

Social media Influencers:

Inspiration or digital deception?

Outline :-

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III. How Influencers are a powerful source of Inspiration?

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Case in point: Influencers from Gaza sharing their authentic stories.

B. Social media influencers inspire people to be financially independent.

Case in point: Collaborating with brands, marketing their products, as well as, views on content

C. Social media influencers inspire people by breaking traditional gender stereotypes

case in point: Rise in stay-at-home dads, women launching their own businesses.

D. Social media influencers inspire people to express their creativity and individuality

Case in point: People making all sorts of content: singing, dance, art, fashion styling, sports.

E. Social media influencers inspire people to raise their voices against injustices

Case in point: Increase in voices against genocide, war crimes, racism, harassment; raising funds, donations.

F. Social media influencers promote and inspire empowerment within people:

Case in point: promoting mental well-being, self-love and acceptance, representing their culture, religion, and ethnicity.

IV. How Social media influencers create digital deception?

A. The promotion of luxurious, materialistic, & perfectly curated lives; leading to upward social comparison, anxiety, and depression.

B. The promotion of perfect standards of beauty and bodies; leading to eating disorders (Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa) and Body dysmorphic disorder.

C. The promotion of fake and expensive products, leading to a trap of buying useless products.

V. Inspiration or digital deception: Which influencers
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Influencers have become one of the most powerful forces of social media in the recent years. The rise in the influencer culture has become a great source for inspiration for many people across the world. They inspire people to share their stories and connect with people in extraordinary ways. Influencers have now become a major voice against any sort of injustice in the world. They not only help people to become more aware, but also actively break the traditional barriers of the society. Influence is not about the number of followers, but it is about the digital footprint and impact they leave on their followers. Social media influencers have actively promoted positivity, kindness, and creativity, inspiring millions with relatable content.

Social media influencers refer to people who have a significant number of followers on any social media

platforms like Facebook, TikTok, or Instagram.

Through their followers, social media influencers create a social network where they have profound negative and positive impact.

They actively engage with their audiences, creating what is called a digital family.

Due to their relevant content, people feel deeply connected to them. In the past decade, world has seen a major rise in number of influencers on various social media platforms. It has become a major force of transformation in the world, inspiring millions with their stories and digital achievements.

Social media influencers inspire people through their authentic story-telling.

They actively inspire people by sharing their live experiences. One of the most striking demonstration of this phenomenon is seen by the influencers of Gaza. Initially, there were few people who shared their lives living under-siege. Influencers from

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Gazze have shown their hardships and how they have been surviving under a genocide.

Today, there are hundreds of influencers from Gazze sharing their hardships and injustices they experience with the world.

It has further inspired people to post their content on their stories and spread it to the entire world. People actively support them and voice concern for

their problems. Millions of people have been inspired to donate them money, to play a part to make their lives a bit easier, amidst the blood-tainted streets of Gazze.

Hence, the phenomenon of active and authentic story-telling has inspired empathy and compassion in so many people across the world in such a short-time.

Furthermore, social media influencers inspire people to become financially independent. The role of influencers in advertising and marketing for brands have become a major source of income.

By marketing products such as clothes, make-up, shoes, jewelry, and virtually everything has led to financial independence.

Additionally, the number of views on their content is another major source of earning money. Being an influencer has actively improved their quality of life.

Collaborating with Big brands and urging people to use their products have benefitted not only brands, but also inspiring many people to opt for such a career.

Today, there are millions of influencers collaborating with brands, advertising, and generating incomes merely by views. In a world where economic inequalities constantly persist, this has been a major force of economic empowerment for everyone.

Social media influencers inspire many by breaking gender stereotypes.

The gender roles fixed by the society for men and women traditionally is now

now being challenged by social media influencers, inspiring many to do the same. The gender role traditionally associated with men is that they do not or are not supposed to cook, clean, or do the domestic household work. With the rise of influencer culture, men influencers have youtube and instagram accounts of cooking, sharing their recipes and talent. There are many male influencers taking the role of stay-at-home dads, who do the household chores.

What was a taboo in the society is now a source of inspiration only because of influencer culture. Similarly, women influencers are also actively breaking the gender stereotypes. They actively share their work life with their followers, promoting and inspiring other women to pursue their careers too. They try to highlight the role women can play in the development of society. Women influencers have started their own online businesses,

breaking the traditional gender norms. Hence, social media influencers inspire the world to completely transform the society, promoting that this world is not out of reach of anyone only if they dare to try.

Social media influencers inspire people to show their creativity and individuality. People all over the world have different talents. Some people are good at arts, other at sports, but everyone has some unique quality in them. Influencers have been very successful in inspiring people to make content that brings forward their unique selves. Today, there are influencers who are singers, dancers, or painters. Similarly, people who are good at fashion styling or make up. Social media influencers motivate people to show their hidden talents, through which they gain fame, love, support, and recognition throughout the world. What social media influencers have really done

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is to show people their success can depend on them and the platform of social media can take them to the skies of success.

