

## **Transition from Traditional Celebrities to Social Media Influencer: An Empirical Study of Role of Instagram Influencers on Consumer Purchase Intention**

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### **Abstract**

The shift from traditional celebrities to social media influencers, especially Instagram influencers, has had a big effect on people's plans to buy. Instagram influencers interact directly with their followers, which builds trust and a feeling of authenticity. This is different from traditional celebrities who usually promote products through mainstream media. Together, this personal connection and material that is relatable makes them more trustworthy, which makes their suggestions more convincing. So, people are more likely to believe and act on these endorsements because they see them as real events instead of just ads. Because Instagram is interactive, influencers can also talk to their fans, which builds trust even more. As a result, brands are working with Instagram influencers more and more to leverage their power, knowing that these partnerships can successfully change consumer behavior and increase sales. This change shows how social media sites are becoming more important in changing how people think and what they buy in the digital age. Study survey was conducted among 213 customers to know the factors that show different Role of Instagram Influencers on Consumer Purchase Intention and found that Trust and Credibility, Personalized Recommendations, Long-Term Relationships and Influence on Brand Perception are the factors that show different Role of Instagram Influencers on Consumer Purchase Intention.

**Keywords:** Social Media Influencers, Instagram Influencers, Consumer Behavior, Trust and Authenticity, Brand Partnerships, Interactive Engagement, Product Endorsements, Digital Age Marketing.

### **Introduction**

Consumer purchasing intentions have been completely transformed by the shift from traditional superstars to social media influencers, especially on sites like Instagram. In light of Instagram's capacity to facilitate direct communication between influencers and their followers, Gupta and Nair (2021) indicated that "celebrity endorsement" on the platform significantly modifies "purchase intention." Instagram influencers interact personally with their audience, generating a sense of trust and relatability, in contrast to traditional celebrities who promote items through mass media channels. Influencers can now build "credibility," which is essential for swaying customer behavior, through interactive involvement as opposed to one-way communication. The impact of Instagram influencers' endorsements is greater than that of traditional celebrities, as they are seen to have more "authenticity" and perceived "expertise" that affect consumer decisions to buy.

Gupta et al. (2020) undertake an in-depth investigation of the influence of "Instafamous celebrities" on customer "buying behavior," highlighting the distinctive capacity of these influencers to establish a personal connection with their audience. The word "Instafamous" describes people who have become well-known mainly on Instagram, frequently by posting stuff that appeals to their followers' interests and morals. This kind of one-on-one interaction creates a feeling of "community," which increases followers' openness to product recommendations. They underline that compared to traditional celebrities, customers perceive "Instafamous celebrities" as more approachable and reliable, which increases the possibility that they will make a purchase. The influencers' capacity to present products in "real-life scenarios" strengthens customer trust by giving their endorsements more "authenticity" and increasing the likelihood that consumers will make a purchase.

Saima and Khan (2020) analysed how "social media influencer marketing" works and how "credibility" functions as a mediator in influencing "purchase intentions" among consumers. They contend that one important distinction between Instagram influencers and conventional celebrities is "credibility." Traditional celebrities frequently use product endorsements to further their marketing campaigns, while Instagram influencers are viewed as authorities in their field and offer tailored advice that appeals to their followers. Customers' "purchase decisions" are greatly influenced by Instagram influencers' "credibility," which is developed via regular engagement, openness, and knowledge. Customers' long-term "brand loyalty" is also promoted by their credibility, which also makes their endorsements more compelling. The

emergence of Instagram influencers has caused a change in consumer behavior, with purchase intentions being more influenced by social media personalities' perceived "authenticity" and "expertise" than by traditional celebrity endorsements.

### **Literature Review**

According to Alam et al. (2022), Indian consumers are depending more and more on "social commerce platforms," where influencers are crucial in determining what they will buy. Social media influencers, as opposed to traditional celebrities, frequently establish a more intimate relationship with their followers and use this trust to influence purchasing decisions. This change is particularly noticeable on social media sites like Instagram, where influencers interact with fans on a regular basis to produce content that is seen as more relatable and genuine than traditional advertising. In a nation like India, where the younger population is more technologically savvy and prefers the views of influencers over traditional celebrities, this changing dynamic is especially pertinent. Consequently, in order to reach certain audiences and increase engagement rates, marketers are working with influencers more and more.

