

## **Has the advent of social media ended the culture of superstardom in Bollywood?**

Urvi Parikh<sup>1</sup> Ravindra Katyayan<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, JJT University, Vidyanagari, Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan – 333001

<sup>2</sup>Research Guide, JJT University, Vidyanagari, Jhunjhunu, Rajasthan – 333001  
[parikh.urvi18@gmail.com].

---

**Abstract:** Superstar as a term is synonymous with Bollywood. The glamorous world of Bollywood has witnessed the rise of several stars, making a mark with their talent, charm and charisma. While some manage to swoon the audience over their looks, there are some who sweep them off their feet and are tagged as the Superstars of Bollywood! From Dilip Kumar to Shah Rukh Khan, B-town has many names in this list of superstars. But lately, we only have stars. The culture of superstar has become redundant. Reason? May be the advent of social media. With easy accessibility and direct contact with a star over social media has brought down the curiosity that once existed around the film stars. The kind of stardom that has been enjoyed by the likes of Rajesh Khanna, Dilip Kumar, Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan, Aamir Khan, Akshay Kumar and Ajay Devgn, is missing with the actors of the newer generation.

**Keywords:** Bollywood, Social Media, Shah Rukh Khan, Amitabh Bachchan, Salman Khan, Superstars of Bollywood, Twitter

---

Date of Submission: 09-11-2017

Date of acceptance: 23-11-2017

---

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

Indian cinema has completed a century since the first film was made by Dadasaheb Phalke back in 1917. Hindi films have been around for almost 70 years with actors like Guru Dutt, Dilip Kumar, Raj Kapoor, Rajesh Khanna, Amitabh Bachchan, Shah Rukh Khan, Salman Khan, Aamir Khan, Akshay Kumar ruling the roost. These stars have enjoyed unprecedented stardom and boast of a massive fan following. Their names are enough to draw the public to the theatres and make a film super-hit! Their era has been different. There existed no social media, no marketing, no promotions - it was pure love that was communicated through films and their fans were excited to see them at the theatres when their films released. Articles about them in leading newspapers and film magazines piqued the interests of the audience very often. Not just that, but a few lucky ones also had the privilege of catching a glimpse of their favourite star outside their homes in Mumbai or at a shooting studio where they were put up for their movie shoots.

Given the fact that a celeb's accessibility to the audience was limited only to films and to a certain extent through brand endorsements, there always existed a curiosity in the minds of the audience to know more about the star! What they eat to what they wear, where they go to what's up with their personal life, fans have always been interested in knowing the intricate details about their idols. Hence there existed a culture of stardom and super stardom.

### **II. DECLINE IN STARDOM**

Today, with the advent of social media and the connectivity a fan enjoys with his favourite celeb, there seems to be a steady decline in the way an actor/actress is perceived. If we go by the graph, the last few superstars that belong to the industry are from the 90s which include the three Khans - Shah Rukh, Aamir, Salman along with Akshay Kumar and Ajay Devgn. These actors are still ruling the hearts of the audience and occupy the numero uno position in Bollywood. And for years to come, despite some great talent, there isn't a replacement to these names. Like a Ranbir Kapoor or a Ranveer Singh are undoubtedly great actors, but they do not enjoy the same amount of stardom as compared to their seniors who have been working for almost twenty five years now. And while some argue that it is because of the declining interest of the audience in movies, there are many who believe that it is because of the presence of social media.

### III. ADVENT OF SOCIAL MEDIA

With the advent of Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, a fan can access a star's life easily. He/She knows what their favourite celeb is up to. For instance, a Ranveer Singh fan knows what the actor is doing, thanks to his social media. Whether he is shooting for his film *Padmavati* or hitting the gym or visiting a mall for a store launch, all the updates are right there. All that the fan has to do is stalk the celeb's Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or Snapchat handles and he is privy to the whereabouts of Ranveer Singh. There is no need for him/her to take any other amount of effort which the people previously took. Communication with these celebs has become so easy. Earlier, fans would write love letters, send across gifts only to convey their emotions and love for the stars. Today, that can be done while sitting at home. There doesn't exist a culture where a fan, situated in some part of India, has to fly down to Mumbai to meet Varun Dhawan. Uptil the 90s this was considered to be a proud moment. Fans would boast about their interactions and pictures with the celebs. Today, courtesy social media, it has become very common.

In an interview, actor Arjun Kapoor stated this same fact. When asked about stardom, the actor told Deccan Chronicle, "We can never recreate the situation of the past era now; everybody is tangible and touchable. That unknown, untouchable aspect of stardom is gone. That happened because they want to know more about us. Stardom hasn't reduced but the definition of it has changed."

In another interview, actor Aamir Khan said, "I think so. It is changing. The fabric is changing. At one time, the access to the stars were very limited. In 50s-60s there was no television also. The only access was when you stood physically outside the theatre when he arrived for the film's premiere. Either you stand outside their house or the theatre. The only other access was through the print media. One could read Dilip Kumar or Amitabh Bachchan or Raj Kapoor interview. Then TV came and Phool Khile Gulshan Gulshan gave one window into their lives. We could hear them talk and first hand see their expressions. Now there is so much, therefore things have changed. The stars have become more accessible. Also, now lot of stars are very communicative. The stars are right in my pocket. Initially, it required lot of efforts. So the concept of stardom is changing, no doubt."

### IV. CONCLUSION

Well, I couldn't agree more to Arjun Kapoor and Aamir Khan. Social Media has made the culture of superstars redundant in Bollywood. And though a Varun Dhawan's *Judwaa 2* does collect massive numbers at the box office and it does define his stardom, when we compare the same to Salman Khan, it is bound to be at least three times less. The kind of crowds that gather outside an Amitabh Bachchan's house every Sunday is unimaginable. Today we won't see that happen to a Ranbir Kapoor. And with this, I am in no means comparing a megastar like Senior Bachchan with the Kapoor lad. In fact, Bachchan's stardom 30 years back is ten times more than what RK enjoys today!

And while the senior actors are at an advantage as they are also available on social media, the younger ones are on the flip side of it. Stars like Hrithik Roshan, Abhishek Bachchan and Kareena Kapoor are amongst the few who stepped into Bollywood at a time when the transition into social media was just happening. So they have been at a loss as they could neither enjoy the traditional form of love from the fans and nor could they shine on social media due to the newness of the medium.

Whatever be the case, one thing can surely be deduced and that is - stardom has indeed changed and social media has been an important factor in ending the culture of producing superstars in Bollywood.

### REFERENCES

- [1]. <http://www.deccanchronicle.com/entertainment/bollywood/070517/the-definition-of-stardom-has-changed-arjun-kapoor.html>
- [2]. <http://www.rediff.com/movies/report/why-secret-superstar-is-bigger-than-dangal/20171012.htm>

IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) is UGC approved Journal with Sl. No. 5070, Journal no. 49323.

Urvi Parikh, "Has the advent of social media ended the culture of superstardom in Bollywood?." IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS), vol. 22, no. 11, 2017, pp. 43-44.