



A Study on The Analysis of Modern Marketing Strategies and Their Impact on Audience Perspective in the Tamil Film Industry (2015-2025)

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Abstract: This study examines the transformation of promotional tactics within the Tamil Film Industry (Kollywood) and their subsequent impact on audience behavior during the digital decade of 2015–2025. The research analyzes how modern strategies—specifically Instagram Reels, influencer reviews, meme marketing, and controversy management—influence ticket booking decisions and the "Modern Box Office Paradox." Based on primary data from 100 respondents in the Coimbatore region, the study applies statistical tools including Percentage Analysis, Chi-Square tests, and descriptive interpretation. The findings indicate a significant shift from "Content-driven" to "Perception-driven" success, where 60% of discovery occurs via short-form video. While aggressive marketing successfully drives "First Day First Show" (FDFS) collections, the study reveals a growing "trust deficit," with 85% of audiences skeptical of manufactured hype. The study concludes that while digital tools are essential for discovery, sustainable success in the post-pandemic era requires a balance between viral "hook steps" and narrative quality.

Keywords: Tamil Film Industry, Modern Marketing, Audience Perspective, Instagram Reels, Influencer Marketing, Meme Culture, Box Office Paradox.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary landscape of the Tamil Film Industry, the relationship between a motion picture and its audience has evolved from simple content consumption into a complex negotiation of perception. This transition, accelerated by the "Jio Revolution" post-2016, has moved the industry from an era of physical physicality (cut-outs and banners) to a hyper-digital ecosystem. Modern marketing in Kollywood is now defined by the "Modern Box Office Paradox," where a film's commercial success often becomes disconnected from its inherent narrative quality through aggressive digital machinery.

For a culturally significant industry like Kollywood, which releases over 200 films annually and caters to a massive global diaspora, marketing has become a 24/7 data-driven operation. The entry of corporate powerhouses like Sun Pictures and Lyca Productions has corporatized distribution, while streaming giants like Netflix and Amazon Prime Video have altered consumption habits. Today, the audience's perspective is shaped long before a ticket is purchased, filtered through algorithmic feedback loops of Instagram Reels and YouTube Shorts.

This study examines the impact of these modern strategies over the period 2015–2025. It considers key variables such as the "3-second rule" of social media engagement, the weaponization of hashtags by fan clubs, and the emergence of "Review Culture." By deconstructing these strategies, the research aims to understand why "biggest" films often thrive while "best" films struggle, and how the definition of a "hit" has blurred in the age of viral marketing.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A. LITERATURE REVIEW

Sakthi Priya & Sundaram (2025) observed that 65% of audiences were willing to watch a film based solely on an impressive digital campaign, even without narrative clarity, concluding that memes have become more effective than traditional audio launches.

Sathish Kumar & Karpagam (2025) investigated short-form video content and found that Instagram Reels revolutionized promotions by offering high-velocity engagement, noting that "behind-the-scenes" clips generated more organic interest than polished trailers.

Gerritsen (2016) analyzed the "figure of the fan" in Tamil cinema, arguing that fan clubs (Rasigar Mandrams) function as a decentralized marketing workforce that actively shapes the public persona of stars like Rajinikanth and Vijay.

Pinkvilla (2024) reported on the tension between traditional producers and new-age digital critics, highlighting the request to ban YouTube reviews inside theaters due to their immediate impact on box office prospects.

B. RESEARCH GAP

Most existing studies on film marketing pre-date the massive explosion of short-form video (Reels/Shorts). There is a critical lack of research on the "Second Lifecycle" of films—how "Troll Culture" re-evaluates a film's legacy post-OTT release. This study seeks to bridge this gap by providing an integrated analysis of how 15-second vertical videos influence 3-hour theatrical decisions and the resulting "Post-OTT" perception.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. RESEARCH DESIGN

The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design. It attempts to map out current marketing tools while critically examining the relationship between aggressive hype and final audience perception.

B. DATA SOURCES AND PERIOD OF STUDY

The study utilizes a mixed-source approach. Primary data was collected via a structured questionnaire from 100 respondents. Secondary data was obtained from industry reports (Ormax Media, FICCI-EY) and academic journals. The study focuses on the decade spanning 2015–2025.

