# ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS IN BRAND PROMOTION FOR FASHION

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**FINAL PROJECT REPORT**

**By**

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**Declaration**

I certify that the final project research report titled "Role Of Social Media Influencers In Brand Promotion For Fashion" being submitted to the Pearl Academy, New Delhi for the award of the **Undergraduate Degree of BA (Honors) Fashion Media Communication** is a record of bonafide work carried out by me, under guidance/mentorship of Mr. Asheesh Saini,, Course Leader. Due permission and approvals has been taken from all the sources of data collection. The results contained in this document have not been submitted, in part or in full, to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree or diploma.

*Signature of the student*

*(Shirin Rajput)*

**CERTIFICATE OF MENTORSHIP**

This is to certify that the document titled "Role Of Social Media Influencers In Brand Promotion For Fashion" being submitted by Shirin Rajput, to the Pearl Academy, New Delhi for the award of the **Undergraduate Degree of BA (Honors) Fashion Media Communication** is a record of bonafide work carried out by her/him. SHIRIN RAJPUT has worked under my guidance, and fulfilled the requirements for submission of the final project research report, under my guidance & mentorship. The learning outcomes of the project and works undertaken by him/her herein in the project report have been carried out by him/her under my mentorship. The results/ information contained in this document have not been submitted, in part or in full, to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree/diploma.

*Signature of Mentor*

*(Mr. Asheesh Saini)*
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**ABSTRACT**

The research investigates the link between digital media and the social media influencers who are responsible for curating content, which is consumed by a large number of audiences. The rise of the digital world has led to many endorsements practiced by fashion brands in context to these bloggers on Instagram. It also leads us to the audience who are highly inspired by these influencers in buying a product, however lacks knowledge. This paper gives you an in-depth knowledge of the inside world of how these brands tackle with the influencers.

The paper sheds light on the role of Plagiarism in fashion and the importance of taking responsibility for one's actions. The paper is based on the real- time observations and experience keeping Plagiarism in one hand and social media influencers in other.

*Key words: Digital media, Social Media Influencers, Comic Book, Social Media, Blogging, Micro blogging, illustrations, Digital world, Internet, Online, Offline, Bloggers, Brand, Promotion*

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

## 1. Introduction

Digital media is an enclosed word which includes anything that is online or digital like mobile, web etc. Social is a subhead of digital encompassed by the channels where people usually socialize. Social media channels usually develop on the user generated content based on the targeted audience. Digital marketing includes many other channels like televisions, radio, digital billboards, SEO, Ads, email marketing etc. However, Social media marketing which comes under digital marketing includes all the social media sites like Youtube, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram. Digital marketing will be gaining more ground in the online as well as the offline section in the future. There should be technology loved by everyone and which affects everyone. (Gianatasio and Gianatasio, 2018) Being a part of digital media, social media is the new way of connecting with people. Social media, a computer based technology facilitates the information by building connections with thousands of people. By simply sharing videos or photos, one can generate quality of content. Views can be paid but shares cannot be paid, says Jenny Leahy, Microsoft (Whitler, 2018).

A social media influencer has access to a large audience and can persuade other by virtue of their authenticity and reach. Brands nowadays are ready to expand their budgets for these influencers, who will be responsible for the brand's promotion.

A large part of the brand popularity depends on the social media influencers who share their stories, opinions, blog posts, videos, pictures, tweets etc. This trend is likely to continue in the coming future. (O'Connor, 2018)

A post on business of fashion states that amongst social media platforms, Instagram is the place where about 50 percent of the posts regarding brands are accounted. Also, companies are not considering broad social media strategies for their campaigns on one platform. These visually appealing images over Instagram or stories on such platforms can be produced in different ways. (O'Connor, 2018)

All the fashion brands differ from each other and the way they create content for themselves also differs. Instagram, Twitter, Youtube are few of the platforms, on which the brands share their content. They prefer targeting their audiences through the influencers who are majorly dependent for the brand's marketability. These influencers connect with people to popularize a particular brand. The best influencers not only go after the upcoming sensation. By keeping this in mind, they prefer to conduct a valid research to align their brands with the right type of audience. These bloggers are responsible to showcase about the product, the brand as well as the compsany values. These bloggers indulge with the brands in order to meet a particular goal by transactional pay to post collaboration. (Backaler and Backaler, 2018)

Instagram, comes on the top of the list of these bloggers as a large part of the audience prefer it over any other site like Twitter or Facebook. Posting about their passion on social media, influencers have gained popularity as their opinions matters. A post on BBC says "It's now the number of followers on Instagram, Pinterest, Facebook and Twitter, rather than your experience necessarily, that can secure you a top job." (Hope, 2016)

Platforms like Diet Prada that is a strong tongued Instagram account, keep their followers entertained by exposing designers who are ripping others work off. They expose the fakes and the rampant copycat culture in the industry. It is followed by the who's who of the industry, they have even called out many leading designers for plagiarising their designers. They are even calling out leading stylists who dress their celebrity clients in designs that have been plagiarised. Almost everyone is talking about it and are swayed by their content. They called out Off-White for taking inspiration from all different labels followed by knocking off brands like Celine and Vetements. Diet Prada is the most feared Instagram account which showcases the plagiarism done by people in the fashion industry. The people behind Diet Prada are Tony

Liu and Lindsey Schuyler responsible for this critical fashion account. They revealed themselves in an interview with Business of Fashion and told them that they started this account as a joke and now they had a following of 450k. This isn't their main job-Liu has his own label, while Schuyler runs a consultancy (Cadogan, 2018)

Social media platform is the link between the brands and the consumers on which the content is generated for the viewers to interact with. There are a number of people who are willing to become influencers in the coming future so that they work with such brands. These influencers motivate other people by sharing their experiences on the social media and through this, many people are willing to be social media influencers or bloggers. Social media platform like Instagram, has the maximum reach to it and keeps on changing its features accordingly. Pages like Diet Prada are new to the audience and probably the only one who provide criticism in the fashion industry. There are many pages which looks similar to it and have a different audience to it. Diet Sabya is a copy of Diet Prada and has an Indian audience and the content is related to Bollywood celebrities. There will be many accounts in the coming future but Diet Prada being verified account will still stand out of all. An article in The Guardian states that "Diet Prada's popularity is related to the "call-out" culture of the internet, but it also represents a shift in attitudes where shopping is concerned. "I think we are in a time when everyone is really questioning the choices that they make and there is this move towards more consciousness as consumers," says Liu. Copycatting is far from a victimless crime, says Schuyler, "especially for small designers. It can wreck their businesses." The most satisfying element of Diet Prada, adds Liu, is "helping out small companies that don't have financial resources to litigate". Bigger companies have such marketing power that, if they rip off a design, most consumers never become aware of the original, he says." (H. Marriott, 2018)

]This project aims to study the digital media and understand the promotion done by the fashion brands in the industry and the role of social media influencers in it. The objective is to analyze whether platforms like Diet Prada is a fad and are the people working in the industry cognizant of such pages. Also to observe the impact made by social media influencers and to interpret the potential of such platforms in the future.

The observations would give me a better and in depth understanding of social media (Instagram) and also the further questions would be beneficial;

-To observe and study the likely impact of platforms like Diet Prada.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This research paper is separated into five sections. The introduction of this paper is followed by the literature review which is looks at various research papers, website articles, e-books and journals to study the role of social media influencers in promoting fashion brands through digital media techniques along with the advantages and brand study in context of social media platforms and social media influencers. After literature review, the primary data is pulled is assessed on the basis of interviews, group discussion, survey and observations from the consumers of social media and the digital writers of Vogue magazine. This is followed by the data and findings of the primary research, which are basically the results of all of the methods used for the collection of primary data. The outcome of the literature review, survey analysis, interviews, group discussion and observation. The final section discusses the conclusion in context of both secondary and primary data along with the final design recommendation along with the scope and further limitation of this research.

## 2.1. Digital Media

Any media device, which includes phones and computers that can be read by a machine, is called digital media. It is basically used to target a large number of potential customers who are willing to utilize it in any means. Digital media refers to text, graphics, animation, audio and video, which are digitally encoded. (Scott and Scott, 2017)

The defining difference between the modern and the early age was the fact that early machine needed physical and mechanical parts. The first media that was truly called digital appeared with digital computers. (Scott and Scott, 2018) Communicating one naked voice is done through creative ways by which a digital website or a platform works with consistency. TV shows and magazines of today are a perfect example of such means. (Griscom, 2017)

Digital form includes photos, music, websites, social media, mobile apps and even computer games. Graphic/web design, interaction design, photography, journalism, animation, illustration and many other things can be done under the study of digital media. It's impactful in many different ways. The content read by people can be in the electronic form as one can read it while travelling or moving all around the world. (Verma and Malviya, 2010) This is a broad field by which the content is generated in different mediums like TV, SMS, Radio or Billboards. Digital media comprises of internet marketing and various search marketing tools. It has created a whole new world in the fields of journalism, entertainment, education, publishing, commerce, and politics. (Scott and Scott, 2018)

### 2.1.1 Advantages / Benefits of digital media

Social media consists of various user-driven channels like Facebook, Youtube, Instagram, and blogs etc. which allow the customers to interact with each other. Different platforms work in a very distinct manner and have unique features. (Cuthbertson, 2018) There are a number of people using social media on a regular basis; every working professional is likely to know at least the core tenets of how these digital tools work. In other words, by converting anything into digital means, it automatically addresses to a larger audience in less period of time and to the right type of audience. Digital Marketing is a broad concept, which brings together any type of marketing products, or services that operates through electronic mediums which include Online and Offline. Unlike traditional methods, digital marketing is more affordable and valuable. One can reach a larger audience in a shorter time-period, as it is the most diverse form of displaying your content. As the content is very interactive, the user tend to indulge themselves with the website.

