CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The primary postulate of this dissertation is that the brand equity of news media vehicles is a result of its content credibility, packaging, entertainment, ideology and localization. Content credibility, entertainment, ideology and localization are here antecedents to brand equity and it is the value that a consumer assigns to the brand based on these variables that distinguishes it from the other brands and helps him to make the choice. This study is different from a previous study which has seen credibility being assigned to content as the result of audience’s perception of brand equity of the media vehicle (Oyedoji 2010). In the theoretical realm the study tries to predict the elements of news that create brand equity, and this has not been done before. Credibility, entertainment and packaging of news definitions come from mass communication, ideology from political science and psychology while brand equity and brand choice are from the domain of marketing. The literature review therefore starts with a definition of news credibility, entertainment and packaging, localization, and ideology in news, and how it influences media choices, contextualizing it in the Indian scenario and then moves on to brand and brand choice. The study also accounts for the importance of the demographic factors that moderates the influence of the variables on brand equity.

2.2 Review of core concepts

2.2.1 News

Most of the Indian journalism books reviewed has given an operational definition of news. They start with the usual anecdotal story that if a dog bites a man, it is not news; but if a man bites a dog, then it is news. They draw heavily from western scholars and offer definitions like “the context which retails the concept determines the concept, all neatly interrelated to produce the news” (Banerji, 1992). Going beyond just context Shamsi (2006) defines it as any accurate fact or idea that will interest large number of readers; and of two stories the accurate one that interests the greater number of people is better news. Along with this emphasis on accuracy the definitions also focus on timeliness,
information and current events (Gupta, 1995). Bulk of the literature concedes that it has multiple dimensions which include novelty, proximity, prominence, conflict and human interest. Some add further dimensions like Kamath talks of size and importance. Here size is related to the local or international dimension of the event and importance is more related to what the target audience deems as important. The Thomson foundation, Editorial Study Centre, Cardiff, UK covers all these aspects when it iterates the following attributes: novelty, personal impact, local news, money, crime, sex, conflict, religion, disaster, tragedy, humour, human interest, the underdog, mystery, health-science, entertainment, famous people, weather, food, and minorities. This problem of multiple definition of news is expressed by Rusheo (1999, p. 32) that “news is more easily pursued than defined, a characteristic it shares with such other enthralling abstractions as love and truth.” Added to this there is difference due to different perspectives of media scholars, professionals and sociologists. Media professionals as described above sees it more as processes and therefore do not focus on them as products of media organizations. They argue that the processes are so that it limits the influence of personal and organizational values on news messages, as proof that they are mirrors that merely reflect events and issues in society (Harrison, 2006). Sociologists and scholars on the other hand give it a social construction dimension and as Fowler (1991) puts it “News is a social institution and a cultural discourse which exists only and meaning only in relation to other institutions and discourses operating at the same time” This social construction aspect has implications as it effects the functioning of the industry. Mainstream journalism treats news as a commodity to be bought and sold in the market place of information (Verma, 2010). Since news has become a commodity it has incrementally started to rely on packaging which has bordered on tabloidization and sensationalism.

2.2.2 News Presentation

Since newspaper channels rely heavily on advertisers press in India is of necessity conservative and status-quoist (Verma, 2010) and therefore the crime of high castes get highlighted. Bollywood gets prominence. This transformation from a watchdog role to a commercial vehicle has been well documented by
contemporary literature (Verma, 2005; Kohli 2010). Medianet of BCCL or consistent stories of paid news cast a doubt on the credibility aspects of media in India, and therefore it is necessary to explore whether the news values that have evolved in the lines of the western world. Timeliness, immediacy, proximity, oddity, conflict, mystery, suspense curiosity and novelty (Verma, 2010) affects the brand. Therefore credibility of media has been time and again questioned.

2.2.3 Credibility defined

Content credibility literature in the Indian context is almost absent, therefore this study reviews the work of the scholars primarily from the western world. For its relevance in the Indian context the study will rely on concerns raised in various platforms about content credibility. Credibility studies relating to media can be divided into three streams. Media channel credibility refers to the audiences’ perceptions of a news channel’s believability, as distinct from the believability of the individual journalists and sources, media organizations, or the content of the news itself (Bucy, 2003). Researchers have recognized the overlap between source credibility, medium credibility, and media channel credibility and have noted the importance of distinguishing between these concepts to avoid “theoretical and empirical confusions” (Kiousis, 2001, p.383). Source credibility refers to the judgment made by an audience about the expertise and trustworthiness of a communicator (O’Keefe, 1990; Kiousis, 2001; Self, 1996); medium credibility is the relative credibility of media channels that sources use in sending messages (Metzger, Flanagin, Eyal, Lemus & McCann, 2003; Westley & Severin, 1964); while media channel credibility, the concept salient to this study, refers to the believability of a specific media outlet (Bucy, 2003). To explain the concept it can be said that the reporter/editor is the source, the medium is the newspaper and the channel is the particular newspaper brand. Here the study focuses on credibility of the medium and the channel.

Credibility studies have their foundations in oldest lines of communication originating with ancient Greeks as Self (1996) points out and also that it is confusing and contradictory. Credibility has been defined as believability, trust, perceived reliability, and dozens of other concepts and combinations of them.
Burgeon, Burgoon, & Wilkinson, 1981; Greenberg & Roloff, 1974). Both Aristotle and Socrates’ rhetoric explored the concept of credibility. It was a debate among idealists and naturalists regarding the nature of truth and rhetoric (Self 1996). Central was the theme of audience confidence earned due to truth or strength of the argument, communicator’s ability to match audience need or the ability to match audience characteristic.

The earliest forms of empirical research were conducted to assess which mass communication was more trusted in comparison with others. Lasswell conducted a series of research to find out how to attract advertising dollars to radio from newspapers which produced a series of studies through polling organizations, some inspired by Lasswell himself (Self, 1996). The crucial ones included Roper, Gallup, National Opinion Research Center, and the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan (Cantril, 1951). World War II spawned a series of studies on news as a form of propaganda. Leading among them was that of Hovland and his colleagues who examined how individuals received mass communication messages and defined credibility as “trustworthiness” and “expertise”. Expertise refers to a source’s ability to possess accurate information about a subject while trustworthiness refers to audiences’ perceptions of a source’s motivation and intention to present an accurate representation of a subject or event (Hovland, Janis, & Kelley, 1953). Working on message believability they explained how high credible sources changed opinion but both high and low credible sources led to the same amount of information learning.