Instagram has become a prominent medium where influencers have a major impact on the purchase intentions of consumers. According to Trivedi and Sama (2020), "influencer marketing" on Instagram raises customers' "brand admiration," which in turn encourages "online purchase intentions." Because of the visual format of the platform, influencers can present products to followers in real time, giving them instant access to information about how and why to use them. Instagram influencers maintain a constant and involved engagement with their audience, frequently replying to comments and exchanging direct messages, in contrast to traditional celebrity endorsements that frequently feel remote. This constant communication builds a sense of dependability and trust, both of which are important factors in influencing purchasing decisions. Furthermore, influencers' customized content connects with the audience more deeply than traditional marketing channels, which makes it simpler for firms to target particular consumer segments and increase conversion rates. Influencers are getting more and more skilled at crafting captivating stories that encourage user interaction and conversion as Instagram develops with features like "Shoppable Posts" and "Instagram Stories," securing their place in contemporary marketing tactics.

Social media influencers can be more powerful than traditional superstars in materialistic cultural contexts like India. The "endorsement effectiveness" of celebrities and social media influencers is compared by Agnihotri and Bhattacharya (2021), who observe that influencers frequently possess a more profound comprehension of their audience's values and inclinations. Their ability to comprehend this enables them to customize their content to meet the expectations of a materialistic culture that places a high value on consumer items and prestige. Influencers curate lifestyles on Instagram that their followers want to live, which makes their endorsements especially powerful. In contrast to celebrities, whose suggestions could be interpreted as motivated by money, influencers are thought to be more sincere in their advice. Their recommendations have a greater influence on customer choices and purchase behavior because of this perceived genuineness, especially in areas where materialistic ideals are common. Thus, firms' interactions with customers in the digital age have evolved strategically with the shift from traditional celebrities to social media influencers.

According to Santiago et al. (2020), social media influencers' exceptional capacity to forge closer, more direct bonds with their followers is what's causing this change. In contrast to conventional celebrities, whose contacts with followers are sometimes confined to the media, Instagram influencers interact directly with their audience, building a relationship based on trust and genuineness. The significance of "online trust" lies in its ability to directly impact consumers' perceptions of the products that these influencers promote. They go on to say that as customers' confidence in influencers increases, so does their propensity to buy the things these advocates endorse, highlighting the significance of the "parasocial interactions" that define these virtual connections. Influencers on Instagram have a significant impact on how consumers think, which affects their propensity to make purchases.

Tiwari et al. (2024) assessed this dynamic by using the "theory of planned behavior" to comprehend how customers' purchasing decisions are influenced by fashion influencers. The authors contend that Instagram influencers, who frequently post lifestyle advice, product evaluations, and personal endorsements, have the ability to sway the opinions of their

followers. Because they are viewed as personable and reliable, these influencers have the power to dramatically change consumers' perceptions of a product by casting it in a positive light.

Gopakumar and Dananjayan (2024) assessed how followers' purchasing behavior can be influenced by the supposedly intimate and one-sided interactions between influencers and themselves. These relationships, in which followers have a deep emotional connection to influencers even in the absence of reciprocation, establish a strong affinity that conventional celebrities frequently are unable to forge. They show that consumers are more likely to believe influencers they relate to when they endorse them, which increases their propensity to make purchases. This is especially true for influencers who advocate things that are consistent with their personal brand; followers view these endorsements as sincere suggestions rather than compensated advertisements.

According to Kumar et al. (2023), "Instagram influencers" are now crucial in determining the "purchase intention" of consumers. Social media influencers cultivate a more close relationship with their audience than traditional celebrities, whose endorsements are frequently perceived as impersonal and remote. Influencers appear more trustworthy and relevant when they engage with their audience frequently and provide "personalized content," which fosters a tight relationship. It is emphasized that followers' purchasing decisions are significantly influenced by the "credibility dimensions" of Instagram influencers, which include "expertise," "trustworthiness," and "attractiveness." Influencers are more effective at influencing consumer behavior when they can produce genuine, interesting material, which raises their perceived credibility. Influencers offer a more sincere and conversational approach, matching their suggestions with their personal brand and lifestyle, in contrast to typical superstars whose endorsements are frequently planned and polished. Influencer marketing has replaced traditional celebrity endorsements in the advertising industry, which is indicative of a larger movement towards emphasizing "authenticity" and "relatability." Instagram influencers can greatly affect their followers' attitudes and "purchase intention" by utilizing these aspects, which will motivate them to follow their advice.