A successful advertising with a proper social campaign on the social media platform is a win-win for a brand. It can be done in other ways too- by sending emails to their customers or by sponsoring the advertisements. "There are a lot of ways in which these tactics are used so that to target the right type of audience, examples of which are Search Engine Optimization, Search Engine Marketing or Pay per Click Advertising, Social Media Marketing or Content Marketing, Mobile Marketing, Web Analytics, Marketing Automation, Content Writing & Rate Optimization are the popular and most-demanded areas in digital

marketing. This medium is responsible in accelerating growth in the business and usually takes a few months to evolve with failures initially.

People spend a lot of time on social media, digital media allows the consumers to browse and consume content on their mobile phones or tablets. SEO [1] and Google analytics [2] helps to reach more and more number of qualified people over the Internet. Also, it has a lot of potential. (Kaushik, 2016)

## 2.1.2 Popular Channels involved in Digital media

"An important characteristic that sets the digital environment apart from the traditional marketing environment is the ease with which customers can share word-of-mouth information, not only with a few close friends but also with strangers on an extended social network. In the digital environment, customers can post reviews on products, services, brands and firms at firms' websites as well as third-party websites and social networks, and these reviews reach a much larger number of potential customers." (Kannan and "Alice", 2016) There are many channels involved in digital media and without them, digital media is nothing. Digital marketing is dependent on technology.

Two types of practices are involved, Push Digital Marketing Practices and Pull Digital Marketing Practices.

Push marketing involves Direct mail, TV/radio, Print Ads, Tele-marketing, Trade shows, Pay Per Click and many more. By Utilizing direct mail or direct calls, one is pushing the potential clients towards the item or a post. It does a very extraordinary job about attracting the viewers towards a particular objective. Whereas, Pull marketing involves website SEO, Videos, Networking, Blog, Publication, Speaking, Social Media and many more. By publishing a post and doing its SEO in a right way will automatically pull out the right kind of target audience for a particular post.

## a) Search Engine Optimization

"This means search engines (Google, Yahoo, Bing) need to be optimized for the webpage, so that the webpage can be seen on the Internet. Therefore, to find a company's landing page it needs SEO. SEO is basics of internet marketing, and the main idea is to get a good rank when the customer is searching for a specific search term for a particular service or a product." (Paavola, 2017) A well-done SEO is responsible for bringing more traffic to any particular website. Paid search has been best marketed by Google. SEO basically puts a particular website or a particular post to the top ranks of the search result. It has many elements attached to it that need to be implemented to maximize its effectiveness.
The Google content network also operates on a cost per click methodology through which things can get easier. One can get more number of clicks on a webpage and it ranks accordingly.

These ads are images, text, audio or animation, which is creative enough. By searching through the mails, one may often have all sorts of advertisements. This happens because the success of a particular ad is working through number of clicks on it and that is the reason why it is displayed to every customer. One can target the adverts according to the consumer behavior, demographics, or geographic location. It helps in planning the future posts wisely. It also tells what a person actually did on the site and how many of them really conversed. By display advertising one can not only promote an offer, but also can increase the online presence and reach out to the viewers in term of awareness. (Paavola, 2017)

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[1] SEO Search engine optimization is a set of algorithms, which shows trustworthy results and the most relevant ones if a consumer is searching something. (Kim, 2018)

[2] By using Google analytics, one can find out the number of visitors that come to the site, visit what type of pages and spend how much time on a particular page.

**b) E-mail Marketing**

Email- Marketing is the one process by which a brand can get many viewers or customers for their product or a service. By emailing individually, one can gain new customers and improve their relation with the existing one. It can be risky too, as not all the customers are patient enough to check their mails frequently but even if the target is 50% from email marketing, it works. However, there is a possibility if a brand keeps on sending multiple emails, it may be irksome to the customers, as they would often mark the mail as a spam. Advertising through emails is the best way to stay in contact with the customers, as they can have a conversation right away at any point of time. Also it is not expensive and is tech-savvy, if done properly, one can have brand recognition in an effective way. Many advantages come handy with email marketing, very less effort is needed and is affordable enough. As the emails are sent, one can get quick responses, which is time saving as the brand does not have to wait for as to see how a campaign went. Through this, one can broadcast various things like products, notifications, promotions, services, campaigns and many more.

As reported by the BBC, 82% use the web often to check and reply to their emails. It is amongst the most effective tools used in digital marketing, which filters out the audience, and target the market. The reason behind its increasing is that the emails or the messages sent to the customers are filtered and the messages are sent to their mailbox where the viewer actually get the access and then they can read it wherever and whenever they want. Sharing data with the audience via email marketing gives an open response rate as well as increased revenue. (Paavola, 2017)

**c) Social Media Sharing**

Social Media Sharing involves spreading the kind of content on platforms like Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram making it go popular and on the other hand, viral. Sharing any kind of content on social media can be very demanding, as it needs a crisp message properly delivered to the viewers. The brands tend to use these platforms in their part of the sharing content via digital medium. Some brands of course have made the shift from television to digital better than others as a new opportunity has turned up. Thanks to digital video recorders and similar technology, more people are fast-forwarding to this evolving trend. (Groner, 2013)

There are many more networking platforms like Pinterest, Snapchat Google+ and Instagram apart from Facebook, Youtube, Twitter or LinkedIn. Podcasts and Vlogs have also increased the numbers of viewer engagement. Social Media has been highly successful in attracting the customers and keeping them active on their own websites for traffic. It gives the opportunity to have a two-way conversation between brand and the customer as well as between peers. It plays a very important role, brands consider these social media platforms and they make their identities on these networks.

The important 3 ways in which social sharing works for good results. If there is an interesting data and the user wants to open it or click on the link, it's called 'click bait'. By clicking on it, they want to share it amongst their friends as the content is interesting enough. Secondly, social presence, which means the page need to have fresh content to be posted regularly and consistently. Thirdly, the content can be promoted through campaigns; these are engaging enough, as it's always a shareable content. These campaigns and the engaging posts are in a form of a competition, quiz, prize and many creative things. (Paavola, 2017)

The content can be shared, created by the people, content like banners posters or ads. This tool is utilized by many brands to further promote their brand in a better way as the message is further being distributed faster and also in a better way.  It also gets more interaction than any print medium.
(Tritama and Tarigan, 2016)

## 2.2 Fashion Brands

The word Fashion is a form of an individual and a direct form of communication which can be conveyed in many different ways. From clothing, footwear, lifestyle, accessories to makeup, fashion covers it all. (Islam and Khan, 2013) A brand can be a term, sign or a name used to identify a particular good. A well-known brand not only has an eye-catchy label to it but also has an insight to it. Fashion brands keeps on changing with respect of the evolution of the society and its new trends. (Islam and Khan, 2013)

"Some are high street brands and some are luxury brands. Brands like Zara, Topshop and H&M are some of the high street brands which can be reached by anyone and on the other hand, due to the massive media attention, designers like Tom Ford, Stella McCartney and Alexander McQueen has turned themselves into a perfect brand. These high-fashion clothing brands showcase their designs in the main fashion weeks in Paris, New York, London and Milan. (Tungate, 2012). High street brands are affordable, not for specific occasion and has a larger audience. Whereas, Luxury brands offers categories like spirits and wines, fashion which includes cosmetics and perfumes, couture and accessories, ready-to-wear along with jewelry and watches. (Fionda and Moore, 2009). Lyst[3] has shown a round-up of around 10 brands, one can know their rankings accordingly. Gucci taking the top spot, Off-White has risen to the second place.
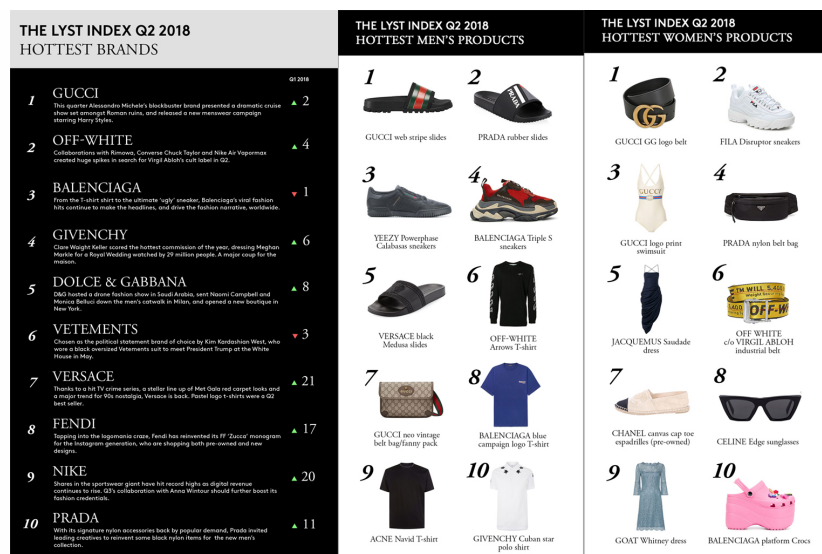


Figure 1:Lyst index of brands and famous men's/women's products (Lyst, 2018)

All of these brands are different in some or the other way. They creatively form a relationship with their high-end customers in a unique manner by differentiating it with other brands. Different brands use different ways to do everything starting from branding, publishing, advertising or involving people. For e.g., Louis Vuitton's have been relentless with their engagement with millennial audience, they've gone a lot deeper with their appointment of Virgil Abloh [4]and they're investing a lot in people. (Shannon, 2018)

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[3] Lyst- BoF was partnered among with Lyst, which is known for being a search platform for fashion that helps in analyzing the behavior of about 70 million consumers annually. (Matera, 2018)

[4] Virgil Abloh- American fashion designer, DJ and music producer, artistic director of Louis Vuitton(menswear) since March 2018. Apart from LV, he is the chief executive officer of Off-White (Milan-brand founded in 2013)

## 2.2.1 Brands on Social Media



Figure 2: For HMoschino Collection, First Looks of Jeremy Scott and Gigi Hadid (Alwin,2018)

Starting from Fendi, Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Nike, Zara, H&M to Kate Spade, have a unique style of portraying themselves out in the market. be it on social media or on the print media, every brand has its own usp. it has to have a vibe to it so that consumers can relate to it and identify it easily. These brands use many techniques to gain any attribute. Burberry's chief creative officer and incoming chief executive officer Christopher bailey told BOF that innovation with the product is the key and it should always tell a story. He believes that heritage and history matter a lot which is important to have a base and then one can build further on top of it. All of this is done through technology" (Harilela, 2014)

