

Sports Celebrity Endorsements on TV and its Impact on Youth

¹Dr. Jagadeesh Prakash , ² Shamala . R

^{1,2}Department of Communication Bangalore University PK. Block Palace Road

ABSTRACT: [Advertisements cater to the emotional appetite of the viewers by plastering the appealing image of celebrities and thus have become an integral part of our lives. Mass media serves as an interface between society and market by introducing every commercial product on TV. Viewers rate ads based on their content, script and presentation. Some ads convey a social message while others are presented in a humorous manner and accordingly their viewership also varies. Advertisements delivered by a celebrity provide a higher degree of recognition and is easily recalled by the viewers as compared to ads that does not feature celebrities. Most of the ads target youth as their potential consumers as they are more likely to favorably respond to products rather than others. Today advertisers resort to different strategies to break through the clutter of ads that collide with the viewers in everyday life. Such a strategy is sports celebrity endorsements which have shown a steady growth in the past few years. This study tries to examine how youth perceive advertisements featuring sports stars and whether the youth are influenced by these sports celebrity endorsements and the various factors that influence them to purchase a product.]

KEY WORDS: Advertisements, Sport, Celebrity endorsement, Youth, Consumerism.

I. INTRODUCTION

Celebrity endorsement can be defined as any individual with public recognition who uses his/her recognition for a product by appearing in an advertisement for it (McCracken, 1989). TV advertisements have a strong impact on the viewers as compared to print advertisements. Companies find television a more reliable source to win the hearts of youth. These audio-visual ads are not only appealing but also have an immense influence on their daily lives. Studies have proven that youth spent more time watching TV especially sports channels. In recent years, celebrity endorsements have become a trend. In this competitive scenario, brands launch their products in association with some noted film or sports celebrities. Several studies have shown that celebrities make advertisements believable (Kamins-1989) and enhance message (Freidman and Freidman-1979) to remember the products. Endorsements are believed to generate a greater opportunity for consumers to choose a particular brand. Celebrity endorsement is purely an advertising strategy both for TV and the company as it generates revenue for both institutions. Sports celebrity endorsements have become a prevalent form of advertising and target consumer being prominently youth for products like electronic gadgets, clothing, automobiles, and beverages etc. Sports icons have occupied strong positions in the advertising field by endorsing variety of products and have invariably succeeded in attracting youth. These celebrity endorsements expedite brand recall which influences youth and their purchase intention. According to a study, celebrities are used in 64% of Indian TV advertisements. Film stars take first slot in endorsements and second include sports icons (Jain V, Roy S, Daswani A and Sudha M (2010) mainly from cricket. Sports celebrities engaged in advertising earns about Rs 4,000 crores annually, of which cricket holds 90% share as Indians are obsessed with the game of cricket(Star India). Other sports icons have also been in advertisements due to their achievements in international stages like Saina Nehwal, Mary Kom etc.

India has the largest youth population in the world and this in turn has influenced media to target youth as consumers. According to CIA, in India Brand Equity, 66% of Indian population is below the age of 35 years which means huge consumer market is there that attracts lot of companies to launch their products. Our country is emerging as the most attractive retail market for investment. Indian retail market is 5th in the world. 141 million households have TV and total money spent on ads is US\$5133 and TV takes the first place with 82% urban viewers (source IRS2010). Choosing an ideal celebrity for marketing a product is recent. Companies spent a lot of money on sports icons like M S Dhoni, Captain of Indian Cricket team who was purchased by Rhitiz management for 2.1 million in July 2010. He endorses around 19 brands products. Virat Kohli signed 10 Crore deal with Adiddas brand and Sachin Tendulkar made to the top list of Forbes magazine with 18.9 million. All brands target youth consumers. This particular study is to know how youth perceive various sports celebrity endorsements. Ads like Pepsi, Fast Track, Axe and Yamaha RD350 etc are more youth targeted endorsements

and will not be much appealing to older age group. This study is an attempt to identify the increase in these advertisements featuring sports figures.

