

Social media Influencers: Inspiration or Digital Deception.

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Outline.

Introduction.

Social media influencers as a source of deception

- 1) Manufactured fake lifestyles.
- 2) Promotion of unrealistic expectations of life in general.
- 3) Creating falsified one directional narratives.
- 4) Promotion of products as genuine when they have little understanding of it.
- 5) Exploitation of people by promoting their own wicked ideas.
- 6) Using sensationalism as a tool to boost views.
- 7) Exposure to them leads to building a rapport that erodes authentic role models.
- 8) Changing the definition of purpose with popularity.
- 9) Creation of deviant behavior by promoting life as be lived.

How social media influencers can positively inspire their audience

- 1) Showing obedience to cultural values.
- 2) Sharing information as it is to promote critical.
- 3) By showing them contributing positively to the so they inspire people to do the same.

Conclusion.

The advent of the internet has led to the rise of increased exposure of people to one another. One of the many things that has resulted from the evolution of the internet is the development of social media.

Early social media tools included Facebook, Vine and Youtube. The rise of video sharing platforms have given rise to a different kind of celebrity from the conventional artists, and scientists called social media influencers. These social media influencers take many forms such as daily vloggers, cooking channels etc and since they form a core feature into the daily social life of their followers they have a great influence on their neural thinking abilities. The exposure of social media influencers lead to the promotion of the following ideas into the easily impressionable minds of their core audience namely the youth.

They show aspects of their lives leading to the promotion of unrealistic expectations about life due to their high curated, faked lifestyles.

Due to the influence they have on their audience they create narratives that suit their agenda obscuring the truth. Also the emotional connection they have with their audience they promote products that have no real value, along with their own enterprises that is a source of burden on the majority of their primary audience i.e the middle class people. Also constant exposure to

them leads to the creation of authentic role models.

But it is not all doom and gloom as they can influence their audience positively as well in many ways as well such as showing them contributing by donating they influence their followers to do the same as well. So as we can see due to a primarily profit driven model influencers create a disconnect in their audience about the real values through a mask. But can positively influence their audience as well.

Due to a highly public life they create a sanitized version of their real life which people are not able to distinguish as a fake image. Since their

life styles are high public, influencers show only a part of their life style that is only positive. Be it being dressed lavishly and wearing branded they create an unattainable beauty standard. They do not show the negative aspects of their life and this acts as a negative buffer because start to see their own lives in a negative light and being able to thus starts a culture of people hating their own lives when life is a mixture of both the positives and negatives. And when the mask comes off people are sent into a state of anaphylactic shock. No more was this case visible in the case of a Pakistani youtuber ducky bhai who was seen as a positive role model but when his case with

multiple smaller content creators was exposed it created a disconnect between his reel image and his true image.

Aside from creating surreal expectations about life, social media influencers show their own version of a story which leads to public not discovering the truth on their own. Since the core trait of social media influencers is to make sure that their image remains glamorous and the same as they portray in their videos they resort to emotional manipulation as a tool to maintain the status-quo. The main revenue generating mean of these influencers remains their videos, when a controversy arises they appeal to the emotions of their audience since they have already built a rapport with their audience it makes it easier and when this happens the audiences governed by their emotions rather than intuition they buy into the narratives purporting by these agents of social media leading to a cycle where they jump to conclusions without critically analysing the facts of the story. An example of this was Crypto Zoo promoted by Logan Paul as a safe, profitable investment and millions trusted him because of parasocial influences despite the game not being fully developed with Paul denying an wrongdoing initially.

Aside from manufactured narratives, Influencers promote products that they have little idea about. Another stream of revenue for social media influencers is through product promotion. They promote a product by using the age old slogan that they have personally tried it and that it truly works whereas the reality is the opposite and they have just been paid a sum to make them rave about the product and since their audiences already believe them to be truthful, and that they care about their audience, they unwittingly buy these products. People do not actually realise whether they need these products or not as they try to copy the people they are influenced by and later learn about the gravity of what they have got themselves into. An example of this is the Deton beads which are promoted as cleansing toxins but in reality are mainly laxatives and diuretics. This shows how influencers wrongly provide a product as being different from what it truly is.

wrongful

Aside from product promotion influencers try to diversify from their video making revenue and thus promote their own businesses which are to maximize their own profits. Some social media influencers use the connection they have with their audience to push upon them their own business ideas. They do this by showing them they have started a new enterprise and since the people have been

with them from the start they want to share what they have learned and some the profits with them. Since the people are exposed to only a highly curated image of these influencers and not their true self they believe they truly mean well and can do no wrong when in reality it is entirely the opposite.

To prove this we need to look ~~over~~ more back no more than last year when three Pakistani youtubers started a joint crypto teaching website, which was engaged for its non-sensical approach and the lack of experts present to teach about the nitty-gritties of the topic. This shows how influencers use their presence to boost their own profits.

Moreover Influencers use sensationalism as a tool to boost their own repertoire. In an increasingly mundane world people are always looking for a source of entertainment. TV channels know about this and create breaking news out of anything to sell to their audience and boost their rankings.