Be it a luxury brand or a premium brand, they place social media on the top of their list. Latest collection by H&M with collaboration with Moschino which shows a collections with a mix of street wear with a range of pieces that feel a bit more luxe. They targeted the social media influencers, millennial audience, stylists and celebrities for their promotion. (Greenberg, 2018) Moschino X H&M 2018 includes women's wear as well as menswear. The price range of the collection ranging from $25 to $300. Jeremy Scott even shared a sneak peek of the campaign starring Gigi Hadid, shot by Steven Meisel on Instagram with a caption ''I created this collection as a gift to my fans''. (Lee and Hargrove, 2018) "For me, fashion is about communication. It's how I communicate with the world and share what's on my mind, so social media makes a lot of sense. And I think fans connect with it, because it's genuine. What inspires me, what puts a smile on my face — I share that stuff because it's real. And I think Instagram was made for fashion, because it's so much about individualism and color and shape. It's a really creative medium. It's a tool of communication and aspiration, and so I try to use it to share a little bit of my work and a little bit of my world, but not too much. It's a give and take. Maybe I give a little bit of this, and I hold back a little bit of that. Maybe I post some shots from the studio and then maybe I post some fan art. It's a little peek inside my mind, what I'm looking at and what I love." (Kahn, 2018)

## 2.2.2 Case Studies on Brands

### a) In terms of Social media Influencers- Fendi



Figure 3: 10th Anniversary campaign for Fendi's #MeAndMyPeekABoo handbag (Fendi, 2018)

Fendi, an Italian luxury fashion brand, known for fur, ready-to-wear, leather goods, fragrances eyewear, shoes etc. In 2018, 10th anniversary campaign for Fendi's Peekaboo handbag starred the Kardashians. The images were debuted on the brand's social media channels featuring the trio- North West, Kim Kardashian and Kris Jenner. The iconic family who is know for its appearance showcased a more intimate side in that campaign. (Seth, 2018) In addition to the imagery, Kris, Kim, and North will also star in a short film for the campaign. "The idea was to expand the concept of family, as its part of our history, and we wanted other families of women. In the case of the Kardashians, they are all three of them very strong women, with strong personalities. It's an iconic family, who is known for its appearance, but we wanted to bring more of an intimate side to the table," Silvia Venturini Fendi, creative director of accessories and menswear, told *WWD*. (Fisher,2018)



Figure 4: "According to Lyst, the reality star is responsible for a global sell out across their 12,000 partner stores just hours after she posted this video of her puppy chewing on a fluffy red pom pom bag charm." (kyliejenner, 2018)

Figure 5: Kylie Jenner shows off A Fendi stroller for her daughter- Stormi, which one can custom-order for $12,500 (kyliejenner, 2018)

Kylie Jenner's posted a video of her Dachshund puppy who was chewing her Fendi bag's pom-pom charm and according to Lyst, the reality star's snapchat video caused increase in the sales. Her dog wields serious style influence that the online retailer says they sold out globally across 12,000 partner store that too just hours after she posted that video. The Kardashians are hugely responsibl for fashion searches and high sales surge by posting videos and picture of it. (Blott and Brannen, 2016) She once posted a picture in a Fendi mini- dress pushing a Fendi-branded pram carriage of her baby girl Stormi Webster. The Fendi print became the most popular trend of the season. Not only the Kardashian clan but the supermodels like Bella Hadid and Hailey Baldwin are setting 90's fashion statements by posting pictures on their social media. (Matera, 2018)

**b) In terms of Social Media- Virgil Abloh- Off-White**



Figure 6: Virgil Abloh with the patent transparent Rimowa X Off-White suitcase (Rimowa X Off-White, 2018)

It has been just few years and Virgil Abloh has conquered the fashion world, racking up an array of exclusive collaborations. Supermodels and influencers wearing Off-White belts and the patent transparent Rimowa X Off-White suitcase and posting their pictures on the social media became a trend in itself. In a post on Vogue Paris, Virgil shares ''Social media definitely changed a lot in the past ten years. We used to

buy a lot of advertising in newspapers and billboards but now we have to adapt to where the consumer is spending most of their time, which is on Instagram or Snapchat, looking at their friends but also labels and products and inspiration and that's a huge adaptation for us. Before, labels were not exactly arrogant but they controlled what they wanted to say, one image, one product, this is who we are. Now, we can't control the message, from the label but also the consumer. Back then whoever bought a Rimowa suitcase you could run into them at the airport, but now you can just see them on Instagram, getting likes and all these things. It puts your label in a different position." (Héloïse Salessy, 2018)

## 2.3 Power of Social Media

''Imagine the last time you spent an entire day without checking your Instagram feed, WhatsApp, Facebook or Twitter timeline. This is the world we live in. A world full of posts, 'likes' and 'follows'. We live in an age when communicating has taken on a whole new meaning. With instant messaging and unlimited access, being a cheaper method of communication, raising awareness and generating income by promoting goods and services, social media has revolutionized modern day society. The Internet is building more dominant societies around the world. Globally connected people have now increased in numbers. It is harder to imagine a happier day without using the Internet. Over the course of time, smart phones, tablets etc. have entirely changed social networking and the way we communicate with one another.'' (Olusola, 2018)

### 2.3.1  Social Media Platforms - Twitter, Facebook and Instagram

 Twitter is one of the very popular platforms on social media on which people ''tweet'' about their thoughts. The use of hash tags  that works as a keynote to find a relative subject is the main thing of Twitter. There's always a type of competitive content. The target audience is also definite and the people engage by making conversations by re-tweeting or commenting. (Paavola, 2017)

Facebook allows business to connect with existing customers and create a fresh account. The networking site is becoming viral by attempting all these trends. Facebook works well as a marketing tool as its user friendly and behavior are easy to collect. Facebook offers an option for business with a goal and rules, so that it can grow further. Groups can make to attract the customers and event pages are usually made to inform about the upcoming events with the related information and the Facebook campaigns can easily target the right type of audience. People can actually give negative or positive responses to a particular post or a campaign and anybody can view the likes, comments and reviews. (Paavola, 2017)

Instagram is a photo-sharing app, which allows you to share posts, which can be seen either publicly or by the people who follow the certain page. It gives an option of insights if a page is business profile. Through those insights, one can figure out which post got the highest reach and could further plan for the sponsored posts. A link can also be added of the website to the bio of the page and one can tag, comment and explore it furthermore. "Instagram, which Facebook bought in 2012 for $1bn, has more than a billion active monthly users and has grown by adding features such as messaging and short videos. In 2016 it added the ability to post slideshows that disappear in 24 hours, a copy of Snapchat's popular 'stories' feature." (Gibbs, Lyons and Solon, 2018)

### 2.3.2 Social Media influencers over Instagram

"Influencer marketing is almost ubiquitous in the fashion and beauty realm, but even the biggest companies are still catching up to what does and doesn't work for them, and consumers. With the ever-increasing investment in influencer-led social media campaigns, which mainly happen on Instagram, companies from Adidas to L'Oreal are targeting younger consumers." (Hays, 2017)
 It's a world in which the brands tend to cash in by selling everything from fancy glasses to overpriced shoes, by providing a daily dose of paid content into the news feeds of the applications we tend to use. All of this is done without our knowledge. For the people who will never be fashionable, beach-ready enough or beautiful for them it means that a slow drip-drip of unrealistic lifestyle along with unattainable body expectations that can only make us feel inadequate. (Noor, 2018)

These social media influencers share things, which work according to the particular brand they are promoting on their social media. This contains a sense of originality, which every social media influencer should have. High-profile influencers on these sites such as Instagram typically use the hash tag (#) and mostly they are sponsored by the brand itself. Celebrities and bloggers have millions of followers who watch their channels to see where they are going for holiday, what are they wearing on a daily basis, what all products they are using, the books they read, cafes they visit and many more. By doing all of this, they form a family over that particular social media account. The viewers follow them, their lifestyle and their whereabouts. Similarly, they are responsible enough in inspiring people as well as being their role models. (Rob Davies, 2018) ''These old notions of branding and product placement have morphed into something that is everyday and ubiquitous. Social media is a world of advertisements for ourselves'' (Moore, 2018)

### 2.3.3 Content posted by Social Media Influencers

A few years ago, there were only few people who were involved in social media marketing like Rihanna who was responsible of in taking the coconut water consumption and soon all of this is turning into, as anyone can become an influencer. But social media is much more than that. These social media influencers are being paid for every single post. From being an air purifier to makeup, everything is sponsored and talked well before sharing it on such platforms. (Godwin, 2018) These fashion bloggers are responsible for increasing newness by their thoughts, images, ideas, visuals and many other things. They form a group of followers and encourage interactions with them by reviewing things, posting about them, live chat sessions and promoting them. (Barnes, 2013) "Platforms like Diet Prada [5] a must-follow for fashion lovers, has become a runway referee that calls out designers for copying other designs, also its bio says, "Knocking each other off." The account was one of the first to point out the similarities between Michele's 2018 Gucci resort collection and the designs of Harlem tailor Dapper Dan." This platform also mentions some of the bloggers who are responsible for plagiarism sometimes and is followed by 90,000 followers. (Tietjen, 2017)

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[5] Diet Prada- An Instagram account and website responsible for calling out the copy-cats in fashion industry.

 **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research methods gives you the tools through which one can collect, filter and understand the information to get conclusions for a particular topic. Such type of research is done to convince the people that it has proper validity.(Walliman, 2011) Social media is a link between the brand and the consumers, almost every brand uses social media, for this topic, the research aims on the influence of bloggers in promoting fashion brands over Instagram. The main objective of this research is to know how social media influencers interact with their consumers. The type of research was collected directly from individuals working at the top fashion magazine and from the people who are a part of this situation. By using online survey, one can get a larger target audience easily as internet helps in connecting with people. And a group discussion was also being conducted to know individual perspective of the consumers of social media. (Danlos, 2016)

The research was done in a way of an exploratory study, the observations was quick and efficiently taken. This study was taken by observations and is dependent upon surveys, interviews and group discussions. All of these observations were written down and recorded so that to be analyzed later. Various social media platforms were observed in a way to study further about how the digital worlds on the Internet work. Instagram accounts like Diet Prada was also being observed in terms of their following and engagement of the viewers to know more about online platforms. Both consumers and the fashion writers were approached to get a better understanding about social media influencers and social media platforms over the Internet.