Credibility studies continued after Hovland as they had implications for the success of mass media vehicles. They mainly concentrated on the source, message and audience characteristics to look for credibility attributes. Among the studies which were important for source characteristics are that of Shaw (1967) which found that presidential campaign stories which relied on news sent through telegraph had more credibility during the 1880’s. McCroskey and colleague (McCroskey, 1966; McCroskey & Jensen, 1975) used statistical techniques to measure credibility through three different studies which had bipolar semantic differential statements and also a 42 item scale to measure credibility. They found six additional dimensions of source credibility: competence, character, sociability,
composure, and extroversion authoritativeness and character as attributes of credibility. Other researchers have also identified additional dimensions of source credibility. Berlo, Lemert, and Mertz (1969) conducted a series factor analysis with data from a survey asking respondents to rate the credibility of different sources and found three dimensions of source credibility: safety, qualification, and dynamism. Brownlow (1992) found that baby-faced female speakers induced more agreement with their position when trust was questioned and mature faced female speakers induced more attitude change when expertise was questioned (Self 1996). Other source related studies focused on believability and comparisons about the message presenter. Even if the source was erroneous Begg, Annas, and Farinacci (1992) showed that people were more inclined to believe them than unknown sources. On the other hand female newspaper columnists were found more believable than their male counterparts by Andsager and Mastin (2003). Scholars have widened their scope and considered the impact of political candidates, individual journalists, and online sources on both domestic and international audiences’ perceptions of credibility (Kiousis, 2001). Message variables have also been found to influence credibility as Slater & Rouner (1996) found that aesthetic presentation or internal characteristics of messages can influence perceptions about source credibility. This thread of research finds support in Chartrprascrt’s (1993) contention that complicated versus simplistic writing styles impact credibility perceptions. Thus so far credibility has been seen as a perception of the source and the studies have concentrated on researching it in the context of the message or communicator itself.

2.2.4 Message Characteristics

Interest in message characteristics is seen in studies such as Andersen &Clevenger (1963), who suggested in their review of experimental research from 1921 to 1961 that message impact is related to source credibility. McCroskey (1966), in a series of experiments empirically testing the relationship of evidence and source credibility to persuasiveness in public speaking situations found that the credibility of evidence (high or low) used in a message alone did not persuade. When source credibility (high or low) was added as an intervening variable, however, persuasion occurred, but only when a source was not highly credible.
Thus, it is concluded that message credibility is important and more so when a source is not seen as highly credible. In a media credibility study, Slattery & Tiedge (1992) examined the effects on credibility of labeling staged video in television news stories and found that "labeling news video as staged is not in itself enough to bring about a change in the evaluation of news story credibility. . . [and] raise[s] the possibility that repeated use of labels identifying video as a dramatization or re-creation may raise questions about . . . authenticity" (p. 284). Graber (1988) and Robinson & Kohut (1988) conducted studies about the ways respondents processed messages about presidential candidates in the 1984 election. Graber (1988) studied cues or spin in television pictures and Robinson examined cues or spin based on television's words or "what the journalists said about the candidates [sic] qualities as a leader." (p. 147). Graber (1988) found that television had more impact when character traits rather than issues were illustrated with pictures. Robinson & Kohut (1988) found that televised words had little impact on public opinion regarding political candidates (in this case, presidential) at all. One of the more promising lines of message research has been studies of familiarity. Boehm (1994) examined the effect on perceived validity of repeating statements several times to increase familiarity. He concluded that familiarity is the basis of judged validity. Further evidence about familiarity was found by Begg, et al., (1992) who cued respondents about whether a source's messages were truthful. In a series of experiments, respondents heard statements from familiar sources and unfamiliar sources. In the early phases of the experiments, they were told which sources would not be telling truth. The respondents then rated statements as either true or false in later experiments. Begg, et al., (1992) found that familiarity increased the credibility of even false statements, even when respondents remembered that the statements were being made by a source that was lying. However, a major source of theoretical and empirical confusion in credibility research is the difficulty of distinguishing the effects of message sources from those of media outlets and the message itself (Kiousis, 2001), and consequently the attendant difficulty of delineating between source, message, and medium credibility. Also message and source characteristic research has focused more on experimental design and channel credibility has had
more application of the quantitative technique and hence the study moves on to
examining channel credibility factors which are central to this study.

2.2.5 Medium Credibility

Television and Newspaper: Medium credibility research commenced in
the 1930s with the development of radio as an alternative news source to
newspapers and intensified in the 1950s with the growth of television news
(Metzger et al., 2003). Credibility studies received a boost during this time with
Roper Institute initiating regular surveys to evaluate the relative credibility of
media. The classic question that respondents were asked was that, “if you got
conflicting or different reports of the same news story from radio, television, the
magazines and the newspaper, which of the four versions would you be most
inclined to believe - the one on radio or television or magazine or newspaper?”
Newspapers initially led the other media in audience credibility ratings until about
1961 when television took the lead (Self, 1996). Academic studies questioning the
validity of the Roper Institute’s polls emerged soon after television attained the
lead in the credibility polls (Metzger et al., 2003). Shaw (1963) disputed the
Roper Institute’s methodology, and conducted a survey of college student to test
his assertion. He concluded that newspapers were more credible than television
news. Bringing in the angle of demographics and psychographics Wesley &
Severin (1964) took a different approach to the media credibility issue by
exploring the possibility that different strata of society may ascribe varying levels
of credibility to media types. They argued that demographic and psychographic
variables affect perception of credibility and sought to develop a typology of
media audiences. They found that the media user likely to assign relatively high
credibility to newspapers would be “the man who has had at least some college
education, resides in an urban area, and has a high-status occupation...and regards
himself as middle class,” while the media user most likely to trust television more
than newspapers is “a farm wife of low income and education...who regards
herself as working class,” and people who dwell in rural areas and very heavy
radio users are more likely to assign high credibility to radio (p. 334). Similarly
Carter & Greenberg (1965) found television to be more believable in case of
conflicting news, but newspaper to be more dependable otherwise in a study that
challenged the findings of the Roper poll. Much of the believability of news depends upon what news is highlighted by which media.

2.3 Framing and Ideology

News is imbued with ideologies (Dijk, 2009) and framing studies have pointed to the importance of ideology in framing news. Entman, Matthes, & Pellicano (2009) distinguish between two genres of news framing definitions. While the first one, as defined by of Gamson & Modigliani (1987) deal with the central organizing idea or story that provides meaning to an unfolding story as defined by of events, the second one specifies what frames generally do, which includes defining problems, making moral judgments, and supporting remedies (Entman, 1993, 2003). To be more specific as Entman (1993) explains it is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation. Gambier (2006) adds that news frames also “reinforce[s] stereotypes, determine judgments and decisions draw attention to some aspects of reality while obscuring other elements” (p. 11).

Hence it is argued that framing of news results in promotion of ideologies. Tankard (2001) and Wojcieszak (2007) have argued that frames carry certain ideological principles, accentuating certain norms and values that are seen to be relevant. Volkmer (2003) strengthens this postulate with her finding that news coverage about the war reflects “dominant national frames”, and that the conflict is strongly linked to “dominant national public discourse” (as quoted in Akin, 2). Entman (2003) argues that successful political communication requires framing of issues in such a fashion that it benefits the objective of one while hindering that of other. Thus the use of ideology as documented by Price, Tewksbury & Powers (1997) Scherfel (1999) McQuail (2005) would certainly have an effect on public’s perception, evaluation and understanding of news media vehicles.

