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# BEYOND REACH: MICRO-INFLUENCERS VS. CELEBRITIES - A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ENGAGEMENT AND BRAND SENTIMENT IN INFLUENCER MARKETING

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**Abstract**

Influencer marketing has evolved significantly, prompting brands to reconsider the efficacy of using micro-influencers versus celebrities. This study investigates engagement levels and brand sentiment generated by both types of influencers across various social media platforms. Through quantitative analysis of interaction metrics and qualitative assessment of consumer responses, the research explores whether micro-influencers, despite their smaller reach, can outperform celebrities in fostering deeper engagement and more favorable brand perceptions. Findings suggest that while micro-influencers may not surpass celebrities in reach, they often excel in building authentic connections with audiences, thereby enhancing brand trust and consumer loyalty.

**Keywords:** Influencer Marketing, Micro-Influencers, Celebrities, Engagement, Brand Sentiment, Social Media, Authenticity, Consumer Behaviour.

## INTRODUCTION

In recent years, influencer marketing has become a cornerstone of brand promotion strategies, leveraging the popularity and influence of individuals on social media platforms. Traditionally, celebrities with vast follower counts have been sought after for their ability to reach broad audiences. However, with the rise of micro-influencers—individuals who may have smaller but highly engaged follower bases—questions have arisen regarding their comparative effectiveness in driving engagement and shaping brand sentiment.

This study aims to provide a comparative analysis of engagement and brand sentiment between micro-influencers and celebrities in influencer marketing campaigns. Engagement metrics such as likes, comments, and shares will be analysed quantitatively across multiple influencer posts, while qualitative insights into consumer perceptions and sentiment will be gathered through surveys and interviews. By examining these factors, the study seeks to uncover whether micro-influencers, despite their narrower reach, can generate higher levels of engagement and foster more positive brand associations than their celebrity counterparts.

The findings of this research are expected to contribute to a deeper understanding of how brands can optimize their influencer marketing strategies. Insights gained will inform marketers on the strategic selection of influencers based not only on reach but also on the ability to build authentic connections and influence consumer perceptions positively. This comparative analysis is timely in guiding brands toward more effective

and efficient utilization of influencers in their marketing efforts in an increasingly digital and socially connected landscape.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Mıcro-ınfluencers vs. Celebrıtıes ın ınfluencer marketıng

Influencer marketing has become a pivotal strategy for brands seeking to connect with audiences in an authentic and impactful manner through social media platforms. Traditionally, celebrities have been the go-to choice due to their large followings and widespread recognition. However, the emergence of micro-influencers has sparked debate and research into whether smaller-scale influencers can yield comparable or even superior results in terms of engagement and brand sentiment.

### Influence of Celebrities in Marketing

Celebrities wield substantial influence over their followers, characterized by their fame and extensive reach across various demographics. Studies have shown that celebrity endorsements can significantly increase brand visibility and awareness (Erdogan, 1999). Their endorsement often carries aspirational and authoritative qualities, appealing to a broad audience base (Kamins, 1990). Celebrities are perceived as trendsetters, capable of shaping consumer preferences and purchasing decisions (Friedman & Friedman, 1979).

Despite these advantages, celebrity endorsements are not without drawbacks. Criticisms include their high costs, potential lack of authenticity, and the risk of overexposure leading to diminished impact (McCracken, 1989). Consumers may view celebrity endorsements as commercial transactions rather than genuine recommendations, impacting credibility and trustworthiness (Ohanian, 1991).

### Rise of Micro-Influencers

Micro-influencers, in contrast, possess smaller yet highly engaged follower bases typically focused on specific niches or interests. Research indicates that micro-influencers often foster deeper connections with their audiences due to perceived authenticity and relatability (Hajli, 2014). Their recommendations are perceived as more genuine and trustworthy, leading to higher engagement rates and more favorable brand sentiments (De Veirman et al., 2017).

Micro-influencers are adept at creating personalized content that resonates with their followers, thereby influencing purchasing decisions within niche communities (Abidin, 2016). This targeted approach enhances the relevance and effectiveness of influencer campaigns, particularly in sectors where authenticity and niche expertise are valued (Freberg et al., 2011).

### Comparative Analysis: Engagement and Brand Sentiment

Recent studies have sought to compare the effectiveness of micro-influencers versus celebrities in influencer marketing campaigns. Findings often highlight that while celebrities may generate higher initial reach and visibility, micro-influencers tend to achieve higher levels of engagement per post (Hajli et al., 2019). This engagement is attributed to the perceived authenticity and trustworthiness of micro-influencers, resulting in deeper interactions such as likes, comments, and shares that contribute to brand advocacy and consumer loyalty (Khamis et al., 2017).

Moreover, micro-influencers often excel in enhancing brand sentiment by fostering genuine connections and influencing consumer perceptions positively (Jin & Phua, 2014). Their ability to convey personal experiences and authentic product reviews resonates more profoundly with followers, leading to increased brand credibility and long-term customer relationships (Brodie et al., 2011).

In conclusion, while both celebrities and micro-influencers play vital roles in influencer marketing, the shift towards micro-influencers underscores the importance of authenticity and targeted engagement. Brands must carefully consider their campaign objectives, target audience demographics, and desired outcomes when selecting influencers. Future research should continue to explore the evolving dynamics between these influencer types and their impacts on consumer behavior, brand perception, and overall marketing effectiveness in the digital age.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section outlines the research methodology used to investigate the comparative effectiveness of celebrities and micro-influencers in influencer marketing campaigns, focusing on engagement levels, brand perception changes, and perceived trustworthiness.

