



Impact of celebrity endorsement on impulsive buying decisions with special references to Instagram

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of Instagram celebrity endorsements on impulsive buying behaviour among Gen Z consumers in India. With the rapid growth of social media platforms and the increasing influence of celebrities on digital marketing, Instagram has become a powerful medium for shaping consumer attitudes and purchase decisions. The primary objective of this research is to analyse how celebrity endorsements on Instagram influence impulsive buying tendencies, especially among young consumers who are highly active on social media.

A descriptive research design was adopted, and data were collected from a sample of 120 respondents using a structured questionnaire. The analysis included frequency distribution, oneway ANOVA, Pearson's correlation analysis, and descriptive statistics. The findings indicate that a majority of respondents actively engage with Instagram celebrity content and are influenced by the visual appeal, credibility, and aspirational value of such endorsements. Many respondents reported making unplanned purchases after viewing celebrity-endorsed posts, stories, or reels on Instagram.

The results further reveal that Instagram celebrity endorsements have a positive influence on impulsive buying behaviour, with younger consumers showing greater responsiveness to celebrity-driven promotions. The correlation analysis showed a positive relationship between social media engagement and impulsive purchase behaviour, indicating that higher exposure to celebrity endorsements is associated with stronger impulsive buying tendencies.

In conclusion, the study highlights that Instagram celebrity endorsements significantly contribute to impulsive buying behaviour among Gen Z consumers in India. These findings emphasize the need for greater awareness of digital influence and more responsible marketing practices to help young consumers make informed purchase decisions.

Keywords: Impulsive buying behaviour, gen Z consumers, social media marketing, digital influence, consumer behaviour, purchase decision

Introduction

Instagram celebrity endorsements have a big impact on impulsive purchasing because they use the visual attractiveness and legitimacy of celebrities to encourage impulsive purchases. This introduction examines how these recommendations encourage impulsive purchasing, especially from younger users of the platform. Celebrity endorsements have long shaped consumer behavior, evolving from traditional media to digital platforms like Instagram, where they powerfully trigger impulsive buying among youth. This section traces the topic's roots, growth, and transformation, focusing on its relevance to Instagram-driven purchases in India. Celebrity endorsement involves famous personalities promoting brands to leverage their fame, credibility, and appeal for influencing buyer decisions. On Instagram, this manifests through visually compelling posts, stories, and reels that spur spontaneous, emotion-driven purchases, particularly among Gen Z and millennials. Studies link this to heightened trust and aspirational appeal, making it a key focus for modern marketing research.

Instagram's visual emphasis on photos and videos—which are more attention-grabbing than text—has made it a vital marketing tool. Celebrities with large fan bases are increasingly being used by businesses to sell companies, transferring the endorsers' notoriety and likeability to the goods. Research indicates that this strategy increases purchase intention, particularly for clothing and e-learning products that celebrities like Virat Kohli endorse.

The practice began globally in the 1760s with Wedgwood using royal endorsements, but in India, it started in 1941 when actress Leela Chitnis endorsed Lux soap—marking the entry of film stars into advertising. By the 1980s, icons like Lalitaji (Surf ads) popularized it on TV, with Bollywood dominating 80% of endorsements. The 1990s saw explosive growth, fueled by economic liberalization, turning celebrities into brand influencer's worth over \$200 million annually.

Instagram celebrity endorsements increase perceived trust, value, and customer loyalty, which both directly and indirectly encourage impulsive purchases. For example, studies show that Instagram superstars have a beneficial impact on impulsive behaviour, with path coefficients showing significant effects (e.g., 0.623 direct impact). This is amplified by hedonic motivations and internet marketing, which account for up to 40.7% of the variation in fashion purchases.

Relevance of Research

Despite increased usage, there are still gaps in our knowledge of category-specific impacts and mechanisms, such as source trustworthiness (e.g., competence, attractiveness). In order to address them, this research focuses on Instagram's influence on impulsive choices and provides marketers with information on the best celebrity-product pairings. The requirement for customised tactics is highlighted by empirical data from follower surveys.

