

# THE INFLUENCE OF FITNESS POSTS ON INSTAGRAM AND ITS EFFECT ON CONSUMER PURCHASE DECISION

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## ABSTRACT

This study investigates the influence of fitness post on Instagram and its effect on consumer purchase decision and provides a baseline understanding of how Instagram fitness post influences consumers. As per the research conducted by Luis V. Casalo Instagram is the most used Platform by opinion leaders in the fitness industry, and this trend is expected to rise even more in coming days, this study aims to understand as to how fitness post is influencing the purchase decision of the customers. The result collected are based on the 384 followers of fitness industry focused on Instagram.

### 1.1. THE RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY AND MOTIVATION

In the past few years, there was a change in focus from individual computers to networks. Previously the internet was only used for research, now it also opens to individuals. Thus, nowadays people spend a significant amount of time on social media and undertake a high level of consumption acts in this environment. Social networking sites allow people to share consumption, lifestyle choices and brand attachment with their online community. With the internet growing fast nowadays, social networking sites have become a great tool for selling

products and allow their branding. Companies may do it through advertisements, or they may even tease customers to comment on a product after its launching on the official website, for instance. In addition, social networking sites are the major key to connect with customers. Companies deal with customers directly through the sites by settling a good base of communication about the products and the brand, which can lead to reviews and the increasing of reputation.

Social networking sites' members are consumers of existing networks and they may be seen as more trustworthy compared to total strangers, which leads social networking sites to become a crucial source of product information for consumers. How close and important a consumer feels to the source of information can have a great influence on that consumer's decision to search and pass feedback on social networking sites as well as a strong tool to facilitate electronic word-of-mouth

Instagram seems to represent an ideal tool for electronic word-of-mouth, as consumers freely post pictures of fitness and consequently disseminate information between their friends and acquaintances. Nowadays everyone is sharing more fitness in this way than ever before, and a huge amount of this fitness-centric media revolves around fitness photography on social networking sites such as Instagram. Thus, it seems to be pretty trendy the act of sharing fitness posts that aim to influence others to follow the same healthy lifestyle or at least stay inspired. Consequently, there is this huge industry of fitness bloggers and instagrammers whose goal is to provide inspiration for a proper health and aesthetics. Then certain food posts become so viral between the followers and the recipes become famous that everyone ends up trying to be fit. A strong online culture is being built up continuously, these fit lifestyles are becoming a "fit-nation" and influencing the way we buy, cook and eat.

By analyzing previous research on social networking sites, Instagram did not have enough attention yet and it seems to deserve high attention once it also contributes to the way people search for information.

It was launched in 2010 and it is a mobile photo-sharing application that creates a strong visual culture.

With the rapid development of mobile technology, Instagram has been growing steadily and becoming increasingly popular. Although it now provides a website where users can view posts, images still can't be posted from a Web interface. Plus, Instagram reaches a younger, more diverse audience than other social networks, such as Facebook, for instance. Even though users have a smaller number of followers comparing to Facebook, they have much more interaction, which might be due to Facebook fatigue. Moreover, previous research shows that Instagram, comparing to other photo sharing websites, has a stronger social attribute. Therefore, there is a huge need for researchers to explore social relationships on Instagram and their consequences nowadays.

This is an attempt to deal with Instagram data regarding consumer purchase decision.

Experiences on Instagram are presented to show the efficiency of the proposed framework. Therefore, my research questions rely on how Instagram's fitness posts are influencing on consumers purchase decision

