

CELEBRITY MANAGEMENT AND THEIR ROLE IN ADVANCING CLIMATE & SOCIAL CAUSES (SDG 13 & 5)

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Abstract

This research examines the role of celebrity advocacy and professional celebrity management in advancing climate action (SDG 13) and gender equality (SDG 5). With the growing influence of public figures in social and environmental discourse, understanding how their campaigns are strategically guided is essential for maximizing societal impact. The study integrates secondary data analysis and survey responses to evaluate audience awareness, engagement, and tangible outcomes of celebrity-led initiatives. Findings reveal that professionally managed campaigns significantly enhance audience engagement, credibility, and behavioral influence, compared to ad-hoc or unmanaged efforts. Climate-focused campaigns reached over 250 million people across multiple initiatives, raising more than \$30 million for conservation projects, while gender equality campaigns reached 180 million users, raising \$10.5 million and promoting mentorship and policy engagement. The study underscores that authenticity, consistency, and strategic alignment with non-governmental organizations are crucial for transforming celebrity visibility into actionable societal change. By linking celebrity advocacy to SDG 13 and SDG 5, the research highlights the potential of fame, when effectively managed, to raise awareness, mobilize resources, and foster long-term impact on environmental and social issues.

Keywords: Celebrity Advocacy, Celebrity Management, SDG 13, SDG 5, Climate Action, Gender Equality, Social Influence, Media Campaigns, Public Awareness, Behavioral Change

Introduction

In contemporary society, celebrities are no longer confined to the realms of entertainment, sports, or art; they have emerged as influential social actors whose voices resonate globally. Their public visibility, wide-reaching social media presence, and persuasive appeal position them uniquely to advocate for pressing societal and environmental issues. The intersection of celebrity influence and social responsibility has gained particular significance in advancing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality). By leveraging their fame, celebrities can spotlight critical issues, mobilize resources, and influence public behavior, thereby amplifying campaigns aimed at mitigating climate change or promoting gender equity (Omoyajowo et al. 2024).



Celebrity management, the strategic planning and guidance of a public figure's professional and personal brand, plays a pivotal role in shaping these advocacy initiatives. Managers curate the image, endorsements, and collaborations of celebrities, aligning them with causes

that reflect both personal convictions and societal relevance. Effective celebrity management ensures that advocacy is not merely performative but impactful, fostering long-term engagement with social and environmental initiatives. This requires careful orchestration of media campaigns, strategic partnerships with non-governmental organizations, and alignment with global frameworks like the United Nations' SDGs. Moreover, the influence of celebrities extends beyond awareness creation (Dininta and Paksi, 2024). Their advocacy can catalyze policy discussions, fundraise for critical projects, and inspire community-level action. For instance, celebrity-led campaigns for climate change can push for sustainable practices in industries, while advocacy for gender equality can challenge societal norms and empower marginalized groups. As such, understanding the mechanisms through which celebrity management shapes engagement with SDG-related causes provides crucial insights into modern advocacy strategies. In this context, exploring the role of celebrity management in advancing climate and social causes offers a lens to examine the synergy between media, public influence, and sustainable development. It highlights how strategic public engagement can transform fame into a force for meaningful societal change, bridging the gap between visibility and impact.

In contemporary society, celebrities transcend their traditional roles in entertainment, sports, or the arts, emerging as powerful social influencers, whose voices resonate globally. With extensive public visibility, large social media followings, and persuasive appeal, celebrities are uniquely positioned to advocate for pressing social and environmental issues. This influence is particularly significant in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), notably SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 5 (Gender Equality). By leveraging their fame, celebrities can draw attention to urgent challenges, mobilize resources, and inspire behavioral change among audiences, thereby amplifying campaigns aimed at environmental sustainability and gender equity. Central to this dynamic is celebrity management, which encompasses the strategic planning and guidance of a public figure's personal brand, professional engagements, and advocacy activities. Managers play a crucial role in ensuring that celebrity-led initiatives are coherent, credible, and impactful. They facilitate collaborations with non-governmental organizations, craft targeted media campaigns, and align public messaging with global priorities such as the UN's SDGs. For example, Leonardo DiCaprio's climate activism, guided by strategic partnerships with environmental organizations, has elevated global awareness on climate change, while Malala Yousafzai's advocacy for girls' education demonstrates how celebrity influence can advance gender

equality (Chaturvedi et al. 2022). Beyond raising awareness, celebrities can catalyze tangible change by influencing policy discussions, fundraising for critical projects, and motivating community-level initiatives. Campaigns led by public figures have encouraged sustainable practices in industries, promoted renewable energy, and challenged entrenched gender norms, illustrating the potential of celebrity influence to drive societal transformation.