Impulsive buying triggers

Impulsive buying triggers from celebrity endorsements arise when consumers make spontaneous, emotion-driven purchases without prior planning, often amplified by Instagram's fast-paced visual content. These triggers exploit psychological cues like aspiration and urgency, leading to unplanned spending on fashion, beauty, or lifestyle items—studies show celebrities boost impulse buys by 20-40% through repeated exposure.

The scope of this study on the "Impact of Celebrity Endorsement on Impulsive Buying Decisions with Special Reference to Instagram" is strategically defined to ensure focused, feasible research suitable for an MBA-level paper. Geographically, it targets Instagram users aged 18-35 in Tier-1 and Tier-2 South Indian cities like Tiruppur, Coimbatore, Chennai, and Bangalore, where social media penetration exceeds 70% and e-commerce thrives, deliberately excluding rural areas or nationwide representation to enable efficient data collection over 2-4 weeks. Demographically, the population comprises Gen Z and millennials—including college students and young professionals—with daily Instagram usage over 2 hours, drawing a convenience sample of 100 respondents (balanced by gender, prioritizing females for higher fashion impulsivity) from income brackets of Rs 20,000-1,00,000 monthly. Conceptually, it examines key variables such as celebrity credibility (attractiveness, trustworthiness, expertise per Ohanian's scale), platform exposure via posts/reels/stories, and impulsive buying tendencies (Rook-Fisher scale), focusing solely on fashion, beauty, and lifestyle products while excluding planned purchases, B2B contexts, or other platforms like TikTok. Mediators like FOMO and hedonic motives are analyzed through quantitative surveys and regression/PLS-SEM. Temporally, the cross-sectional design captures March 2026 trends, such as reel-driven endorsements amid rising AI influencers, without longitudinal elements. Methodologically, a pilot-tested Likert-scale questionnaire (Cronbach's $\alpha > 0.7$) processed in SPSS supports descriptive stats, correlations, and hypothesis testing, with the sample size providing 80% power for medium effects but limiting complex moderations. This bounded approach delivers actionable insights for digital marketers targeting similar demographics.

Objectives

1. To analyze the influences of celebrity endorsements on consumer buying behaviour on Instagram.
2. To examine the impact of celebrity promotions on impulsive buying decisions among Instagram users.

Review of Literature

1. The effect of celebrity endorsement on consumer behavior: Case of the Lebanese jewelry industry. (Safi Hani, Azouri Marwan, Azouri Andre)

The study focuses on the impact of celebrity endorsement in jewelry advertisements on consumer behavior, specifically among Lebanese female consumers. It examines celebrity endorsement in terms of its concept, effectiveness, and role in shaping customer perception, decision-making, and attitudes. Celebrity attractiveness is found to enhance advertisement recall and is positively associated with purchase intention. Despite improving recall and purchase intention, celebrity endorsement negatively affects consumers' brand preference and overall brand attitude

2. Celebrity endorsement as one of nowadays major ways to influence consumer buying behaviour. (Anna Poghosyan)

Celebrity endorsement is a powerful and measurable tool in modern marketing campaigns. Companies invest heavily in celebrity endorsements despite risks, believing they add brand value and influence purchase decisions. Advertisements featuring celebrities significantly affect consumer response and brand promotion outcomes.

3. Investigating the effect of celebrity endorsement on brand credibility, corporate credibility, advertising credibility, consumer social status on buy intention (Vahid Bakhtvar, Muhammad Piri)

Celebrity endorsement positively influences brand credibility, advertising credibility, corporate credibility, and purchase intention. Brand credibility and advertising credibility do not have a direct impact on consumers' intention to buy. Corporate credibility and perceived social status significantly drive purchase intention. Brand credibility enhances social status, while advertising credibility strengthens corporate credibility.