II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This research tries to find out how the college students in Bangalore perceive sports celebrity ads and how it in turn influences their choice of purchase.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Celebrity endorsements have become a prevalent form of advertising. Several studies have examined consumer's response to celebrity endorsements. As already mentioned in the introduction, celebrity make the ads believable and enhances the message recall (Friedman And Friedman 1979). Icons aid in recognition of brand names (Petty, Cacioppo and Schumann 1983) and this creates positive attitude towards the brand (Kamins1999), thus creating a distinct personality for the endorsements of brand (Mc Cracker 1989). Celebrity endorsements are believed to generate a great line of consumers employing certain celebrity endorsement strategies. The number of products sold out by celebrity endorsements help in enhancing the consumer perception of endorsement credibility (Tripp et al 1994). The frequent exposure to these various endorsements has a negative impact on purchase intention. But for the companies it's a beneficial venture as every month a new celebrity is endorsed with the product. This campaign also receives external press speculation as to which celebrity is to be featured next. Biswas'2009 found that people aged between 18 and 25 are more prone to recall brands using celebrities as compared to older age group. Older age group people look for product information in ads before making purchase decisions. Youth seek information from internet and other sources but are easily influenced by ads which affect their purchase decisions. Celebrity based ads are no longer restricted to traditional campaign and hence youth typically change channels during commercials. Sports icon's image is the pivotal determining factor that governs the company's product promotion and the consumer's purchase decision. Sports heroes have become aware of their image in endorsing a brand and this in turn has ennobled their stardom amidst youth. (Smart Barry 2010) The social reform adds by the government features sports icons that aim at creating awareness among the public especially youth. Social service ads like Polio eradication program featuring Sachin Tendulkar and Sania Mirza for save the girl child will be much more appealing to youth rather than ads that do not feature celebrities. Ohanian (1990), has identified three dimensions of source credibility for celebrity endorsements: Trustworthiness, Expertise and Attractiveness. Coles and Anderwers (1996) noted that celebrities nowadays nurture post modernist conceptions of sports as a commodity and an athlete as a media celebrity. Michel Jordon is a legend and a role model for American Youth. He has become the symbol of the leading brands like Nike, Coco-Cola, Mc Donalds, Quakers Oats, Jordan Brand Apparels, Chevrolet Cars, Rayovac, Bijan (Michael Jordan Cologne).

Irene Roozen (2008) discusses how to find out the effect that the celebrity endorser brings to the product and to the consumer for different categories. She also explains the extent to which these effects vary across different product categories. This research uses written questionnaires and the study analyzes the impact of female international celebrity endorsers with respect to three different product categories- high involvement, low involvement and the beauty products. The study concluded that the female celebrities are found to have the highest expertise for beauty products with much lower scores for candy bars (low involvement) and lap-tops (high involvement). Dr. Sushil Kumar Rai and Ashish Kumar Sharma (2013) found out in a study that the endorsers can be from different fields, with fame as the only criterion. Most of the celebrities are from film and sports arena, as their popularity extends to relatively wider segments of the population. Celebrity endorsement serves the dual purpose of creating interest in advertisements and overcoming the advertising clutter (Suresh, 2005). Competitors will not get the same celebrity to endorse their brands.

IV. MATERIALS AND METHOD

This study is confined to Bangalore city and its suburbs. Questionnaires were prepared and distributed to a group of 485 youngsters. The study shows the impact of celebrity endorsements on that group and how it has affected their purchase decisions of various products.

V. DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis and interpretation of the data collected in this research is the crucial step to ascertain the objectives of this research and reach conclusion in order to make recommendations. In this research, analysis was done on the data collected through survey method.

The study was conducted among youth all over Bangalore City. For the sake of convenience the city was divided into 5 equal parts.