## 3.1. Literature Review:

The very initial part for this study was done with the help of ebooks, research documents, websites, articles and journals. It helped in creating a range of the study for better understanding of the various parts of discovery. Due to these resources, this study provided knowledge of how digital media works and its advantages to a brand. The techniques used by the firms to putting the content online and the way it is curated. The literature review, being a secondary form of data helped in getting in- depth knowledge about social media and various different platforms involved in promoting a fashion brand. It was important to have a this type of a research so as to make a base for a survey being held followed by in-depth interviews and focus group discussion. The review was also necessary to for better understanding of a social media platform named Diet Prada which basically is a platform for fashion lovers which is responsible for calling out designers for copying other designs. This platform also mentions some of the bloggers who are responsible for plagiarism sometimes and is followed by 90,000 followers. (Tietjen, 2017) The review also helped in knowing social media in a more descriptive manner and would be needed for further discussion of the results from findings, interviews, survey and group discussions

## 3.2. Survey

The survey resolved may questions of the topics of Social Media. In the beginning it had very basic questions regarding social media and towards the end the questions were about the influencers and their paid promotions. It helped in providing information in a layman's way about the social media influencers being an intermediate between the brands being promoted and the target audience. Platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook or Twitter helps in creating content for the viewers by the brand. At first, it needs to cover demographics of a person, which includes age, gender, and occupation, and so on those data are important in order to generalize the general profile of the respondents. It further had a focus on the use of social media platforms. It will determine the most used and the whether the viewers are aware of paid promotions and sponsored posts made by the bloggers on Instagram. The survey brought out the overview about so the people rely on the ads done by these influencers and if the influencer marketing impactful or not. This survey also helped in identifying if the consumers even know the difference between normal posts and sponsored posts. (Danlos, 2016)

### 3.3. In-depth Interviews:

In the third phase of the research, in-depth interview with fashion writers of Vogue was used.  The in-depth interview is a useful tool to collect data from experts.

'In the exploration of the subject of Diet Prada being  a social media platform responsible for calling out the fashion designers, stylists involved in plagiarism. The sole purpose of this in- depth interview was to know a)  the impact of such platform and if  a person should have the ability to question in fashion; b) if an enterprise like Diet Prada be relevant in coming years too or will it be a fad; c) Designers or influencers like Kardashians or Jenner be cognizant of Diet Prada. The interview were taken from the fashion writers of one of the top magazines as not everyone is aware of Diet Prada. These interviews were taken using advances computer technology such as emails and skype.

### 3.4.     Focus Group Discussions:

Focus Group discussion was held to know the insights about social media and the bloggers in a descriptive manner. And to know if the consumers have bought anything recommended by a social media influencer. If bought then were they satisfied with the product. To know better about how the consumers feel about paid promotions done by these bloggers and how these sponsored posts affect their life. It is the most commonly used tool for getting in-depth information out of group of people who have different perspective and perceptions. By conducting such discussion, it gives the researcher a background information which may help in further study.

### 3.5. Observation:

The observation method helped in gathering data in an efficient way which was much more quickly done. (Walliman, 2011) Observation from the social media platform- Instagram was also being done to better understand the Instagram accounts and the blogs maintained by social media influencers. The interaction with the consumers or the viewers were noted. Number of followers and the type of content they post for the engagement of their followers. Instagram stories, videos and the pictorial content were observed for to know how social media marketing is done. This method was chosen as the bloggers only post content over the social media and it was important to note this pattern of blogging done by them. Secondly, The Instagram account of Diet Prada was also kept under observation as to know how they post the data on their website along with their Instagram account. The aim of this method was to research about the pattern of the postings to get in- depth knowledge about social media platforms.

**CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS AND INFERENCE**

## 4.1. Literature Review

The result from the literature review established and explained data which helped in forming the outline of primary data. Social media is the main aspect through which the online data is being shared with the viewers. The digital media is a vast medium used for a lot of things. The literature review helped in getting the knowledge about the advantages and the benefits of digital media and how the content can be boosted up on a platform through SEO and Google analytics. Digital marketing involves many other channels helped in sharing the content across the customers. The message communicates faster than any other medium through email marketing and social media sharing.

The literature review also establishes that a fashion brand needs it own digital appearance online for its own benefits. Cleared out the wider concept of promoting a brand in different ways over the social media and how these brand involves other people including the viewers by putting themselves out in the market. In terms of social media influencers, a brand can easily have a rise in their sales. Through the images and the type of content these reality star or these influencers post on their accounts, having a large number of followings lead to promotion of the particular brand. Off-White's Virgil Abloh shares ''Social media definitely changed a lot in the past ten years. We used to buy a lot of advertising in newspapers and billboards but now we have to adapt to where the consumer is spending most of their time, which is on Instagram or Snapchat, looking at their friends but also labels and products and inspiration and that's a huge adaptation for us. Before, labels were not exactly arrogant but they controlled what they wanted to say, one image, one product, this is who we are. Now, we can't control the message, from the label but also the consumer. Back then whoever bought a Rimowa suitcase you could run into them at the airport, but now you can just see them on Instagram, getting likes and all these things. It puts your label in a different position." (Héloïse Salessy, 2018)

However, the content on Social media platforms like Instagram is taken over by these social media influencers. As the people now a days prefer online content over offline that too through I-pads, mobile Phones and many more. Influencer marketing is all about sharing their lifestyle with the world, besides that making different brands a part of their lifestyle and sharing it over their social media accounts. By putting across the content in an aesthetical manner, they make their feeds engaging enough. And the more the merrier, brand prefer choosing bloggers or influencer who are famous to promote themselves.

## 4.2. Survey

This influencer study shows that the social media influencers over the Internet are responsible for consumers to buy a particular product. But the customer does not know when they come across sponsored content on various social media platforms. 68.8% of them know about the paid or sponsored posts but not in detail. By showing them some of the examples of the sponsored posts, very few could recognize the correct type of a paid post. The survey polled people of 15-25 of age out of which 73.8% of the students follow almost 10 fashion bloggers on their social media account. They follow these bloggers on Instagram followed by Facebook, Snapchat and Youtube. About 40% of them said that seeing the sponsored posts annoys them. Furthermore, half of the audience told that they found a brand on social media because of the third party posts. They've even un-followed an influencer because of they think that the influencer posts too much sponsored posts.

## On which of the following sites are you subscribed to or follow celebrity* or popular accounts? (Tick all that apply)
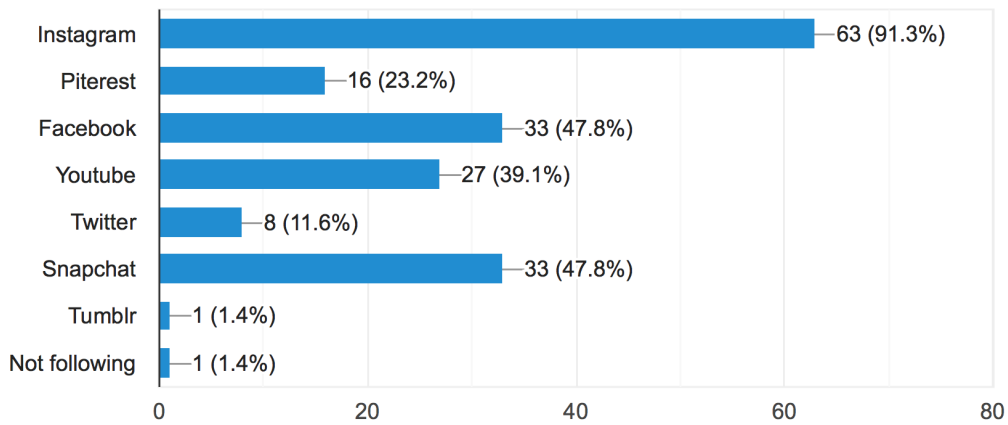
69 responses



## Do you know about sponsored and paid posts?
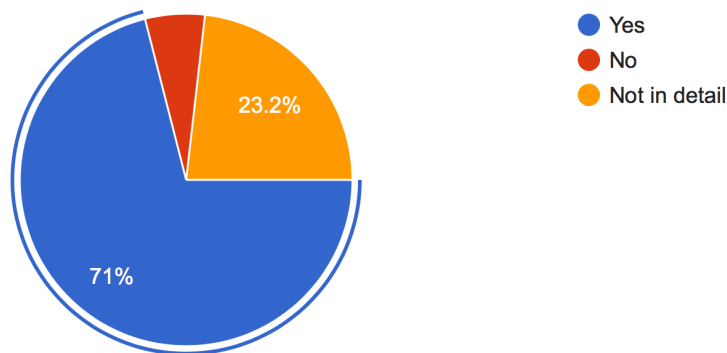
69 responses



Figure 7: Survey Questions

People actually buy products, which are recommended by these bloggers via these platforms but hardly, meet their expectations. Out of beauty, apparel, fitness, entertainment, food and beverage and technology were amongst the top category. Many respondents didn't know about the very commonly used hash tags like #paid, #sponsored, #partner, #ad, #collaborationwith . They never noticed these hash tags and didn't know the purpose behind it. Half of them picked #sponsored, bloggers never use this term in their posts. #incollaborationwith and #paid was most widely recognized followed by #ad and #partner. Majority of the respondents were unaware of the advertised content on social media. But when the respondents were asked hypothetically, that if a sponsored post change your sentiment about the blogger? 50.8% said ''sometimes''.

When asked about the favorite online personality and why they follow them, some people mentioned 'Kylie Jenner and Kim Kardashian as they are unabashedly real'. It's ironical as of how social media represents a particular person and people tend to believe them. By reading the reviews of this question, it shows that people are more likely to be attracted to the real and authentic content instead of sponsored or paid posts. However, they strongly agree that social media profiles are behaving as paid actors in a role and their content/posts are the adverts.