4. Effect of celebrity endorsement on consumers' buying Behaviour of electrical appliances in Accra, Ghana: A Case of hisense Ghana ltd (ibrahim ofosu-boateng)

Television is the most effective medium for celebrity endorsement in influencing consumers' buying behavior, followed by radio, newspapers, and billboards. Celebrity credibility has the strongest impact on purchase decisions, followed by physical attractiveness, trustworthiness, and expertise. The study recommends prioritizing television and radio advertising and selecting credible, attractive celebrities for endorsements.

5. Impact of Celebrity Endorsement on Buying Behaviour (Tejashwini K. C.)

Celebrity endorsements boost brand awareness by leveraging the star power of famous personalities to capture attention in crowded markets. They also foster higher consumer trust in endorsed brands, as fans transfer their admiration for the celebrity to the product. Moreover, celebrities positively influence purchase decisions, often swaying hesitant buyers toward a favorable choice. Overall, such endorsements prove particularly effective in competitive markets, where standing out requires emotional connections beyond mere advertising.

6. Celebrity Endorsement and Purchase Intention (Marium Mateen Khan, Zareena Memon, Sandeep Kumar)

Attractive celebrities significantly boost buying intention by drawing consumers in with their charisma. The credibility of the endorser enhances the brand's overall image, making it more appealing and reliable in consumers' eyes. Endorsed products also become easier to remember, sticking in the minds of audiences amid marketing noise. Ultimately, the celebrity's appeal drives higher sales intention, translating admiration into actionable consumer behavior.

7. Celebrity Brand Endorsement & Consumer Buying Behaviour (Muhammad Amir Adam and Nazish Hussain)

Consumers often imitate celebrities they admire, mirroring their choices in products and brands. The celebrity's image transfers directly to brand perception, elevating its status

through association. This fosters an emotional connection that strongly influences buying behavior, turning passive interest into purchases. However, endorsement effectiveness hinges on the celebrity's popularity, which amplifies reach and impact.

8. Impact of Celebrity Endorsement on Consumers (Muhammad Amir Adam and Nazish Hussain)

Celebrity ads capture more attention than non-celebrity counterparts, standing out in a saturated media landscape. Young consumers prove especially susceptible to this influence, showing heightened responsiveness. Endorsements also improve brand preference, shifting loyalties toward associated products. Ultimately, celebrities spark greater interest and trigger impulse buying, accelerating purchase decisions.

9. Local and international celebrity endorsers' credibility and consumer purchase intentions (Nyarai F. Nyamakanga, Mari Ford, and Kim Viljoen)

Examine local and international celebrity endorsers' credibility and its influence on consumer purchase intentions, drawing from a survey of 237 female Gen Y/Z respondents. They explore how local celebrities' attractiveness and trustworthiness shape purchase intentions, while international celebrities' expertise drives similar effects. Hypotheses were tested via multiple regression analysis, revealing nuanced impacts. The study identifies key managerial implications, positioning celebrity nationality as a moderating factor in crafting effective endorsement strategies.

10. Impact of celebrity endorsement on consumer buying behaviour in beauty soap industry (With special reference to the consumers in North Central Province in Sri Lanka) (J.D.T. Madhusanka)

Investigates the impact of celebrity endorsement on consumer buying behavior in Sri Lanka's beauty soap industry, focusing on consumers in the North Central Province. The study examines perceptions of celebrity endorsements and identifies key attributes—like trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness—that shape purchase intentions. It assesses their overall effect on buying behavior within the FMCG sector. Insights into the consumer mindset help inform targeted marketing strategies for endorsed products.

11. The impact of influencer marketing and celebrity endorsements on consumer behaviour within the South African context (Marlini Nair Moodley)

Explores the impact of influencer marketing and celebrity endorsements on consumer behavior in the South African retail context. The study assesses whether social media influencers (SMIs) and endorsements create tangible value for brands. It analyzes SMIs' role in shaping decision-making through social media platforms. Social media emerges as a cost-effective advertising tool for organizations. Finally, the research develops a conceptual framework to guide retailers in integrating SMIs into their marketing strategies.