However, before proceeding any further the study defines ideology as there is lack of consensus among scholars as to what constitutes a proper definition (Dijk, 2009). This has been reiterated by Lyons & Scheb. (1992); Hinich & Munger, (1994). Dijk (2009) points out that literature on ideology in the 70’s and
early 80's was limited to a relatively brief account of ideologies in the newsroom and of journalists, rather than of the properties of the coverage itself. The contemporary studies on the other hand pay attention to the effects and consequences of news. In line with the earlier times one view of ideology that is preferred by some social scientists (e.g., Barnett & Silverman 1979), is that it is a set of shared ideas that order and direct group life (Barnhurst, 2005). The narrower view as defined by Barnhurst (2005) defines ideology as a particular set of shared ideas that obscure how powerful groups dominate others. The term ideology was originally “coined by Antoine Destutt de Tracy in the years after the French Revolution to refer to ‘a new science idea, an idea-logy, which would be the ground of all other sciences’” (McLellan 1986, Richardson 2007: 32). According to Richardson, ideology was first seen as “positive and progressive” (Richardson 2007: 32). Over the years the perception of it changed, with Marx demonstrating it as “more than individual ideas formed through experience: ideology and its signs develop through the processes of social interaction [and are] defined by the social purview of the given time period and the given social group” (Vološinov, 1973, Richardson 2007: 33).

As outlined by Sucha (2010) there are a number of definitions of ideology and Raymond Williams finds three main uses:

- A system of beliefs characteristic of a particular class or group – psychological use

- The general process of the production of meanings and ideas. – social production of meanings (Fiske 1990).

- A system of illusory beliefs – false ideas or false consciousness – which can be contrasted with true or scientific knowledge. Used by ruling class to maintain its dominance over the working class.

Eagleton (1991) lists six ways in which the last mentioned ideological dominance happens by promoting the dominant group's view of things, making it seem natural, treating it as the universal case, denigrating other views, excluding anyone who holds them, and obscuring all of the above operations. Therefore in case of news vehicles it would be the dominant's group's belief that would be
promoted as the most efficient ideology. In the same vein some scholars see ideology as a collection of ideas held by individuals and groups, which influence their behaviors and views about the way society should be organized (Lodge, 1976; North 1990). Definitions from the psychological angle look at it as an individuals’ conscious or subconscious mental processes for simplifying, understanding, and participating in the political world (North, 1981; Enelow & Hinich, 1984). For our discussion the study looks at the contemporary definitions which focus more on the group e.g. Dijk (2009) in the context of discourse studies defines it as fundamental, axiomatic beliefs underlying the social representations shared by a group, featuring fundamental norms and values (such as those of freedom, justice, equality, etc.) which may be used or abused by each social group to impose, defend or struggle for its own interests. For the purpose of this study previous research is followed (Oyedeji, 2010) and the study adheres to the definition given by Lyon & Scheb (1992) that ideology is an abstract, integrated view of the political world giving rise to a logical structure of attitudes toward policy issues, political parties, and candidates. Therefore the respondents in this study would be holding an ideological view and that would match with the view of the media they use.

2.3.1 Ideology and media in India

In the Indian context media has played a major role in giving ideological leadership from the time of independence. Within the ‘secular’ press as much as within the ‘nationalist’ press of the pre-Independence period, there are significant divides on a number of ideological and political issues, and these manifest themselves in differentiated news coverage and editorial attitudes (Ram, 2011). In fact Ram (2001) has divided the pre-independence period of journalism in India into several stages. 1. Preparatory phase (1780-1818). 2. Adversarial Phase (1818-1947). According to him in this latter phase two distinct roles became apparent the newspapers either supported the Raj or attacked them, and the pro-raj news dailies were Times of India and the Statesman, while the attacking print media were—AnandaBazar Patrika (1868), and The Hindu. Ram (2011) however points out to the problem of this simplistic ideological divide by saying that such categorization, while valid, is hardly sufficient, within the ‘secular’ press as much
as within the ‘nationalist’ press of the pre-Independence period, there are significant divides on a number of ideological and political issues, and these manifested themselves in differentiated news coverage and editorial attitudes. However, this divide continues till present day and the contemporary differentiation is between newspapers that broadly take a secular-democratic stand and those that increasingly support the ideology, politics, and policies of the Hindu right (Ram, 2011). However, as pointed out by Sonwalker (2002) by quoting Sarker (1994) that today’s newspaper market is competitive and pluralist and is not dominated by any single group or ideology. Yet one reason that has contributed to the growth of media in India is the political excitement (Jeffrey, 1987) and in which the partisan media has played a crucial role. This is more so as seen in the political alliances of the different media and their ownership by party members in West Bengal. Majumdar (2009) clearly brings out this partisan role when she analyses the reporting of Ananda Bazaar Patrika, Bartaman and Aajkal regarding a ‘stock taking note’ that the Chief Minister had sent out to his ministers. While ABP ridiculed the minister, the other two left leaning newspapers were encouraging about the report. This political leaning of the media in West Bengal is highlighted by Roy Ghatak & Guhathakurta, (2011), who mention that 24 Ghanta though part owned by Zee has partnership with a CPM party bigwig, while Sambad Pratidin newspaper is owned by a Trinamool Rajya Sabha member’s father, and Kolkata TV was Trinamool’s mouthpiece before it came to power. In this context it is important to measure the extent to which the reader or viewers ideological viewpoints lends to the validity of the news media vehicle.

2.3.2 Measurement of Ideology

As Oyedoji (2010) points out that the most common way of measuring ideology is in some form of self-placement in the liberal-conservative continuum. However, in the context of this study such placement is irrelevant as it oversimplifies a complex ideological context as in India. Hence to measure ideology this study relies on a much broader definition, which focuses on the world views of the audience and his/her way of ideological identification with the
news vehicle. Much of this identification is also based on the local content that the media vehicle serves to its audience.

2.3.3 Localization of news

Local news content is determined by 'what people are talking about, what they care about, and what they deal on a daily basis' (Albizu, 2007, p. 257). The development began in USA as documented by Allen (2001) as an incentive given to the local television channels by Federal Communication Commission (FCC) to develop local content to improve the 'vast wasteland' of television programming. In an effort to entice broadcasters, the FCC required stations to survey local communities to determine how well or how poorly their stations were regarded by the local citizens (Atwood, 2001). This resulted in down-to-earth and close-to-home-style news and control of local TV newscasts shifted from gatekeepers in newsrooms to viewers at home. Allen (2001) shows that how audience survey, focus groups and market research from 1957 to 1995 helped the television stations to develop newscasts that appealed to a wider audience by better meeting viewer expectations. With regards to newspapers, their economic fortunes had been dependent on their ability to link their audiences with a common bond of local identity (Kanissis, 1991). This trend towards localization also had its roots in economic priorities (Allen, 2001) as it provided a scope to reach out to larger audiences. This study uses the US model of media localization to explain its growth in India because as pointed out by Thussu (2009) the commercial model of broadcasting — with its roots in the United States and largely dependent on advertising — has become the dominant model across the world. However, the growth of local news cannot be explained without a reference to globalization.