C. SAMPLE DESIGN

The study employs a non-probability convenience sampling technique, targeting 100 active movie watchers in the Coimbatore metropolitan area, representing a diverse mix of "Digital Natives" and "Digital Migrants" aged 18–45.

D. VARIABLES USED IN THE STUDY

- **Viral Content Marketing:** Use of "Hook Steps" and punchlines for Reels.
- **Influencer Trust:** Impact of YouTube reviewers on booking decisions.
- **Meme Influence:** Effectiveness of humor and satire in maintaining relevance.
- **Price Sensitivity:** Impact of "High Hype" on willingness to pay premium rates.
- **Social Message Impact:** Extent to which films spark ideological conversations.

E. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

- **H01**
: Age of the respondent has no significant association with the level of influence of Meme Campaigns.
- **H11**
: Age of the respondent has a significant association with the level of influence of Meme Campaigns.
- **H02**
: There is no significant relationship between marketing hype and actual audience satisfaction.

IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A. PERCENTAGE AND CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Table I: Impact of Digital Tools on Audience Behavior

Marketing Variable	Primary Discovery (%)	Influence on Opinion (%)	Booking Intent (High)
Instagram Reels / Shorts	60%	45%	.782**
Influencer Reviews	20%	30%	.814**
Meme Campaigns	10%	15%	.521*
Meme Campaigns	10%	15%	.521*
YouTube Trailers	5%	10%	.412
Traditional Billboards	5%	0%	-.105

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation:

The analysis reveals that traditional advertising (billboards/posters) has a negligible impact on opinion. Instagram Reels (60%) is the dominant force for discovery. A strong positive correlation (.814) exists between Influencer Reviews and Booking Intent, proving that YouTube critics have effectively replaced traditional journalists as the primary arbiters of taste.

B. CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS

Table II: Chi-Square Test (Age vs. Meme Influence)

Statistical Metric	Value
Degrees of Freedom (df)	4
Table Value (at 5% significance)	9.488
Calculated Chi-Square Value	18.452
Result	Significant

Interpretation:

Since the calculated value (18.452) is greater than the table value (9.488), the Null Hypothesis is rejected. This proves that the effectiveness of Meme Marketing is highly age-dependent, being most effective for the "Below 25" and "25-35" demographics but statistically ineffective for older audiences.

C. NORMALITY TEST

Table III: Normality Test for Audience Variables

Variable	Shapiro-Wilk Stat	Sig.	Result
Booking Excitement	0.962	0.683	Normal
Marketing Trust	0.971	0.812	Normal
Price Sensitivity	0.967	0.744	Normal

Interpretation:

The normality test confirms that audience perception variables follow an approximately normal distribution, validating the use of parametric techniques for this study.

V. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION**A. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

- The Star Paradox:** While 45% of respondents claim to prioritize "Good Content," 50% admit that the "Star Cast" remains the single biggest driver for FDFS ticket purchases.
- Influencer Power:** 75% of respondents would immediately drop plans to watch a movie if a popular YouTube influencer gave it a negative review.
- The Trust Deficit:** 85% of respondents believe big-budget films use "Paid PR" and "Bot Tweets" to artificially inflate numbers, leading to deep skepticism.
- The Second Lifecycle:** 80% of the audience changes their opinion of a film after seeing "Troll Content" post-OTT release, proving the internet decides long-term legacy.
- Music as a Weapon:** 55% of respondents admitted to booking tickets based on a "Viral Hook Step" alone without knowing the actual plot.

B. CONCLUSION

The decade of 2015–2025 marks a paradigm shift from star-driven monopolies to "Algorithm-Driven Hype." Modern marketing successfully drives initial collections through manufactured FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out), but it has created a volatile disconnect between promotional promises and actual satisfaction. The "Modern Box Office Paradox" reveals that while marketing can bring an audience to the theater on Day 1, only genuine content can ensure long-term legacy. A segmented approach is now required: using memes for youth and traditional emotional hooks for older segments.

C. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study is restricted to the Coimbatore metropolitan area, potentially involving an urban bias. The sample size of 100, while sufficient for this academic project, may not fully represent the global Tamil diaspora. Additionally, the rapid evolution of technology means strategies dominant in 2024 may be obsolete by 2026.



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