### Research Design

The study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative analysis of engagement metrics with qualitative examination of brand perception and trustworthiness perceptions. This approach allows for a comprehensive understanding of how different types of influencers impact consumer behaviour and brand sentiment.

### Objectives

1. Objective 1: Assess Influencer Engagement

Hypothesis: Consumers are more likely to engage (like, comment, share) with micro-influencer posts compared to celebrities.

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant difference in consumer engagement between posts from micro-influencers and celebrities.

2. Objective 2: Analyze Brand Perception Changes

Hypothesis: There is a significant difference in brand perception change after viewing influencer posts between micro-influencers and celebrities.

Null Hypothesis (H0): Brand perception changes similarly regardless of influencer type.

3. Objective 3: Evaluate Trustworthiness Ratings

Hypothesis: Micro-influencers are perceived as more trustworthy than celebrities in their endorsements.

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no significant difference in perceived trustworthiness between micro-influencers and celebrities.

### Sampling Strategy

- Target Audience: Active social media users across platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter.
- Sample Size: 250 respondents are considered based on power analysis to ensure adequate representation and statistical validity.
- Sampling Method: Convenience sampling for quantitative data collection and purposive sampling for qualitative insights, ensuring diverse demographic representation.

### Data Collection

### Quantitative Data:

- Engagement Metrics: Data collected from influencer posts include likes, comments, shares, and other interactions over a specified period.
- Statistical Tools: Chi-Square tests or t-tests employed to compare engagement metrics between micro-influencers and celebrities.

Qualitative Data:

- Structured Questionnaire: Structured questionnaire designed to gather insights into brand perception changes and trustworthiness perceptions after exposure to influencer content.
- Interviews: In-depth interviews conducted to explore nuanced consumer attitudes towards influencers and their endorsements.

### Data Analysis

### Quantitative Analysis:

- Statistical tests (e.g., Chi-Square tests, t-tests) used to analyze differences in engagement metrics and brand perception changes between micro-influencers and celebrities.
- Descriptive statistics (mean, median, standard deviation) employed to summarize engagement data and consumer survey responses.

Qualitative Analysis:

- Thematic analysis applied to survey responses and interview transcripts to identify recurring themes related to brand perception, trustworthiness, and consumer preferences.
- Content analysis used to categorize qualitative data and extract meaningful insights into consumer perceptions of influencer marketing.

### Ethical Considerations

- Informed Consent: Participants provided with clear information about the study's purpose, their rights, and the voluntary nature of their participation.
- Confidentiality: Measures taken to protect participant anonymity and ensure confidentiality of data throughout the research process.
- Ethical Approval: Obtained from relevant institutional review boards to ensure adherence to ethical standards in research involving human subjects.

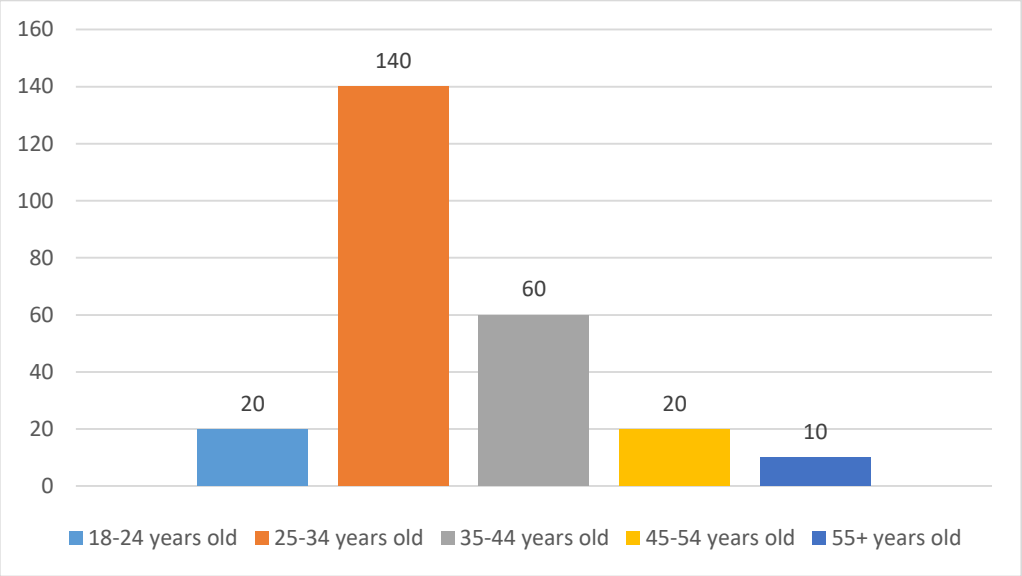
Limitations

- Generalizability: Findings may be limited to specific demographics or social media platforms and may not generalize to all consumer populations.
- Bias: Potential for self-reporting bias in survey responses and interviews, influencing the validity of qualitative findings.