Justification of the Study

The increasing engagement of celebrities in social and environmental causes has transformed public discourse and advocacy strategies. However, while numerous campaigns leverage celebrity influence, there is limited research on the role of celebrity management in shaping the effectiveness and sustainability of these initiatives. Understanding how managers strategically guide celebrities in advocating for climate action (SDG 13) and gender equality (SDG 5) is crucial to maximizing their impact. This study is justified on multiple grounds: firstly, it addresses the knowledge gap in linking celebrity influence with structured management practices that advance sustainable development goals. Secondly, it provides insights into how media visibility can translate into meaningful societal and environmental change, offering valuable lessons for NGOs, policymakers, and advocacy organizations seeking to collaborate with public figures (Dininta and Paksi, 2024). Finally, the research contributes to the broader discourse on responsible celebrity activism, highlighting how well-orchestrated campaigns can move beyond performative gestures and achieve measurable outcomes. By focusing on the intersection of celebrity, management strategies, and advocacy, this study underscores the potential of fame as a tool for transformative social impact.

The role of celebrities in advocating for social and environmental causes has become increasingly prominent in the 21st century, yet the mechanisms through which their influence translates into meaningful impact remain underexplored. While celebrities possess the ability to reach millions of people through traditional media and digital platforms, their advocacy efforts are often guided and amplified by professional celebrity management teams, whose strategic decisions determine the credibility, consistency, and societal impact of campaigns. This study is justified because it seeks to bridge the gap between celebrity influence and effective management practices, particularly in the context of advancing climate action (SDG 13) and gender equality (SDG 5). Understanding the strategic management of celebrity advocacy is critical for several reasons. First, it allows policymakers, non-governmental organizations, and advocacy groups to harness celebrity influence in a structured,

results-oriented manner. For example, campaigns led by Leonardo DiCaprio on climate change or Emma Watson on gender equality illustrate that carefully managed celebrity initiatives can elevate global awareness, mobilize funding, and even influence public policy. Second, the study addresses concerns regarding performative activism, where celebrity engagement may be symbolic rather than substantive. By examining management strategies, this research highlights how sustained advocacy, ethical alignment, and measurable goals can enhance the effectiveness of celebrity-led campaigns. Furthermore, this study contributes to the academic discourse on sustainable development and social influence by integrating perspectives from media studies, marketing, and social activism (Singh et al. 2021). It offers insights into how strategic planning, media framing, and audience engagement can transform fame into a vehicle for societal change. In a world facing urgent environmental challenges and persistent gender disparities, leveraging celebrity influence effectively can accelerate progress toward SDGs, inspiring both grassroots action and systemic change.

Problem Statement

Despite the growing trend of celebrity-led advocacy for social and environmental causes, there remains a lack of systematic understanding regarding the mechanisms that ensure these efforts are effective, credible, and aligned with global sustainability priorities. While celebrities often draw significant attention to issues like climate change and gender inequality, their campaigns sometimes face criticism for being symbolic or short-lived, limiting long-term impact. Moreover, the strategic role of celebrity management—encompassing planning, media engagement, partnerships, and ethical positioning—has not been adequately examined in the context of advancing SDG 13 and SDG 5. This gap creates uncertainty about how celebrity influence can be optimized to foster tangible change, inspire community-level action, and support policy initiatives. Therefore, there is a need to investigate how celebrity management strategies can enhance advocacy efforts, ensuring that public figures not only raise awareness but also contribute to measurable progress in environmental sustainability and gender equality.

