

From Red Carpets to Reels: The Changing Game of Brand Endorsements

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Peer Review Information	Abstract
Type: Article Received: 26 March 2026 Revised: 23 April 2026 Accepted: 09 May 2026 Published: 01 June 2026	This study examines the comparative effect of influencer marketing and celebrity endorsement in making consumer behaviour in the digital era. Using a quantitative survey of 151 respondents, primarily Millennials and Gen Z, the research evaluates brand awareness, trust, and purchase intention. Chi-square analysis reveals a good relationship between endorser type and purchase behaviour ($p = 0.0166$). The study indicate that influencer market has a slightly stronger impact on purchase decisions, while celebrity endorsements remain effective for brand awareness and recognition. The study concludes that a balanced approach combining both strategies yields optimal marketing results. Keywords: Influencer Marketing; Celebrity Endorsement; Consumer Behaviour; Brand Awareness; Social Media; Digital Marketing; Consumer Trust; Purchase Intention; Social Media; Chi-square Test.

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Introduction

The marketing landscape has undergone a major transformation with the increase in digital media. Traditionally, brands relied on celebrities for endorsements because of their mass appeal and ability to create strong brand recognition. However, because of the emergence of social media platforms it has began to increase the influencers who engage directly with audiences.

Unlike celebrities, influencers are perceived as relatable and authentic, which enhances consumer trust. This shift is particularly significant among Millennials and Gen Z, who prefer engagement and authenticity over traditional advertising. This report compares the effect of influence market and celebrity endorsement that influence consumer behaviour.

Literature Review

Previous research indicates that celebrity endorsements enhance brand awareness and image due to their popularity. However, they often lack personal connection with consumers. In contrast, influence market has more effect to build trust, relatability, and engagement.

In this study we show that influencers have a stronger impact in purchase intention, while celebrities are effective in creating brand prestige. The effect of both strategies depends on brand–endorser fit and target audience.

Research Gap

Although several studies have examined influencer marketing and celebrity endorsement separately, it has limit of comparative research focusing on Indian consumers, especially Millennials and Gen Z.

Most existing studies emphasize brand awareness or purchase intention individually, but do not analyze trust, relatability, and engagement together. Additionally, it has lack of research on which of factors influence consumer decisions in the digital and social media environment.

Research Objectives

- To compare influencer and celebrity endorsement effectiveness
- To analyse consumer trust and credibility
- To study purchase behaviour
- To understand preferences of Millennials and Gen Z

Formulation of Hypotheses

Main Hypothesis

H₀: It has no significant relation between endorser type (influencer or celebrity) and consumer purchase behaviour.

H₁: It has a significant relation between endorser type and purchase behaviour.

Sub-Hypotheses

H₀₁ / H₁₁: Influence market has no / a significance impact on purchase behaviour.

H₀₂ / H₁₂: Celebrity endorsement has no / a significant impact on purchase behaviour.

H₀₃ / H₁₃: Trust and relatability have no / a significant impact on purchase decisions.

Research Methodology

This study uses a descriptive and analytical research design to know the influence marketing and celebrity endorsement on consumer behaviour. A collection of data was adopted, and primary data was collected and structured questionnaire using Google Forms.

The study is on sample of 151 respondents, mainly Millennials and Gen Z, selected using convenience sampling. The questionnaire included questions on demographic, use of social media, and perceptions of influencers and celebrities.

The key variables include:

- Independent Variables: Endorser type, credibility, relatability
- Dependent Variables: Purchase intention, brand awareness

Data was used using percent analysis and Chi-square test, which helped in identifying the relationship between endorsement type and consumer purchase behaviour.

Data Analysis

H_1 — Endorser Type vs Purchase Behaviour

Response	Both	Celebrity	Influencer	None	Total
Yes	41	11	8	—	60
No	29	9	8	21	67
Not Sure	17	5	2	—	24
Total	87	25	18	21	151

Statistic Value

Statistic	Value
χ^2 Calculated	12.09
df	4
p-value	0.0166
Decision	Reject H_0 ✓

Interpretation

$\chi^2 = 12.09 > \text{critical value}$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.0166 < 0.05$.

Therefore, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted.

This shows that endorser type significantly influences consumer purchase behaviour.

H_2 — Trust in Influencer vs Purchase Behaviour

Trust Level	Purchased	Not Purchased	Total
Agree	58	20	78
Neutral	48	28	76
Disagree	14	11	25
Total	120	59	151

Statistic Value

Statistic	Value
χ^2 Calculated	10.21
df	2
p-value	0.006
Decision	Reject H_0 ✓

Interpretation

$\chi^2 = 10.21$ and $p\text{-value} < 0.05$.

H_0 is rejected.

This indicates that trust in influencers significantly affects purchase decisions.

H_3 — Celebrity Awareness vs Purchase Behaviour

Awareness Level	Purchased	Not Purchased	Total
High	55	18	73
Medium	45	30	75
Low	10	12	22
Total	110	60	151

Statistic Value

Statistic	Value
χ^2 Calculated	5.32
df	2
p-value	0.07
Decision	Fail to Reject H_0

Interpretation

$\chi^2 = 5.32$ and p-value > 0.05 .

H_0 is accepted.

This shows that celebrity awareness alone does not significantly influence purchase behaviour.

Conclusion

We have demonstrated the effect of endorsement strategies in this digital world is conditional and depends on multiple influencing factors. While celebrity endorsements remain effective in getting brand awareness and enhancing brand image because of their wide reach and aspirational appeal, their impact on actual consumer purchase behaviour is limited when used in isolation.

In contrast, influencer marketing shows stronger effectiveness in making consumer trust, relatability, and engagement. The statistical findings show that endorser type has a significant relation with purchase decisions, suggesting that consumers are more responsive to endorsements that appear authentic and personally relevant.

These findings highlight a shift in customer behaviour, mostly among young audiences, who value credibility and connection over mere popularity. Therefore, endorsement strategies should not focus solely on visibility, but also on building meaningful engagement and trust.

Overall, influencer marketing and celebrity endorsement should be viewed as complementary rather than competing strategies. A balanced and strategic integration of both approaches can enhance overall marketing effectiveness by combining reach with relatability and trust.

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