

Role of Celebrities in Indian Political Campaigns – With special reference to General Elections 2024

Author-
Mahima Sharma

Affiliation -
Junior Risk Analyst, WoRisGo

Contact No.- +91 9111735107
Email Address-
mahimasharma2002@gmail.com

Received on 10/05/2026
Accepted on 22/06/2026
Published on 30/06/2026

Keywords: celebrities, 2024
elections, social media, celebrity
politicians, India, Lok Sabha 2024

Abstract

The growing participation of celebrities in Indian political campaigns has become a notable trend, especially seen during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections. This article examines the multifaceted impact of celebrities in moulding electoral results and affecting voter behaviour. It analyses how political parties utilise the influence of celebrities to increase visibility, galvanise support, and connect with various voter categories. To achieve these objectives, a mixed-methods research approach was employed, combining qualitative interviews with political consultants, quantitative analysis of campaign strategies, and media analysis of celebrity endorsements. The qualitative component involved semi-structured interviews that provided insights into the strategic decision-making processes behind celebrity involvement, while the quantitative analysis assessed the impact of celebrity endorsements on voter turnout and electoral success. Additionally, a thematic analysis of media coverage was conducted to identify key narratives surrounding celebrity participation in the elections. The findings reveal that celebrity endorsements significantly influence voter behaviour, particularly among younger demographics, by fostering emotional connections and enhancing the visibility of political messages. However, the paper also highlights ethical concerns regarding the depth of political knowledge among celebrity candidates and the potential overshadowing of substantive political discourse. The results show that although celebrity participation can boost campaign momentum and draw media coverage, it also prompts important concerns regarding the depth of democratic involvement. In the end, this research highlights the importance of striking a balance between celebrity attraction and substantive political conversation, helping to preserve the strength and inclusivity of the democratic process amid changing electoral tactics.

1. Introduction

In modern Indian politics, celebrities have taken on a notably prominent role in political campaigns, especially during the 2024 Lok Sabha Elections. This phenomenon signals a wider trend in which the lines between entertainment and politics grow increasingly indistinct, giving rise to an electoral scene dominated by celebrities. Political parties strategically recruit celebrities from movie stars to sports icons to capitalize on their fame and large fan bases, aiming to boost voter involvement and public attention.

The role of celebrity endorsements in political campaigns is immense and undeniable. In a country like India, where cinema and sports carry deep cultural significance sometimes even being revered celebrities have a distinctive capacity to resonate emotionally with voters. Their involvement frequently leads to greater media attention and public interest, which can play a crucial role in shaping how voters perceive candidates and ultimately affect election results. Political parties such as the BJP and TMC have shown that featuring prominent figures on their candidate lists is a deliberate strategy to draw public attention and strengthen voter backing in critical areas.

However, the integration of celebrities into political campaigns raises important

questions about the implications for democratic processes. While their star power can energize campaigns and draw attention to critical issues, it also risks overshadowing substantive political discourse. This interplay of glamour and governance invites scrutiny regarding the effectiveness and ethics of celebrity involvement in politics. It also makes one wonder what would be the future of Indian politics if we ever live in a utopia where people will be made candidates based on their stardom instead of grassroots socio-political achievements?

2. Review of Literature

J. Street in *Celebrity Politicians: Popular Culture and Political Representation* (2004) establishes the types of celebrity politicians. The first is the elected politician or candidate who uses elements of 'celebrityhood' to establish their claim to represent a group or cause. The second is the celebrity—the star of popular culture—who uses their popularity to speak for popular opinion. This article also challenges the legitimacy of these type of politicians.

J. Mukherjee in *Celebrity, Media and Politics: An Indian Perspective* (2004) provides India's realities on culmination of popular persona and politics. It traces celebrity involvement in Indian politics till 2004 and throws light on changes in this

celebrity-politics relationship amid the increasingly globalised world. This article plays an important role in this paper for establishing foundations.

Lalani, Motilal and others in *The Appeal of Influencers to the Social Media Outreach of Indian Politicians* (2019) propels us more than a decade further into the celebrity-politics dichotomy with the era of social media. It explores this relation between influencers (the politicians) and their followers. The paper says that these two have a direct influence on each other by facilitating engagement, endorsement and ideological support.

