

# Instagram Influencers and Consumer Behaviour: A Study of Youth in Delhi

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## ABSTRACT

The traditional buying and selling process has undergone a radical change. Instagram has gained popularity and established itself as a hub for stylish women who only use it to read fashion blogs. Fashion blogs have become one of the most effective platforms for influencers to interact with their audience by giving their insights and advice. The study, titled "Instagram influencers' & consumer behavior: A study of youth in Delhi," aimed to find out how Instagram influencers influence young adults. An attempt was made to comprehend the factors that influence young adults' purchasing behavior. The study contributes to the literature by seeking responses from young adults. The major findings of the study indicate that male respondents spent most time on Instagram—five hours or more. The majority of respondents, both males and females, follow Instagram influencers, with 36% following Instagram influencers to get inspiration, and respondents stated that they are interested in trends, fashion knowledge, information, and entertainment, in addition to the options provided. Clothes were the most commonly purchased lifestyle product by respondents, as they constitute an important human need, followed by accessories, skincare, and cosmetics. The recommendation or suggestion of friends was considered the most essential aspect of the purchasing process.

**Keywords:** Instagram Influencers, Consumers Buying pattern, Recommendation, Lifestyle products.

## INTRODUCTION

On Instagram, influencers are key to influencing young people to buy things, particularly lifestyle items like apparel, skincare, fitness, home decor, accessories, and many more. The extent to which Instagram influencers of all types have an impact on the various online consumers' purchase intentions on the platform varies on several factors. Influencer marketing is the relationship between a brand and an influencer. It incorporates both conventional and contemporary marketing techniques. Because audiences can relate to influencers more easily than celebrities, brand partnerships with them are becoming more lucrative for businesses. Influencers, whether internal or external, can influence consumers through a variety of strategies, whether they are doing it consciously or unconsciously.

Instagram is a social media platform that is crucial to the social environments of the many people that use it often (Instagram Revenue and Usage Statistics, 2021). First off, it supplies amusement for the various individuals who enjoy perusing other users' stuff on the platform. This platform not only offers entertainment and pleasure, but it also permits concurrent real-time conversations between users. This interaction facilitates the sharing of information between people (Mattern, 2017). The world's most

popular social media network, Instagram, has been instrumental in changing how internet shopping is conducted. Among Instagram's active users, 44% use it for brand research and discovery (Aaron and Breuer, 2020). 53 percent of Instagram users follow their preferred brands (Aaron and Breuer, 2020).

### **Instagram Marketing**

The most widely used site in the world, Instagram, has a significant impact on how the world of online buying is changing. With this new marketing approach, viewers can interact with them through IGTV videos, stories, posts, and other means. A wider range of products is available to customers thanks to the brands' ability to spread awareness of their products on a larger scale. Nearly 60% of people between the ages of 18 and 30 use Instagram to follow restaurants, travel blogs, and fashion brands. The platform, influencers play a crucial role and have a significant following on Instagram. People are now actually following the trend of becoming influencers on various platforms, with Instagram being the most well known. Because audiences can relate to influencers more readily than celebrities, brand partnerships with them are becoming more profitable for businesses. Reviews from influencers are more truthful than those from paid celebrities (Negi and Pabalkar, 2020). Someone well-known to a specific demographic is an influencer (Marwick, 2013, in Abidin, 2016). Due to their popularity and genuineness, Instagram influencers have developed credibility in a certain niche, industry, or sector. This user can influence others, reach a sizable following, and start trends on social media. As a result, snapping images of these people's daily lives has turned into a lucrative industry. These days, more and more people do this on Instagram as well as blogs. Because influencers are supposed to provide honest product reviews, people follow them on Instagram because they feel more connected to them. (andotra & sinha, 2020).

### **Influencer Marketing**

According to Campbell & Farrell (2020), influencer marketing enables significant brands to be capitalized on without the need for a specific operational manual for marketing. As a result, to attract the attention of the influencers' subscribers, marketers must work with various content creators on various social media. On the other side, Lou & Yuan (2019) reported that 94% of firms are successfully using influencer marketing in their product promotions, according to research on social media trends. Thus, this is a method of quickly reaching the firm's target market. Additionally, with the help of influencer marketing, various brands can take advantage of the influencers' professional level of expertise in terms of influencing people's ideas. Influencer marketing is the practice of promoting the goods and services of people who take steps to affect other people's purchasing decisions. Most frequently, the popularity, reputation, or even competence of the influencers results in such buying impact. This kind of advertising is comparable to word-of-mouth advertising. Social media play a significant role in the organization's efforts to strengthen it and optimal conditions are created for this tool's use. Over time, bloggers have gotten increasingly interested in branding, or the usage of celebrities, but today's branding also involves regular people who have a lot of influence over others. One of the strategies for attracting new customers via internet media might be referred to as influencer marketing (Zak & Hasprova, 2020). Influencer marketing is predicated, in part, on the customer trust that opinion leaders have earned. A large number of influencers also blog or share their experiences, stories, or interests with a larger online audience. They have their own set of interests. Numerous them of are working mothers on maternity leave, athletes, actors, or adventurers. Each of them has the power to persuade a different group of people and to promote a different product. Proper product promotion is the core of influencer marketing. An important component

of this type of marketing is that the influencer must be associated with the product; otherwise, he or she won't endorse a product without having used it or even knowing anything about it (Zak & Hasprova, 2020).