## **1.2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Instagram is a mobile photography application, launched in 2010 by Systrom and Krieger, that was acquired by Facebook for one billion dollars in 2012. In 2013, Instagram was reported to be the "fastest growing media among mobile-savvy users" (Aw Yeong, 2013, in (Abidin, 2015, p. 6). In 2016, it brought 1,53 billion dollars in mobile ad revenues, which is 8,4% of Facebook's global mobile ad revenues. Over 80% of the Instagram users live outside the United States, while the mobile ad revenues are much higher in the United States than externally. In 2017, 2,3 billion dollars were brought in by mobile ad revenues in the United States, while only 0,71 billion dollars were brought in outside this region. This difference in trend seems to remain stable in the following years (Nadiminiti, 2017 in (Brooke, 2017). Instagram's revenue share is expected to rise by 18% in 2018, which represents 5 billion dollars (Aslam, 2017). In 2016, 32% of internet users were using Instagram, which means 700 million total users (April 2017), of which 400 million (May 2017) are daily active users (Aslam, 2017). Compared to 2015, the total user number has doubled. 59% of the 18 to 29-year-old internet users are active on Instagram. Therefore, compared to other social media platforms, Instagram use is especially high among younger adults. More than 95 million photos and videos are posted every day on Instagram (Nadiminiti, 2017, in Brooke, 2017). Users generally make posts about the highlights of their personal life, while SIs, which are the main topic of this thesis, post about sporting goods, fashion, fitness, beauty, and consumer electronics (Berger, Experticity, & Keller Fay Group, 2016). To summarize these themes: lifestyle products. Lifestyle as "the routine manifestation of subcultures, regulated and influenced by family (social class), friends (status groups, gender, generation) and different types of movements and networks". Jensen (2007)

Influencers are inspired by other influencers, as 83% of these influencers say they purchased a product they saw on social media within the last month (Soltysinska, 2017.)

Every campaign starts with defining the target audience and the objectives to be achieved. Marketers have different objectives when wanting to reach an audience. An interesting presentation of these objectives is the "cognitive – affective – conative"-model. One can set a goal on the cognitive side: a consumer getting to know a brand. Once the information has been treated, the consumer can create an attitude towards a brand (affective). The conative dimension aims at making a consumer act, to make him purchase. Influencer Marketing complies with the "learning model" (Jean, 2017.)

Kotler and Keller (2016, p. 179) define consumer behavior as "the study of how individuals, groups, and organizations elect, buy, use and dispose of goods, services, ideas or experiences

to satisfy their needs and wants”. This thesis focuses on one aspect of this definition: everything that revolves around the purchase itself. Consumer purchase behavior first refers to the act of buying a certain product or service. But this is not the only mean of the concept. It includes for instance the search of relevant information to a purchase decision, selections and other actions performed before, during and after a purchase. It is an observable event that takes place in a certain context and at a given point in time. Moreover, it comprises four elements: an action, a target, a context (for instance online) and a time. The first element, the action, is for example: buying, but also searching for information. The second element is the target at which the action is directed (a brand or a product category) (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980, in Ajzen, 2008.)

In addition, Instagram has features in which users can discuss privately, have group chats, watch and create video-content on Instagram TV, and even buy products directly through the app. In fact, according to one recent Facebook IQ’s research (“How Instagram Boosts Brands and Drives Sales,” 2019), 54% of respondents of the survey stated they have purchased a product/a service when seeing or after seeing it on Instagram. Similarly, Global Web Index’s survey (Valentine, 2018) suggested that around half of Instagram users that follow influencers have been impacted by influencers in their purchasing behavior. With all the affective features (e.g., images, sound and motion), marketers try to trigger consumers’ impulses and evoke emotional responses through influencer endorsements.( Drossos, Kokkinaki, Giaglis & Fouskas, 2014.)

Overall, the use of influencers with the interest of healthy lifestyle is growing among sportswear brands, while consumption of sportswear apparel is increasing. Global sports apparel market is estimated to generate \$248.1 billion in revenue by 2026 mainly due to the increasing health awareness, changing lifestyles, and growing popularity of women’s participation in sports. Hence, this study seeks to explore the world of influencer marketing on Instagram from female consumers’ perspective and investigate how sportswear endorsements impact young women’s impulse buying behavior.( Kumar & Deshmukh, 2019)

Adolescence and young adulthood are key periods for developing norms related to health behaviors and body image, and social media can influence these norms. Social media is saturated with content related to dieting, fitness, and health. Health and fitness-related social media content has received significant media attention for often containing objectifying and inaccurate health messages. Limited research has identified problematic features of such content, including stigmatizing language around weight, portraying guilt-related messages regarding food, and praising thinness. However, no research has identified who is “liking” or “following” (i.e., consuming) such content.