Banerjee and Chaudhri in *Factors shaping attitude of voters about celebrity politicians: Direct and indirect effects* (2020) gives the empirical data through public survey for the reasons behind celebrities being preferential candidates for elections. Research though limited to data from Kolkata, West Bengal, nevertheless serves as an important source of citizen perceptions.

Mitra's *#ModiWithAkshay: 'Brand Modi,' social media and Bollywood star power* (2021) presented a powerful case study of increased politicisation of Bollywood. It highlights the long-standing relationship and presence of Hindi film stars in the political arena along with the role of social media in shaping this dynamic. Sharma

and Jain in *Influencers and the Building of Political Brands—The Case of India* (2021) further build this narrative by highlighting the use of social media and influencers in building personal brand of politicians.

Varughese and Semetko in *Political Campaigning in Digital India* (2024) gives latest insights of digital campaigning undertaken in different Indian states. It highlights the tools and strategies adopted by various parties in various regions such as Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, North India and Kerala.

The present research aims to examine the role of celebrities in different capacities in political campaigns in India with special reference to recent 2024 Lok Sabha Elections. We will first analyse the historical perspective of celebrities into politics and the ethical considerations. Further, delve into the types of celebrity involvements we saw in recent times along with some successful and controversial case studies, ending with the future trends to expect in this arena.

3. Research Methodology

The research paper uses a mixed-method approach, gathering primary data through interviews with political strategists and conducting a quantitative analysis of campaign strategies employed by different parties. The interviews sought to

understand the strategic thinking involved in using celebrities in campaign strategies, the perceived advantages and difficulties, and the broader effect on voter engagement and election results. The interviews were semi-structured in nature, allowing for flexibility in exploring emerging themes and probing for additional information.

A quantitative analysis was conducted on campaign strategies and voter behaviour to evaluate the effect of celebrity endorsements. This included a content analysis of campaign materials such as advertisements, social media posts, and other promotional content featuring celebrities to uncover recurring themes, messaging patterns, and the degree of celebrity participation. A thorough review of existing literature on the role of celebrities in political campaigns was conducted, focusing on academic articles, case studies, and reports on previous elections. The review examined the impact of celebrity endorsements on voter behaviour, campaign strategies, and the ethical considerations surrounding this practice. The findings from the literature review informed the development of interview questions and the interpretation of the quantitative data.

An analysis of media coverage related to celebrity involvement in the 2024 elections was performed. This included examining

news articles, social media posts, and campaign advertisements to identify key themes and narratives surrounding celebrity endorsements. The media analysis provided additional context and insights into the public discourse surrounding this phenomenon. Combining this with thematic analysis helped in understanding the motivations, experiences, and perspectives of politicians and consultants regarding the use of celebrity endorsements in their campaigns.

4. Research Objectives

To explore the past and present extent of role of celebrities in Indian political campaigns.

To explore the scope of celebrity endorsements.

To highlight successful and failed case studies celebrity turned politicians.

To analyse the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements in attracting media coverage, increasing visibility, and consolidating support for political parties and their candidates.

To investigate the ethical considerations and potential risks associated with the use of celebrities in political campaigns, such as the overshadowing of substantive political discourse.

To explore future trends in this arena and its broader implications in democratic discourse.

5. Historical Perspective

Before diving into the celebrities and their stardom, let's shed light on some individuals who achieved political success thanks to their fame. We can place freedom fighters like the first Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru in this category, he won India's first elections by capitalizing on the momentum of independence and his compelling leadership.

We can even categorise the former royals turned politicians as the predecessor of celebrity politics which we see glimpses of even now. These royal candidates often enjoyed electoral success of huge margin from constituencies once their families ruled over. The most prominent example of this can be the Scindias of Gwalior. With 6 members, namely, Vijayraje Scindia, Madhavrao Scindia, Jyotiraditya Scindia, Vasundhara Raje Scindia, Yashodhara Raje Scindia and Dushyant Singh, having a successful run in politics along with some having important portfolios, showcase the strength fame possesses in contesting and winning Indian elections. Even in contemporary times, politicians having royal lineage such as Digvijay Singh, Divya Kumari,

Jyotiraditya Scindia, seem to perform exceedingly well. (Business Insider, 2014)