Therefore, people all over the world make content they are naturally good at and not only gain relevance, but also inspire many others to begin the same process.

Social media influencers inspire people to raise voices against injustice. Since people naturally connect to the influencers and celebrities, so if they raise their voice against something, the followers are extremely supportive. Interestingly, if the influencer himself or herself is caught in any sort of injustice, they also tend to correct their actions and quickly unfollow them. Social media influencers who have raised their voice on issues like harassment, ^{racism,} crimes being committed in Gaza, Ukraine, and Sudan, their followers also tend to raise their

voices and since, they have a large number of followers it reaches maximum people.

They also raise funds and donations for people in need and their followers get inspired to do the same thing.

Hence, this shows their impact has been significant when it comes to inspiring people to voice concerns against the perpetual injustices in the society.

Social media influencers inspire empowerment within people. They inspire self-love, confidence, and ~~we~~ mental-wellbeing among people. The great thing about the influencer culture is that there are people from every race, color, religion, and ethnicity. Influencers actively inspire their followers to feel confident in their bodies. They actively call out people who engage in body-shaming or spreading any sort of hate. Influencers teach their followers that it does not matter if they are fat, thin, black, or white.

Everyone has dignity and should accept themselves. They share the values of their culture and religion, reflecting diversity from all over the world. They inspire people to authentically show what they believe in. Furthermore, they inspire people to address mental health issues like depression, anxiety, panic disorder, or eating disorder. Influencers suggest methods to people to deal with their issues of self-esteem and express themselves freely and without any fear of judgement. Hence, promoting acceptance and tolerance, improving the well-being of people and inspiring their empowerment is one of the most beautiful aspects of influencer culture.

Although, there are countless models of inspiration for people in form of influencers, it is also important to take into account some of the digital deceptions fueled by influencers through social media. Since, nothing is completely

free of harm, there are few aspects of the
influencer culture that creates problems for
the society.

One of these deceptions include, the
luxurious and materialistic lifestyle curated
by influencers. The social media influencers
often show a lifestyle that is all
portraying success on the basis of the
material lifestyle. People often perceive
this is the only standard for success and
they fall in a depressing spiral of
upward social comparison. Since, people think
influencers live such a luxurious life, they
would have no real problems in their
life. Therefore, this fuels resentment and
anxiety among people of being left behind
in life. They often forget to be grateful
for their blessings and engage in constant
dreadful social comparison. This deception of
living a perfect life makes people depressed,
often leaving them feel like a failure
in life.

Secondly, all the standards of beauty and perfect body showcased by the influencers is fueling many mental disorders. The digital deception of perfect face and perfect body has led to a rise in eating disorders. Studies show that there is significant rise in the number of eating disorders like anorexia nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa, where people starve themselves and intentionally purge to have ideal weight and body. Similarly, there is a rise in body dysmorphic disorder. It refers to a constant feeling of not being satisfied and comfortable in their body types and feel extremely depressed about it, leading to a great deal of diminished self-esteem. Hence, if on one side they inspire people, the other side of the digital deception can be increasingly dangerous, creating self-hatred instead of self-love.

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Lastly, influencers significantly promote the products that are not up-to-the mark. Many people report buying products on the advice of influencers. Since, a lot of people follow them and try their best to be relevant and connect to them, they fall in the trap of buying useless things. Therefore, too often people pay huge amounts of money simply to receive scams or products that simply do not work. The digital deception for the sake of money, that all products work great and promotion that they are necessary for all people by the influencers has been very disappointing. Hence, people often do not realize that everything an influencer promotes, is not the definite truth.

Nevertheless, on one hand influencers have inspired people for freedom of expression and on another hand, a digital deception under the facade of

perfection, both sides remain true. Which influencers are trustable and which are not is indeed the paradox of this culture. But, what cannot be denied is that influencers on social media have both been a force of inspiration and digital deception. The liking or the disliking an influencer remains a subjective choice. Although, what is required among the people in the virtual space is the awareness that what meets the eye is not always true. Social media is a space that learns to change and adapt; it is expected that influencer culture will keep significantly inspiring people in more ways or deceive them in more ways is a test case for the future pathways.

In conclusion, social media influencers continue to change the landscape of social media both in inspiring and deceptive ways. There is

gratitude among people for the emergence of such a powerful source. However, the digital deception frequently creates discontent among people too.

One thing is certain from the above case scenarios that social media influencers have impacted people in more positive ways than negative ones.

They have successfully opened the doors of opportunity, kindness, and positivity as the main source of inspiration.

Hence, the number of influencers emerging in the world through this inspiration suggests that, inspiration has far outweighed the deception.