12. Celebrity Endorsement and its Effect: Arabic world perspectives (chokri Kooli)

The study investigates celebrities' own knowledge and perceptions of endorsement attributes, effectiveness, and associated risks. It identifies crucial celebrity traits—like

trustworthiness and popularity—that drive sales, shape customer behavior, and boost brand demand. Kooli analyzes the bidirectional influences among celebrities, companies, customers, and brands within the endorsement cycle. Barriers to adoption in Arab countries stem from cultural norms, beliefs, and prevalent low trust levels.

13. Impact of Celebrity Endorsement on Consumer Buying

The study on the impact of celebrity endorsement on consumer buying (year) underscores its persuasive power, particularly in cosmetics. Celebrity endorsement directly influences consumers' buying intention by leveraging fame and appeal. Trust and credibility of the celebrity emerge as the most critical factors in swaying decisions. Such ads render products more attractive and memorable, enhancing recall and desire. Overall, celebrity endorsement proves highly effective in cosmetic marketing, driving preference and sales.

Research Gap

The existing literature shows several important gaps in the study of Instagram celebrity endorsements and impulsive buying behaviour in India. First, there are limited India-specific studies that directly examine how Instagram celebrity endorsements translate into impulsive buying among youth, especially in Tier-2 and Tier-3 cities. Second, there is insufficient comparative research on Gen Z and millennials to understand differences in impulsivity, trust, and aspirational appeal when exposed to the same celebrity-brand content. Third, very few studies analyse how different content formats such as static posts, Stories, Reels, and livestreaming influence impulsive purchases in the Indian context. In addition, the role of para-social interaction, where fans form one-sided emotional bonds with celebrities, remains underexplored in relation to unplanned buying behaviour. Other gaps include inadequate attention to moderating factors such as price sensitivity, social class, and parental influence, which may shape the impact of celebrity-endorsed posts. The distinction between celebrity endorsers and influencer-celebrity hybrids is also not clearly established in many studies, making it difficult to identify the unique effect of celebrity fame versus influencer-like relatability. Furthermore, limited empirical work has examined post-purchase outcomes such as buyer's remorse, return behaviour, and satisfaction after Instagram-driven impulsive purchases. Finally, cross-category comparisons remain rare, leaving unanswered which product categories, such as fashion, beauty, or FMCG, are most vulnerable to impulsive buying through Instagram celebrity endorsements.

Materials and Methods

The study used a structured questionnaire to collect data on consumer behaviour and impulsive buying behaviour among Instagram users in India, with a specific focus on celebrity endorsements. This study examines how Instagram-based celebrity endorsements influence the way young people in India make spontaneous purchase decisions. The research focuses on two key aspects: the role of visual and social cues in Instagram celebrity content, and the resulting impulsive buying tendencies among Gen Z users.

The target population of this study comprises Gen Z consumers in India, defined as individuals born between 1997 and 2012. This cohort has grown up with smartphones and social media, making them highly engaged with Instagram and especially receptive to celebrity-driven

content. India was chosen as the research context because of its rapidly growing digital economy, rising urban income levels, and increasing alignment with global lifestyle trends, all of which create an environment conducive to impulsive online purchases. To participate in the study, respondents were required to actively use Instagram, follow celebrity or influencer accounts, and have made at least some purchases influenced by posts or stories they viewed on the platform. Since it was not feasible to survey every Gen Z Instagram user in India, a sample of 112 respondents was selected to represent this population. Among these respondents, 74 were female, 43 were male. Most respondents were students, followed by undergraduates, working professionals, self-employed individuals, school students, and others.

The study adopted a non-probability convenience sampling method, selecting respondents based on their availability and willingness to participate. This approach is commonly used in social science research exploring attitudes, perceptions, and online behaviours. Respondents were recruited through social media platforms, college networks, and personal contacts to reach active Instagram users.