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While research in mobile advertising is abundant, limited attention has been paid to date to how consumers respond to mobile advertisements for different product categories and in which

way impulsivity affects intentions to purchase. In this paper, we study the dimensionality of the product involvement construct and its effects on consumers' purchase intentions via a simulated field experiment (N = 736). We show that the cognitive dimension of product involvement and impulsiveness significantly affect purchase intentions. We also present that the relationship between product involvement and purchase intention is moderated by the consumers' impulse buying personality traits. These findings progress the current state-of-the-art in mobile advertising research, while also having significant practical consequences for the design of effective mobile SMS advertising campaigns. (Drossos et.al,2014)

## **2.1 SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The study focuses on the influence of fitness post on Instagram and its effect on consumer purchase decision. The study also aims to understand the study on Instagram posts on all the different stages of the purchase decision process.

The Research further attempts to provide suggestions to improve the effectiveness of using Instagram as an effective media for the fitness industry.

The respondents selected for this study belonged to the city of Bangalore,

## **2.2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

- To examine the Instagram usage behaviour of the consumers.
- To understand the impact of Instagram posts on purchase behaviour.
- To determine the influence of Instagram fitness posts on the different stages of the purchase decision process.

## **2.4 RESEARCH DESIGN**

This study is exploratory and descriptive in nature it is an exploratory study with a descriptive research design to investigate the customer preference towards fitness post. The data collection was conducted through a survey method with the use of a self-designed Questionnaire. The survey was conducted through the questionnaire which was circulated with the help of digital media platforms using WhatsApp groups, Instagram, and other social media. The sample size of the data collected is 384. The significance of the study is to highlight the influence of fitness post and consumer purchase decision. This study will help us in understanding how Instagram has become a powerful platform for influencing consumer purchase decision.

The purpose of this study was to understand consumer purchase decision and attitude towards fitness post. This is a quantitative study was selected for the same. The data collection was conducted through a survey method with the use of a self-designed Questionnaire

The survey was conducted through the questionnaire which was circulated with the help of digital media platforms using WhatsApp groups, Instagram, and other social media platforms. The sample size of the data collected is 100 The sample of the study was confined to a limited group of people who have been taken as respondents.

## **2.5 METHODS FOR DATA COLLECTION & VARIABLES OF THE STUDY**

The research conducted is descriptive, and survey method to collect primary information from the consumers using a structured questionnaire. Primary data is collected by applying the quantitative method. The respondents are from the age group of 18-32 years. Once the questionnaire was approved, it was circulated in the form of Google forms among the samples under consideration through various social media platforms.

## **3.1 TECHNIQUES FOR DATA ANALYSIS**

The study investigates the influence of fitness posts on Instagram and its effect on consumer purchase decision which is conducted among 384 respondents. Multiple Regression Analysis has been used to analyse the data.

## **CONSUMER PURCHASE DECISION PROCESS**

The consumer decision process also called the buyer decision process, helps markets identify how consumers complete the journey from knowing about a product to making the purchase decision. Understanding the buyer buying process is essential for marketing and sales. The consumer or buyer decision process will enable them to set a marketing plan that convinces them to purchase the product or service for fulfilling the buyer's or consumer's problem.

The consumer decision process is composed of Need recognition, Information search, evaluation of alternatives, and Actual purchase. Post-purchase Evaluation is the result of satisfaction or dissatisfaction that the consumption provides. The buying process starts when the customer identifies a need or problem or when a need arises. It can be activated through internal or external stimuli.

### **❖ STEPS IN PROCESS CONSUMER PURCHASE DECISION.**

#### **I. NEED RECOGNITION**

Need recognition of Problem Recognition is the first stage of the buyer decision process. During need or problem recognition, the consumer recognizes a problem or need satisfied by a product or service in the market. The buyer feels a difference between his or her actual state and some desired state. Internal stimuli can trigger the need. This occurs when one person's normal needs, such as hunger, thirst, sex, rise to a level high enough to become a driver. External stimuli can also trigger a need.

