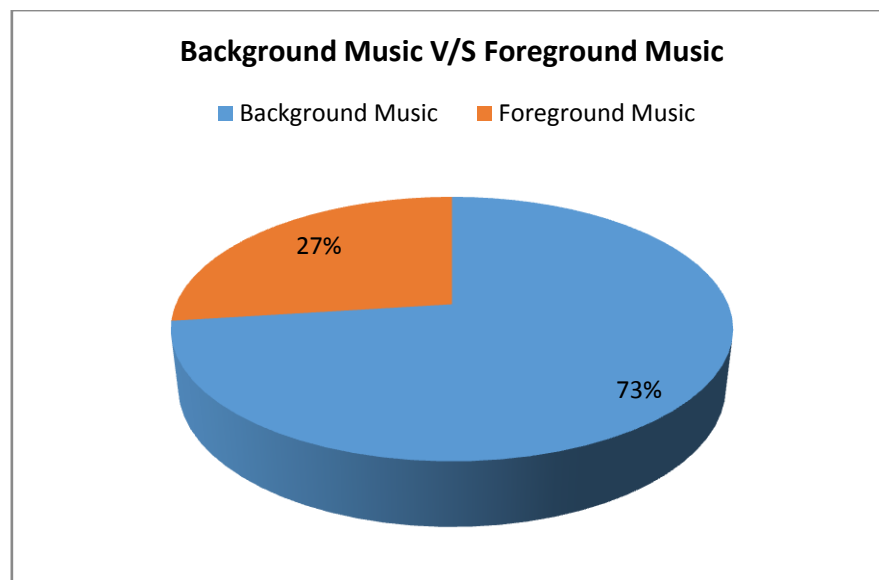


The data also asked a pertinent question: Are jingles still relevant in today's context? While most senior Indian advertising and marketing professionals say that jingles (with catchy lyrics or tune) are heard much less compared to signature tunes (such as Airtel, Intel and Britannia), few believe that jingles will die. Reason could be that we haven't seemed to crack newer expressions, tunes, melodies or compositions. Somehow, a jingle also has an unfortunate, 'dated' feel to it. For a great jingle to come through, you'd ideally need all of 30 seconds to build the tune. Most of the current commercials are story- and idea-based commercials. Jingles are less common - but maybe baselines change so often that there is no opportunity for long-lasting 'brand songs'. But several brands do continue to use jingles: MDH masalas, Nirma and Close-Up. The use of fewer rhymes in brand sign-offs - with or without music, reflects today's more conversational, casual style of speaking. With the increase in the number of players in the category and share of voice, retaining salience in the consumer's mind by differentiating one brand from the other is a real challenge. Today, the emphasis is more on consumer insight to develop communication messages.

The grid further sought to find whether advertisers/ marketers were using 'Background Music' or 'Foreground Music' as part of their ad communication.

Background Music is played at low levels, also known as ambient or environmental music.

Foreground Music is played at audio levels higher than background music.



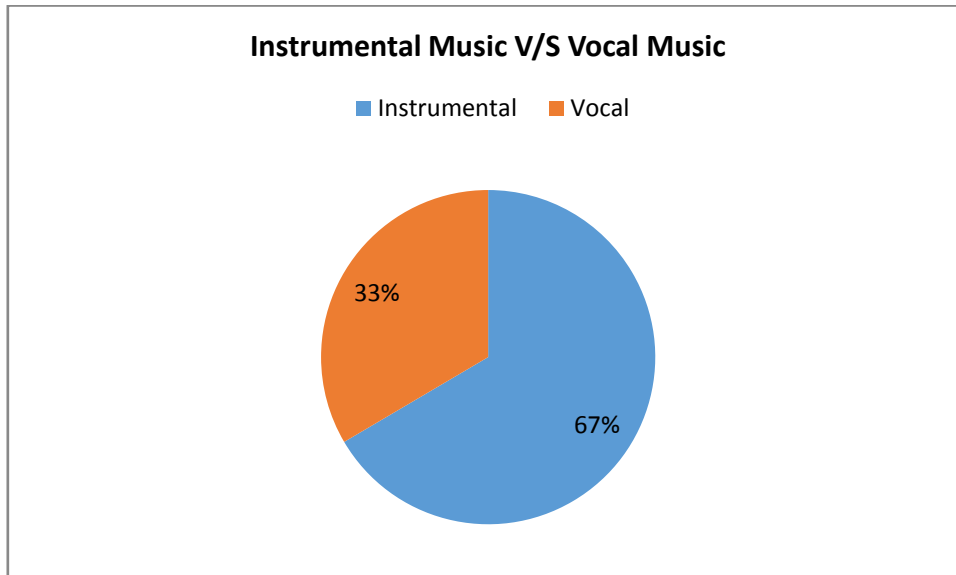
As revealed in the diagram, 'Background Music' formed a major part of ads at a staggering 73%. Foreground Music wasn't widely used and stood at a paltry 27%.

