



Advertising and Marketing Strategies of Alcohol Brands at BharatGP: Assessing Awareness among Riders and Attendees

Tony Joseph K A¹, Dr. Kannan S²

¹PG, Media and Communication Studies, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Karnataka, India.

²Assistant Professor, Department of Media Studies, CHRIST (Deemed to be University), Karnataka, India.

Email: tonjoe1326@gmail.com¹, kannan.s@christuniversity.in²

Corresponding Author Orcid ID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0006-9478-5858>¹, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1068-8016>²

Abstract

This research investigates the effect of alcohol product marketing within the motorsports industry on the lifestyle choices of adolescents and young adults in India. Employing qualitative in-depth interviews, the study included experts such as professional motorcycle racers, racing team coordinators, sponsors, organizers, journalists, and parents aged 13 to 45, who attended Bharath GP in Delhi from various locations. Thematic analysis was applied to the interview data, revealing key themes related to the influence of alcohol advertising on lifestyle choices, brand loyalty, and purchasing behavior of young consumers. Findings indicate a pervasive influence on lifestyle choices and increased alcohol consumption associated with alcohol product marketing at Bharath GP. The study underscores the necessity of regulatory frameworks for alcohol marketing in motorsports events, specifically emphasizing the importance of responsible advertising strategies within the context of Bharath GP.

Keywords: MotoGP, Bharath GP, alcohol marketing, motorsports.

1. Introduction

This research delves into the symbiotic relationship between motorsports, particularly MotoGP, and the alcohol industry, emphasizing the strategic marketing alliance witnessed during the Bharath Grand Prix 2023. As a global platform, MotoGP attracts a diverse audience, making it an ideal stage for alcohol brands to promote their products. The study focuses on the marketing strategies employed by Indian alcohol brands Campai and international brand Bushmills during the event. It analyzes their approaches to engage with a culturally diverse audience, taking into account the unique challenges posed by varying attitudes towards alcohol in different Indian states. The research also draws parallels with the Netflix series "Bad Boy Billionaires: India," highlighting Vijay Mallya's influential role in combining alcohol branding, specifically Kingfisher, with Formula One racing. This historical context provides depth to the examination of Campai's and Bushmills' marketing

strategies during the Bharath Grand Prix. Furthermore, the study explores the crucial role played by governing bodies, Fédération Internationale de Motocyclisme (FIM) and Dorna Sports, in regulating alcohol advertising in motorsports [1]. The FIM's code of conduct guides alcohol sponsorship, ensuring responsible marketing practices and alignment with local regulations. Dorna Sports manages sponsorship activities, negotiates deals, and oversees compliance with FIM guidelines. A literature review performed on multiple studies revealed certain ideas in this area of research [2&3]. The first study explores Carlsberg's alibi marketing during the UEFA Euro 2016 finals, revealing the substantial presence of alibis during critical game moments, with potential implications for public health, especially among children. The second report forecasts a remarkable growth in the motorsport online advertising market, emphasizing the effectiveness of online advertising



tools, particularly programmatic advertising on mobile devices. The third study investigates the impact of different forms of alcohol advertising on adolescent drinking behavior, highlighting varied influences based on exposure to specific ad types. The fourth paper scrutinizes the nuanced relationship between tobacco company sponsorship and alibi marketing in Formula One, revealing potential contravention of advertising directives. The fifth paper critically analyzes the responsible drinking advertising sponsored by the U.S. beer industry, uncovering inconsistencies in messaging. Lastly, the study on alcohol industry sponsorship of sportspeople suggests potential links between alcohol sponsorship and increased drinking behaviors among Australian athletes. Additionally, a systematic review underscores the association between alcohol advertising exposure and subsequent alcohol consumption in young individuals. The study highlights the careful balance struck by these organizations to accommodate business interests while upholding ethical standards in alcohol promotion during MotoGP events. In addressing the problem statement, the research aims to understand the marketing and advertising strategies of Campai and Bushmills, examining their impact on brand awareness and consumer behavior. The scope extends from January 2022 to September 2023, with a focus on attendees aged 13 to 45 at the Bharath Grand Prix [4-8]. The study's relevance lies in contributing to the understanding of lifestyle and surrogate marketing in alcohol sponsorship within the context of Indian motorsports, with implications for public health and sports sponsorship policies.

2. Methodology

The research design for this study is qualitative, employing in-depth interviews as the primary method of data collection. This approach, focused on non-numerical data, aims to analyze the impact of digital marketing of alcohol on adolescents. The geographic focus is Delhi, particularly due to the Indian Grand Prix 2023 at the Buddh International Circuit, fostering a connection between motorsports and lifestyle choices [9]. The target population ranges from 13 to 45 years, encompassing both