Similar tools are employed by social media influencers as well. They start by making controversies out of mundane matters or they start feuding with other parties in a decision that is mutually beneficial to both parties as it gives their respective accounts a considerable support from people declaring their support. These influencers understand the algorithm perfectly and

know exactly what sells, so when they see that their engagement metrics have started dwindling they rely on these gaudy tactics to maintain their numbers and even boost them. Jake Paul and the 'Team 10' feud is an excellent example of this with public battles, emotional vlogs coinciding with music drops and album release with feuding members collaborating later again.

Along with staged stunts, personal interactions result in the creation of real role models.

Gone are the days when people would look up to people like Neil Armstrong, Albert Einstein and Muhammad Ali. Instead, a new trend has taken over with people looking up to these influencers as role models. What was once how people wanted to start YouTube careers by looking at these influencers, what was once normal that is looking up to men who had achieved great things in their lives and had shaped ~~the~~ world history is in fact becoming history. In an increasingly commercialized world where the success is measured through how much one makes, engages with different trends and not with whether one is of substance or not, these influencers feed off like vultures. We need not to look forward then the values of these influencers where even little children come up to them and say that they want

to be like them and from thousands flooding to meet and greet with the above mentioned influencers.

Along with the changing the definition of role models social media influencers have changed the definitions of success from purpose to popularity. Influencer culture dictates that success is visibility being constantly in the news, in the mouths of the people and engagement trends. These have had a marked influence on the perception of people with an increased obsession on the changing societal aspirations from being good to other people and having their skills so that they can be useful members of the society to that of chasing fame and validation from external sources. In today's world people seek validation from external sources rather than true validation which comes from inside and leads to contentment.

Instagram baby moms are a primary culprit of this with a lot of mothers posting their babies on Instagram with comments flooding in to show how good of a parent they are.

Moreover, Social media ~~better~~ influencers behave in a way that is over exaggerated inculcating similar thinking patterns into their audience.

Social media presence dictates being larger than life, and these influencers use this perfectly by being loud in public, engaging in behaviors that are at odds with the acceptable behavior in a society. When their audience sees that this type of behavior generates views on youtube and keeps them into the conscious of the people, they try to copy their behavior into their daily lives as well, leading to social desensitization and them not being as the public but being seen as a nuisance to public. No more can be this seen in the changed attitudes of adolescents to behavior such as swearing in public which was considered as something not to be done but being embraced proudly and as something to boast.

But all is not doom and gloom as there is a silver lining to all of this with influencers who contribute positively as well. Some influencers on social media only post content when they have something meaningful to talk about and their behavior with their audience creates a positive influence with people looking up to them and trying to copy these behaviors into their daily lives as well. This conformist behavior leads to people living their life as being true to themselves and contributing to the society with their skills which is in contrast

to the behavior provided by the standards of social media. With people pointing out to YouTubers such as Tolan Swigo who do not rely on over the top antics but rather present themselves as they are. This shows how social media influencers can be a source of enlightened behavior in the midst of all of ~~more~~^{the} highly curated images.

^{Some} Moreover, Social media influencers use their platforms and reach to educate their audiences. In alone a dozen there are influencers who use of their platforms to educate the audience whether it be about education in general but about ~~the~~ what it means to be alive and how people can be useful members to the society they inhabit as well. Due to the exposure of people to these influencers they create a culture of positivity and since people value the opinions of influencers highly they listen to them and try to inculcate the ideas they promote into their lives.

An example of ^{an} education positive influences is Mark Rober an ex-NASA employee who uses his platform to educate the people about physics and space in simple terms which even ^{the} layman can understand.

Apart from educating their audience some influencers create a culture of passing goodwill forward. Some social media influencers record themselves helping out the less privileged people in their society. Although it is a bit hypocritical to say that good should be done in the private rather than recorded and posted to show one's magnanimity but this encourages their audience to do implement the same behavior into their daily lives as well. This creates a culture of welfare where the privileged help out their less privileged brethren thus ensuring that they have ~~information~~ to their basic needs fulfilled creating circulation of wealth which soothes over any resentment that the less-privileged people might have. A Kuwaiti YouTuber Abo Blah has organized record selling charity streams and his livestreams help mobilize audiences to donate and support humanitarian efforts. His campaigns show how influencers can mobilize people towards generosity and not just entertainment.

To sum this up, social media influencers are mostly deception but there are some cases where influencers have helped bring about a positive change as well. Social media influencers use sensationalism as a tool to boost their engagement and this has brought about a culture

where the definition of societal expectations has changed from purpose to popularity due to people championing the social media influencers as their role models instead of men of substance. Their highly curated lifestyles create unexpected expectations about life in the minds of their highly impressionable audience. ~~Not many~~ with this they exploit their audiences at large, wrongful marketing of products and promoting their own profit driven enterprises. But there are social media influencers who contribute positively by educating their audiences and by encouraging them to donate or well. By following these positive influences people also show obedience to cultural norms.

There is an almost undeniable evidence that social media influencers deceive their audiences but the behavior of some positive influencers shows that it is not all doom and gloom.

With increasing public awareness of the public to these social media influencers people have ~~also~~ already started shifting to more ~~fact~~ pressing matters and with dubbing trends there is hope that the negative social media influencers change their antics and contribute positively to the society and become people to actually look upto.