- [1] Bangalore North
- [2] Bangalore South
- [3] Bangalore East
- [4] Bangalore West
- [5] Bangalore Central

The data collected for the analysis and interpretation was mainly done through primary data collection methods. Based on this information a questionnaire was prepared

Table.5.1: Preference of Various mass media to get information about favorite sport (Multiple response)

Medium	Percent
TV	75.4
Radio	2.5
Newspaper	15.5
Magazines	6.6
Total	100.0

Base : 485 Source: Field Survey

Figure: 5.1.

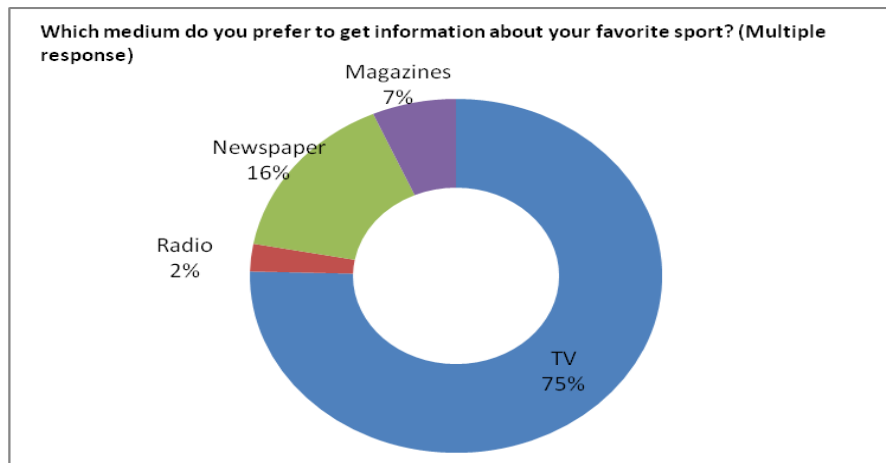


Table: 4.1 describe the priority of use of various Mass Media by youth to get the news of their favorite sport. T.V dominates among all with 75%, followed by Newspaper 16%, magazines occupied the third position with 7% and finally radio with 2%.

Table: 5.2. Respondent’s Favorite sports

Sport	Percent
Hockey	10.1
Cricket	58.5
Football	8.8
Tennis	1.7
Badminton	15.2
Other sports	5.7
Total	100.0

Base : 485 Source: Field Survey

Figure 5.2

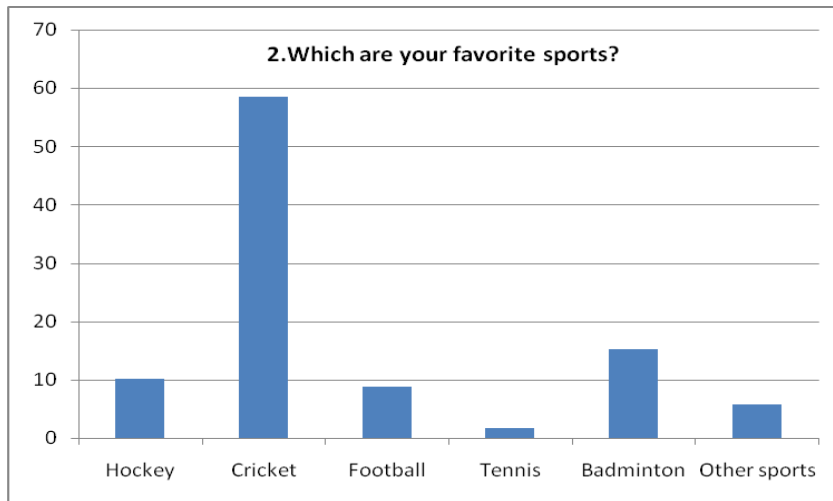


Table: 5. 2 shows the favorite sports among youth. Cricket occupies the first place with 58.5% and it is the most adorable game among youngsters. With 15.2%, Badminton is the second favorite, while Football is the third favorite sport with 8.8% , Tennis and other sports follows in 4th and 5th place with 1.7 % and 5.7% respectively.