#### **II. INFORMATION SEARCH**

The second stage of the purchasing process is searching for information. Once the need is recognized, the consumer is aroused to seek more information and moves into the information search stage. The consumer may have heightened attention or may undertake an active search for information. The amount of searching a consumer will depend on the strength of his drive,

the amount of information he starts with, the ease of obtaining more information, the value he places on additional information, and the satisfaction he gets from searching.

### **III. EVALUATION SEARCH**

Evaluation of alternatives is the third stage of the buying process. Various points of information collected from different sources are used in evaluating different alternatives and their attractiveness. While evaluating goods and services, different consumers use different bases. Generally, the buyer evaluates the alternatives based on the product's attributes, the degree of importance, belief in the brand, satisfaction, etc. to choose correctly. A marketer must know how the consumer processes information to arrive at brand choices. Consumers do not always follow a simple and single evaluation process. Rather several evaluation processes are in practice.

### **IV. ACTUAL PURCHASE**

After the alternatives have been evaluated, consumers decide to purchase products and services. They decide to buy the best brand. But their decision is influenced by others' attitudes and situational factors. Usually, the consumer will buy the most preferred brand. But two factors might influence the purchase intention and the purchase decision. The first factor is the attitudes of other people related to the consumer. The second factor is unexpected situational factors. The consumer may form a purchase intention based on factors such as expected price and expected product benefits. However, unexpected events may alter the purchase intention. Thus, preferences and even purchase intentions do not always lead to actual purchase choice.

### **V. POST PURCHASE EVALUATION**

The buyer decision process's final stage, post-purchase-purchase behavior, the consumer takes action based on satisfaction or dissatisfaction.

In this stage, the consumer determines if they are satisfied or dissatisfied with the purchasing outcome. Here is where cognitive dissonance occurs, "Did I make the right decision. "At this stage of the buyer decision process, consumers take further action after purchase based on their satisfaction or dissatisfaction

## **DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS**

6% of the group of 18-20, 76% belong to the group of 21-23, 12% belong to the group 24-36, 3% to the group of 27-29. And 3% belong to the group of 30-32 years. 73 male and 27 female. 43 % are students, 17 % are employed, and 32 % from self-employed and 8 % are Business. It can be inferred as majority of respondents are i.e., 43% are employed. 8% are less than 20k, 4% are of 20-40k, 14% are of 40-60k, 39% are of 60-80k and 35% are more than 80k, it can be inferred that the majority of respondents are of 39% in the category 60-80k. .

### **TIME SPENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA PER DAY?**

9% of the respondents spend less than 1hr, and 22% opted for 1-2 hr.,40% have opted for 3-4 hr. and 29% have opted for more than 4Hr. it can be inferred that the majority of the people have opted for 3-4 Hr. (40%).

#### • **SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM USED.?**

It can be inferred that ,91% have opted for what's app, 92% have opted for Instagram.,55% have opted for Facebook. and 18% have opted for twitter along with LinkedIn (55%) and YouTube (82%), it can be inferred that people have opted for the majority of what's app (91%), Instagram (92%), YouTube (82).

#### • **SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS INFLUENCE YOU TO PURCHASE IMPULSIVELY.?**

70% have opted for Instagram,10% have opted for Facebook., none have opted for Twitter. and 20% have opted for YouTube. it can be inferred that the majority of the people have opted for Instagram (70%).

### **3.3. HYPOTHESIS TESTING:**

- $H_0^1$  – Instagram posts significantly does not influence need recognition
- $H_1$  – Instagram posts significantly influence need recognition
  
- $H_0^2$  – Instagram posts significantly does not influence information search
- $H_2$  – Instagram posts significantly influence information search
  
- $H_0^3$  – Instagram posts significantly does not influence evaluation of alternative
- $H_3$  – Instagram posts significantly influence evaluation of alternative
  
- $H_0^4$  – Instagram posts significantly does not influence actual purchase
- $H_4$  – Instagram posts significantly influence actual purchase
  
- $H_0^5$  – Instagram posts significantly do not influence post purchase evaluation
- $H_5$  – Instagram posts significantly influence post purchase evaluation

