

## **The Impact of Social Media Influencers on Purchasing Intention of Fashion Brands: Special Reference to Instagram Users**

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Despite Instagram's pivotal role in shaping Sri Lankan fashion purchases, local trendy clothing brands lag global giants in effectively leveraging influencer marketing. This study delves into the specific Instagram influencer qualities impacting Sri Lankan consumers' purchase intentions towards modern fashion. Employing a quantitative approach with a convenience sampling method of 385 Instagram users in Western Province, we investigated the influence of perceived trustworthiness, expertise, likeability, similarity, and attractiveness on purchase intentions. Findings revealed a robust correlation between perceived trustworthiness and purchase intention, solidifying its pivotal role in fostering consumer confidence. Expertise also emerged as a significant influencer, demonstrating the importance of product knowledge and relatable fashion advice. Interestingly, likeability alone faltered, suggesting celebrity status may not suffice. Instead, a perceived sense of similarity, encompassing shared values and cultural nuances, strongly correlates with purchase intention, highlighting the power of authenticity and relatability. Furthermore, familiarity with the influencer, cultivated through consistent and engaging content, emerged as a driving force, reinforcing the value of long-term audience connections. These insights offer a valuable blueprint for optimising influencer marketing strategies within Sri Lanka's unique fashion landscape. By prioritising trustworthiness, expertise, and relatable values, local brands can forge deeper connections, foster trust, and ultimately drive conversions. By actively cultivating familiarity through consistent and engaging content, they can further amplify their influencer marketing impact, paving the way for success in the dynamic and competitive world of Sri Lankan fashion.

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