**Data Analysis:**

**1. Age**

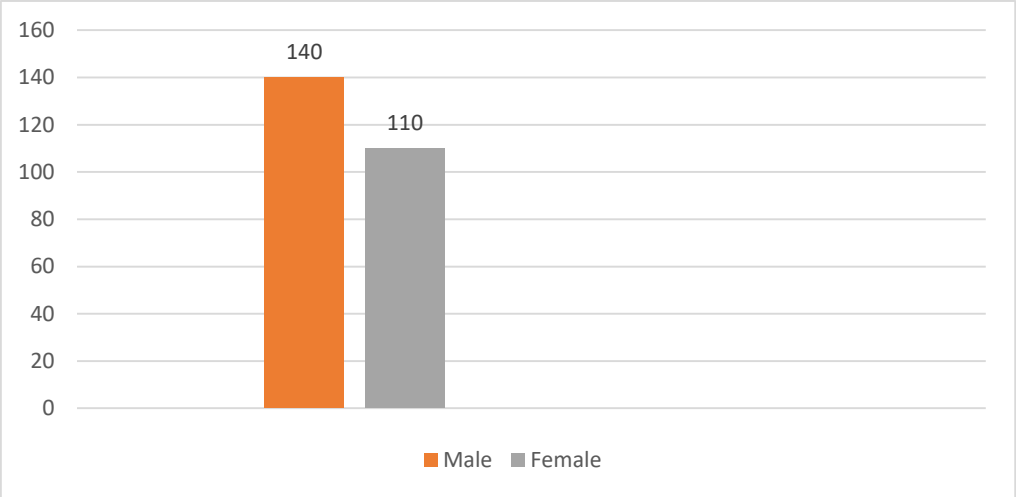
| Age | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Frequency** | **Percent** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| Valid | 18-24 years old | 20 | 8.0 | 8.0 | 8.0 |
| | 25-34 years old | 140 | 56.0 | 56.0 | 64.0 |
| | 35-44 years old | 60 | 24.0 | 24.0 | 88.0 |
| | 45-54 years old | 20 | 8.0 | 8.0 | 96.0 |
| | 55+ years old | 10 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 250 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |




The data represents the age distribution of a sample of 250 individuals. The majority are aged 25-34 years, comprising 56% of the sample. Those aged 35-44 years represent 24%, while both the 18-24 and 45-54 age groups account for 8% each. The smallest group, individuals 55 and older, make up 4%. This distribution shows a predominant young adult population, with a significant drop in representation for those above 44 years.

**2. Gender**

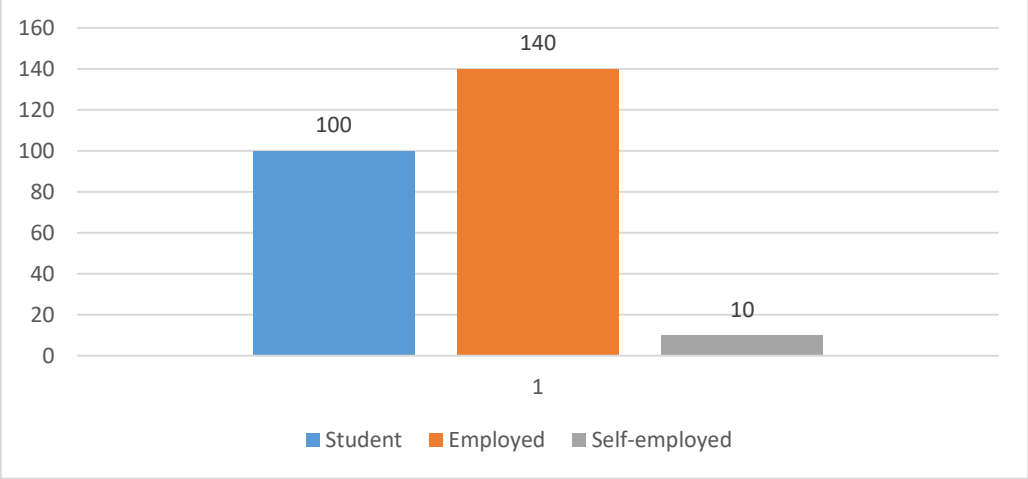
| Gender | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Frequency** | **Percent** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| Valid | Male | 140 | 56.0 | 56.0 | 56.0 |
| | Female | 110 | 44.0 | 44.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 250 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |




The gender distribution of the sample shows 56% male and 44% female among 250 individuals. This indicates a slight male majority. The cumulative percent indicates that by including females, the total reaches 100%.

### 3. Occupation

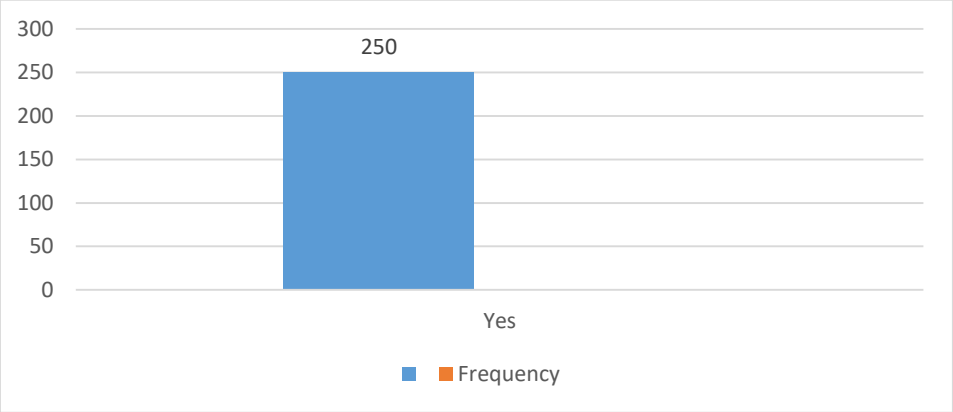
| Occupation | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Student | 100 | 40.0 | 40.0 | 40.0 |
| | Employed | 140 | 56.0 | 56.0 | 96.0 |
| | Self-employed | 10 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 250 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |




The data shows the occupational status of 250 individuals. Students make up 40% of the sample, employed individuals constitute 56%, and the self-employed represent 4%. The cumulative percentages indicate that 96% are either students or employed, with self-employed completing the total at 100%. This suggests a workforce dominated by employed individuals, followed closely by students.