## 4.3   In-depth Interview

The in-depth interview with the brand owners/managers was done simultaneously with the observations of luxury retail outlets and products survey. The interviews were restricted only to the Luxury Fashion brands of Indian origin, whereas the observations were done on both Indian and International Luxury fashion brands. To qualify the brands as luxury merchandise the Luxury Council norms as mentioned above and in the literature review were considered. (See paragraph three of Section 2.5 of the Literature Review) People working in Vogue magazine that were considered for this study.

Rujuta Vaidya, a Fashion and E- commerce Editor of Vogue.in. When asked about social media she shared her views by saying that it is one of the strongest means to communicate, it is a way a story is distributed which are primarily digitally and has a very high impact on the viewers. She uses Instagram primarily, an thinks that social media has changed many things in fashion from the last few years. About Diet Prada she said that the people behind them whatever they say is little more powerful. They have a wide chain of people who are supporting their cause, they are funny to and have done a good job in sensationalizing things, which has brought them eyeballs, and what they are doing is unique. They are not saying anything wrong by pulling out people who are copying other people's work, they're talking about abuse in fashion and media, and they're talking about people being racist like the whole Dolce & Gabbana thing happened. All of these are important as for the consumer who is really buying labels should also understand where fashion comes from and if a label is unethical because it makes good clothes doesn't mean one should support them. DP is important because it has an insider as well as an outsider's perspective. People are now genuinely scared and they will think twice before stealing someone's designs in the market and making profit out of it as they are no longer allowed to steal ideas. And It can be fad unless it goes out of the shape of Instagram and becomes maybe a blog.

Lauren Indvik, Head of News and Features of British Vogue is a freelance journalist who writes about fashion, entertainment and retail. She's also the editor- in chief of fashionista.com. When asked about social media she said that she uses Instagram and Twitter mainly. According to her, Diet Prada isn't invisible, exactly - the founders have been named and profiled in BoF and the New Yorker. It's a fresh voice and she doesn't always agree with it, but she thinks that they have an engaging manner of storytelling. DP calls out certain things by having the ability to question in fashion, she supports free speech and a culture of criticism, whether in fashion or elsewhere. They are advocates for originality in design. Copyright laws are not often favorable to young designers, for example in the US; DP offers another recourse of sorts. Anecdotally, Diet Prada is helping in promoting authentic and original designs and she has heard of designers who are worried a design might end up on DP. It will be relevant in the coming years too but it depends how they evolve. She also thinks that Diet Sabya being a substitute of DP, possibly successful enterprises are often imitated. In her view it's good to be cognizant of such things in general.

Priyanka Khanna, the Associate Fashion Feature Director of Vogue India regularly uses Instagram, Twitter for catching up on news, and sometimes, check Facebook. Social Media according to her has made fashion more inclusive and democratic. It gives everyone a seat at the table, so as to speak. When asked about Diet Prada, she says that it's a great page with incredible research by calling out copycats and any other negative behavior in the fashion industry. In her view it's important to have a voice on social media and to

use that voice in a positive manner. Every industry must have checks and balances, and in many ways DP serves that in fashion. She thinks that DP is not like other pages, it's ensuring that designers and houses are not complacent and also that credit is given where credit is due. It has a singular viewpoint and voice that makes it unique. It has definitely made designers and stylists more aware as inspiration is everywhere but it's still important to tread the line between inspiration and imitation, so she think they will continue to be relevant. By doing all of this she definitely thinks that it has made its followers more informed shoppers. Also the influencers should not be scared of them but should be aware of them.

Alessia Glaviano, who handles Art and Photography of Vogue Italia and is the Brand Visual Director of the same. She uses Instagram mainly and believes that social media breaks the forth wall of fashion. When asked about Diet Prada, she said that she doesn't like DP, as there is too much violence and hatred on social media. She thinks that some of the things, which they brought up, were necessary and good but it feels like it's a bit of a gossip thing going on. According to her, one should definitely have the ability to question in fashion. Diet Prada has a lot of followers; in whatever they say or whatever they post on their social media platform, it has a lot of impact with the people. Also, sometimes the things they bring up are appropriate, its something we all think about whereas, most of the time she feels as if it's a bit gossipy and they try to find something bad all the time. All of these blogs like DP are getting a lot of attention at the moment and it does have a lot of influence on everyone as what happened with Dolce & Gabbana.

Nitya Chablani, Digital Feature Editor of Vogue.in uses only Facebook and Instagram. According to her social media gives everyone across the globe access to the newest, freshest, coolest trends, and it works the same way in every field, be it food, culture, art, movies, beauty. When asked about Diet Prada she thinks that it can sometimes be negative, but at the same time, pages like DP do also help keep plagiarism in check. The fun, tongue-in-cheek captions are always a treat for people who use the page solely for entertainment. And it's very important to have an opinion, but not necessarily to stand out. In DP's case, the page is based on shock value and has become a necessity to have an opinion on every so-called copy. But for other pages and personalities, it's just important to be true to what that page values. She finds DP as a fun, cheeky page to follow for a peek into the fashion world. But the page is powerful and well informed too. DP was the first page to highlight the existence of racism in Dolce & Gabbana's latest China-oriented ad campaign. Clearly, DP's reach and influence is substantial. It's playing a strong role in highlighting not-so-original work in front of fashion enthusiasts, and in the case of consumers who aren't as well-versed in fashion, the page helps educate them in an interesting, new way. Also, as long as DP provides consumers with fresh, new content, it will remain relevant. It was the first page of its kind when it came out first and already has a website too.

Praachi Raniwala, a freelance fashion and lifestyle journalist who is a content creator and a brand consultant. She writes for Vogue India and Condé Nast Traveller. When asked about social media she said she uses Facebook and mostly Instagram. The main focus was about the impact of Diet Prada, which she thinks is a classic example of modern day investigator fashion journalism done right. According to her, they do ample research before sharing anything with the viewers, if you read their captions they are very informative, there's references, there's history, there's solid facts and she thinks that an industry with the amount of plagiarism did need an account like this. It helps in starting off the conversations, it helps in promoting the concept of accountability and responsibility for your actions and just being more conscious of what a brand puts out, especially when it's a bigger brand and have this kind of platform. She thinks that DP has already started affecting the industry as brands and designers have become more conscious now of what they put in their collection. They can't take the audience for granted anymore because the people following this account have become more aware. People are demanding more from the brands and they don't want to be taken for a ride. If one follow's the whole Dolce & Gabbana incident with DP, it had a huge impact. The D&G market in China and amongst the Southeast Asians were hit in a way like one can never imagine. Her take on Diet Sabya is, some of the copies that they call out are legit and genuine and some are far reaching she feels that DP which has a more serious and factual tone, DS is a bit bitchy, they need to

turn it down as this should not be a mean girl platform, it is a form of modern day investigative journalism so they need to adopt a more kinder tone.

All of these professional are working in the top most magazine i.e. Vogue profiles as head of features, digital editor and writers. The outcomes of the interviews were conducted from all of the segments starting from brand consultant, brand visual director, head of news/ features, and digital writers to a freelance writer. All of these people with different personalities have defined that Instagram is the most used social media platform followed by Facebook and Twitter. According to them Diet Prada is an account used for raising awareness and designers and the people working in the industry are cognizant of it. They think that the tone used by them is sometimes harsh but the page is informative enough. Also the owners behind them are not just the people working behind this page but they also have good knowledge about fashion. Therefore, all of these people were in the opinion that social media platform is used for communication and DP is one of them.

## 4.4. Focus Group Discussion

A focus group discussion was conducted with regular consumers of social media to understand the impact of social media influencers and to know if the customers are aware of the paid and sponsored posts they do.

The focus group had six participants and was drawn from a group who are regular consumers of social media. All of the participants are college students of 18-22 years of age.

All of them were of different backgrounds starting form law, fashion, psychology, business etc. Everyone had social media accounts on Instagram and use Instagram and Snapchat the most. All of the focus group members are pursuing their undergraduate from colleges of Delhi NCR area and did their schooling from Faridabad. The members indulge themselves in extra curricular activities like Karate, Yoga, Badminton and Cricket.

The outcome of the focus group discussion indicates that the members of the group thinks that social media is a way of connecting to people and it helps in spreading knowledge. They were aware of social media influencers and in their view an influencer is a person who are famous, who engages themselves with people to promote a brand and has a large number of followers. They showcase their lifestyle through their social media accounts. An influencer is different from an average social media user in a means that they portray their style by posting professional shoots, each picture has a purpose behind it and every post is planned accordingly. Whereas, a normal user shares general pictures of themselves. By visiting the influencers feed, they tend to watch the Instagram stories and then the pictures on their feed followed by videos or IGTV. An Instagram story is a short cut for the viewers to see what all a blogger does in the daily routine. Out of 100, they prefer to take 10% of the inspiration for their daily outfit preferences. They think that all of these bloggers are also copying each other for style tips in clothing but few of them are unique too. When showed the print outs of the examples of paid promotion and sponsored posts, very few members could actually recognize the paid posts. They are well aware of influencer marketing but are not sure of. They also think that the giveaways and the contests conducted by them are all fake and a means to increase their following. Out of six participants only 2 have bought a product recommended by a blogger and rest doesn't believe in recommendations, as they know that the influencers are paid. They think that its better to take a style tip or to learn a makeup technique/tactics from these bloggers rather than trusting their sayings. They think that they influence a layman in some or the other way by putting up the content, which a layman can relate to. They are somewhere influenced by them as they prefer to takeaway the techniques rather than taking the product recommendation. The group very well agreed to the thought that influencers make it obvious when they do such paid posts. In their view, it's the brand which has a

certain positioning in the market which lets the people buy the product and it doesn't depend on the blogger promoting it. They gave the example of a makeup brand, Hudabeauty, It has a certain positioning in the market that the bloggers and then the customers use it. Also, Brands are sold because of their brand value and the brand name not because of a blogger. Girls take inspirations for their personal assistance and makeup techniques; on the other hand, boys take inspiration in styling themselves. They also get inspirations from their lifestyle in terms of fitness and food.