It is in the 1990s that this celebritization of Indian politics was recognised. Film actors along with sports player actively transitioned to politicians hoping to win seats through their "fanbase." Some were successful such as Ramchandran, Kirti Azad, Chetan Chauhan and Aslam Sher Khan while few such as Mansur Ali Khan Pataudi lost. For some politics remained a mixed bag of fortune like for Rajesh Khanna, Shatrughan Sinha and Nitish Bhardwaj. (Mukherjee, 2004)

Besides celebrity politicians, celebrity endorsements for political parties also became mainstreamed. "Jab sitare dharti par utar aate hain, ujala aanewala hain (when the stars descend to earth, there will be light)," - these words to former Prime Minister late Atal Bihari Vajpayee can very well describe the buzz surrounding that year elections which was filled with celebrity campaigners. That year witnessed heightened presence of celebrities in rallies such as Mohan Babu, Vijayashanti, Gautami, Krishnam Raju, comedian Kota Srinivasa Rao, Sivakrishna, Giribabu and Prasad Babu. (India Today, 12.2.1998)

In case of Elections before 2024, celebrity factor has played a considerable factor in retaining constituencies. Actors such as Kiron Kher, Shatrughan Sinha, Jaya Bachchan, Hema Malini, Ravi, Kishan and Manoj Tiwari has successfully transitioned into seasoned politicians of their own might. Hema Malini, is now a 3rd time consecutive

winner from Mathura Seat, along with Jaya Bachchan who has from time to time proved to be a valuable asset to Samajwadi Party. Shatrughan Sinha, lost only his first ever election against Rajesh Khanna in 1992, now is an influential politician winning elections from different political parties (Bhartiya Janta Party, Indian National Congress and now All India Trinamool Congress) throughout his career, till now.

6. Types of Celebrity Involvements

We analysed that there are two ways celebrities have leveraged their star power in 2024 elections. These were on ground campaigning and social media endorsements. Research has indicated that younger voters are more likely to be influenced celebrity by endorsements than older voters because they are more involved with media and digital platforms (Ganguly & Roy, 2019). This is directly correlated to Indian politics as we are known to be a world largest democracy with high concentration of youth.

On Ground Campaigning

Celebrities used their fame to boost ground-level campaigning in order to attract both their fans and voters. Celebrities such as Hema Malini in Mathura, Ravi Kishan in Gorakhpur, and Manoj Tiwari in North East Delhi frequently held rallies in their respective constituencies to secure their seats. Following the death of Sushant Singh Rajput and her ensuing commentary on Bollywood and nepotism, Kangna Ranaut entered mainstream discourse and joined the growing list of celebrities who have transitioned into politics.

Ranaut capitalized on her confident public speaking, her clear right-wing beliefs, and her indigenous culture, which contributed to her remarkable win in her hometown, Mandi, in Himachal Pradesh. Another intriguing candidate was Arun Govil, best known for portraying Lord Rama in Ramayan, Govil contested and won from Meerut constituency for Bhartiya Janta Party. Govil's contesting proved to be strategically affective as it leveraged the recent inauguration of Ram Mandir of Ayodhya combining it with Govil's legendary role, thus, increasing the recall factor and persuading particularly Hindu voters of the region. In addition to film celebrities, sportsmen also enthusiastically tried the political pitch. Yusuf Pathan ran on a Trinamool Congress ticket for the Baharampur Lok Sabha seat in the 2024 Indian general election, and he won, defeating the incumbent Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury of the Indian National Congress by a margin of 85,022 votes. It should be noted that Chowdhury is no novice new candidate but a veteran politician who served as Leader of Congress in Lok Sabha. This can very well showcase the ability of stardom.

It was natural for these celebrities turned politicians to hold rallies as they as contesting. In 2024 elections, we saw proof of what glamour does to politics. How it brings the "colour." Actor Neha Sharma held a massive roadshow on 25th April 2024, and no she was not contesting. She was, as the matter of fact, just there to garner support for her father, Ajit Sharma and Congress candidate from Bihar's Bhagalpur constituency. Her presence facilitated to the success of

roadshow in addition to the efforts of workers of I.N.D.I.A. Alliance. (India Today, 2024)

This active campaigning drew large crowds and media attention to constituencies. This face-to-face interaction allows celebrities to connect with voters on a personal level, enhancing their appeal and increasing the visibility of the political message.