Table: 5.3. Do you watch programmes or advertisements of sports celebrities appearing on various mass media?

Yes-Always	Yes – sometimes / rarely	No- Not at all	Can't Say
46.3	43.6	5.9	4.2

Figure: 5.4

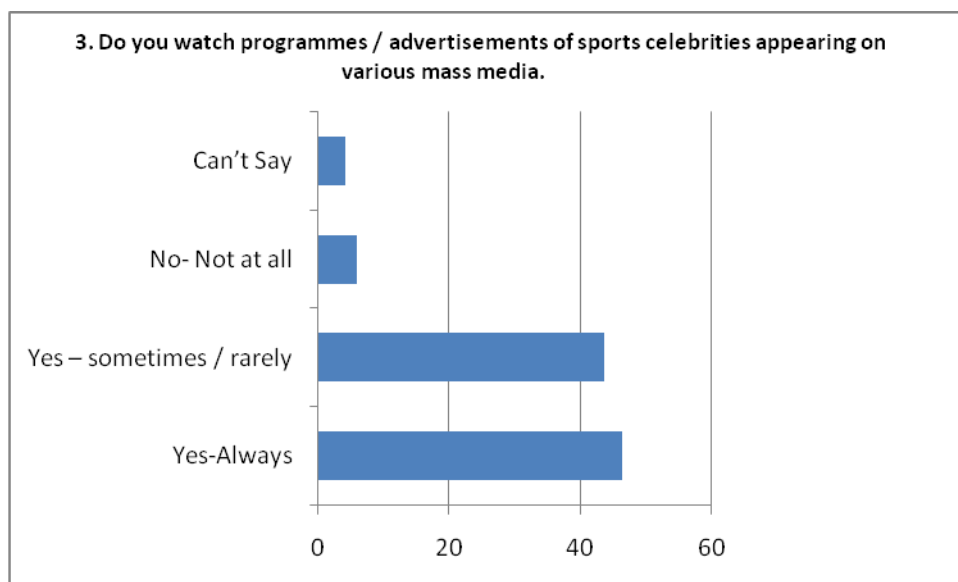


Table: 5. 3 shows the rate of influence of advertisements among youngsters through different mass media. Among youngsters about 46.3% likes to actively view advertisements in various media, while about 43.6% people rarely watch advertisement, and about 5.9% people say that they never admire advertisements and another 5.2% people say that they have no idea about it.

Table: 5.4 Have you ever bought any product which you have seen in the advertisement

Figure:5.4

Yes-Always	Yes – sometimes / rarely	No- Not at all	Can't Say
14.1	51.6	20.4	13.9

Table: 5.4 shows the rate of purchase of products based on the viewership of ads. About 14.1% youngsters say that they purchase products that appear in ads while 51.6% youngsters say that they purchase very rarely. 20.4 % say that they never buy products that appear in ads. Another 13% say that they do not want to comment on this topic.



Table: 5.5. Have you ever tried to imitate the mannerisms of your favorite sports star?