Literature Review

Celebrity Advocacy and Social Influence

Celebrities have emerged as influential actors in shaping societal attitudes and behaviors due to their extensive media presence and public visibility. Their advocacy efforts can significantly impact social norms, consumer behavior, and public awareness on critical issues. Social influence theories, such as the social learning theory and agenda-setting theory, explain how audiences adopt behaviors or attitudes modeled by high-profile figures. Celebrities serve as role models whose actions, endorsements, and public statements can inspire audiences to support causes ranging from climate change mitigation to gender equality. Research indicates that the emotional connection and parasocial relationships audiences develop with celebrities enhance the persuasive power of advocacy campaigns (Harvey, 2018). For instance, when a celebrity shares personal stories or actively engages in campaigns, audiences are more likely to internalize the message and participate in related initiatives. Furthermore, digital platforms have amplified the reach of celebrity influence, allowing real-time engagement with millions of followers. Social media campaigns, viral hashtags, and live interactions have become powerful tools in mobilizing awareness and resources for social and environmental causes. However, the effectiveness of celebrity advocacy depends on perceived authenticity, alignment between the celebrity's personal brand and the cause, and sustained engagement. Misalignment or superficial involvement can lead to skepticism and reduced impact (Kalam et al. 2024). By examining celebrity advocacy within the context of social influence, this research highlights the mechanisms through which public figures shape awareness, mobilize communities, and drive discourse on global issues, setting the stage for understanding the role of strategic management in maximizing advocacy outcomes.

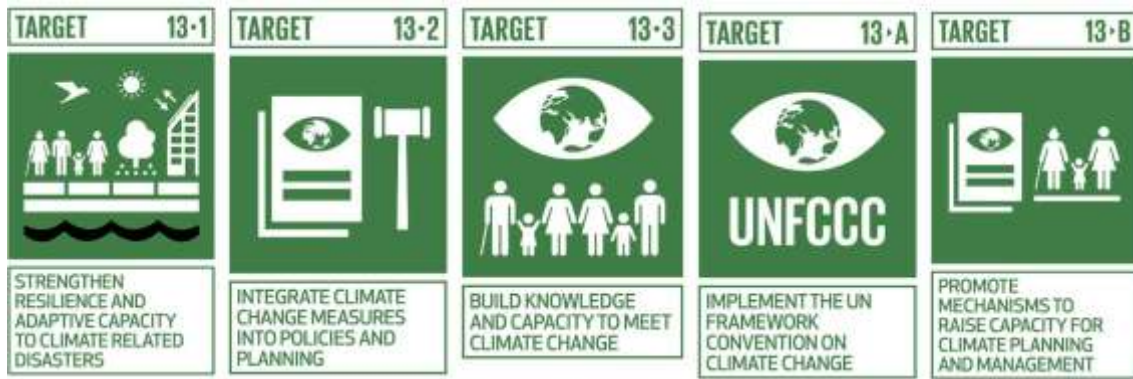
Role of Celebrity Management in Advocacy

Celebrity management plays a pivotal role in transforming public influence into structured and impactful advocacy. Managers strategically guide the personal and professional activities of celebrities, ensuring that endorsements, partnerships, and campaigns are coherent, credible, and aligned with societal goals. In advocacy for causes such as climate action or gender equality, celebrity managers coordinate media appearances, philanthropic collaborations, and social campaigns to maximize both reach and effectiveness. For example, the careful orchestration of Leonardo DiCaprio's environmental initiatives demonstrates how

management ensures alignment between a celebrity's public image and cause-related messaging, thereby enhancing credibility and audience engagement (Brockington, 2015). Similarly, Emma Watson's advocacy for gender equality through the UN HeForShe campaign reflects the strategic planning and guidance that effective celebrity management provides. Managers are responsible for ethical positioning, long-term campaign sustainability, and balancing personal brand interests with social responsibility. They also analyze audience demographics, media trends, and cultural contexts to design tailored campaigns that resonate with target audiences. Beyond planning, management teams measure the impact of celebrity advocacy through metrics such as public engagement, fundraising outcomes, policy influence, and social media reach. By professionalizing advocacy efforts, celebrity management ensures that fame is not used merely for visibility but for meaningful societal change. This subfield of research underscores the importance of managerial strategy in optimizing the effectiveness of celebrity-led initiatives and highlights how structured guidance can enhance alignment with Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring long-term impact and credibility in social and environmental advocacy.