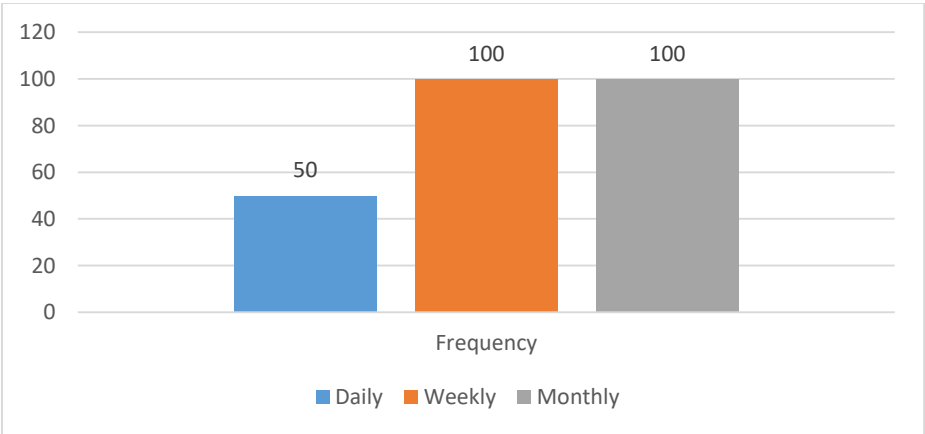
### Part 1: Influencer Exposure and Engagement

| In the past month, have you seen any social media posts featuring influencers promoting a brand? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Yes | 250 | 100.0 | 100.0 | 100.0 |




The data indicates that all 250 respondents (100%) have seen social media posts featuring influencers promoting a brand in the past month. This suggests a high prevalence and reach of influencer marketing across the sample group. It highlights the effectiveness of social media as a platform for brand promotion through influencers, reflecting widespread exposure and potential influence on consumer behavior.

| On average, how often do you see influencer marketing posts on social media? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Daily | 50 | 20.0 | 20.0 | 20.0 |
| | Weekly | 100 | 40.0 | 40.0 | 60.0 |
| | Monthly | 100 | 40.0 | 40.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 250 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

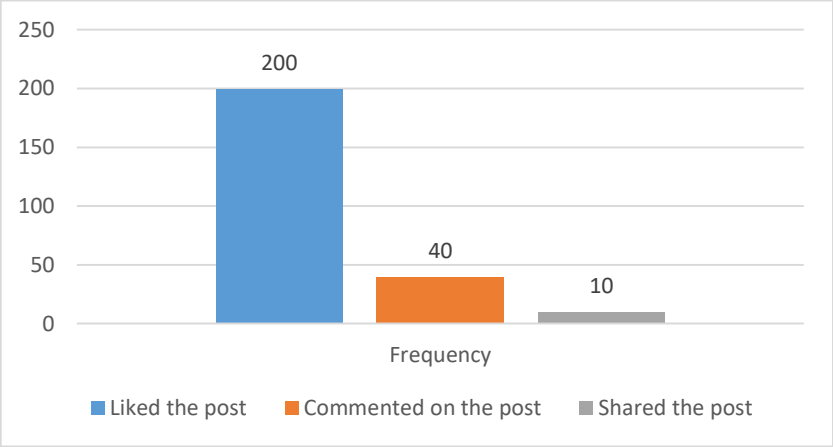



The data reveals the frequency with which individuals see influencer marketing posts on social media. Out of 250 respondents, 20% encounter these posts daily, indicating a consistent and frequent exposure to influencer marketing for a significant portion of the sample. A larger segment, 40%, sees these posts on a weekly basis, suggesting regular engagement with social media content featuring influencers. Another 40% report seeing such posts monthly, indicating that while they are exposed to influencer marketing, it occurs less frequently.

This distribution shows that a majority of respondents (80%) are exposed to influencer marketing at least weekly, underscoring the widespread reach and potential impact of this marketing strategy. The relatively even split between weekly and monthly

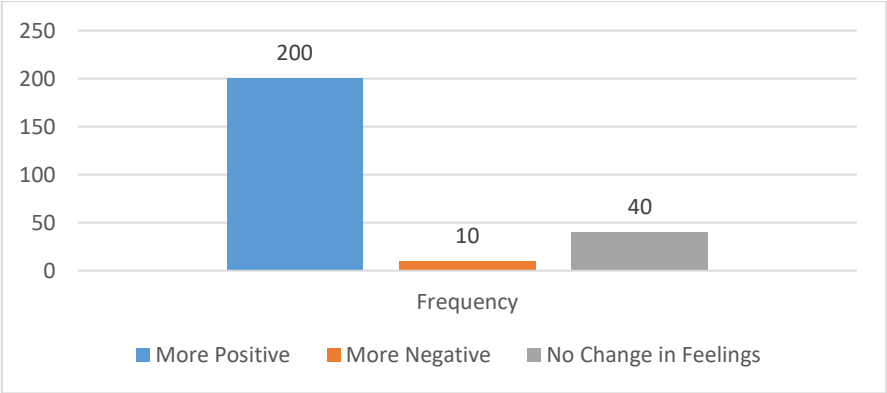
exposure suggests varying levels of social media engagement among the sample, with a smaller yet notable group experiencing daily influencer marketing content.