The reason for the wide gap can be easily concluded by the fact that 'Generic Music' was the more dominant type of music over 'Custom Music' as seen in the previous diagram. Hence



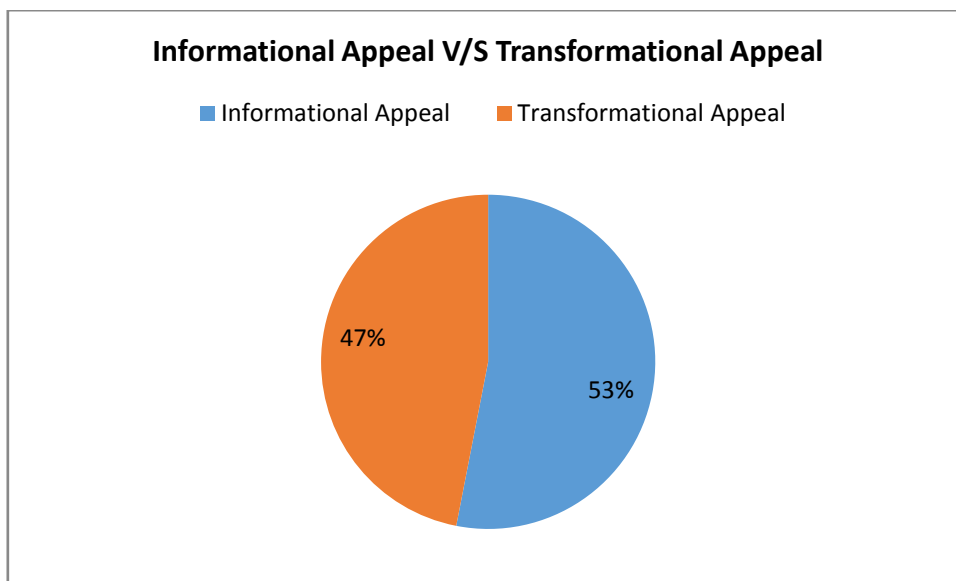
since generic music is more affordable compared to its more expensive 'custom music' counterpart which would want its music to be played in the foreground and be more prominent due to the high spend involved in designing and execution of custom music.

We then analyzed most common type of music that the advertisers/ marketers were using in their ads with respect to 'Instrumental Music' or 'Vocal Music'.