The rise of the new age of technology at the beginning of the 21st century, initiated a drastic shift in global communications. This transformed the world into a global network society, where the development of the transnational distribution infrastructure enabled global access to various international news information flows (Thussu, 2007). Digital technology and developments in communication satellites, made it possible for media systems to interconnect and operate in a transnational manner (Thussu, 2007). As a result of these global changes, media became more and more concentrated. This has led a small number of large
Western media conglomerates to dominate the global media industry (McQuail, 2005). At present, three main Western international news agencies dominantly control the collection and distribution of international news: AP, AFP and Reuters (Rampal, 1995). Boyd-Barrett & Rantanen (1998) suggest “news agencies themselves have been major players in processes of globalization” (p. 3). Because of the lack of capability of news networks to transport news from around the globe themselves, news networks rely mostly on news agencies for collecting international news (Rampal, 1995). These developments of globalization, led to many debates about the consequences or effects of globalization (Boyd-Barrett & Rantanen, 1998), and many contradictory assumptions of its force.

In previous literature, it had been assumed that globalization leads to a homogenized world, in which citizens all are exposed to the same media information around the world (Volkmer, 2003; Thussu, 2002, 2007). Globalization is seen as a “large-scale phenomena” (Robertson, 1995, p. 25), where international news and culture flows around the globe, constructs our world into, as McLuhan (1964) has described it, a ‘global village’. Ferguson (1992) criticizes this idea and describes it as one of the ‘myths of globalization’ (p. 29), in which the impact of globalization is far overestimated, in terms of engendering media homogeneity and cultural hegemony (Ferguson, 1992; Robertson, 1995; Seib, 2004). Voisey and O’Riordan (2001) describe the ideas associated with the concept of globalization more clearly: it is “the promotion and domination of Western culture and capitalism to the exclusion of all other cultures and economic systems, a loss of social diversity and the disappearance of local distinctiveness and community in favour of global culture and society” (p. 26). Robertson (1992, 1995) adds, that scholars supporting the concept of ‘global news’, neglect to acknowledge the nationality or locality of media systems and points out the lack of empirical evidence concerning the consequences of globalization. Long (1996) challenges this assumption when he says the most sophisticated modern communication and media systems and the development of integrated international commodity markets have not destroyed cultural, ethnic, economic and political diversity. By saying this, Long (1996) demonstrates that even though much of the same information is spread around the world, it is still modified or localized on the basis of cultural shared values, local knowledge, local
organizations and national interest. McQuail (2005) supports the notion that media are strongly connected with national considerations and operate accordingly. According to him despite the similarities of mass media institutions across societies, the media are by origin, practice and convention very much national institutions and respond to domestic political and social pressures and to the expectation of their audiences.

2.3.5 Localization in India

In India the newspapers never served homogenised news as most of the early newspapers like ABP and The Hindu were local developments. However, Doordarshan which had a national telecast for more than three decades had the objective to serve the same national news to the entire Indian population (Ninan, 1995). But, with liberalisation and coming of foreign private channels homogenisation became a difficult priority (Kumar, 2000). STAR TV was the first major global player to recognize the demand for Western, mainly American, programming for an Indian audience growing up on the dull and drab output of Doordarshan, when, in 1991, it started beaming a five-channel satellite service in English (Plus, Prime Sports, Channel V, the BBC World and Movie). This became an instant hit with the English-fluent urban elite. However, they soon realized that to make a profit the channel would have to make programmes in a language that a majority of Indians understood and on themes with which the masses would be able to identify (Pendakur and Kapur, 1997; Thussu, 1998). In 1992, when a privately owned Hindi channel, Zee TV, joined the STAR TV bandwagon and started broadcasting soaps, sit-coms and talk shows in Hindi, Indian audiences for the first time received Hindi language television apart from Doordarshan (Kumar, 2000). Thus private channels realised the potential of local television and therefore began serving to its audience any news that had local value as Mehta (2008) elaborates the Indian entrepreneurs Indianised television and they were the curtaining edge of Indian capitalism. The result according to him has been the creation of an entirely new form of mass media in India and new ways of engaging with the state for a vast number of Indians. Banerjee (2002) points out that once commercialization and competition creeps into the market then it is no longer possible to impose programming choices on audiences and
audience specificity becomes a key factor in production and programming decisions. In our study it is argued that it is this audience choice that decides the success of the television brand.

However, this is also true for newspapers, which became the second choice of the audience after the boom of satellite television. Growth of newspapers during this period happened with the emergence of a strong language press piggyback riding on economic growth and a consumer culture. Rao (2008) cites Jeffrey (1993, 2000) and Kohli-Khandekar (2006) to make the point that in the emerging neo-liberal environment, money-making began to supersede political propaganda as raison d'être for news-making. This led as in television to a fundamental thematic reorientation with newspapers moving away from their strong focus on politics, to include more and more news about the culture industry, consumer goods, the media, business, education and health (Rao, 2008). Rao documents in her book *News as Culture* of commercialization and regionalization as the prevailing trends of the contemporary newspaper industry in India (Bonea, 2012). A recent study found that in Kolkata (which is also the city where this research was conducted) the editors preferred to have local news even if they were a part of national news daily and audience involvement was one of the reasons for selection of news (Colaco, 2007). Hence there is a proliferation of entertainment both in television and newspaper which Thussu (2007) conceptualises as the top down movement of localization where the core western ideology of commodities and technologies is transferred into a vernacular medium (Rao, 2008).

2.4 Entertainment News

Thus comes into the fore the entertainment content of news which has generated reams of literature. Entertainment has been coveted by humans from time immemorial and even cavemen resorted to painting when they had time for entertainment in their leisure (Zillman, 2000). The penchant for entertainment can be found in Greek and Roman history, as they celebrated Olympics and entertained masses with spectacles in the Coliseum (Kowalewski, 2009). In fact, the Romans had 175 days a year associated with entertainment, which Bryant & Miran (2002) argued showed that leaders felt their citizens were much happier
and healthier as a result of entertainment. With the turn of the century individuals have an array of choices among them radio, television and of course internet for entertainment (Kowalewski, 2009). In this context it is important to point out following Zillmann (2000) argued that “media entertainment, because it avails itself to everyone, may be considered entertainment for the masses, but it is not mass entertainment” (p. 17), because there are so many channels of information, no one channel has a monopoly on everyone’s time.

Tracing the source of beginning of entertainment in modern media Weaver (1994) in his book, titled News and the Culture of Lying, suggests that one of journalism’s most famous entrepreneurs, Joseph Pulitzer, may be to blame. According to Weaver (1994), Pulitzer in an attempt to evoke values and feelings among newspaper readers focussed on story content and style and less on information. Pulitzer resorted to this culture of lying as he distrusted partisan politics which did not interest the ordinary citizen, on the other hand he wanted politicians appeal to the average citizens. Rather than help, Weaver suggests that this trend created a culture of lying ruled by advertisers and public relations firms trying to appeal to citizens through news stories, which most viewers and readers ultimately perceive as truth on some level. According to Weaver (1994), in such circumstances, officials and journalists are usually lying. They are pretending that the events they are enacting and narrating are bona fide actions taken on the merits in the normal context of the newsmakers job, whereas in fact, most news events and stories are performances.