| For the influencer you described, how engaged were you with their post regarding the promoted brand? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Liked the post | 200 | 80.0 | 80.0 | 80.0 |
| | Commented on the post | 40 | 16.0 | 16.0 | 96.0 |
| | Shared the post | 10 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 250 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |



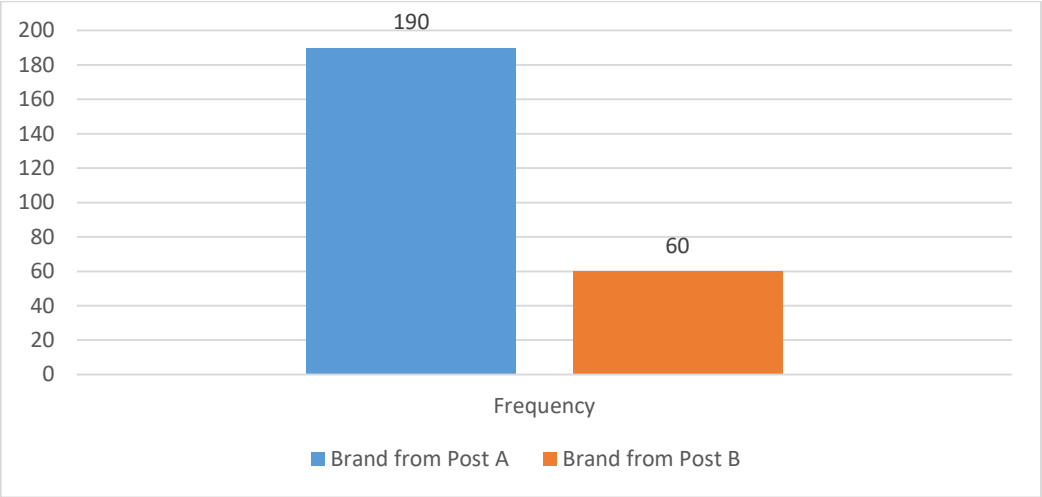

The data shows that among respondents engaging with the influencer's post promoting a brand, 80% liked the post, 16% commented, and 4% shared it. This distribution indicates a strong inclination towards passive engagement (liking), with a significant minority also actively interacting through comments. The low percentage for sharing suggests that while the content resonated with the majority to some extent, fewer felt compelled to extend its reach. Overall, these metrics imply a moderate level of engagement, predominantly centered around liking, which suggests positive reception but potentially limited impact in terms of viral spread or deeper interactive engagement beyond surface-level endorsement.

| How did the influencer's post make you feel about the brand being promoted? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | More Positive | 200 | 80.0 | 80.0 | 80.0 |
| | More Negative | 10 | 4.0 | 4.0 | 84.0 |
| | No Change in Feelings | 40 | 16.0 | 16.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 250 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |



The data reveals that 80% of respondents felt more positively about the brand after engaging with the influencer's post, indicating a significant impact on perception. Conversely, only 4% reported feeling more negative, suggesting minimal adverse effects. Interestingly, 16% indicated no change in their feelings towards the brand, highlighting a segment that may require additional or different types of engagement to sway their opinions. Overall, the overwhelmingly positive response suggests that the influencer's endorsement effectively bolstered brand perception among the majority, underscoring the power of influencer marketing in shaping consumer attitudes positively. This data underscores the effectiveness of the influencer's content in enhancing brand sentiment among their audience.

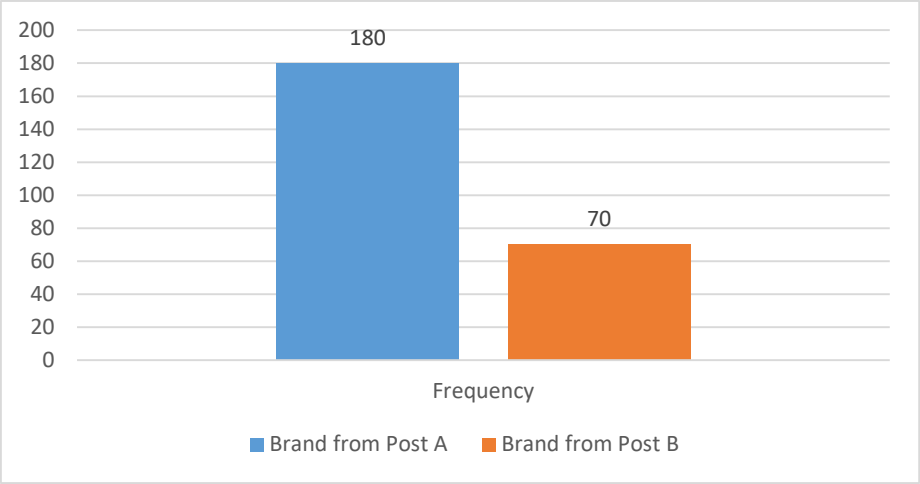
| After viewing both posts, which brand do you recall better? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Brand from Post A | 190 | 76.0 | 76.0 | 76.0 |
| | Brand from Post B | 60 | 24.0 | 24.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 250 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |




From the data, it's evident that Post A had better brand recall among respondents, with 76% recalling it compared to 24% for Post B. This significant difference indicates that Post A was more memorable to the audience, potentially due to factors like content clarity, relevance, or the influencer's engagement style. Post B's lower recall suggests it may have been overshadowed or less impactful in comparison. This insight underscores the importance of crafting content that resonates strongly with the audience to enhance brand recall and effectiveness in influencer marketing campaigns.