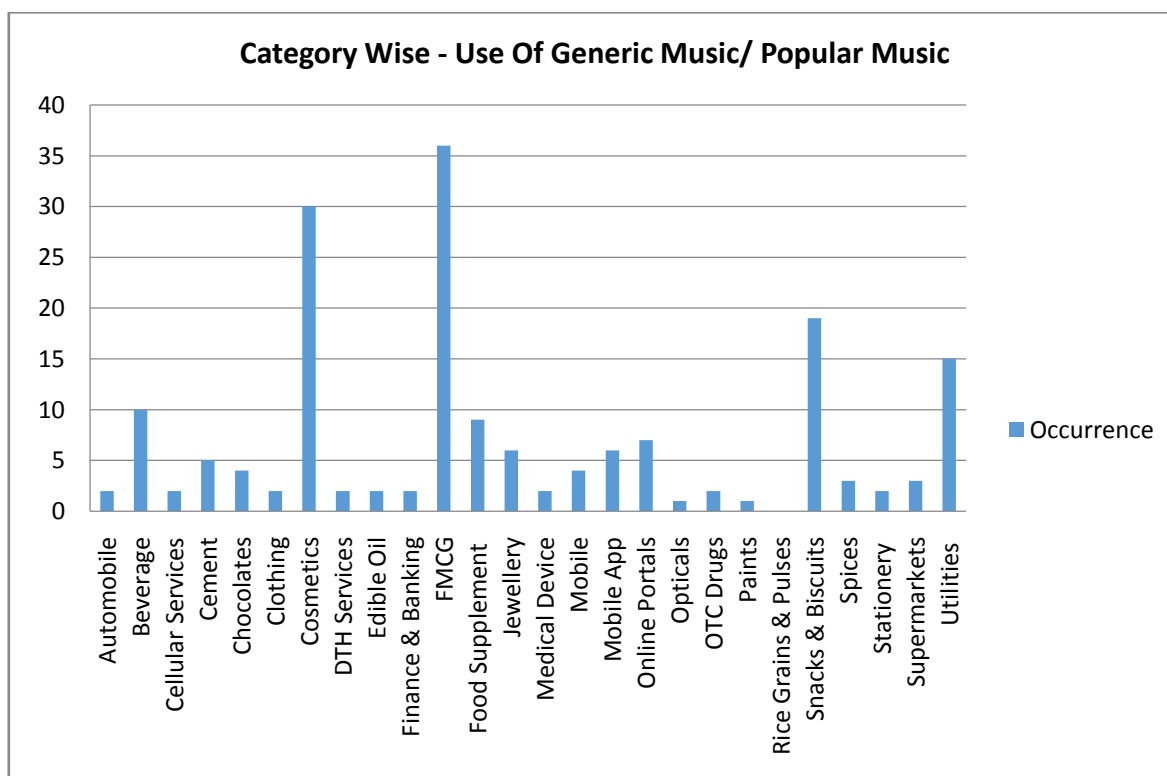


As displayed in the figure, 'Instrumental Music' was the leading music in the usage area with a mighty 67% of share to its name. 'Vocal Music' on the contrary occupied only 33% of the overall share. The trend is not very promising as it is researched that song vocals, either original or altered, are more effective stimuli of advertising effects than instrumentals or no popular music.

It is interesting to note that the advertisers/ marketers were more inclined towards using 'Transformational Appeal' which translates to Affective path: creating or changing a brand image or personality; creating or changing attitudes and brand liking; igniting a desire or need. Creating or strengthening an association; striking an emotional chord over the use of 'Informational Appeal' which translates to Cognitive path: creating awareness, educating about brand use, explaining how it can solve a consumer problem. But the gap wasn't wide, and the current trend is leaning more towards transformational appeal since the Indian consumer is ever evolving and is moving away from the objective of what an informational appeal is aiming to provide them with.

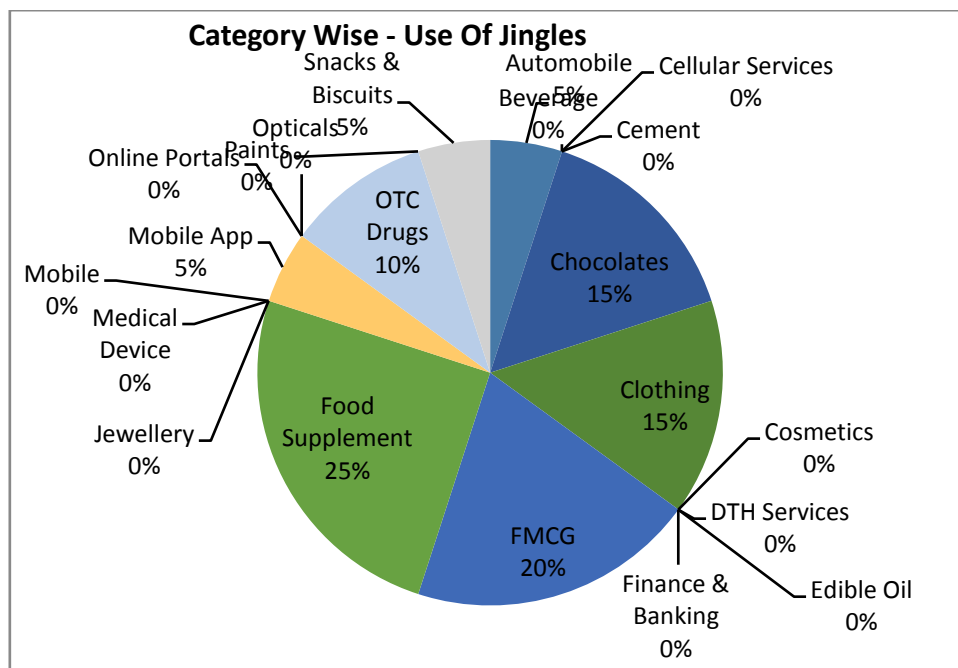


The Category Wise - Use Of Generic Music/ Popular Music in ads is displayed in the below diagram.