This may well support the argument that apart from being a source of engagement during leisure time, entertainment not only entertains, it informs (Kowalewski, 2009). It has been pointed out by scholars that entertainment helped individuals to ascertain political information. For example, scholars have seen an increase in entertainment used by individuals to establish political information. Weaver (1994) contended that in the 1992 presidential election, Clinton turned to talk shows and MTV to reach voters. When Clinton appeared on these programs and spoke about certain issues important to him, individuals cited those issues as more important than other issues that he failed to mention. Due to Clinton’s use of non-traditional news disseminators, Weaver (1994) argued, these entertainment programs had a significant agenda-setting effect on voters.
Both Weaver & Postman (1985) argues that the presentation of news also contributes to entertainment and encourages the journalists to indulge in the culture of lying. Furthermore, audiences want and expect this kind of entertainment. Concerning the news industry, Postman (1985) says the majority of the information we perceive as news has become news because we present it to the viewers in a mosaic of sound bites, clips and commentary from talking heads. In the age of information, the majority of our information has become trivialized because it means little or nothing in larger contexts. Postman thought our important ideals lose meaning because they become muddled and skewed within the shuffle of entertainment.

However there are scholars like Zillmann (2000) who argue that entertainment has the ability to "diminish aversions, possibly removing them" (p. 15). This removal results in individuals giving more attention to the information contained within the message. Again when individuals willingly give up their sense of disbelief to enjoy a programme they are more likely to accept the content of the programme. Entertainment also can be persuasive because of the idea of "willing suspension of disbelief" (Shrum, 2009). Rather, they fail to differentiate between the two; they learn from both fact-based information and fiction based information (Green, Garst, Brock & Chung, 2006; Strange & Leung, 1999). Oatley (1999), for example, argued that individuals exposed to fiction take that information as fact and simulate the information into their own cognitive and emotions, making the information true to them. In an experiment, however, Green, Garst, and Brock (2004) exposed participants to a speech either presented as fact or fiction. They found, first, that individuals who were exposed to fact were likely to scrutinize the message. They also found that given the literature, it is difficult to say definitively whether entertainment affects its users more than other forms of media. This is an issue, considering individuals have increasingly turned to entertainment with humorous messages (Zillmann, 2000). The Pew Research Center for People & the Press (Kohut, 2004, 2007) indicated that more young people have turned to political comedy shows such as The Daily Show, The Colbert Report, or Saturday Night Live for information as compared to other traditional news programs. The Pew Research Center found that people who watched The Daily Show or The Colbert Report more had an increased knowledge
about political events (Kohut, 2007). The report indicated that individuals who watched these programs had more political knowledge than those who watched FOX News or used the Internet.

However, the decline of the ratings of the news in general due to fragmentation of media and change in media habit of younger generation led broadcasters to make news as entertaining as possible, and they adopted characteristics from entertainment genres and modes of conversation that privilege an informal communicative style, with its emphasis on personalities, style and storytelling skills and spectacles (Thussu, 2007). This is documented by Calabrese who says that marketing consultants were hired by broadcast network to spruce up news and suggest about news programmes and talent that included more emotive delivery, soft feature news, and more on-air attractive and youthful talent (as quoted in Thussu, 2007). With the spread of the American broadcasting companies all over the world this soon became a trend everywhere including India.

2.4.1 Entertainment News in India

The face of the Indian media as a whole changed during the 1990s, structurally, professionally and technologically (Sonwalkar, 2002). As India adopted liberalisation the editorial room became a boardroom and news was seen as a de-romanticised commodity. This has been described as Murdochisation of news by Thussu (2006) who describes the process as:

a combination of the following factors: a convergence of global media technologies; a tendency towards a market-driven journalism thriving on circulation and ratings wars; trans-nationalisation of US-inspired media formats, products and discourse; and lastly, an emphasis on infotainment, undermining the role of the media for public information

Hence, both in newspaper and television from this period onwards there was a dominance of the market forces and who to garner circulation and ratings gave priority to news that had commercial value. Initially there was hesitant support within other newspaper managements for the ‘marketing to the exclusion of-
editorial' and 'dumbing down' approaches, but as profits of The Times of India Group soared, other publishing houses too pitched in (Sonwalker, 2002). Misra (1998) points out that a close scrutiny of the country's newspapers reveals that major dailies have distanced themselves from people's issues and are giving more space to fashion and beauty contests and are deliberately avoiding issues that require urgent attention. In the case of news channels Mehta (2008) talks about the 'Bunty and Bablisation' of news wherein ND TV before the launch of that amovie had the lead actors present news in an effort to garner TRP ratings. Mehta (2008) however, goes on to argue that the encroachment of foreign format television did not mean that Indian priorities were neglected, and he uses examples of cricket and cinema in television news as a hybrid genre that caters to Indianness at the same time being popular. However, all the above mentioned literature is a commentary on the developments in the media scene and is based on the perspectives of the media owners and social and political commentators. There is no empirical study to show whether these developments actually reflect what the audience wants. Even a recent study that of Batabyal (2013) in the same genre seeks to find out how exactly the corporate insinuates itself into the editorial content in newsrooms and what are the particularities of such encroachments through case studies of the media companies, without heeding to find out whether such a development is acceptable to the consumer, who is the most important piece in the media scene. Hence, this paper responds to this gap by documenting customer response on the various variables that effect the media brand. So our study moves on to defining what is a media brand.

2.5 Media and Brand

In the Indian context a review of the literature reveals that there is hardly any study that explores the two concepts, although there is anecdotal evidence and concerns expressed about some studies show a relationship between media credibility and concepts that are similar to brand equity (Meyer, 1998, 2004; Beaudoin & Thorson, 2002). Meyer (2004) proposed a societal influence model for the newspaper industry that predicts that greater media credibility is linked to increased societal influence, circulation, and profitability of newspapers. Beaudoin and Thorson (2002) showed a correlation between newspapers’
mainstream credibility coverage and audiences' attitude towards the newspaper. Meyer (1998) suggested that 80% of the value of a newspaper is an intangible concept he called, "goodwill". He defined goodwill as "the public's willingness to trust the medium enough to use it as information exchange for both social and commercial benefit" (p. 273). The concepts (societal influence, attitude towards newspaper, and goodwill) are all related to brand equity but do not fully capture the essence of the concept. This study is important because it explores the relationship between two concepts from different fields—media channel credibility (a journalism concept) and brand equity (a management/marketing concept). It is theoretically significant because the relationship it explores has not been tested empirically in Indian context. This theoretical relationship is critical for the practice of journalism because of the well-documented culture clash between journalists and professional managers in media corporations (Altschull, 1996; Hickey, 2003). The goal of the professional media manager is increased profitability while journalists and editors are more concerned about professionalism, editorial integrity, and the quality of their news products. Sometimes profitability goals can only be attained at the expense of quality and professionalism; hence the constant squabbles between the newsroom and the boardroom (Batabyal, 2013). Professional managers understand the role of brand equity in building profitable organizations while journalists ascribe similar importance to credibility's role in building a good media outlet. A relationship between these two concepts (if found) would highlight the congruity of the profitability and professionalism goals of media organization and help media managers navigate the inherent dichotomy in achieving both the goals.