Yes-Always	Yes – sometimes / rarely	No- Not at all	Can't Say
18.6	34.1	30.3	17.0

Figure: 5.5

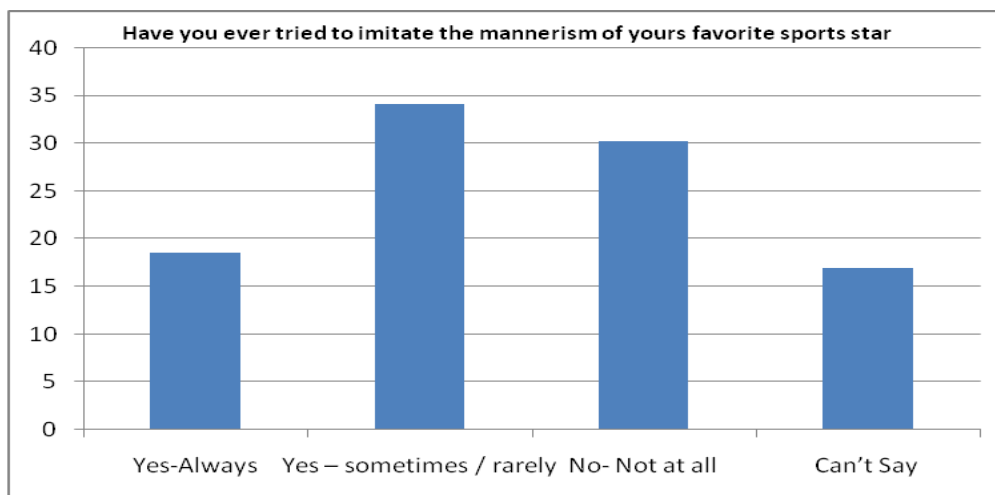


Table: 5 depict the rate of youngsters who imitate their favorite sports star. About 18.6% of them are of the opinion that they like to imitate their sports stars, while 34.1% say that they use to imitate rarely. Another 30.3 % of youngsters say that they never tried to imitate and the rest 17% commented that they are not sure about it.

Table: 5.6. What motivates you to purchase a product?

Motivational Factor	Percent
Brand Name	31.0
Brand ambassador	7.5
Quality of product	50.1
Budget	11.4
Total	100.0

Base: 485 Source: Field Survey

Figure: 5.6



Table: 6 mentions what makes people to purchase a product- whether it is the brand name, the popularity of the brand ambassador, the quality or the budget of the consumer.

About 50.1 % youth say that they love to purchase the product based on the quality of product, 31% commented that they purchase the product because of the brand name. While about 11% of youngsters take in to account their budget and the rest 8 % accepts that they purchase the products based on the popularity of brand ambassador.

Table: 5.7. On an average how much do you spend on products a year endorsed by your sports heroes?

Amount	Percent
No money spent	48.1
<Rs 20,000	46.8
Rs 20,000 to 40,000	4.7
>Rs 40,000	0.4
Total	100.0