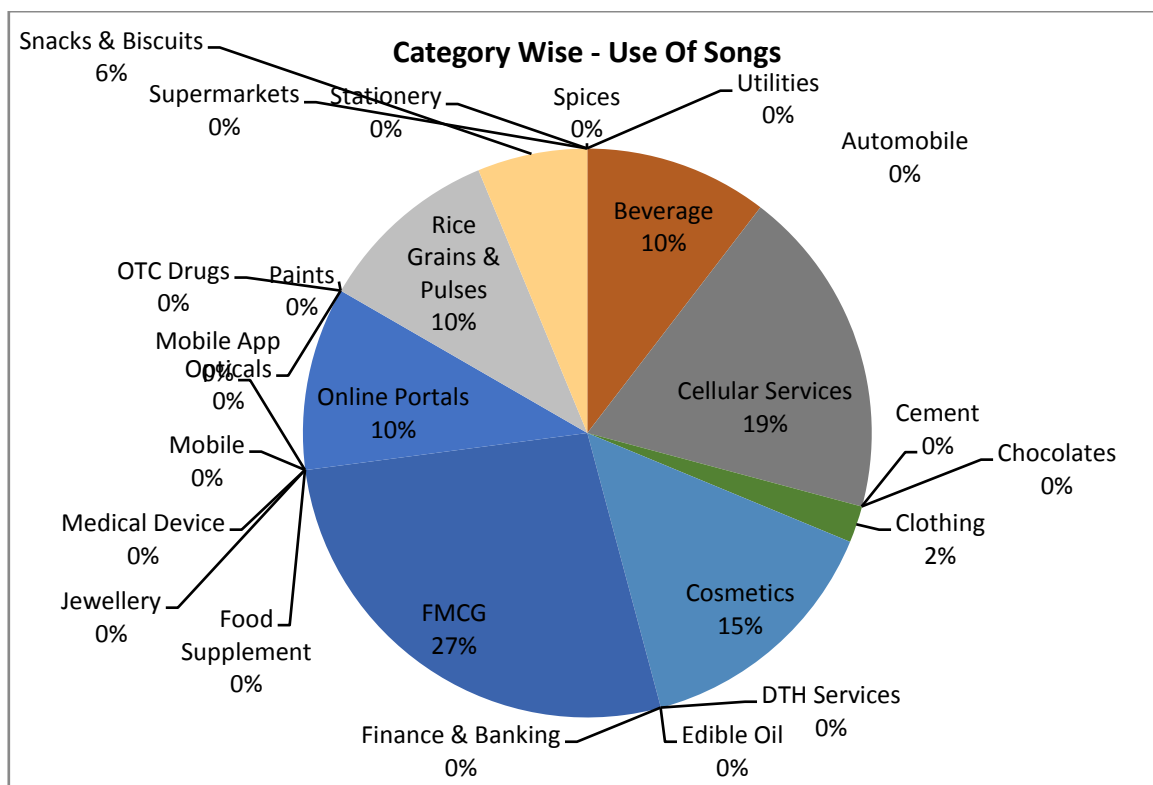
As observed in the above diagram, a major chunk of generic music/ popular music was present in ads belonging to the FMCG category, followed by the categories of Cosmetics and Snacks & Biscuits.

Ω This part of the grid endeavoured to explore which categories were using jingles in their ads and in what proportions.



It is evident from the above figure, that the majority of the jingles were present in the Food Supplement Category, followed by the FMCG category. The categories of Chocolates and Clothing shared the similar shares in terms of use of jingles in their ads. OTC Drugs followed in quick succession and Mobile App garnered a meager 5% of the total share.