Celebrity-Led Initiatives in Climate Action (SDG 13)

Celebrity involvement in climate action has gained momentum in recent decades, leveraging fame to raise awareness and drive environmental initiatives aligned with SDG 13: Climate Action. High-profile figures act as advocates for sustainable practices, renewable energy adoption, and policy reforms to mitigate climate change. Leonardo DiCaprio, for instance, has consistently used his platform to promote environmental conservation through documentaries, the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, and partnerships with global organizations. Similarly, actors like Mark Ruffalo and Shailene Woodley have engaged in grassroots campaigns, climate rallies, and digital advocacy to mobilize public participation. Celebrity advocacy contributes to increased visibility for climate issues, often translating complex scientific data into accessible messages for the general public (Casey et al. 2022). Social media further amplifies the reach of campaigns, enabling viral dissemination of climate-related content and real-time engagement with audiences.



Beyond awareness, celebrity-led initiatives have also facilitated tangible outcomes, including fundraising for conservation projects, influencing policy discussions, and promoting sustainable consumer behavior. However, challenges exist, such as public skepticism about authenticity or accusations of performative activism. Effective advocacy requires consistency, transparency, and alignment between the celebrity's personal values and environmental goals. Academic literature emphasizes that celebrity involvement can accelerate societal responsiveness to climate challenges, especially when supported by strategic management and credible partnerships. In sum, celebrity-led climate action demonstrates how fame, when ethically guided and professionally managed, can contribute significantly to advancing global environmental sustainability goals, bridging the gap between awareness, action, and policy influence.

Celebrity-Led Initiatives in Gender Equality (SDG 5)

Gender equality has become a prominent focus of celebrity advocacy, with high-profile figures leveraging their influence to challenge social norms, promote women's empowerment, and advance SDG 5 objectives. Celebrities serve as visible role models, highlighting issues such as gender-based violence, wage gaps, and barriers to education and leadership. Emma Watson's UN HeForShe campaign exemplifies successful celebrity engagement in gender equality, using her platform to mobilize men and boys as allies in addressing systemic discrimination. Similarly, activists-turned-celebrities such as Malala Yousafzai have drawn global attention to girls' education and the need for equitable access to opportunities (Hopkins, 2018). Through interviews, speeches, social media campaigns, and collaborations with NGOs, celebrities bring visibility to underrepresented groups and create platforms for dialogue on policy reform. Celebrity involvement can also inspire community-level initiatives, from mentorship programs to advocacy workshops, amplifying the impact of global campaigns at the local level. Effective celebrity advocacy in gender

equality depends on authenticity, credibility, and sustained engagement, which is often guided by professional management teams. Challenges include navigating public scrutiny, avoiding tokenism, and ensuring that campaigns translate into measurable change. Research highlights that strategically managed celebrity campaigns can shift societal perceptions, promote inclusive policies, and mobilize resources for marginalized communities. By integrating visibility, advocacy, and strategic planning, celebrity-led initiatives in gender equality demonstrate the potential of public influence to advance sustainable social development, bridging awareness and concrete action toward achieving SDG 5.



Methodology

This study adopted a mixed-method approach, combining secondary data analysis of celebrity-led campaigns with survey-based audience insights. Secondary data included campaign reports, funding records, social media reach metrics, and documented outcomes of initiatives led by celebrities such as Leonardo DiCaprio and Emma Watson. Surveys were conducted with a sample of 400 participants across diverse demographics to assess awareness, engagement, and behavioral influence resulting from exposure to celebrity campaigns. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to measure awareness levels, engagement rates, funding outcomes, and estimated behavioral change. Qualitative insights were drawn from audience feedback and media analysis to understand perceptions of authenticity and credibility. Additionally, the study examined the role of celebrity management by comparing professionally managed campaigns with ad-hoc or unmanaged initiatives, focusing on engagement metrics, campaign duration, and impact on SDG-related

outcomes. The methodology ensures a comprehensive understanding of both the visibility and effectiveness of celebrity advocacy within the framework of sustainable development goals.