### **Objective**

1. To find the factors that show different Role of Instagram Influencers on Consumer Purchase Intention

### **Methodology**

Study survey was conducted among 213 customers to know the factors that show different Role of Instagram Influencers on Consumer Purchase Intention. "Random sampling method" and "Factor Analysis" were used to collect and analyze the data.

### **Findings**

Table below is sharing respondent's general details. Total 213 people were surveyed in which male are 32.4% and 67.6% are female. Among them 34.3% are below 37 years of age, 41.8% are between 37-42 years of age and rest 23.9% are above 42 years of age. 24.9% are students, 31.9% are in service, 8.9% are in business and rest 34.3% respondents are housemaker.

**Table 1 General Details**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	69	32.4
Female	144	67.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Age (years)</b>		
Below 37	73	34.3
37-42	89	41.8
Above 42	51	23.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Occupation</b>		
Student	53	24.9

Service	68	31.9
Business	19	8.9
Housemaker	73	34.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>213</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 2 “KMO and Bartlett's Test”**

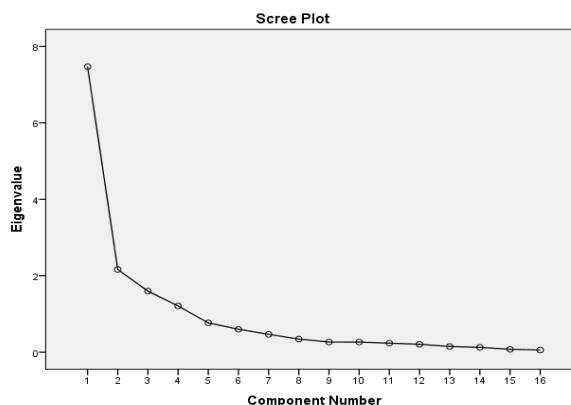
“Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy”		.874
“Bartlett's Test of Sphericity”	Approx. Chi-Square	2932.272
	df	120
	Sig.	.000

In the table above KMO value is 0.874 and the “Barlett’s Test of Sphericity” is significant.

**“Table 3 Total Variance Explained”**

“Component”	“Initial Eigen values”			“Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings”		
	“Total”	“% of Variance”	“Cumulative %”	“Total”	“% of Variance”	“Cumulative %”
1	7.470	46.686	46.686	3.420	21.375	21.375
2	2.164	13.523	60.209	3.380	21.123	42.498
3	1.597	9.982	70.191	3.106	19.414	61.912
4	1.209	7.558	77.749	2.534	15.837	77.749
5	.767	4.792	82.541			
6	.600	3.750	86.292			
7	.468	2.924	89.216			
8	.343	2.145	91.361			
9	.265	1.656	93.017			
10	.264	1.651	94.668			
11	.236	1.478	96.146			
12	.207	1.295	97.441			
13	.149	.932	98.373			
14	.128	.798	99.171			
15	.075	.470	99.642			
16	.057	.358	100.000			

The “principal component analysis” method was applied to extract the factors and it was found that 16 variables form 4 Factors. The factors explained the variance of 21.375%, 21.123%, 19.414% and 15.837% respectively. The total variance explained is 77.749 %.



The graph above depicts the Eigen values generated from the "Total Variance Explained table" for an elbow with 4 components.