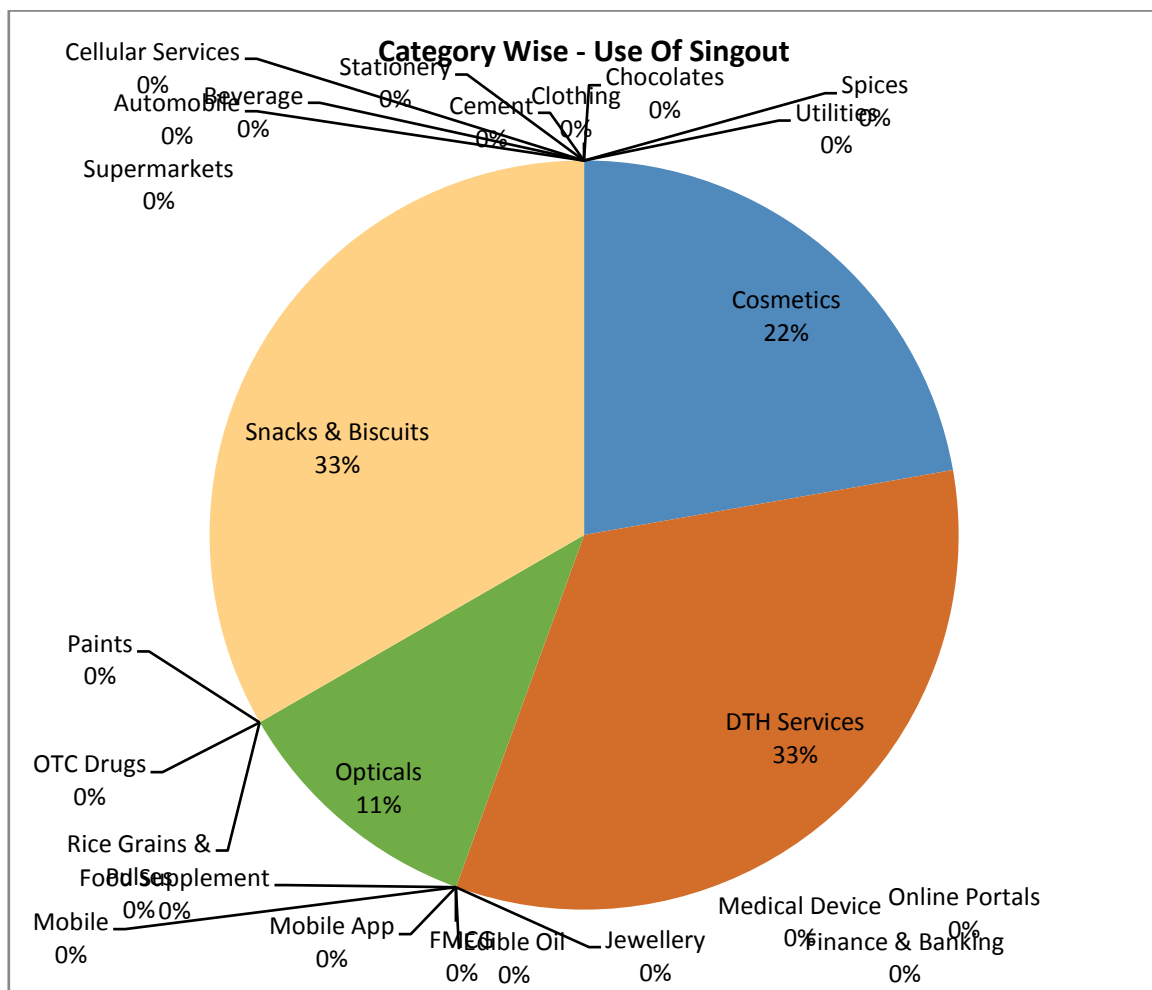
This part of the grid strived to discover the use of songs the different categories were employing in their ads.





According to the chart illustrated above, 27% of the FMCG category used songs in their advertisements. Cellular services occupied 19% of the total chart share, followed by the Cosmetics category occupying 15% of the total share. The categories of Beverage and Rice Grain & Pulses shared 10% of the share each. Snacks & Biscuits and Clothing followed at 6% and 2% respectively.