adolescents and experienced racers. The legal drinking age in Karnataka is 21, shaping the age criteria. The sample comprises individuals with significant motorsports involvement, such as on-track instructors, coaches, riders, organizers, parents, and avid fans [24]. The choice of in-depth interviews ensures accurate, firsthand information from those well-versed in the field [10]. The objectives center on studying alcohol product lifestyle marketing in motorsports, analyzing its influence on lifestyle choices, understanding advertising's impact on brand loyalty and purchasing behavior, and examining attendee perceptions of alcohol availability and consumption, especially concerning children. Research questions delve into the effects of lifestyle marketing on riders and attendees, the influence of alcohol advertising on brand loyalty, purchasing behavior, and attendee perceptions and responses to alcohol at the Indian Grand Prix. Data collection involves semi-structured questionnaires administered through online and offline means, accommodating respondent and researcher convenience [11-13]. The study's population comprises experts in motorcycle racing, including professional racers, team coordinators, sponsors, organizers, journalists, and parents who attended the Bharat GP in Delhi. Purposive sampling, guided by expertise in the subject matter, involves eight participants, with thematic analysis applied to their responses. Operational definitions clarify terms such as Bharat GP, Moto GP, and Alcohol Marketing in Motorsports, providing a clear framework for the study's parameters. The operational definitions are as follows:

- **Bharat GP - Moto GP** is a world championship motorcycle race happening in 23 countries all over the world. BharatGP is a part of this series of motorcycle racing that happened in Delhi, India, for the first time in the 75-year history of Moto GP.
- **Alcohol Marketing in Motorsports** - Alcohol marketing in motorsports may be defined as the display of various alcohol



brand's logos throughout the race track including bikes, team apparels, team uniforms, VIP paddock and corporate boxes and other promotional activities in the venue with an aim to promote the sponsors of the event and achieve brand recall among the attendees. The study aims to uncover insights into the intricate relationship between alcohol marketing in motorsports, lifestyle choices, and perceptions among diverse participants within the motorsports community [14].

3. Result and Discussion

This qualitative study employs thematic analysis of in-depth interviews to explore the nuanced effects of alcohol lifestyle marketing in the motorsports industry, specifically focusing on the Indian Grand Prix. The study addresses three key research questions: the impact on lifestyle choices of adolescents and young adults, the influence of alcohol advertising on brand loyalty and purchasing behavior, and attendees' perceptions and responses to alcohol availability, particularly concerning children [15&16]. The lack of awareness regarding bans on alcohol and tobacco products in motorsports events emerges as a significant theme among participants. This underscores potential communication gaps and the need for more effective dissemination of information. Despite varying levels of awareness, participants express concerns about surrogate marketing strategies, where alcohol brands promote themselves on social media while offering products at events [17]. This theme highlights a potential discrepancy between marketing messages and actual consumption opportunities, raising questions about transparency and ethical practices [23]. The thematic analysis reveals diverse perspectives on the influence of alcohol consumption on lifestyle choices. While some participants advocate prioritizing the thrill of racing over alcohol promotion, others view it as a cultural element integral to motorsports enjoyment. The tension between entertainment value and potential consequences on lifestyle choices is

evident, suggesting a need for balance. Participants' personal consumption habits vary, with some abstaining from alcohol and others admitting to being social drinkers. This diversity emphasizes the importance of considering individual attitudes and behaviors within the broader context of alcohol marketing. Brand awareness and advertising effects are evident, with exposure to alcohol brands at the event acknowledged. The analysis raises questions about the effectiveness of advertising strategies in creating brand awareness and influencing perceptions [26-28]. Exploring the influence of alcohol advertising on brand loyalty and purchasing behavior, the study finds a complex interplay of factors. While some participants distance themselves from purchasing alcohol products at events, others indicate a willingness to try based on advertising exposure. The theme of negative influence on children emerges strongly, reflecting concerns about setting a bad example and highlighting the ethical dimensions of alcohol marketing in motorsports events. Participants propose alternative measures, such as promoting energy drinks or non-alcoholic beverages, to mitigate the presence and consumption of alcohol [18]. This suggests a collective desire for a balanced and responsible environment. The overall impression theme encapsulates participants' cautious sentiments, questioning the appropriateness of current marketing strategies, especially concerning young attendees and children. Synthesizing findings with existing literature, the study aligns with previous research emphasizing the pervasive influence of alcohol marketing on various age groups. Both sources converge on the need for nuanced regulatory measures to address potential risks, especially concerning vulnerable populations like adolescents. On the whole, this research provides valuable insights into the multifaceted effects of alcohol lifestyle marketing in the motorsports industry [19-21]. The thematic analysis captures participants' diverse perspectives, shedding light on awareness levels, marketing strategies, concerns, and alternative suggestions. The study contributes to the broader discourse on responsible



alcohol marketing practices and suggests avenues for future research and policy considerations in the context of motorsports events.

Conclusion

The synthesis of literature and thematic analysis in this research provides a comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted impact of alcohol marketing in motorsports. Common themes include the significant influence on lifestyle choices, the association with increased alcohol consumption, and the importance of regulatory frameworks. However, differences highlight unique dynamics within the motorsports context and the necessity of considering both broad policy perspectives and individual experiences [22]. Future research recommendations advocate for a mixed-methods approach to enhance comprehension, a targeted exploration of younger audience attitudes, global cultural variations, alternative data collection methods to mitigate bias, participatory research for community engagement, consideration of socio-economic factors, continuous monitoring of evolving marketing trends, and longitudinal designs for dynamic perspectives [25-28]. These recommendations aim to guide future investigations towards more nuanced insights and targeted interventions in the motorsports industry and beyond.

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