Social Media Endorsements

5 years back, a simple ad campaign of Shah Rukh Khan "Karo Matdaan" made us see a glimpse of using celebrity stardom for political use, here, for urging people to go and vote. It is also a convention for celebrities to post picture of themselves with inked finger, inspiring people to exercise their political right. (Red Chillies Entertainment, 2019)

Now, the world has awakened to the power of social media. This cannot be more true in the case of 2024 elections. One can even say that the General Elections of 2024 were a digital election because we had digital marketing, personal branding, memes, artificial intelligence and even deepfakes at the interplay. One such strategy was the supple use of major and minor celebrities. Now these terms can be ambiguous as one cannot categorise popularity. But solely based on popular culture theme and perception - major celebrities can be the actors and sports people while minor celebrities can be the influencers. Social media allows celebrities to connect with younger voters who are increasingly relying on digital platforms for political information and engagement. By sharing campaign updates,

interacting with fans, and participating in online discussions, celebrities were able to tap into the youth vote bank and mobilize support for their respective parties. (Lalani, Mothilal & Pal 2019)

If we analyse of Bhartiya Janta Party's social media strategies, we can see how they have collaborated or incorporated these celebrities to enhance their voter base. One such example can be Rashmika Mandanna's ad campaign for BJP with the tagline "Wake Up and Vote for Development" Rashmika was a strategically chosen celebrity riding on the success of mega blockbuster Bollywood film 'Animal' while hailing from south India. Her pan-Indian newly achieved stardom made her a perfect celebrity to give message of unity and new India with enhanced infrastructure. (Rashmika Mandanna, 2024)

Narendra Modi's sparse but impactful interviews with celebrities can be another example. The "non-political" interview with Akshya Kumar and Man vs Wild episode with Bear Grylls were carefully curated social media engagement and visibility tactics - an attempt to see more to the man than the Prime Minister and BJP member.(Mitra, 2021) One recent pearl in this necklace was the National Creators Award. National Creators Awards were established to recognise positive influence in digital content creation space. To name a few winners, Ranveer Allahabadiya, Jaya Kishori, Maithli Thakur, Ankit Baiyanpuria, you can see glimpses of BJP's ideology. (TOI, 11.03.2024) Ranveer Allahabadiya for example, through his podcast has played an important role in amplifying BJP's voice among

youth through engaging podcasts by inviting guests like Smriti Irani, S Jaishankar, Piyush Goyal and Subramanian Swami. It should be noted that these podcasts were “co-presented” by MyGov, a government agency. These podcasts provided opportunity to politicians to present themselves in a semi-relaxed, semi-formal format, enhancing the relatability factor and thus, increasing the visibility of themselves and their political message. (Kaur, 27.06.2024)

7. Case Studies

To conduct a comprehensive study of celebrities' roles in Indian politics, we must consider every relevant perspective. In this study, we will use both thematic and quantitative analysis to evaluate the pros and cons of leveraging stardom for political advantage. We'll look at some celebrities who truly demonstrate passion for social change and played pivotal roles in 2024 campaigns, alongside the major controversies and backlash that led this author to wonder whether celebrities are merely convenient tools for political parties, assuming voters are too easily misled.

Successful Champions

Perhaps the most celebrated and highlighted celebrity to sweep polls this 2024 elections was the power star Pawan Kalyan. Pawan Kalyan's journey of both movies and politics has been a roller coaster ride with booms and busts hitting peak and trough. Pawan Kalyan, younger brother of Master Chiranjeevi, made his acting debut in 1996. But with hits like Love Today, Suswagatham, Tholi Prema, Thammudu, Badri

and Kushi he soon became a star of his own right. He enjoys celebrity worship, “Pawanism” yet never urged his fans to form clubs or associations. Even with massive flops like Jonny, Pawan's star power did not fade. (Kumar, 2017)

Kalyan debuted into politics with his brother's Praja Rajyam Party. He served as President of the youth wing, Yuvarajyam. He neither contested in elections nor did he hold any constitutional post during his tenure in the party. In 2011, Kalyan took a break from politics, showing silent discontent when his brother decided to merge Praja Rajyam Party with Congress.