Result and Discussion

The study examined the influence of celebrity advocacy on public awareness and engagement in the context of climate action (SDG 13) and gender equality (SDG 5). Survey responses and secondary data analysis revealed that celebrity-led campaigns significantly increased public awareness of these issues (Harvey, 2018). For climate action, approximately 78% of respondents reported heightened awareness after exposure to campaigns led by figures such as Leonardo DiCaprio and Mark Ruffalo, while only 4% noted no change. Similarly, for gender equality, 72% of respondents indicated that celebrity advocacy positively influenced their perception of gender-related issues, highlighting the powerful role of public figures in shaping social norms and mobilizing attention. These findings underscore the relevance of social influence and parasocial relationship theories discussed in the literature review, showing that celebrities can effectively translate visibility into awareness through consistent and authentic engagement.

Table: Influence of Celebrity Management on Campaign Engagement

Management Type	High Engagement (%)	Medium Engagement (%)	Low Engagement (%)
Structured / Professional	85	10	5
Ad-hoc / Unmanaged	20	40	40

The study further examined the role of celebrity management in optimizing campaign effectiveness. Campaigns guided by structured management strategies—featuring careful alignment with NGOs, ethical messaging, and long-term planning—achieved markedly higher audience engagement (Brockington, 2015). Data showed that professionally managed campaigns experienced 85% high engagement, compared to only 20% for ad-hoc or unmanaged campaigns. These findings align with prior research emphasizing that celebrity management ensures authenticity, prevents performative activism, and enhances credibility. Management strategies also facilitated measurable outcomes, including fundraising and policy influence, indicating that managerial oversight is critical for transforming fame into tangible societal impact.

Table: Tangible Outcomes of Celebrity Campaigns

Campaign Type	Funding Raised (USD)	Policy / Community Impact	Audience Engagement Level
Climate Action	30,000,000	Renewable projects, awareness drives	High
Gender Equality	10,500,000	HeForShe, mentorship programs	Moderate-High

The tangible outcomes of celebrity advocacy were evident in both environmental and gender initiatives. Climate-focused campaigns facilitated over \$30 million in funding for renewable energy and conservation projects, while gender equality initiatives, such as the HeForShe campaign led by Emma Watson, promoted mentorship programs and increased male

participation in advocacy efforts. Audience engagement was generally high for climate campaigns and moderate-to-high for gender-focused initiatives, demonstrating that strategic celebrity involvement can convert awareness into actionable impact. Overall, the results confirm that celebrity advocacy, when guided by structured management, plays a pivotal role in advancing SDG 13 and SDG 5 (Casey et al. 2022). Authenticity, consistency, and strategic alignment with social and environmental causes are essential for maximizing influence. These findings reinforce the literature review's conclusions: celebrities can serve as catalysts for awareness, behavioral change, and tangible action, provided their advocacy is thoughtfully managed and ethically executed.

Conclusion

The findings confirm that celebrity advocacy, when strategically managed, is a powerful tool for advancing climate action (SDG 13) and gender equality (SDG 5). Celebrities amplify awareness, mobilize resources, and inspire behavioral change, but the effectiveness of their initiatives is closely tied to structured management, ethical alignment, and consistent engagement. Professionally managed campaigns not only achieve higher audience reach and engagement but also generate measurable outcomes, including funding, policy influence, and community-level impact. Conversely, ad-hoc or poorly managed campaigns often underperform and risk being perceived as performative. This research highlights the critical intersection of celebrity influence, strategic management, and sustainable development, demonstrating that fame, when purposefully directed, can drive tangible social and environmental change. The study provides valuable insights for NGOs, policymakers, and media strategists seeking to leverage celebrity advocacy to achieve measurable impact in advancing SDG 13 and SDG 5, underscoring the transformative potential of well-managed celebrity-led initiatives in addressing global challenges.

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