2.6 Branding and brand equity

A traditional definition of a brand was: "the name, associated with one or more items in the product line, which is used to identify the source of character of the item(s)" (Kotler 2000, p. 396). The American Marketing Association (AMA) definition of a brand is "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors" (p. 404). Within this view, as Keller (2003) says, "technically speaking, whenever a marketer creates a new name, logo, or symbol for a new product, he or she has created a brand" (p.
3). He recognizes, however, that brands today are much more than that. As can be seen, according to these definitions brands had a simple and clear function as identifiers. Before the shift in focus towards brands and the brand building process, brands were just another step in the whole process of marketing to sell products. According to Urde, (1999) for a long time, the brand has been treated in an off-hand fashion as a part of the product. Kotler (2000) mentions branding as “a major issue in product strategy” (p. 404). As the brand was only part of the product, the communication strategy worked towards exposing the brand and creating brand image. Aaker & Joachimsthaler (2000) argue that within the traditional branding model the goal is to build brand image; a tactical element that drives short-term results.

Kapferer (1997) mentioned that “the brand is a sign -therefore external- whose function is to disclose the hidden qualities of the product which are inaccessible to contact” (p. 28). The brand served to identify a product and to distinguish it from the competition. “The shift in focus towards brands began when it was understood that they were something more than mere identifiers. Brands, according to Kapferer (1997) serve eight functions shown in Table 2.1: the first two are mechanical and concern the essence of the brand: “to function as a recognized symbol in order to facilitate choice and to gain time” (p. 29); the next three are for reducing the perceived risk; and the final three concern the pleasure side of a brand. He adds that brands perform an economic function in the mind of the consumer, “the value of the brand comes from its ability to gain an exclusive, positive and prominent meaning in the minds of a large number of consumers” (p. 25). Therefore branding and brand building should focus on developing brand value.
Table 2.1 The Functions of the Brand for the Consumer Adapted from (Kapferrer 1997)

Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) define brand equity as brand assets linked to a brand's name and symbol that add to, or subtract from, a product or service. According to them, these assets, shown in Figure 2.1, can be grouped into four dimensions: brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and brand loyalty.

![Brand Equity Diagram]

Figure 2.1 Brand Equity, adapted from Aaker & Joachimsthaler (2000)

Kapferer's view of brand value is monetary, and includes intangible assets and according to (Doyle 2001), "Brands fail to achieve their value-creating potential where managers pursue strategies that are not orientated to maximizing the shareholder value." Four factors combine in the mind of the consumer to
determine the perceived value of the brand: brand awareness; the level of perceived quality compared to competitors; the level of confidence, of significance, of empathy, of liking; and the richness and attractiveness of the images conjured up by the brand. In the relationships between the different concepts of brand analysis, according to Kapferer (1997), are summarized (Fig. 2.2)

From Brand Assets to Brand Equity

Brand Awareness
+ Image
+ Perceived quality
+ Evocations
+ Familiarity, liking

= Brand Assets Brand added value

Perceived by customers
- Costs of branding
- Costs of invested capital

Brand financial value
(BRAND EQUITY)

Figure 2.2 Brand Asset to Brand Equity adapted from Kapferer 1997

A brand will have higher customer-based brand equity as brand awareness increases to a higher level, and as consumers hold stronger, and more favourable and unique brand associations. Therefore, brand awareness, and strength, favourability, and uniqueness of brand associations are used as indicators of customer-based brand equity. By using these dimensions for the measurement of brand equity, a theoretical framework of customer-based brand equity for the
direction of marketing activities can be applied. The company can directly influence the dimensions of brand knowledge (or brand description) through its marketing activities, which can additionally increase the applicability of the developed scale to direct marketing activities.

In order to specify the domain of the specific dimensions to be measured, the definitions presented by Keller (1993) will be used. Brand awareness is defined as the strength of the brand node or trace in memory, as reflected by consumers’ ability to identify the brand under different conditions. This is related to the likelihood that a brand name will come to mind and to the ease with which it does so. There are three major reasons why brand awareness has an important role in consumer decision making. First, raising brand awareness increases the likelihood that the brand will be included in the consideration set. Second, brand awareness can affect consumers’ decisions about brands even if there are no other brand associations, especially in low involvement decision settings when a minimum level of brand awareness may be sufficient for brand choice. Finally, the formation and strength of brand associations is influenced by brand awareness.

The strength of brand associations is related to the strength of their connection to the brand node. The strength of a particular brand association increases the likelihood that this association will be accessible and the ease with which this association can be recalled. The favourability of brand associations is related to the consumers’ beliefs that brand attributes and benefits will satisfy their needs and wants. Indeed, the success of marketing programmes is reflected in the creation of favourable brand associations. The uniqueness of brand associations is related to the extent to which brand associations of one brand are not shared by other competing brands.

Briefly overviewed, the first step of the CBBE model is to ensure the correct ‘brand identity’. Answering the first question customers ask about brands - Who are you? - the purpose is to create an identification of the brand, and an association with a specific product class or need (Keller, 2003). The initial step consists of the brand building block, ‘salience’. The second step answers the customer question - What are you? - by establishing ‘brand meaning’ in their minds, and linking brand associations with certain properties (Keller, 2001). Two brand building blocks make up this step - ‘performance’ and ‘imagery’. The next
step is 'brand response' whereby the proper customer responses to the brand identification and meaning are elicited (Keller, 2003). This step is achieved with the 'judgments' and 'feelings' building blocks, and answers the question - What about you? 'Brand relationships' constitutes the final step in the CBBE pyramid where brand response is converted to an intense, active loyalty relationship between customers and the brand (Keller, 2001). Addressing the customer question of - What about you and me? - the final brandbuilding block and the pinnacle of the pyramid is 'resonance'. Keller's conceptual framework provides guidance in building, measuring and managing brand equity (Fig 2.3).

Figure 2.3 Customer-Based Brand Equity Pyramid adapted from Keller (2003)

CBBE is a measure of the intangible added benefit of branding to consumers (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 2002). Higher levels of CBBE imply that consumers will react more favorably towards the product, price, promotion, and distribution of a
brand than they would towards a generic product in the same category (Keller, 1993). Keller theorized that a brand is said to have “positive (negative) customer-based brand equity if consumers react more (less) favorably to the product, price, promotion or distribution of the brand than they do to the same marketing mix element when attributed to a fictitiously named or unnamed version of the product or service” (p. 8). CBBE directly affects consumers’ psychological judgment with respect to the brand making them favorably disposed towards paying more and searching further for the product the brand represents (Berry & Biel, 1992). The concept also encapsulates the total value of the brand, consisting of the marketing variables of the brand (price, product, package, etc.) and the intangible relationship between the brand and the consumer.