#### ❖ **Regression:**



Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.843	.160		5.256	.000
	Need Recognition	.347	.115	.394	3.009	.023
	Information Search	.232	.119	-.253	-1.953	.044
	Evaluation of Alternatives	.726	.131	.769	5.533	.000
	Purchase decision	.540	.152	-.059	-.352	.025
	Post purchase behavior	.850	.130	-.092	-.657	.013

a. Dependent Variable: PD

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.784 <sup>a</sup>	.614	.594	.628	.614	30.274	5	95	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), PPEM, ISM, EOAM, NRM, APM

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	59.713	5	11.943	30.274	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	37.475	95	.394		
	Total	97.188	100			

a. Dependent Variable: PD  
b. Predictors: (Constant), PPEM, ISM, EOAM, NRM, APM

From the above table R sq. value is .614 i.e., 61.4% of the variance of dependent variable is explained by independent variables

F statistic is a test of significance for the entire regression. The overall regression model is significant.  $F = 30, p < .001, R^2 = 0.614$ . R square, referred as the coefficient of determination is a measure of explained variation. R square values of 0.614 (Table no 1) represents the amount of variance in purchase decision that is accounted by the independent variables namely need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, actual purchase and post purchase evaluation. The five stages of purchase decisions account for 61% of the variance in purchase decision.

Since the P values for need recognition(.023) ,information search(.044), evaluation of alternatives(0.00), Purchase decision(.025) and Post purchase behavior(.013) is less than .05.Null hypotheses  $H_0^1$  ,  $H_0^2$  ,  $H_0^3$  ,  $H_0^4$  and  $H_0^5$  are rejected and Alternate hypotheses are accepted. Instagram posts have a significant influence on all the stages of the purchase decision process.

The beta coefficients further indicate that one unit increase in need recognition will result in increase in purchase decision by 0.347 units, one unit increase in information search will result in increase in purchase decision by 0.232 units, one unit increase in evaluation of alternatives will result in increase in purchase decision by 0.726 units and one unit increase actual purchase will increase purchase decision by 0.54 units and one unit increase post purchase evaluation will increase purchase decision by 0.85 . Need recognition has the most influence on purchase decision while post purchase evaluation has the least influence on purchase decision.

The following is the prediction equation:

$$\text{Purchase decision} = .843 + .347(\text{NR}) + .232(\text{IR}) + .726(\text{EOA}) + .540(\text{AP}) + .850(\text{PPE})$$

### RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a significant change/effect on consumer purchase due to the influence of fitness post on Instagram.Digital media which is a growing platform is increasing in reach and influence, and by doing so it also results in the development of the brand and business.

The companies or brands or organization should concentrate on mobile marketing to influence people into buying.People have agreed to the statement of fitness post does influence people's needs and so this point can be used by the companies.

Influence of Instagram posts on purchase decision have shown a positive outcome in the research response and this can be used by the companies to understand the future growth. Instagram has been considered as a source of knowledge and information for the people to utilize in their daily lives, and this is a very important the company to plan out their future course of action.

As likes share and comments have increased the reach of products or brands the company also has to keep in consideration of the excess usage, and keep an eye out for scammers and fake comments, which would hamper reach of fitness brands or product which would definitely result in growth in future.Many other brands can also focus on marketing their products on Instagram it need not be just fitness post.

### CONCLUSION

This research offers a better understanding on the topic **Influence of fitness post on Instagram, and its effect on consumer purchase decision**, from the above research findings we can state that, Instagram posts significantly influence need recognition, information search evaluation of alternatives , purchase decision and post purchase behavior. The growth of Instagram has

increased the reach and influence of fitness industry in the market, which in turn influences the consumer purchase decision. As digital marketing is evolving, the customer reach will definitely increase in the future. Hence companies / brands have to concentrate more on these platforms. Digital marketing is a new way to communicate with the audience, which will then indulge the customers special attention to the social media platform ( Instagram) and will help the companies to uncover the factors or characteristics of this medium which can motivate consumer purchase decision. In addition, considering the emerging influence of Instagram on consumers, we can conclude that Instagram has emerged as

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