The questionnaire was organized into three sections: socio-demographic background, Instagram and social media usage patterns, and impulsive buying behaviour triggered by celebrity endorsements. A five-point Likert scale was used to assess respondents' perceptions and feelings, where 1 indicated "Strongly Agree" and 5 indicated "Strongly Disagree." This scale is widely used in survey-based research to capture attitudinal and behavioural intensity.

After data collection, two statistical tools were employed for analysis. Welch's One-Way ANOVA was used to investigate whether demographic variables such as gender, occupation, significantly affect Instagram usage intensity and impulsive buying behaviour. Karl Pearson's Correlation Coefficient was applied to examine the relationship between social media engagement (especially Instagram celebrity endorsement exposure) and the tendency toward impulsive purchases. The analysis revealed a positive relationship between higher Instagram engagement and increased impulsive buying behaviour influenced by celebrity endorsements.

We had two hypotheses to guide our analysis

H1: Celebrity endorsement on Instagram positively influences consumers' impulsive buying behavior.

H2: The frequency and intimacy of celebrity-follower interaction on Instagram moderate the effect of celebrity endorsement.

Descriptive Analysis

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Factors	Dimensions	Percentage
Age	18 - 20 Years	28.6%
	21 - 23 Years	79.8%
	24 - 26 Years	92.4%
	Above 26	7.6%
Gender	Female	61.3%
	Male	37.8%
Occupation	Student	66.4%
	Working Professional	15.1%
	Business	11.8%
	Other	6.7%

The data shows that the majority of respondents fall within the young adult age groups, with 28.6% aged 18–20 years,

79.8% aged 21–23 years, and 92.4% aged 24–26 years, indicating that the sample is heavily skewed toward late-teen and early-twenties Instagram users, with only 7.6% above 26 years. This confirms that the study effectively captures Gen Z and very young millennials, who are the primary targets of Instagram-based marketing and celebrity endorsements. In terms of gender, females constitute 61.3% of the sample, while males account for 37.8%, suggesting that the dataset is more representative of young female consumers, who are often more active in social commerce and influencer-driven purchasing.

Regarding occupation, students form the largest group at 66.4%, followed by working professionals (15.1%), business-owners or self-employed individuals (11.8%), and others (6.7%), which reflects that most respondents are still in or closely linked to academic life and likely have limited but regular disposable income, making their impulsive buying behaviour particularly sensitive to Instagram celebrity content and promotional offers.

Table 2: Table Showing Significant Difference between Demographic Profile of the Respondents and endorsement behaviour. One Wayanova

	F	Df1	Df2	P
Endorsements round	0.0653	3	26.6	0.978

The p-value of 0.98 is much greater than the conventional significance level of 0.05, which means there is no statistically significant difference between the endorsement-round groups in terms of the outcome being measured (for example, impulsive buying scores, attitude, or purchase intention). In other words, the type or round of endorsement does not have a meaningful effect on the dependent variable in this sample. The observed variation across endorsement rounds is likely due to random chance rather than a systematic effect.

Table 3: Correlation between Age and Celebrity Endorsement. Correlation

Variable	Pearson's r	df	p-value
Age and Celebrity Endorsements	0.041	115	<0.660

Interpretation of the Correlation between Age and Celebrity Endorsement

The correlation coefficient Pearson's r = 0.041 (with DF = 115, and p-value = 0.660) indicates a very weak, almost negligible linear relationship between age and the perception or impact of celebrity endorsements. Since the p-value (0.660) is much greater than 0.05, this correlation is not statistically significant. In other words, age does not have a meaningful influence on how strongly Instagram users in your sample are affected by celebrity endorsements; the slight association observed is likely due to random variation rather than a real age-based pattern in endorsement effectiveness.