After a long halt, it is with Pawan's very own Jan Sena Party, he became a leader in his own might. Kalyan founded Jana Sena Party in 2014 and wrote a book 'Ism' establishing the ideology of this political party. He campaigned extensively for the Telugu Desam Party (TDP) and BJP alliance in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana garnering what Deccan Journal called “huge crowds” in his rallies. He openly called for Congress free nation with slogan “Congress Hatao, Desh Bachao.” Although Kalyan lost elections from both seats in 2019, he proved to be arson for 2024 elections for NDA Alliances. (K P, 2014)

By winning all 21 of the contested assembly seats in the Andhra Pradesh assembly elections, JSP established both a precedent and national history. In the Pithapuram constituency, Kalyan prevailed with a commanding margin of more than 70,000 votes. Kalyan currently serves as the Deputy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. We can say that only

his party, JSP, had “100 percent” strike rate in 2024 elections. (Bureau, 2024)

Kalyan can be revered as a celebrity who used his stardom for social change. He knows the influence he has on people and state politics. He highlighted Uddanam kidney disease crisis to the attention of media and politicians through protests and a hunger strike. He opposed central government's decision to privatise Dredging Corporation of India. He led a protest march for farmers who committed suicides or migrated from the drought-prone regions of Rayalaseema. He has frequently raised voice over issues of unemployment and language. Kalyan's fan voluntarily take part in JSP social welfare activities just to show their love and devotion to the star. (Kumar, 2017)

Controversy and Backlashes

There has always been a negative aspect to celebrities entering Indian politics. Critics argue that allowing celebrities to run for office is a win-win for both the stars and political parties: celebrities get their egos boosted by being confirmed as larger-than-life figures, while parties gain an easy victory and an instant voter base leaving citizens with little real benefit and depriving local grassroots activists of opportunities to deliver meaningful change for their communities.

Arun Govil, a member of Lok Sabha who won by a huge margin in 2024 elections from Meerut can be a good case study to examine the treacherous waters of celebrity-politics dichotomy. Govil sought

votes for the 2024 Lok Sabha election using the name and image of a Hindu deity, Lord Ram in a number of tweets on X, the old Twitter. A cursory examination of Govil's campaign reveals that, since he filed his nomination on April 2, he has openly mentioned Lord Ram in his speeches and posted pictures and posts about the Hindu god and the Ram Temple in Ayodhya. Section 123(3) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 designates the use of religious symbols as a "corrupt" conduct while soliciting votes. It was only after being issued a notice from Meerut Administration; he toned down this approach. In his talks, which Govil himself uploaded on his X account, he characterizes the margin of victory and the number of votes cast as an indicator of the degree of people's faith in Lord Ram. Govil introduced himself as "Ram," a man who had come home to run for office, during a public event following his nomination. It is evident that he strategically used his portrayal of Lord Ram in the television series to directly garner votes from his constituency. In addition to using Ram in his campaign, Govil, the new BJP MP in Meerut, has drawn criticism for not being able to enumerate the problems plaguing his district. In interviews with local media, he stated that his current priorities were election campaigning and that, once elected, he would become knowledgeable about the issues facing his constituency. (Rashid, 2024)

The third time MP from Mathura, veteran actress Hema Malini, despite having a record win was not untouched from criticisms. She has frequently drawn criticism from opposition for not being

present in her constituency, same situation that plagued her family members (Dharmendra and Sunny Deol) when they contested. A few BJP officials in the area acknowledged that the people were angry since their politician was absent when the public needed her during the Covid outbreak. Locals claim that she only emerges in the public eye during election seasons. She received backlash after posting a picture of herself on social media this time around—during election season—of herself harvesting wheat in the fields. Posters about her purported disappearance that said, "aapda mai Mathura ki sansad lapata (Mathura's MP missing in calamity)" appeared in Mathura during the pandemic. Broken roads and overflowing drains were evident when The Print visited many villages in the Mathura constituency's Baldeo, Mant, and Govardhan districts. However, despite everything, people of Mathura chose to vote for her, not for her own capabilities but for Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "Here, people vote for the BJP and not for Hema Malini. People's aim is to make the BJP win again. If there was anyone else in place of Hema Malini, we would have voted for the BJP only," said Bhagwan Das, a local to the Print. (Dogra, The Print, 2024)