Base: 485 Sources: Field Survey

Figure: 5.7

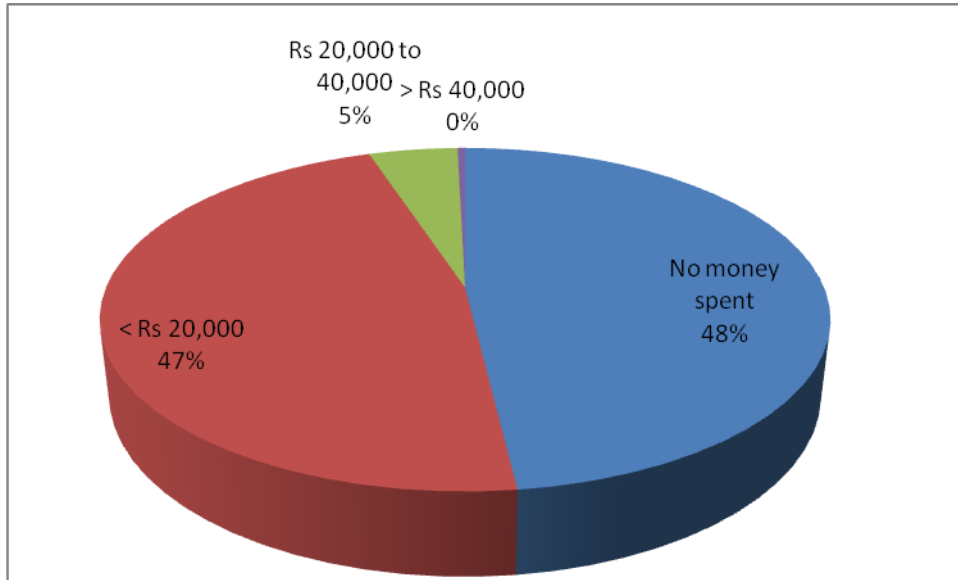


Table: 7 describe how much money does youngsters spend on an average every year to purchase products endorsed by their favorite sports celebrity. About 48.1% of youngsters say that they never like to spend money on their favorite sports stars endorsed products while 46.8% say that they spend up to Rs.20, 000 on products endorsed by their sports heroes endorsed. Almost 4.7% say that they spend Rs.20, 000 to 40,000 to purchase those products and the rest 0.4% youth commented that they spend more than 40,000 rupees to purchase their products endorsed by their favorite sports icon every year.

Table: 5.8. What kind of products are you interested to buy those of which are endorsed by your favorite sports star?

Products	Percent
Electronic .Gadgets	31.2
Bi-cycles	3.6
Motorbikes & Cars	20.6
Grocery items (soft drinks)	19.2
Clothes & Bags	21.7
Others	3.6
Total	100.0

Base: 485, Source: Field Survey
Figure: 5.9

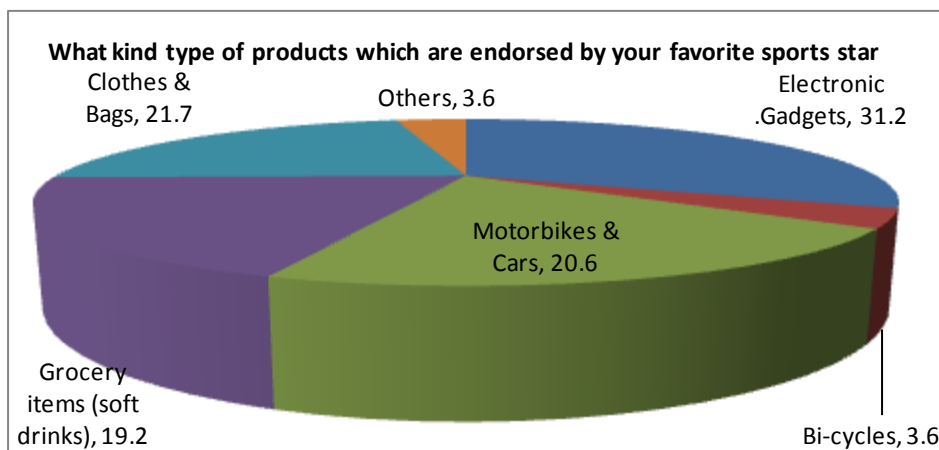


Table: 8 shows what kind of products does youngsters like to purchase from the market which features their favorite sports icon. Almost 31.2% say that they like to purchase electronic gadgets promoted by their sports icons, while 21.7% of youngsters like to purchase clothes and bags. About 20.6 % like to purchase motor bikes and cars while 19.2% youngsters prefer purchasing grocery items and finally 3.6% like to buy bi-cycles endorsed by their favorite sports celebrity.

VI. CONCLUSION

Advertisements aim at influencing the purchasing behavior of viewers. As already mentioned in the introduction, advertising agencies are trying to find out new strategies to break through the fuddle of advertising. This study was based on some specific objectives which have been mentioned earlier. Data was gathered through questionnaires and inferences were drawn from them. Youth watch advertisements in TV than in any other media. Almost 75% of youth watch sports through television channels. Sports celebrities featuring in advertisements is a recent and interesting phenomenon. As pointed out by David Giles (2000) sports is one of the few areas of public life that is truly 'meritocratic' and sports stars can prove that they are the best. Majority respondents (75.4%) claim that they depend on electronic media (television) to watch their favorite sports than other media. Most of the youngsters rendered that branded products always motivates them to purchase those products than those which are unendorsed. Some of them also expressed that they like to watch their sports heroes as brand ambassadors of certain products but are not motivated to purchase them. More than 51.6% youngsters remarked that they rarely like to purchase the endorsed products by watching advertisements (i.e. electronic gadgets, clothes, automobiles etc.) which has been promoted by their favorite sports stars.