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

To gain insight into the effects of Instagram influencers on the buying behavior of youth related to lifestyle products.

### **Specific Objectives:**

1. To identify the types of lifestyle products purchased by the consumers.
2. To find out the factors that affect consumers' buying decisions after the influence of Instagram Influencers.
3. To analyze the role of Instagram influencers on the consumer buying decision-making process.
4. To compare the level of influence between males and females of college students.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The descriptive nature of the study aimed to investigate why young adults follow Instagram influencers and how these influencers influence young adults' purchasing behaviors. The study's goal was to collect quantifiable, unbiased data to better understand how Instagram influencers influence young adults' purchasing decisions.

### **Locale and Respondents of Study**

The research was done in Delhi. Delhi being the capital city of India, is a shopping hub. It is far ahead of the rest of the country's states, union territories, and major cities. The study was carried out with young students from Delhi University. The research sample included young adults aged 18 to 25 years. The study included 100 young adults, 50 males, and 50 females.

(Inclusion Criteria: Male and female College students of age group 18-25 years from colleges of Delhi University. The respondent should have an Instagram account and must access Instagram 2-3 times a day)

### **Sampling technique**

The study employed the snowball sampling method. This non-probability sampling strategy involved selecting a small sample of college students from various colleges and obtaining necessary information from them. Afterward, they were asked to recommend the study to other students on their campuses. The snowball sampling technique proved to be effective in gathering responses from a diverse group of young adults, ensuring that the study's findings were representative of the targeted population. Respondents chosen were assisted in locating additional respondents; those who agreed to participate in the study were enrolled, and information was gathered.

### **Tool for Data Collection**

The study aimed to gain a comprehensive understanding of Instagram influencers as well as the elements that influence young adults' buying habits and for that, a questionnaire was used. Open-ended and closed-ended questions were developed to gain insights into reasons consumers buy products promoted by influencers. It was created for young adults to study their motives for following influencers and how their

purchasing habits have been influenced by following them. The questionnaire comprised different questions related to the following broad categories-

1. Profile of the respondents
2. Different types of lifestyle products are purchased by consumers
3. Reasons consumers buy products promoted by influencers.
4. Factors that change the consumer's behavior towards a particular product.
5. Consumer experience of using lifestyle products promoted by the Instagram influencer.

## SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### Profile of the Student Respondents

It was found that 50% of the respondents were in the 18 – 20 years age group, 39% being between the ages of 21-22 years and the rest were in the 23 – 25 years age group. Males spend the most time on Instagram, with females spending less than two hours, three hours, and four hours. Instagram is a social media platform that is essential to many people's social lives.

### Type, Frequency and Reason to buy Product

Clothes were the most commonly purchased lifestyle product, with 37% followed by 15% buying accessories, 12% electrical appliances, 16% skincare and cosmetics, 6% rest products, 6% gym products, and 8% home furnishings. It was revealed that 44% of female and 28% of male respondents buy products monthly, 21% buy products once a year, 16% buy twice a month, 15% quarterly, 10% weekly, and daily purchases are the least common. It was found that 34% of young adults purchase products based on brand value, 31% on peer recommendations, and 22% on credibility. Other options such as personal preference, quality, necessities, aesthetics, and uniqueness are not valued. Brand value is the most important factor. online shopping patterns have increased significantly due to COVID, as 100% male respondents and 88% of female respondents prefer online shopping. Customer reviews of products and services for sale having a significant impact on purchasing decisions.

### Criteria for Choosing an Instagram Influencer and Experience of buying a product after the recommendation

It was found that 65% of respondents analyzed the content and comments of Instagram influencers to judge authenticity, while 21% analyze growth. Fake followers and mentions in the tag section were the least desirable. 61% of respondents were satisfied with their experience buying a product after an Instagram influencer recommendation, 34% were very satisfied, and 5% were not satisfied. 50% of respondents looked for Instagram influencers' review sections to confirm authenticity, with likes and comments being the second most accepted answer. 24% looked for a verified icon.

## CONCLUSION

Influencers play an important role on Instagram for convincing young people to buy products, particularly lifestyle items such as fashion, cosmetics, fitness, home décor, and accessories. Because of their popularity and genuineness, Instagram influencers have achieved respect in a given niche, business, or sector. Instagram influencers help people learn about the current trends.

Male influencers are usually followed for entertainment, while female influencers are frequently followed for inspiration. The most popular lifestyle item is clothing, followed by accessories, cosmetics, and other

products. The brand value of the product is especially essential among young adults. The brand value of the product is especially essential among young adults. Peer and family recommendations are important when it comes to purchasing. To establish the validity of an Instagram influencer, young adults look at the influencer's content and comments, as well as the development of the Instagram influencer. Buying a product based on an influencer's recommendation is usually a pleasurable experience. Customers are strongly influenced when they interact with influencers who recommend a product, and this occurs more and more frequently with repeated purchases, leading to changes in their purchasing behaviour, albeit in this case, an influencer's knowledge is the most important factor.

Influencers find innovative and inventive ways to express a brand's message, in addition to being entertaining. Instagram influencers share paid content as well, but consumers are aware of this and are swayed accordingly. Influencer marketing is becoming more popular among many firms in various industries. It has a large influence on customer purchase decisions, resulting in impulse purchases. Instagram influencers have influenced the purchasing habits of young adults in some way, in the case of both males and females.

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