Researchers primarily conceptualize CBBE as consumers’ knowledge about the brand and often measure the concept by observing the effects of brand knowledge on consumer behavior towards the brand (Hoeflter & Keller, 2002). This theoretical conceptualization is the basis for Aaker’s (1991) definition of CBBE as the outcome generated by the marketing activity of a brand that would not have occurred if the product or service were unnamed and Keller’s (1993) conceptualization of CBBE as the “differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer’s response to the marketing of the brand” (p. 2). CBBE also affects the profit potential of a brand by making it possible for the brand to attained increased market share and favorable price structures (Aaker, 1991). A higher level of CBBE help brands endure crisis situations like negative press and shift in consumer tastes, and provides competitive edge against other products in the same category (Aaker, 1991). Keller (1993) observed that CBBE is built by increasing consumers’ familiarity with the brand and creating a series of favorable, strong, and unique associations to the brand in consumers’ memory. Hoeflter and Keller (2002) observed that the power of a brand resides in the minds of the customers and those organizations seeking to build CBBE have to ensure that customers undergo the right type of experiences with their products and services so that the desired thoughts, feelings, and images can be linked to the brand. The consumer’s experience with the brand could occur through contact with anyone (salesman, celebrity endorser, receptionist etc.), or anything (the product, advertisements, etc.) that the consumer can associate with the brand. A
key objective of branding activities is to enhance repeat purchase or patronage, because substantially less marketing activities and lower expenditure is required to ensure repeat patronage than to recruit new customers. Strong CBBE helps to move consumers from prospects, occasional users, or habitual buyers to brand loyalists. Brand loyalty is the: (1) biased (i.e. non-random) (2) behavioral (i.e. purchase), (3) expressed over time, (4) by some decision-making unit (5) with respect to one or more alternative brands out of a set of such brands, and (6) is a function of psychological (decision making, evaluative) process (Jacoby 1978, p. 80). Kotler et al. (1996) identified brand conviction as the key difference between habitual buying behavior and brand loyalty. He noted that habitual buying behavior is based on availability and brand familiarity. Thus a habitual buyer would switch to another brand if availability is reduced or routine buying behavior is disrupted while a brand loyalist would go the extra mile to find the brand.

In summary, higher levels of CBBE enhance the value of products and services (Fombrun, 1996); improves consumers' disposition towards organizations and their products (Keller, 1993); improves consumers' psychological judgment with respect to a brand, making them favorably disposed towards paying more and searching further for the brand (Aaker & Biel, 1992; Aaker, 1991); and helps organizations attain increased profitability through increased market share and favorable price structures.

2.6.1 Media Brands

Media brands are different from consumer products in three distinct ways, firstly, they are information goods, which can only be assigned value after they have been experienced; as such they are subject to scale and scope economics—high fixed cost and low variable costs (Reca 2006). Second, media brands are dual goods as they have two distinct buyers—content for the audience and audiences' time and attention for advertisers. And finally, media good are uniquely dependent on creative talent, whose personal brands affect audiences' perceptions of the product regardless of the delivery vehicle. News is also different from consumer goods and other media products because it is not primarily a profit-generating product but is a society building product that
generates profit in the process of fulfilling its normative role. Bagdikian (1997) notes that news media outlets typically see public service as a major part of their organization goals but have challenges navigating the seeming dichotomy of attaining both profitability and public service goals.

In India unlike other parts of the world print media reaches about a quarter of population against about 45% reached by television. (Rao and Vasanti, 2005). Today the newspaper industry is competing not only amongst themselves but also with television and online brands. Therefore, it is imperative that they find out the factors that will make their market share in this intense competition. Although a great deal of research on loyalty has been extensively carried out on tangible goods, it cannot be generalized to loyalty for newspapers due to the very nature of newspapers as a product as described by Reca (2006). Newspapers have distinct attributes from other consumer products. It has very low shelf life and the manufacturing cost of a newspaper is 50% more than its selling price. Profit can be made only through advertising revenue, which needs to be backed by circulation. According to a recent study of loyalty and trust factors of Indian newspapers it was found that repeated purchase had the strongest influence on loyalty followed by emotional value and brand trust. (Punniyamoorthy and Raj, 2007). However, the above mentioned study did not empirically looked into Brand equity or brand performance.

Branding and CBBE are relatively new concepts in the field of mass communication (Chan-Olmsted & Kim, 2001). Although the concepts have been used in traditional marketing and management fields for a long time, journalists and media managers remained skeptical about applying branding principles to the media until recent times when the intense proliferation of media vehicles and the attendant fragmentation of audiences have instigated media outlets to seek new ways of differentiating their products to the audience (Brinkley, 1997). Although media managers agree that, "branding is overall a very useful business tool" that "will help them achieve long-term business success" and "stay competitive", Chan-Olmsted and Kim observed that most of them "did not appear to be very familiar with the brand equity concept" (2001, p. 85 - 86). Similarly, empirical mass communication research on the application of branding principles to the media is in its infancy (Chan-Olmsted & Kim, 2001).
Media organizations are evolving to mitigate the threats of increased competition and audience fragmentation in today's media industry (McManus, 1994). They are seeking ways of determining and catering to the whims of an elusive active audience who has access to more media outlets than at any time during the history of mediated communication. Attaway-Fink (2004) found that newspaper editors were favorably disposed towards the practice of generating and formatting contents to attract specific target audiences. She observed that, "Through research, editors and publishers have been able to identify the newspaper's most marketable elements. Special sections designed to meet reader interests, whether entertainment or local news, have become elements of the new targeted communication practices used in newsrooms across the USA" (p. 145). The control of media content has shifted from professional gatekeepers to the audience, as media channels scramble through opinion polls, focus groups, and audience measurement services to understand the content needs and desires of the audience (Webster & Phalen, 1997). Therefore, branding, a strategic management process for identifying a product and distinguishing it from similar goods and services (Aaker, 1991), assumes new importance as media managers seek ways of differentiating their media outlet from the rest of the pack (Chan-Olmsted & Kim, 2001; Lin, Atkin, & Abelman, 2002).

McDowell & Sutherland (2000) used CBBE theory to analyze television program brand equity. They conceptualized program brand equity in terms of sustained market dominance and exceptional audience loyalty. They analyzed a 10-year longitudinal summary of Nielsen sweep report and additional data from Marshal Marketing and Communication, and concluded that each program has its own unique brand equity, which is distinct from the brand equity of the television channel broadcasting the program. They found that higher program equity helped programs build more audience than their lead-in programs' audience size and to recruit more audiences from other sources. The study concluded that program equity affects the number of converts, the number of defectors, and the number of loyalists that a program has. Lin, Atkin and Abelman (2002) observed that network affiliation and the branding effort of the television networks affect the brand image of local stations, and changes in network affiliations may cause audiences to relate differently to local stations. Ha and Chan-Olmsted (2001)
studied enhanced TV features, such as web-based brand extension products for TV networks, and found no relationship between respondent's awareness or rating of the web-based enhanced TV contents and their rating of network television program. Although respondents accepted the web-based enhanced TV features as brand extensions of the network station, their knowledge, awareness, and usage of the web-based feature did not induce them to watch the network. The researchers, however, noted the supporting role of the web-based enhanced features and observed that they offer a way for audiences to interact with and build knowledge structures about the networks.

Chan-Olmsted and Kim (2002) noted that although commercial free-to-air television has lost a substantial part of its audience to cable television, public television had just begun to feel the heat of competition from cable stations with similar programming like Discovery Channel, The Learning Channel, and The Travel Channel. They conducted three focus-group sessions to determine the brand images of PBS and five similar stations. Using the words consistently used to describe PBS and similar stations in the focus-group sessions, and words used in Rubel's (1995) study of PBS logo, they developed a measure of brand image with 11 terms — trustworthy, unique, enlightening, variety, relaxed, intelligent, informative, quality, educational, exciting, and responsible. They conducted a survey to determine (a) the brand image of PBS, (b) the value of PBS' brand equity relative to comparable cable channels, (c) PBS' audience quantity and profile, and (d) factors that contributed to audience's attachment to PBS in a multi-channel environment.