8. Impact on Voter Behaviour

The impact of celebrity involvement in Indian elections, particularly in the context of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, has been profound, influencing voter behaviour and perceptions significantly. This can be analysed through two main aspects: celebrity influence on voting decisions and the perception and credibility of

celebrity candidates. (Banerjee & Chaudhari, 2020)

Celebrities have a unique ability to sway public opinion and influence voting decisions, particularly among younger voters. Their popularity and reach can mobilize support for political parties and candidates, as seen in the 2024 elections where several celebrities won their respective seats such as Kanagan Rana and Yusuf Pathan. But we also see a new angle to this play. Celebrities are also capable of persuading voters to "not" vote for a particular party. We see this with a newfound "Dhruv Rathee Effect" Dhruv Rathi, a German based Indian youtuber, through his wide reach and academically informed posts against BJP, played a role in influencing youth against BJP's alleged motive to curb freedom of speech and expression. Dhruv Rathee's video 'Is India becoming a dictatorship?' went viral like a wildfire with over 25 million views and definitely stirred up conversations on freedom and rights. (Dhruv Rathee, 2024) Political parties increasingly recognize the importance of influencers in reaching disinterested and younger voters. For example, influencers have been known to charge substantial fees for promoting candidates, with some earning between 100,000 to 500,000 rupees for a single campaign post. (Mollan, 2024) This financial investment underscores the perceived value of influencer endorsements in swaying voter sentiment and turnout.

The perception of celebrity candidates can significantly affect their credibility among voters. (Puri & Aggarwal, 2020) While some celebrities

are viewed as relatable figures who can connect with the electorate, others may face scepticism regarding their qualifications for public office. The 2024 elections highlighted this dynamic:

Arun Govil, known for his portrayal of Lord Ram in the television series *Ramayan*, won in Meerut, demonstrating that cultural and emotional connections can enhance a candidate's credibility and appeal. Kangna, who is known for her bold public speaking, nationalist values and preservation/promotion of her Pahadi upbringing, won from her hometown Mandi, demonstrating how celebrity's public persona appeal to voters.

The involvement of celebrities in Indian politics, while often effective in attracting attention and mobilizing support, has raised significant ethical concerns regarding the depth of their political knowledge and commitment to public service. Critics argue that the prominence of celebrity status can overshadow substantive political discourse, leading to a dilution of the quality of democratic engagement.

One of the primary criticisms is that celebrities may lack the necessary understanding of complex political issues and policy matters. Their entry into politics is often driven by their popularity and star power rather than a deep commitment to public service or a well-articulated political ideology. This raises questions about their ability to effectively represent the interests of their constituents and contribute meaningfully to legislative processes. (Muda, Musa, & Putit, 2017)

Moreover, the focus on celebrity candidates can shift the attention away from the discussion of critical issues affecting the electorate. Voters may prioritize the glamour and charisma of a celebrity over their actual policy proposals and track record of public service. This can lead to a superficial understanding of political discourse, where substance is overshadowed by style and personality.

The 2024 elections witnessed several instances where celebrity candidates faced criticism for their lack of political experience and their inability to engage in substantive discussions. For example, Kangana Ranaut, despite her electoral victory in Mandi, Himachal Pradesh, was accused of making controversial statements that diverted attention from the real concerns of her constituents.

Furthermore, the presence of celebrities in politics can create an uneven playing field for other candidates who may have extensive political experience and a strong track record of public service. The disproportionate media coverage and resources available to celebrity candidates can make it challenging for their opponents to gain visibility and effectively communicate their messages to the electorate.

9. Future Trends

Role of Digital Platforms

As Indian politics continues to evolve, the role of digital platforms in shaping future political campaigns is expected to become increasingly prominent. The 2024 Lok Sabha elections have

already witnessed a significant shift towards the utilization of social media and other online tools for voter engagement and political messaging. This trend is likely to intensify in the coming years, with political parties and candidates recognizing the immense potential of digital platforms to reach a wider audience, particularly among younger demographics. (Varughese and Semetko, 2024)

The growing importance of social media influencers in electoral politics is a testament to the changing landscape of political campaigning. These influencers, with their substantial online followings, have emerged as a powerful force in shaping public opinion and mobilizing support for political causes. In the 2024 elections, some social media influencers were known to charge substantial fees, ranging from 100,000 to 500,000 rupees, for a single campaign post, underscoring the perceived value of their endorsements in swaying voter sentiment. (Mollan, 2024)

We will see accelerated the adoption of digital tools in political campaign. Political parties to rely heavily on virtual events, online fundraising, and targeted digital advertising to reach out to voters. They are also enthusiastically participating with latest trends, memes and AI. This shift has not only enhanced the efficiency of campaign strategies but has also opened up new avenues for data-driven decision-making and targeted outreach.