This preceding component of the grid endeavored to ascertain what kind of categories were using Singouts in their ads:

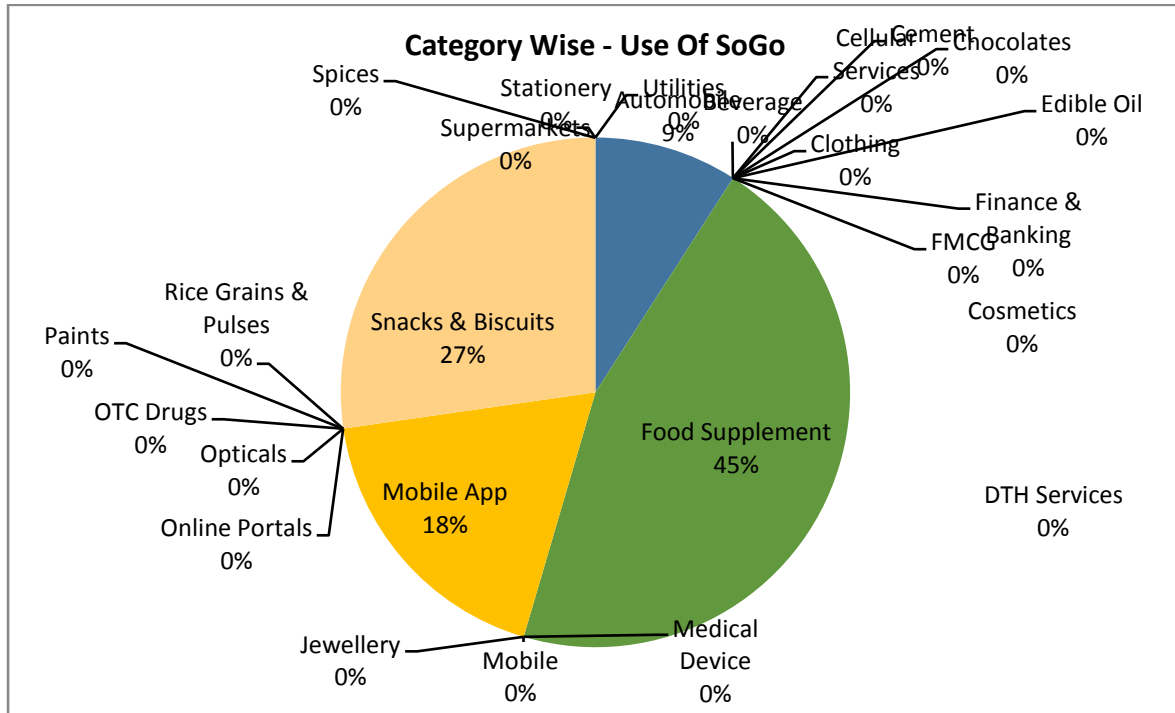


As can be established from the data illustrated in the above figure, the categories of Snacks & Biscuits and DTH services shared the leading positions with 33% of share to their credit. Cosmetics category followed in quick succession and won 22% of the share. Opticals occupied 11% of the total share. It can also be noted that during the course of study it is



observed that out of the 26 categories, only 4 categories used Singouts to convey their messages.

Ω This section of the grid endeavored to ascertain the use of SoGo's or Sonic Logo's in the ads telecasted:



As can be established from the data illustrated in the above figure, the use of Sonic Logo is low among the advertisers/ marketers nowadays. Out of 26 categories only 4 categories had the presence of SoGo's in them, with Food Supplement leading the pack by 45% of the total share, followed by Snacks & Biscuits at 27%, Mobile App at 18% and lastly Automobile at 9%.

CONCLUSION

Music is universal and can instantly trigger an emotional response, and establishing an emotional connection with an audience is so critical for a brand. Music brings value to a brand in three ways: identity, engagement, currency. Specifically, using music to establish an emotional connection with a brand, increases brand recognition, creates excitement and buzz beyond the brand's core products or services, and can empower consumers, giving them valuable content to discover and share. Music creates the value that brands need to win the war for attention and develop a genuine connection with their consumers. When used correctly, music not only creates loyalty, but true advocacy.



The paper discusses and exemplified the appearance of music in TV-commercials. The paper argued that it is probable that music is a prominent feature in current TV-commercials, and that further initiatives are needed to support and develop such an understanding. When it comes to the prevalence and categories of music in TV-commercials, two initiatives emerge as highly interesting: one being the widespread use of transformational appeal over informational appeal. Advertisers/ marketers nowadays are rapidly moving away from communicating the functional aspect of a product in their ads and moving towards using more emotional and humane and affective content in their ads. The other being the extensive use of popular music in the ads, majority of the ads nowadays can't do without music.

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