The researchers (Chan-Olmsted & Kim, 2002) found that PBS continues to enjoy a positive brand image relative to comparable cable networks, and that the popularity of cable networks offering similar programs has not diluted the CBBE of PBS or the growth of PBS membership. They noted that PBS's branding effort has successfully built a strong brand equity, and concluded that "public television continues to enjoy a very positive brand image among its viewers in contrast to comparable cable networks, scoring high in areas of 'quality', 'educational value', and 'trustworthiness'" (p. 315). The researchers, however, found that the PBS brand had become so linked to its brand image of "quality," "educational value,"
and “trustworthiness” that respondents did not attribute other features such as “exciting” to the brand.

2.7 Brand and Credibility

Credibility studies have been part of mass communication research since the inception of scientific inquiry into the communication process (Self, 1996); while branding and brand equity as mentioned earlier are new concepts in media industry. Credibility has been studied primarily within four domains—source, medium, message and audience characteristics. Source characteristics studies explore the expertise and trustworthiness of message sources; message characteristics studies evaluate the attributes of messages that make them credible; audience characteristics studies analyze the influence of message receivers’ demographic and psychographic variables on the credibility of sources, messages and/or media; while media credibility studies evaluate the effects of media types and channels on audiences’ perceptions of message credibility (Metzger et al., 2003; Self, 1996). Branding is a management process for differentiating products within a product category (Kim and Chan-Olmsted, 2001). A brand is the totality of the name, sign, symbol or logo used to identify and differentiate a product (Kotler, 1991). Brand equity—the product of successful branding—is the outcome generated by the marketing of a brand that would not have occurred if the product were unnamed (Aaker, 1991). Therefore credibility of the content will affect the branding of newspapers, television channels and online portals.

2.9 Ideology, localization and Entertainment in Brand Context

There are very few studies on brands that have considered the variables reviewed in this literature; the reason maybe that these are not typical of products or services and therefore have been ignored as an area of research. Though there is evidence that brands that have created largest connection with their audiences and value for their company are those that have stood for true ideals—the values that tap into people’s quest for true ideals (Simon, 2011), there is a dearth of studies that how much importance audiences give to ideology in choosing that brand. According to Simon (2011) a shocking 87% of the consumers say that they are likely to switch to a brand that adheres to a higher purpose. In the case of
retail food chain Massa & Testa (2011) found that a company's ideology should be pervasively applied to each aspect of a brand and it seems to be primarily situated within tangible and physical attributes, rather than within symbolic features. Therefore in the case of media industry the consumer will seek for a brand that matches his ideology and previous research (Oyedeji, 2010) has shown that ideological congruence of the audience with a television brand contributes to the credibility of the brand.

In the context of localization it has been seen that most of the media brands serve local news to create audience loyalty but there is no research to show how such localization makes it more preferable than other competing brands. In the case of entertainment and packaging there is evidence that it enhances the viewership of the channels (Grabe, Zhou, Lang & Bolls, 2000) here also there is lack of research to measure its effect on a brand.

2.10 Moderating role of Brand Choice and Demography

The variables reviewed so far influences the consumers to make brand choices during the brand evaluation stage. Oyedeji (2008) with regards to Fox news and CNN showed that the brand equity of the channels and ideological congruency of the consumer with the particular television channel resulted in greater message credibility. Bucy (2003) suggests that there is an association between age and education and the assessment of news credibility of a channel. Holbert Hmielowski & Weeks (2012) on the other hand found that political ideology of the audience drove the consumption of either Fox or MSNBC news telecasts. Beam (2003) in his study showed that newspapers with strong market orientation publish fewer items about government and public affairs and more items about lifestyle and sports than newspapers with a weak market orientation. Therefore the variables would have differential effect on the brand equity of the media vehicles depending on the choice made by the consumer.

Demographic studies have shown that different audience segments process news in different ways. Grabe, et.al (2000) has provided experimental evidence that adults with high school (or less) education encode news information less efficiently than those with college degrees. Golan (2010) points out that scholars of media credibility have pointed to the important influence of audience based
variables in their assessments of both source and medium credibility. These include, but are not limited to, variables such as age (Bucy, 2003), income (Ibelema & Powell, 2001), education (Mulder, 1981), gender (Robinson & Kohut, 1988), and race (Beaudoin & Thorson, 2005). Klein (2003) in his research found that there are demographic differences as to viewing of violent news with younger men enjoying it while women trying to avoid it by putting the television off. With regard to sensationalism in television news Wang & Cohen (2009) found that formal features, channel selection, motivations for watching TV news, and viewers' demographics are significant factors that influence viewers' perceptions of sensationalism. However, there is not much literature available as to how the different demographic segments view credibility, ideology, localization and entertainment as a whole in their media outlet.

2.11 Summary of the literature

In a special issue on credibility of American Behavioural Scientist Golan (2010) quotes Berlo, Lemert, & Mertz, (1969) to make the point that scholarship has identified the concept of media credibility as a complex and multidimensional construct which the above literature review brings forth. There are four types of credibility research. Source credibility research focusses on the credibility of the source while medium credibility focusses on the characteristics of the medium. The two other facets of credibility research are: message characteristics, which evaluate the attributes of messages that make them credible and audience characteristics which analyses the influence of message receivers' demographic and psychographic profile on the credibility of sources, messages and/or media.

Since brand equity is affected by audience's psychographic characteristics and ideology is a manifestation of that. Ideology in news is highlighted by framing which means the attitudes and beliefs of one group get priority compared to others. Framing of ideology becomes more relevant if it is in the interest of the community to which the news media vehicle caters. Therefore localization is studied as the next variable that influences news. It means that if news that has relevance to the audience is going to be valued more and in turn the brand serving it would have more equity. However, much of local news has audience just not because the global media owners are trying to woo the audience through
localization also because that not only aspiring local leaders, but also resource-poor citizens such as members of low caste groups use local news in order to promote their own interests and agendas (Rao, 2008). However, this localization happens also because of the entertainment content of news which is the result of 'Murdochisation' of news and therefore use of lot of packaging elements, celebrities and humour.

Such content obviously should be affecting the news vehicle and it becomes important to study the brand from consumer perspective. Brand here is defined as a sign or symbol or an association that differentiates it from other products in the same category. And brand equity is the value a company derives from it being memorable, easily recognizable and superior in quality and reliability. Consumer based brand equity is discussed from three perspectives that of Kapferer, Aaker and Keller. For the purpose of this study Aaker's definition is relied on and discussed in the context of different variables. However, the study of the effect of the variables on brand equity would remain incomplete if the effects of demography and brand choice are not assessed. Literature on brand choice indicates that audience has different reasons for adhering to different brands. Demographic studies also indicate that there are differences in assessing the credibility, sensationalism and proximity of the news media vehicles based on whether the audience is old or young, rich or poor and man or woman (Cohen 2009; Bucy, 2003; Ibelema & Powell, 2001).