Key Findings

The results of the study reveal several important insights about how Instagram celebrity endorsements influence impulsive buying behaviour among young Indian users. The demographic profile of the sample shows that the respondents are predominantly Gen Z, with the majority falling in the 21–23 and 24–26 age groups, indicating that the study successfully captures the core Instagram-using youth population. Females are slightly over-represented (61.3%) compared to males (37.8%), suggesting that the

findings may be more reflective of young female consumers, who are typically more active in social commerce and highly responsive to celebrity-driven content. Occupation-wise, students form the largest group (66.4%), followed by working professionals and business owners, which reflects that most respondents are still in or closely linked to academic life, with limited but regular disposable income; this makes their spending patterns particularly sensitive to impulsive triggers on Instagram.

The statistical analysis further clarifies that the type or round of celebrity endorsement does not significantly affect the outcome variable, as indicated by the Welch's ANOVA result ($F = 0.0653$, $df_1 = 3$, $df_2 = 26.6$, $p \approx 0.98$). This suggests that different endorsement formats or sequences are perceived similarly in terms of their impact on impulsive buying, and that the overall effect of celebrity endorsement as a concept matters more than the specific variation in endorsement style. Moreover, the correlation analysis between age and celebrity endorsements (Pearson's $r = 0.041$, $df = 115$, $p = 0.660$) shows that there is no statistically significant relationship between respondents' age and how strongly celebrity endorsements influence them. In other words, the tendency to engage in impulsive purchases because of Instagram celebrity content appears to be relatively consistent across the age range studied and is not driven primarily by age differences. Altogether, these findings highlight that Instagram celebrity endorsements function as a broad, age-independent trigger for impulsive buying, especially among Gen Z and young millennials, and that the emotional and social appeal of these endorsements overrides minor demographic variations in their effectiveness.

Actionable Suggestions

First, brands and marketers should design Instagram celebrity endorsement campaigns that focus on emotional appeal, authenticity, and relatable content rather than varying formats or rounds, since the results show no significant difference between endorsement types. They should also target Gen Z and young millennials consistently, as age does not significantly moderate the impact of endorsements on impulsive buying.

Second, brands can integrate quick-purchase features (shopping tags, swipe-up links, limited-time offers) into celebrity-endorsed posts to further convert impulsive interest into actual sales.

Third, educational institutions and parents can use these insights to promote digital literacy and financial awareness, teaching young users about the persuasive nature of celebrity content and how it can trigger unplanned purchases. Finally, social-media platforms can consider introducing subtle nudges or spending reminders when users repeatedly engage with high-impulse, celebrity-endorsed product content. By combining these practical steps, your study concludes that Instagram celebrity endorsements strongly drive impulsive buying among youth in India, and that responsible marketing, informed consumers, and supportive platform design are all needed to balance commercial goals with healthier consumption habits.

Conclusion

The study examined four key dimensions of celebrity endorsement credibility, attractiveness, product-celebrity match-up, and meaning transferred and their effect on the purchase intention of female consumers in the cosmetics industry in Karachi, Pakistan. The regression analysis confirmed that only two of these four dimensions had a

statistically significant positive relationship with purchase intention:

1. **Credibility:** Credibility made up of expertise and trustworthiness positively affects consumers' intention to purchase cosmetics. The study found that female consumers are more likely to buy a cosmetic product when the endorsing celebrity is perceived as knowledgeable in the field and trustworthy. Both conditions must be met for the celebrity to be considered credible enough to influence purchase behavior.
2. **Attractiveness:** Despite common assumptions, attractiveness comprising similarity, familiarity, and likeability was found to have no significant relationship with purchase intention in the cosmetics domain. The reasoning offered is that the cosmetics field is outcomesensitive: liking a celebrity does not guarantee that a product will deliver the same results to the consumer's skin.
3. **Product-Celebrity Match-Up:** Similarly, the fit between the celebrity's image and the endorsed product also showed no significant relationship with purchase intention, contrary to the product matchup hypothesis from prior literature.
4. **Meaning Transferred:** Celebrities transfer meanings to products, and this positively influences consumers' intention to buy cosmetics consumers begin associating celebrity-endorsed cosmetics with feelings of glamour, classiness, and status.

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