## 4.5. Observation

The observations of the social media account of Diet Prada revealed many things. Their pattern of posting the content through digital medium was observed in a detailed manner. They conduct Polls of the befre and after of a designer's design. By posting about original design and the copied design, they engage with their audience. From fashion weeks and MetGala to street style award ceremonies, they cover it all. They tend to show people from where the fashion comes and what all goes behind a perfect design by showcasing designer's archives. By comparing it with the copied and the original deign, they ask '' who did it better?''. They even have a website for their page from which one can buy things like slogan T-shirts, caps etc. They even update their website with a whole story of a post shared on their social media.

**CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS**

## 5.1 Impact of social media influencers in terms of paid and sponsored posts for a fashion brand

To find out the role of social media influencers in promotion done for a brand, Focus Group discussion and Survey was held. Due to the findings of the survey and the group discussion, it showed that the consumers have been through these paid posts but they do not know about it in depth. They think that it's a money making process done for promotion and the consumer does not rely on the product reviews done by the these influencers, They think that its more about the brand value which matters and less about the tactics used by the brands to promote it. The brand name should be good enough and they'll be convinced to buy a product of that brand.

They follow these bloggers on Instagram, Facebook and on Snapchat.They buy Apparel, food, beverages and many other products online. They even know that these bloggers use hashtags like #incollaborationwith, #ad, #paid, #sponsored for these paid posts which makes it quite obvious for the viewers to recognize the type of promotions they do. The main takeaway from the survey was that the consumers strongly agreed that these social media influencers are just the intermediate between the brands being promoted and the customers who are unaware of such sponsored posts. The viewers tend to watch the Instagram stories as they think that its it shortcut to find out about the lifestyle of these bloggers.

They tend to be influenced by the lifestyle but not that much that they buy a particular product, which they know, is promoted. They prefer to consume the makeup techniques and the daily skin routine but do not trust the product reviews done by them. They think that there is a race between these influencers to gain more followers and are well aware of the paid and sponsored posts done by these bloggers.

## 5.2 Diet Prada, a social media platform's role in fashion industry and its relevance

As social media make fashion more accessible and is the strongest means of communication which makes a huge impact. Diet Prada is the first platform to keep a check on plagiarism done by the designers by going through their archives. A social media observation and in- depth interviews form people working in the top most fashion magazine was done to know better about DP and its existence. Diet Prada is a platform and has a website too, the content posted by them involves history, racism, abuse and everything related to fashion which is done in a wrong way.

It gives you a sneak peek of the happenings of fashion with and inside viewpoint. It's a cheeky page, which sometimes have a harsh tone towards a topic. It's all about starting a new conversation by making people aware of the brands. It's like a modern day investigator journalism which keeps a track on the copy-cats of fashion. Its already affecting the market as designers have become more aware as they can't take the audience for granted anymore. And it's not a fad as it had started a big revolution on the contrary of accountability and responsibility of knowing that a brands customers are well aware. For example, The Dolce & Gabbana market in China got affected when the Show got cancelled. It has a huge impact on the people by making them aware of what's going inside the fashion industry and a customer has the full right to know where the brand comes from before buying any of its products. Whereas Diet Sabya a copy-cat of Diet Prada is a bit bitchy. Many Pages like Diet Influencers or Diet Malhotra have been made after Diet Prada's evolution. The way their content is portrayed in terms of the before/after's and the stories posted by them is very engaging. Until and unless they fit into the shape of Instagram protocol of being up-to-date and engaging, they will be relevant enough in future.

**CHAPTER 6- CONCLUSION**

## Conclusion

The research about digital media and the fashion brands have highlighted the fact that social media is a means of communication used In almost everything. And the brands adapt influencer marketing for to promote themselves on social media through blogger. Instagram being the most hyped platform is used the most and followed by Facebook or Twitter. This helps in engaging with the large number of audience via these bloggers and spreading the message in a more quick way as the information travels faster on Internet. The viewers actually tend to indulge themselves with these bloggers that they trust the recommendations made by them to buy a product. But it's the brands name, which is important than the recommendations, which the customers know, are paid. Most of the times, the social media influencers make it too obvious by the sponsored posts that it somewhat annoys the customers. But the innovation of this social media influencing is so impactful to the customers. Plus, the social media platform like Diet Prada helps calls out the copy-cats of fashion. They are in a way broadcasting about many topics in fashion and calling out designers, stylists and many more. It is a page, which helps in making the viewers aware about the product and the story behind the brand. This research was done by conducting a survey and discussions amongst the consumers or viewers of social media, Interviews from the digital writers of the fashion magazine, which gave a huge indication of the impact of social media influencers in promotion of the brands. This research is only the beginning of a much talked
about topic which can be later on focus on this changing industry with its relation to social media platforms.

**CHAPTER 7 – LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

## Limitations of the Study

As the thesis is for undergraduate study purpose, the scope of the research was only limited to very few resources available like journals, e-books, websites and research papers. As a result, the argument is well supported by the evidences but one cannot assume especially when it comes to plagiarism. One has to have the correct information and the evidence. Also, the research was only limited to the influencers of Indian market. If asked about Diet Prada for the research, influencers were not comfortable and were refusing to answer in the context of plagiarism.

**DESIGN BRIEF**

**Design Brief**

The discussions, findings and conclusion all comes into one agenda, which is to establish a communication strategy between Social media influencers and their consumers. The primary findings tell that people are not aware of the paid collaborations done by these influencers and they cannot recognize it every time they come across a post. They don't rely on the product reviews done by these bloggers over Social media as they think that its not reliable enough. Its to educate them about the paid collaborations endorsed by these influencers in order to sell a product.

From the derived conclusion, the design brief points at the possibility of creating a comic book about the inside story of a social media bloggers life. The book would be having hand-drawn digital illustrations along with a story line, which would be in context to social media blogging and plagiarism. It enables people to dwell in the topic at a closer level and in an interactive manner. Thus, a comic book was chosen to in order to communicate it.

## **DESIGN VISUAL REALIZATION**

**CONCEPT**
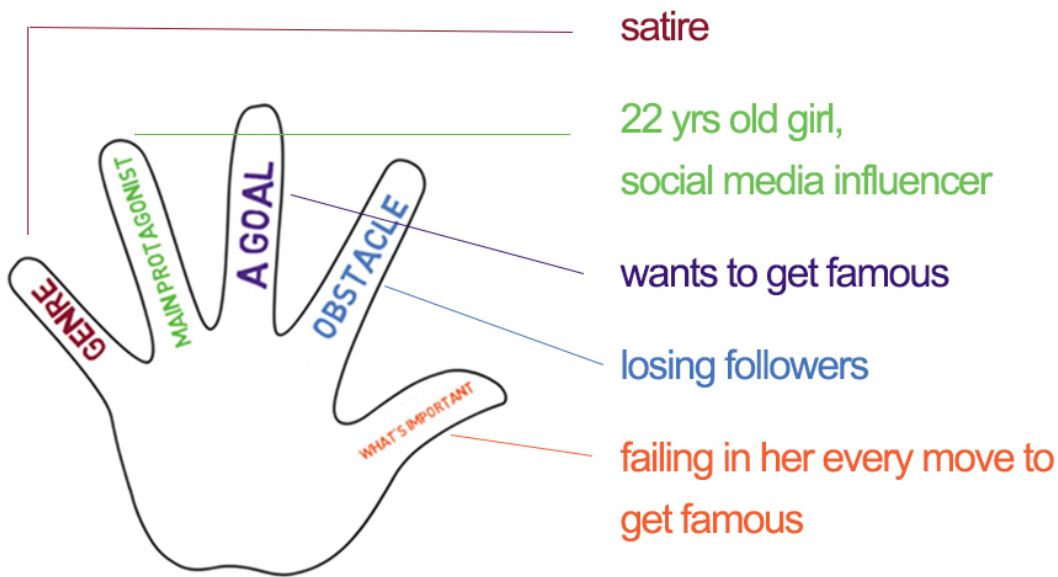


Figure 8: Concept of the comic book (Shirin Rajput)

**PLOT**

Serah, a social media influencer who tries every possible way to get famous, her main aim is to get followers on her social media page on Instagram.

**WHO IS IT ABOUT? (PROTAGONIST)**

My protagonist (Serah Shetty) is a 22-year-old girl who is a social media influencer by profession. An architecture student who completed her degree and decided to be a social media blogger has dark skin brown hairs and some piercings. She is a cheerful and a bubbly girl who can do anything and everything for attention on the Internet. Instagram is her life and can do anything for her followers. She can be manipulated, as she trusts people easily. She usually posts a lot on her stories, dance videos and packaging videos of the media kits, also does live sessions to interact with her followers through social media.

**STORY**

Serah Shetty is a social media blogger who is sitting in her room and decides to make a blog so she designs a website on wix.com and an Instagram account. She then makes a weekly planner, which has all her shoots, shopping, brand event lined up and notes. She reads several documents on how social media works. It's a Monday morning, she plans a shoot as she needs to posts some pictures on her account. She couldn't decide what to wear so for the outfits, she plays Dressup games to get inspirations for her shoot. Presses the hint button and screenshots different outfit styles from a game. Makes a style board for her upcoming shoot, Opens up an app called Pinterest and types #OOTD, #minimalclothes, #minimalstyle, #outfitstyle, #outfitdetails on the keyboard. By doing this she gets several pictures and takes screenshots for her outfit inspirations. Next, she decides the makeup look as well as the location for the shoot. The next morning, she is at the shoot location along with her photographer and the makeup artist.
After her makeup is done, she shows those outfit screenshots to her photographer and instructed him the type of lighting and camera angles. She tries to copy that exact pose from Pinterest couldn't balance on the platform. She was falling and making weird expressions. After making this effort for around one hour, she finally was able to strike a pose but she slipped and fell into the garbage lot below the platform. The photographer clicks her funny pictures and then picks her up. Her day was wasted and she went back

home. She woke up the next day, checks her Instagram and saw that the photographer has uploaded funny images of her falling into the garbage lot.  She lost around 100 followers as many people saw those images.