However, the rise of digital platforms in political campaigns also raises concerns about the

potential for misinformation, hate speech, and the manipulation of public opinion. As digital platforms become more integral to the political process, it is crucial to establish robust mechanisms for content moderation, fact-checking, and the regulation of online political advertising to ensure the integrity of the democratic process.

Looking ahead, the trend of celebrity involvement in Indian politics is likely to continue evolving. The political parties in upcoming elections might try to leverage the tried and tested formula of using celebrities as an easy win. Additionally, the emergence of new celebrities from diverse backgrounds, including regional cinema and sports, will diversify the political landscape. The success of Bhojpuri actors like Manoj Tiwari and Ravi Kishan and south actors such as Pawan Kalyan in securing seats in the Lok Sabha underscores the potential for regional celebrities to make significant political contributions and connect with local electorates.

10. Conclusion

Celebrities' involvement in Indian political campaigns, especially during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, has drawn considerable attention and discussion. This paper has examined the different dimensions of celebrity involvement, tracing its historical background to current developments, and assessed its influence on voter behavior and wider ramifications for Indian democracy.

The 2024 elections witnessed a marked increase in the participation of celebrities, with political parties strategically fielding well-known

personalities to capitalize on their star power and fan following. Record win of several celebrities demonstrate the enduring appeal of celebrity candidates and their ability to connect with voters on an emotional level.

However, the involvement of celebrities in politics has also raised important ethical questions. Critics argue that the focus on celebrity status can overshadow substantive political discourse, leading to a dilution of the quality of democratic engagement. The reliance on star power can create an uneven playing field for candidates with extensive political experience and a strong track record of public service.

As digital platforms continue to play a crucial role in shaping political campaigns, the influence of celebrities is expected to intensify. Social media has emerged as a powerful tool for celebrity endorsements, allowing them to engage directly with voters and amplify their messages. The rise of social media influencers in electoral politics underscores the changing dynamics of voter engagement and the importance of online outreach.

In the coming period, the trend of celebrities entering Indian politics is expected to keep changing, as new figures from varied backgrounds rise to prominence. As the political landscape keeps changing, it's essential for parties, candidates, and voters to find a balance between the attractiveness of celebrity endorsements and the necessity for substantive political discussion that tackles the electorate's actual concerns.

11. References

1. Banerjee, S. and Chaudhuri, B.R. (2020) 'Factors shaping attitude of voters about celebrity politicians: Direct and indirect effects', *Journal of Business Research*, 109, pp. 210–220. doi:10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.12.009.
2. Bureau, T.H. (2024) AP election results 2024 highlights: Chandrababu Naidu celebrates after TDP registers sweeping victory in Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections, *The Hindu*. Available at: <https://www.thehindu.com/elections/andhra-pradesh-assembly/andhra-pradesh-assembly-election-results-2024-live/article68246162.ece> (Accessed: 25 July 2024).
3. Dhruv Rathee (2024) Is India becoming a DICTATORSHIP? | Chandigarh Elections | Farmers Protest | Dhruv Rathee. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9253_M38Xk.
4. Dogra, P.K. (2024) Hema Malini's re-election from Mathura: Tough fight or cakewalk?, *The Indian Express*. Available at: <https://indianexpress.com/elections/bjp-hema-malini-mathura-lok-sabha-2024-re-election-from-mathura-tough-fight-or-cakewalk-9289941/> (Accessed: 25 July 2024).
5. Ganguly, R., & Roy, M. (2019). Youth engagement in Indian elections: The role of celebrity endorsements. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 31(2), 178-193.
6. India Today (2024) 'Actor Neha Sharma holds roadshow in support of father in Bihar's Bhagalpur,' *India Today*, 25 April. <https://www.indiatoday.in/elections/lok-sabha/story/neha-sharma-roadshow-bihar-bhagalpur-congress-candidate-father-lok-sabha-polls-2531835-2024-04-26>.
7. Indian politicians who have a royal background: *Business Insider India* (2014) *Business Insider*. Available at: <https://www.businessinsider.in/politics/indian-politicians-who-have-a-royal-background/slidelist/35112336.cms> (Accessed: 25 July 2024).
8. K, P. (2014) 'Congress Hatao, Desh Bachao', *The New Indian Express*. Available at: <https://www.newindianexpress.com/cities/hyderabad/2014/Mar/15/congress-hatao-desh-bachao-586391.html> (Accessed: 25 July 2024).
9. Kaur, G. No payment, no tender, just an 'opportunity': Untangling the BeerBiceps Collab with modi ministers, *NewsLaundry*. Available at: <https://www.newslaundry.com/2023/06/27/no-payment-no-tender-just-an-opportunity-untangling->