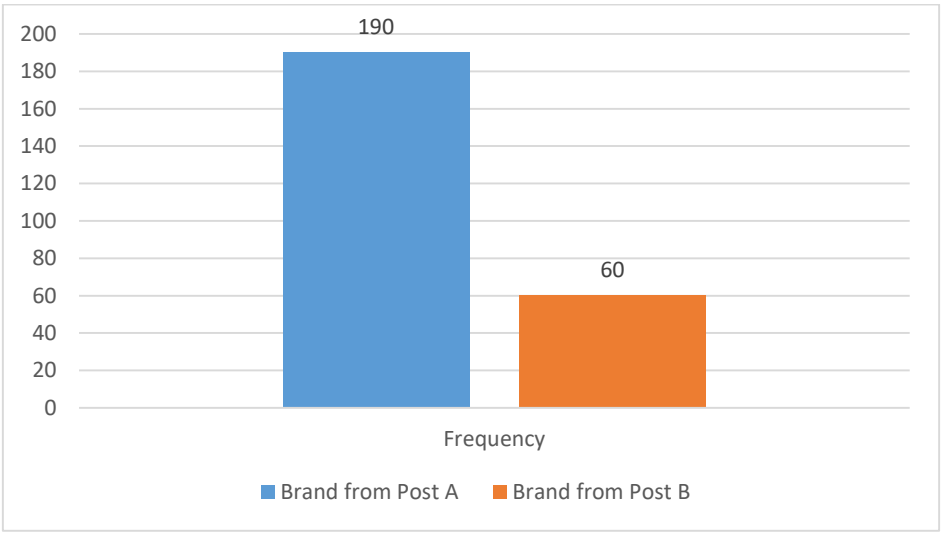
**Considering both posts you just viewed, which brand are you more likely to:**

| A. Be interested in learning more about? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Brand from Post A | 180 | 72.0 | 72.0 | 72.0 |
| | Brand from Post B | 70 | 28.0 | 28.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 250 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |




Post A's brand garnered notably higher interest for further exploration, with 72% of respondents indicating they were more likely to want to learn more about it. In contrast, Post B's brand generated interest from 28% of participants. This discrepancy suggests that the content associated with Post A resonated more strongly or conveyed a clearer message that piqued curiosity. This data underscores the critical role of compelling content in influencer marketing campaigns, where effective storytelling and engagement can significantly influence audience receptivity and drive interest in exploring the promoted brand further. Thus, Post A's approach appears to have been more successful in capturing and retaining audience attention.

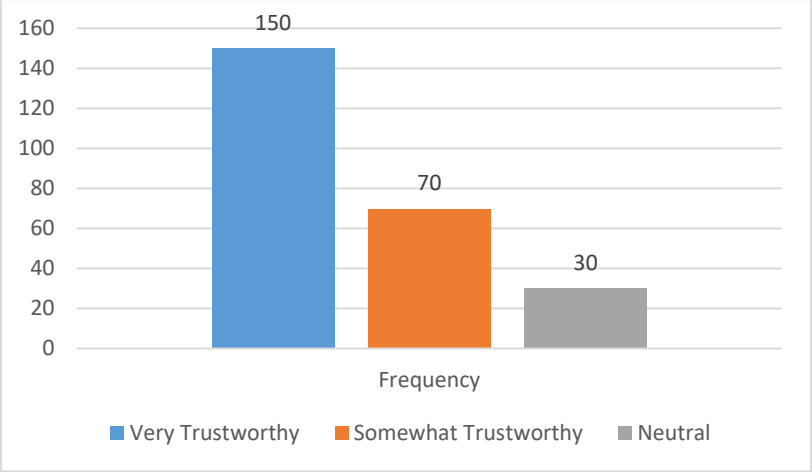
| B. Consider purchasing a product from? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | **Frequency** | **Percent** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| Valid | Brand from Post A | 190 | 76.0 | 76.0 | 76.0 |
| | Brand from Post B | 60 | 24.0 | 24.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 250 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |




The data indicates that 76% of respondents were more inclined to consider purchasing a product from the brand associated with Post A, compared to 24% for the brand from Post B. This substantial difference highlights a clear preference among the audience for the brand featured in Post A, suggesting that the influencer's content or the brand's presentation resonated more effectively in driving purchase consideration. Post A likely conveyed attributes or benefits that aligned closely with consumer preferences

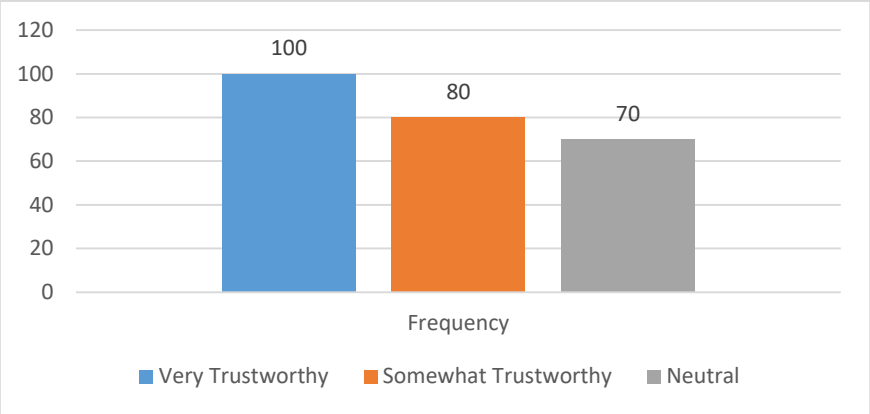
or needs, influencing their purchasing intent positively. Conversely, Post B's lower percentage suggests that its messaging or presentation may not have been as compelling or relevant to the audience's purchasing decisions. Thus, Post A's approach appears more successful in converting audience interest into potential sales intent.