She decided to post some selfies to gain attention and to win back her followers. She even shared a story, as she wanted photographers for her next shoot. She was panicking so she called her best friend Samantha to know ways to get more followers, Samantha told her to make lame videos on Tiktok app. She knew she shouldn't do it but she agreed to it. In her closet, she makes some videos and posted it on her social media. The next morning, she saw that she lost double the followers and she was all over the internet. People were sharing her posts and making fun of her, Missmalini.com posted an article about her that she was trolled as she posted Tiktok videos to get famous. Meanwhile, Samantha's following increased.

She was sad so she decided to go for shopping to the mall. In the Zara store, she was approached by a supplier named Robby who told her to design clothes for her and she would have her own brand along with increase in followers. For two days, she took inspiration from brands like H&M and Zara, designed clothes and uploaded on the website. As many people were buying her designs and she was making money out of it, she once got a letter. Opened it and was shocked that Zara has sent her a lawsuit and wanted her to pay Rs. 50,000/- for copying her designs. Without any further delay, she decided to pay them. The next day she checked her bank balance, it was NIL. The next day, her bell rang and as fashion week was near the corner she got a parcel from MAC cosmetics. She decorates the box with flowers and posted a beautiful picture and some videos of her unpacking those newly launched products. She then posted around 50 stories of that same product. She noticed that few of her following increased. She did the same for days, she even contacted few brands to send in some products for her to review. Got a parcel from Nykaa and posted around 50 stories but was losing followers. Decided to post a poll on her Instagram to know whether people want stories like these or not. Majority of them refused as they were irritated by her. She still decided to post 50 more stories of the same product. The next day she wasn't able to use Instagram so she got a notification that she is blocked.

## LOOK AND FEEL

Mood boards of different elements were made, including type of layouts, which were inspired by that of a graphic book and a comic book. Type of cover pages, which was according to a comic book, not very loud but a bit colorful. Illustrations references were taken mostly from Refinery29, these digital illustrations will be hand drawn by Shirin Rajput. Mood board, which gives a whole vibe of the comic along with fonts, were decided.

Figure 9: layout board for the comic book  (webcomicalliance, silveragecomic, vectorstock)



Figure10: illustration board for the comic Book (Refinery29, byisabel, Louisavcannell, Alexsandro Palombo)
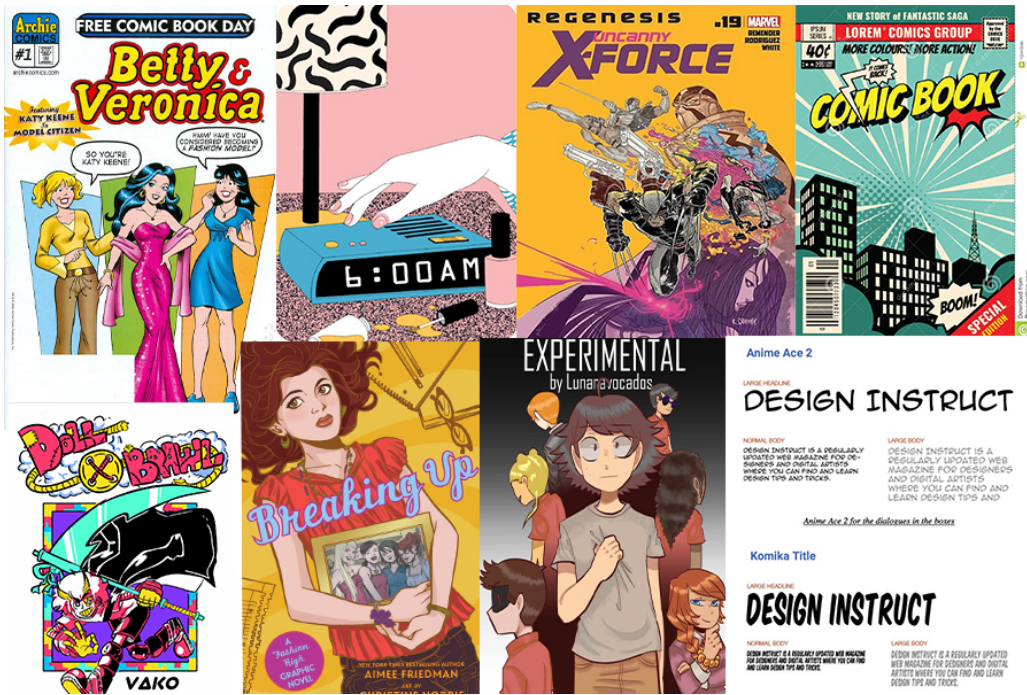
Figure 11: cover and font board ( Lauracallaghanillustration, archiecomic, marvelfandom, goodreads, dafont)
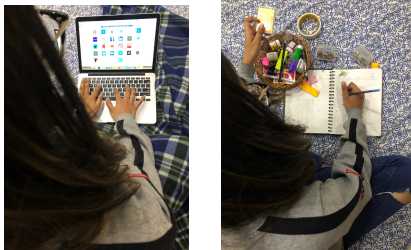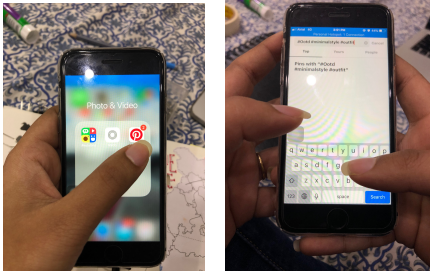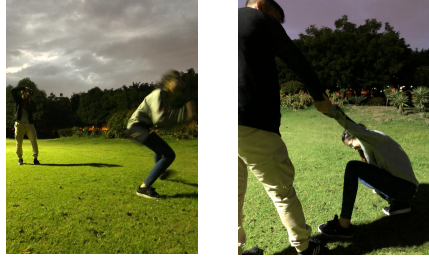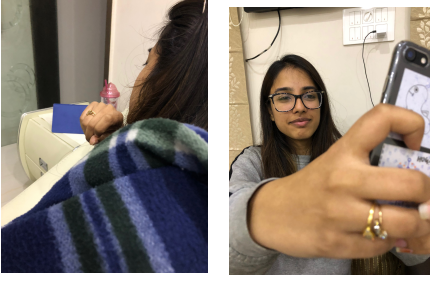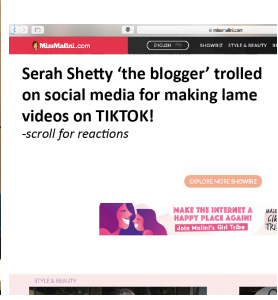


Figure 12: Mood Board (Refinery29, Shirin Rajput, byisabel)
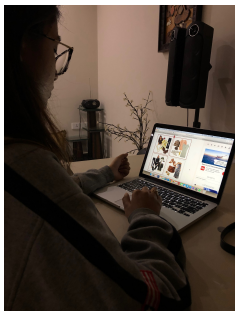
## STORYBOARD

Frame by frame images were clicked so that it can be drawn. These images were placed on the software and were drawn digitally by a digital pen. Storyboard helps in putting up the storyline in an order. The first story towards story building was to write a screenplay and then make a storyboard. Screenplay was written and according to that, the story board was built.

(the following table has been cited at the end of the storyboard)

| | |
|---|---|
| Makes a website on wix.com and Plans everything in a planner- shoots, calls, meetings, vacation etc. |  |
| For outfit inspiration, play dress up games Presses the hint button and collects the screenshots. |  |
| Opens Pinterest app for more inspiration and Types- #ootd, #minimalclothes, #minimalstyle, #outfitstyle, #outfitdetails to get the precise looks. |  |
| Designs a styleboard with all the outfits options. |  |
| Tries on some makeup looks and decided the location for the shoot. |  |

| | |
|---|---|
| At the shoot locations, shows those screenshots for poses, angles and lighting and Tries to copy the exact same pose but fails miserably. |  |
| Copies the poses but fails, fell into a garbage lot and Photographer picks her up. |  |
| Photographer posted her funny pictures, meanwhile she loses followers. |  |
| Wakes up the next morning, checks her planner and Posts some selfies to engage her audience. |  |
| Shared a story as she wanted a photographer for a shoot. |  |
| Calls her friend Samantha, and asks different and interesting ways to gain followers. |  |

| | |
|---|---|
| Makes Tiktok videos as told by her friend Samantha and Trolled on Missmalini.com for posting lame videos on her social media. |  |
| Goes for shopping to source new clothes and Reached the mall. |  |
| Met a supplier named Robby, who asks her to design clothes and launch a brand of her own to get followers back. |  |
| Copies designs from Zara and H&M and Designs her set of clothes by taking inspiration from Zara. |  |
| Got a lawsuit from Zara, has to pay Rs.50,000 for plagiarism and Pays them off and her bank balance is NIL. |  |

| | |
|---|---|
| Fashion Week was around the corner, she got a parcel from MAC cosmetics.<br>Decorates the Mac Kit with other products and clicks a picture, posts 50 stories on her Instagram. |  |
| Contacts different brands to send her products so to get content for her social media blog. |  |
| Got a parcel from Nykaa, posts 50 more stories but lost followers. |  |
| Posted a poll to ask if the audience wants more stories like before.<br><br>Got a response- 75% said no but still posted 30-50 stories. |  |
| next day, was not able to use Instagram and got a notification that she has been blocked. |  |

Table 1: Storyboard of the comic by Shirin Rajput

**COVER PAGE**



Figure 13: Cover Page of the comic (Shirin Rajput)