**“Table 4 Rotated Component Matrix”**

“S. No.”	“Statements”	“Factor Loading”	“Factor Reliability”
	<b>Trust and Credibility</b>		<b>.953</b>
1	Influencers often build trust with their followers by consistently sharing content	.853	
2	The credibility of the influencer makes an endorsement more effective	.843	
3	Brand benefit significantly from the established credibility of the influencer	.830	
4	Influencers who have long-term relationships with certain brands often appear more credible	.804	
	<b>Personalized Recommendations</b>		<b>.929</b>
5	Influencers make product recommendations feel more personalized and relevant	.876	
6	Influencers tend to offer personalized recommendations based on their own experiences with products	.872	
7	Recommendations align closely with their personal interests and lifestyle.	.859	
8	Influencers often show themselves using the products they recommend, which adds a layer of authenticity	.841	
	<b>Long-Term Relationships</b>		<b>.886</b>
9	influencers interact directly with their audience, building a relationship	.906	
10	Consumers are more likely to believe influencers they relate to when they endorse them	.905	
11	Influencers who have long-term relationships with certain brands often appear more credible	.756	
12	Influencer consistently aligns themselves with brands that match their personal values and the values of their audience	.687	
	<b>Influence on Brand Perception</b>		<b>.803</b>
13	Consumer’s trust influencer, transfer to the brand being promoted	.795	
14	Consumers are more likely to feel confident in purchasing the product through trustworthy influencer	.783	
15	Influencers act as relatable figures who bring a human touch to a brand	.729	
16	Through engaging content, influencers tell stories that weave the brand into their everyday lives.	.666	

Table 4 present the factors that show different Role of Instagram Influencers on Consumer Purchase Intention. First factor is Trust and Credibility which includes the variables like Influencers often build trust with their followers by consistently sharing content, the credibility of the influencer makes an endorsement more effective, Brand benefit significantly from the established credibility of the influencer and Influencers who have long-term relationships with certain brands often appear more credible. Second factor is Personalized Recommendations and its associated variables are Influencers make product recommendations feel more personalized and relevant, Influencers tend to offer personalized recommendations based on their own experiences with products, Recommendations align closely with their personal interests and lifestyle and Influencers often show themselves using the products they recommend, which adds a layer of authenticity. Third factor is Long-Term Relationships which includes the variables like influencers interact directly with their audience, building a relationship, Consumers are more likely to believe influencers they relate to when they endorse them, Influencers who have long-term relationships with certain brands often appear more credible and Influencer consistently aligns themselves with brands that match their personal values and the values of their audience. Fourth factor is Influence on Brand Perception which includes the variables like Consumer’s trust influencer, transfer to the brand being promoted, Consumers are more likely to feel confident in purchasing the product through trustworthy influencer, Influencers act as relatable figures who

bring a human touch to a brand and through engaging content, influencers tell stories that weave the brand into their everyday lives.

**“Table 5 Reliability Statistics”**

“Cronbach's Alpha”	“N of Items”
.918	16

The reliability for 4 constructs with total of sixteen elements is 0.918.

### **Conclusion**

Instagram has been essential to the evolution of marketing dynamics as traditional celebrities give way to social media influencers. Influencers are now essential to modern marketing methods because of their genuine relationships with followers. Instagram influencers cultivate a sense of relatability and trust, in contrast to traditional celebrities who may have a more distanced relationship with their audience. Their capacity to influence customer behavior and purchase decisions is strengthened by this tailored involvement. Influencers can present products in a lifestyle setting on Instagram thanks to its visually-focused platform, which helps them tell captivating stories that connect with their following. Influencers' reach and engagement are further amplified by the platform's features, such as Stories and Reels, which makes their endorsements more instantaneous and convincing. Consumers are more likely to make a purchase when suggestions from influencers are viewed as credible than when traditional advertising approaches are used. In summary, a significant shift in consumer marketing is highlighted by the transition from traditional celebrities to social media influencers, especially on Instagram. The capacity of influencers to produce real, relatable material has increased the influence they have over customer preferences and purchase behavior. This change emphasizes how social media is becoming an increasingly significant part of contemporary marketing, and how companies must modify their approaches to properly leverage the power of these online personalities.

The study was conducted to know the factors that show different Role of Instagram Influencers on Consumer Purchase Intention and found that Trust and Credibility, Personalized Recommendations, Long-Term Relationships and Influence on Brand Perception are the factors that show different Role of Instagram Influencers on Consumer Purchase Intention.

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