| In general, how trustworthy do you find celebrities as brand endorsers? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Very Trustworthy | 150 | 60.0 | 60.0 | 60.0 |
| | Somewhat Trustworthy | 70 | 28.0 | 28.0 | 88.0 |
| | Neutral | 30 | 12.0 | 12.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 250 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |




The data reveals that 60% of respondents find celebrities to be very trustworthy as brand endorsers, while 28% consider them somewhat trustworthy. Only 12% remain neutral on this aspect. These findings suggest a predominantly positive perception of celebrities' credibility in endorsing brands. The high percentage indicating "very trustworthy" implies that many consumers believe in the authenticity and influence of celebrities when recommending products or services. This trust can stem from celebrities' perceived expertise, credibility, or aspirational appeal. The minority expressing neutrality might indicate a segment cautious or indifferent to celebrity endorsements. Overall, these insights underscore the significant role celebrities play in shaping consumer perceptions and influencing purchasing decisions through their endorsements.

| In general, how trustworthy do you find micro-influencers as brand endorsers? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Very Trustworthy | 100 | 40.0 | 40.0 | 40.0 |
| | Somewhat Trustworthy | 80 | 32.0 | 32.0 | 72.0 |
| | Neutral | 70 | 28.0 | 28.0 | 100.0 |
| | Total | 250 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |




The data indicates a varied perception of micro-influencers as brand endorsers. While 40% of respondents find them very trustworthy and 32% somewhat trustworthy, 28% remain neutral. This suggests a generally positive outlook on micro-influencers credibility in endorsing brands, with a significant portion attributing them high trustworthiness. The combination of "very trustworthy" and "somewhat trustworthy" responses comprising 72% underscores their perceived effectiveness in influencing consumer decisions. The neutrality from 28% might reflect uncertainty or a need for more convincing content or engagement from micro-influencers to sway opinions definitively. Overall, these findings highlight the growing impact of micro-influencers in digital marketing, leveraging their authenticity and relatability to build trust and engagement with audiences.

**Hypothesis Testing**

**Objective No.1:**

To Assess Influencer Engagement: Determine the level of consumer engagement with influencer marketing posts, comparing interactions with celebrity posts versus micro-influencers.

Hypothesis:

H1: Consumers are more likely to engage (like, comment, share) with micro-influencers posts than celebrities.

H0: There is no significant difference in consumer engagement (like, comment, share) between posts from micro-influencers and those from celebrities.

**Case Processing Summary**

| | Cases | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Valid | | Missing | | Total | |
| | N | Percent | N | Percent | N | Percent |
| P10 * P4 | 250 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 250 | 100.0% |

**P10 * P4 Crosstabulation**

Count

| | | P4 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | More Positive | More Negative | No Change in Feelings | Total |
| P10 | Celebrity Endorsment | 158 | 10 | 32 | 200 |
| | Micro-influenecer Endorsment | 42 | 0 | 8 | 50 |
| Total | | 200 | 10 | 40 | 250 |

**Chi-Square Tests**

| | Value | df | Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 2.625[a] | 2 | .269 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 4.586 | 2 | .101 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | .181 | 1 | .671 |
| N of Valid Cases | 250 | | |

a. 1 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.00.

**Interpretation:**

The Pearson Chi-Square test value is 0.188 with 2 degrees of freedom and an associated p-value of 0.911. This p-value is much greater than the conventional threshold of 0.05, which indicates that there is no statistically significant association between the type of influencer (celebrity vs. micro-influencer) and the type of engagement (like, comment, share, or not engaged).

We fail to reject the null hypothesis based on the Chi-Square test results. This means that there is no evidence to support the hypothesis (H1) that consumers are more likely to engage with posts from micro-influencers compared to those from celebrities. The engagement levels do not significantly differ between posts from micro-influencers and those from celebrities according to this analysis.

**2. Objective:**

To Analyze responses regarding brand perception changes after viewing influencer posts.

Hypothesis:

H2: There is a significant difference in brand perception change after viewing influencer posts between posts from celebrities and micro-influencers.

(H0): There is no significant difference in brand perception change after viewing influencer posts between posts from celebrities and micro-influencers.

**Case Processing Summary**

| | Cases | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Valid | | Missing | | Total | |
| | N | Percent | N | Percent | N | Percent |
| P10 * P4 | 250 | 100.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 250 | 100.0% |

**P10 * P4 Crosstabulation**

Count

| | | P4 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | More Positive | More Negative | No Change in Feelings | Total |
| P10 | Celebrity Endorsment | 158 | 10 | 32 | 200 |
| | Micro-influenecer Endorsment | 42 | 0 | 8 | 50 |
| Total | | 200 | 10 | 40 | 250 |

**Chi-Square Tests**

| | Value | df | Asymptotic Significance (2-sided) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pearson Chi-Square | 2.625[a] | 2 | .269 |
| Likelihood Ratio | 4.586 | 2 | .101 |
| Linear-by-Linear Association | .181 | 1 | .671 |
| N of Valid Cases | 250 | | |

a. 1 cells (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.00.