The interesting part is that youth are the targeted consumers of celebrity endorsements especially in a country like India where youth make up the majority population segment. Hence media privilege celebrity endorsement over unendorsed ads in order to make their product much popular and valuable in the domestic and international market. This influence affects the marketing merchandise and at the same time makes youth addicted (Celebrity Syndrome) to endorsed products. For example PepsiCo which is a beverage that gained popularity among youth as it was endorsed by Indian Cricket team during IPL and ICC World Cup. In other words it can be expressed that youth always like to imitate what their stars perform in reel lives, which drugs them like a slow poison.

In this global era, everything is commercialized whether it be entertainment or sports, marketing jargons like endorsements, merchandise, sponsorship, ads, promotion etc plays a vital role to attract youth who are easily influenced by unwrapping a bundle of colorful dreams with a small package called 'celebrities'. Hence the tag 'celebrity', 'sports hero' or 'role model' naturally influences youth whether it deals with socio-economic status of an icon or considering the long line of fans encircling him. Thus to a large extent, youth are influenced by advertisements that are endorsed by celebrities which in turn regulates the purchasing behavior of youngsters.

REFERENCES

- [1] Cacioppo, J. T., Petty, R. E., & Morris, K. (1983). Effects of need for cognition on message evaluation, argument recall, and persuasion. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol.45,pp. 805-818.
- [2] Cooper, M.(1984). Can Celebrities Really Sell Products? *Marketing and Media Decisions*, pp. 64-65.
- [3] David Giles(2000). *Illusions of Immortality –A psychology of Fame &Celebrity-* Palgrave MC Millan Publication.
- [4] Dean, D.H. and Biswas, A. (2001). Third Party Organization Endorsement of Products: An Advertising Cue Affecting Consumer Pre-purchase Evaluation of Goods and Services. *Journal of Advertising*, P30(4), 41-57.
- [5] Friedman H .H and Friedman L (1978) Dose the celebrity endorsers image spill over products? *Journal of Academy of Marketing Science* pp. 291-299.
- [6] Friedman, H.H. and Friedman, L. (1979). Endorser Effectiveness by Product Type. - *Journal of Advertising Research*, 19(5), 67-71.
- [7] Kamins, M.A. (1990). An Investigation into the 'Match Up'- Hypothesis in Celebrity Advertising: When Beauty May be Only Skin Deep. *Journal of Advertising*, 19(1), p.413.
- [8] McCracken, G. (1989). Who is the Celebrity Endorser? Cultural Foundations of the Endorsement Process. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16(3), pp.310-321.
- [9] Ohanian, R. (1991). The Impact of Celebrity Spokesperson's Perceived Image on Consumers' Intention to Purchase. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 31(1), pp.46-52.
- [10] Petty, richard E, John T Cacioppo and David Schumann,(1983) central and peripheral routes to advertising effectiveness: the moderating role of involvement,*Journal of consumer research*, 10, pp.135-146,
- [11] Rai, Sushil Kumar and Sharma A.K (2013) Trends in celebrity brand endorsements on indian television -International Journal of Marketing, *Financial Services & Management Research* -Vol.2, No. 1(www.indianresearchjournals.com)
- [12] Tripp, C., Jensen, T.D. and Carlson, L. (1994). The Effect of Multiple Product Endorsements by Celebrities on Consumers' Attitudes and Intentions. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20(4), p. 533
- [13] Varsha Jain, Roy, S., Sudha, M., & Daswani, A. (2010) How Celebrity Are Used in Indian Television Commercials. *Vikalpa: The Journal for Decision Makers*, 35(4), pp. 45-5.