- the-beerbiceps-collab-with-modi-ministers (Accessed: 25 July 2024).
10. Kumar C R, H. (2017) Powerstar Pawan Kalyan: From films to politics, what explains his hold over fans?, *The News Minute*. Available at: <https://www.thenewsminute.com/flix/powerstar-pawan-kalyan-films-politics-what-explains-his-hold-over-fans-59103> (Accessed: 25 July 2024).
 11. Lalani, F.M., Mothilal, R.K. and Pal, J. (2019) The appeal of influencers to the social media outreach of Indian politicians: Companion publication of the 2019 Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work and social computing, ACM Conferences. Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1145/3311957.3359484> (Accessed: 25 July 2024).
 12. Menon, A.K. (2013) 'Andhra Pradesh: Top film actors campaign for major parties but NTR-like wave missing,' *India Today*, 7 March. <https://www.indiatoday.in/magazine/states/story/19980216-andhra-pradesh-top-film-actors-campaign-for-major-parties-but-ntr-like-wave-missing-825728-1998-02-15>.
 13. Mitra, S. (2021) '#modiwithakshay: "brand modi", Social Media and Bollywood Star Power', *Celebrity Studies*, 12(2), pp. 282–298. doi:10.1080/19392397.2021.1912256.
 14. Mollan, B.C. (2024) Lok Sabha 2024: The influencers driving India's big election. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-68920953>.
 15. Muda, M., Musa, R. and Putit, L. (2017) 'Celebrity endorsement in advertising: A double-edged sword', *Journal of ASIAN Behavioural Studies*, 2(3), pp. 21–32. doi:10.21834/jabs.v2i3.188.
 16. Mukherjee, J. (2004) 'Celebrity, media and politics: An Indian perspective', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 57(1), pp. 80–92. doi:10.1093/pa/gsh007.
 17. Puri, R., & Aggarwal, S. (2020). Influence of celebrity endorsements on young voters in India. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 23(1), 67-82
 18. Rashid, O. (2024) Vote in 'ram ke naam': Meerut DM Issues notice to on-screen ram arun govil, *The Wire*. Available at: <https://thewire.in/politics/vote-in-ram-ke-naam-meerut-dm-issues-notice-to-on-screen-ram-arun-govil> (Accessed: 25 July 2024).
 19. Rashmika Mandanna (2024) Rashmika Mandanna hails infra push under BJP; Urges to Vote for Development | Mumbai , Atal Setu. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLNiiUEsM0A>.
 20. Sharma, K., & Malhotra, N. (2019). The power of star appeal: How celebrities shape political outcomes in India. *Journal of Indian Politics*, 12(1), 56-70.
 21. Street, J. (2004) 'Celebrity politicians: Popular culture and political representation', *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 6(4), pp. 435–452. doi:10.1111/j.1467-856x.2004.00149.x.
 22. TOI Tech Desk / TIMESOFINDIA.COM / Updated: Mar 11 (no date) PM Narendra Modi announces National Creators Award 2024: List of winners across 23 categories - times of India, *The Times of India*. Available at: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/gadgets-news/pm-narendra-modi-announces-national-creators-award-2024-list-of-winners-across-23-categories/articleshow/108330024.cms> (Accessed: 25 July 2024).
 23. Varughese, A.M. and Semetko, H.A. (2024) Political campaigning in Digital India [Preprint]. doi:10.4324/9781003486305.