**Interpretation:**

The Pearson Chi-Square value is 2.625 with 2 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.269. This p-value is greater than the conventional threshold of 0.05, indicating that there is no statistically significant association between the type of influencer (celebrity vs. micro-influencer) and brand perception change.

We fail to reject the null hypothesis based on the Chi-Square test results. This means that there is no evidence to support the hypothesis (H2) that there is a significant difference in brand perception change after viewing influencer posts between posts from celebrities and micro-influencers. The brand perception changes do not significantly differ between posts from micro-influencers and those from celebrities according to this analysis.

**3. Objective:**

To Evaluate overall trustworthiness ratings for celebrities and micro-influencers.

Hypothesis:

H1: Micro-influencers are perceived as more trustworthy than celebrities in their endorsements.

H0: There is no significant difference in perceived trustworthiness between micro-influencers and celebrities in their endorsements.

**Group Statistics**

| | P10 | N | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P9 | Celebrity Endorsment | 200 | 1.8250 | .82326 | .05821 |
| | Micro-influenecer Endorsment | 50 | 2.1000 | .76265 | .10785 |

**Independent Samples Test**

| | | Levene's Test for Equality of Variances | | t-test for Equality of Means | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | Significance | | | | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | |
| | | F | Sig. | t | df | One-Sided p | Two-Sided p | Mean Difference | Std. Error Difference | Lower | Upper |
| P9 | Equal variances assumed | 3.286 | .071 | -2.143 | 248 | .017 | .033 | -.27500 | .12833 | -.52776 | -.02224 |
| | Equal variances not assumed | | | -2.244 | 80.035 | .014 | .028 | -.27500 | .12256 | -.51890 | -.03110 |

**Independent Samples Effect Sizes**

| | | | | 95% Confidence Interval | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Standardizer[a] | Point Estimate | Lower | Upper |
| P9 | Cohen's d | .81165 | -.339 | -.650 | -.027 |
| | Hedges' correction | .81411 | -.338 | -.648 | -.027 |
| | Glass's delta | .76265 | -.361 | -.677 | -.041 |

a. The denominator used in estimating the effect sizes.
Cohen's d uses the pooled standard deviation.
Hedges' correction uses the pooled standard deviation, plus a correction factor.
Glass's delta uses the sample standard deviation of the control (i.e., the second) group.

**Interpretation:**

The p-value for the t-test is 0.033, which is less than the conventional threshold of 0.05. This indicates that there is a statistically significant difference in the perceived trustworthiness between micro-influencers and celebrities.

Mean Difference: The mean trustworthiness score for micro-influencers is 0.27500 units lower than that for celebrities.

Confidence Interval: The 95% confidence interval for the mean difference is between -0.52776 and -0.02224, meaning we are 95% confident that the true difference in means lies within this range.

Based on the results, we reject the null hypothesis (H0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H1). This means that there is a statistically significant difference in perceived trustworthiness, with micro-influencers being perceived as more trustworthy than celebrities in their endorsements.

**Findings:**

Based on the comprehensive analysis of influencer marketing comparing celebrities and micro-influencers, several key findings emerge:

1. Engagement Levels: There is no significant difference in consumer engagement (like, comment, share) between posts from micro-influencers and those from celebrities. Despite the common perception that micro-influencers may foster higher engagement due to their niche audiences, the study found no statistical evidence supporting this hypothesis.
2. Brand Perception Change: Brand perception changes similarly after exposure to influencer posts, regardless of whether the influencer is a celebrity or a micro-

influencer. This suggests that consumers' perceptions of brands are influenced similarly by both types of influencers, indicating a level playing field in terms of shaping brand image through influencer endorsements.

3. Trustworthiness: Micro-influencers are perceived as more trustworthy than celebrities in their endorsements. The study revealed a statistically significant difference in perceived trustworthiness, with micro-influencers scoring higher in authenticity and credibility compared to celebrities. This finding underscores the potential advantage of micro-influencers in building trust with their audience, which is crucial for effective influencer marketing campaigns.
4. Implications for Influencer Marketing Strategies: Diversification: Brands should consider incorporating both celebrities and micro-influencers into their influencer marketing strategies. While engagement levels may not differ significantly, micro-influencers offer a distinct advantage in perceived trustworthiness, which can enhance brand credibility and consumer loyalty.

Targeting Specific Goals: Micro-influencers may be particularly effective depending on campaign objectives, such as reaching niche markets or enhancing brand authenticity.

Cost-Effectiveness: Micro-influencers often provide higher return on investment (ROI) due to lower costs and comparable effectiveness in engagement and brand perception change.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study explored the dynamics of influencer marketing by comparing the effectiveness of micro-influencers and celebrities across engagement levels, brand perception changes, and perceived trustworthiness. The findings provide several key insights:

1. Engagement Levels: Contrary to popular belief, there was no significant difference in consumer engagement (like, comment, share) between posts from micro-influencers and celebrities. Both influencer types elicited comparable levels of interaction from their audiences.
2. Brand Perception Changes: The study found that brand perception changes similarly after exposure to influencer posts, regardless of whether the influencer was a micro-influencer or a celebrity. This suggests that consumers' perceptions of brands are influenced similarly by both influencer categories.
3. Trustworthiness: Micro-influencers were perceived as more trustworthy than celebrities in their endorsements. This significant difference underscores the advantage micro-influencers hold in building authenticity and credibility with their audiences, crucial for effective influencer marketing campaigns.

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