**HAND DRAWN ILLUSTRATIONS**
(the following illustrations has been cited at the end.)
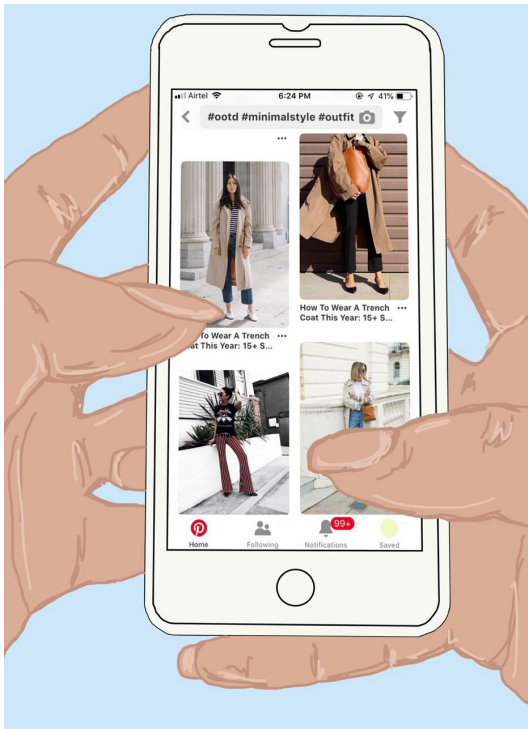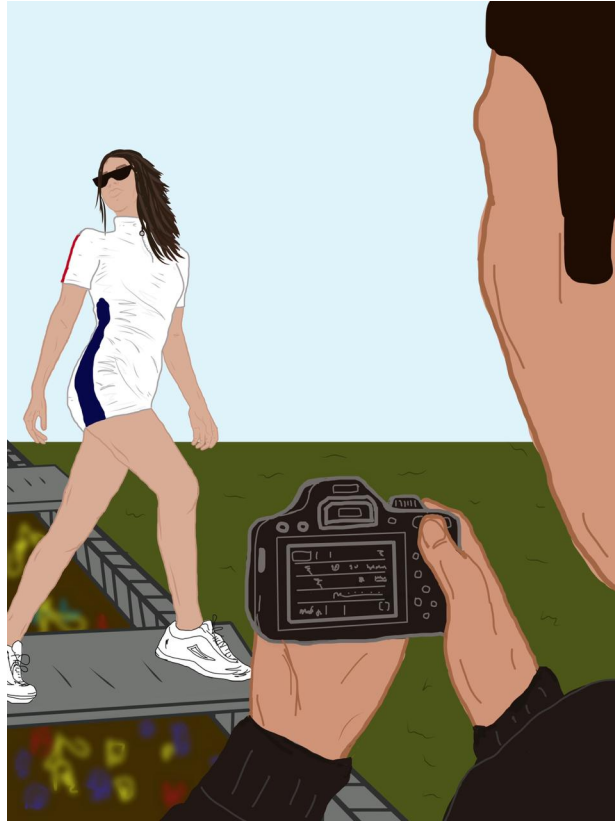
Figure 14: Hand drawn illustrations from the comic (Shirin Rajput)

## LAYOUT SPREADS

(the following illustrations has been cited at the end.)

Figure 15. Spreads from the comic (Shirin Rajput)

**BUSINESS MODEL**

*THE EXPOSÉ* is an upcoming comic book based on the real time observation by Shirin Rajput, written, designed and illustrated by Shirin Rajput. This document gives the viewers, an insight of how a person should be accountable and responsible for their actions in context with fashion blogging done by the budding influencers.

## PROJECT SUMMARY

Based on the story by Shirin Rajput, The Exposé is a comic/graphic book about a fashion blogger who tries every possible way to get followers but at the end gets blocked by Instagram.

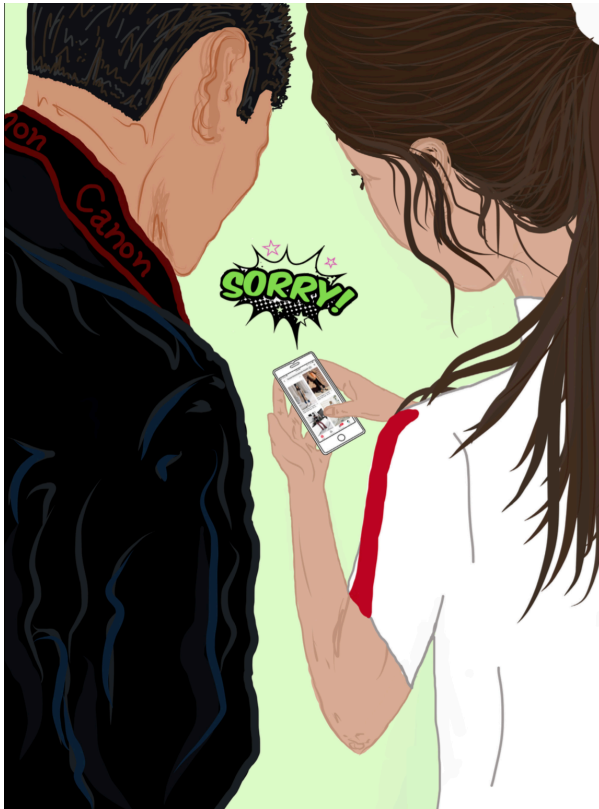Independent designer Shirin Rajput has taken this project in the budget of INR.30,000/-. To the end, The Exposé is a self-made comic book under the mentorship of Pearl Academy which will be available online on Google book, Kindle and Amazon.

The Exposé being curated independently on various digital platforms has versatility in the scope of target market. The following pages will lead you to general idea of what investors and contributors have helped in evolvement of The Exposé.

## SYNOPSIS

Serah, a 22-year old social media blogger tries almost every possible way to get followers on her social media. By planning her shoots to posting pictures on her Instagram about brands, she tries everything to keep her followers entertained and engaged. It becomes difficult for her to manage the following so she tries unlikely ideas to maintain that. Even by doing bizarre things, she fails to at the end.

## MARKETABLE ELEMENTS

-Digital world
Almost every teenager has a social media account and are well aware of the trends over the internet. The Exposé has its social media accounts too which will help the book to be popular from a base level.

-On-Going Trend over Instagram
People of 18-35 age limit uses Instagram amongst other social media applications (Kowalewicz, 2018), By trying out new features, teens are caught up with social media and for them, it's part of their life. By promoting The Exposé on Instagram, people will be cognizant of the fashion faux-pas. It also gives the book a resourceful as well as a flexible element.

## TARGET AUDIENCE

The Exposé will attract to more of a teenage category along with the people working in the fashion industry. Also, a target audience inspired by fashion blogging and people who still like to read comics. People working in the creative field are also a part of the target market. The Exposé will help the teens to be educated about how fashion blogging works and plagiarism is prohibited or outlawed.

## AUTHOR'S STATEMENT

Story-telling is never an easy job to manage. The initial thought process of Exposé began with the launch of a webpage named Diet Prada. An anonymous Instagram page which helped in knocking out on various designers for copying each other's works. Diet Prada gained influence when the Dolce-Gabanna show was being addressed and was canceled in China due to racist marketing campaign. Having an opportunity of studying in a fashion school which lead me to work with Vogue India, one of the top magazine for fashion, gave me a strong perspective of taking responsibility for our actions. According to me, everyone should be

equally credited for their work and people should respect that.

I strongly believe that being a fashion communication student, it's important to have a voice of your own. Whether it's a designer, writer or an artist, everyone should be accountable for their actions. One cannot take the audience for granted anymore and people should be well-aware about the brands before investing in them.

As a writer at Vogue.in, it gave me an insight of how a person is responsible for each and every word being published online. And if mistaken then how it can lead to various ups and down for the entity as a whole. Surrounded by well-versed writers and editors, I became more conscious about plagiarism. It's one of the essential part which should be taught in every fashion school. Before making any major fault, people should be tutored about plagiarism practiced over the internet.

Many high-end fashion brands are being published on Diet Prada almost every day. Instagram, an app used for social media blogging is one of the major fragment of people copying each other. Hence, The Exposé was put together by keeping plagiarism on one hand and social media influencers on the other. Thanks to them.

According to me, social media influencers lack originality as we can see hundreds of accounts over the internet who call themselves a blogger but there are only few, who have distinctiveness of their own. The name Exposé is inspired from Diet Prada which is self-explanatory. The story is inculcated through different observations and real time experience. Inspired from generation who can even risk their mental health in showcasing their dual personality over Instagram. It gives you an inside story of the world of a social media blogger who tries every possible way to get famous.

The artwork is hand illustrated and has a playful effect to it. The vibe of the comic supports the fashion element designed mainly for educating people. It not only gives you an insight of a fashion blogger's life but also tells you how they work personally and with the brands. The Exposé is not only a book but it's and experience of its own.

## FINANCING OPTIONS

As an independent artist, the financing options will be- Private Investment and Collaboration of artists. As the book will be self-published online, private investors can directly invest in the publishing the book. All the profits and the risks will be shared equally along with full credits given to each and every person involved.

Collaboration of Artists- For further editions, contributors including writers, illustrators, designers, color artists, production manager, editors etc. can collaborate in support of The Exposé. They will be credited equally.

## PUBLISHING

The Exposé will be self-published through the link- kdp.amazon.com, by choosing options such as book format, title information, interior design, cover design, distribution and pricing, I will be publishing the book with my own freedom.

### i. Xpress Publishing
One can use the self-service platform to publish the book online by just uploading the pdf document.

## ii. Advantages

a. Publish the book faster as I will not have to wait for months to hear back the response from the publisher as I will be having full control over the timing.

b. Rights will be retained to my book as I don't have to sign over my rights to any publisher. I believe that it's my story and I should be the one to get the rights for the same.

c. Receive real time sales by not waiting for a year to know how the book is doing and get informed every time a copy is sold.

d. By earning maximum profits from my book sales and get paid every month.

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# **MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS**

I am going to market and promote the comic book in following ways:

**1. Capture Email Addresses**
Make a list of people involved as collaborators or the people responsible for giving advice throughout the project, in order reach larger audience. Also, collaborations including illustrators, bloggers and designers who promote this kind of content.

**2. Social Media**
**a. Instagram**
Instagram is where The Exposé can get the maximum audience. As pages like Diet Prada started off by a simple anonymous account which used to post various posts of designers copying each other. The Exposé will have an Instagram account named- keep it real, with few illustrations designed in type of a meme. Many stories will be shared about the bloggers copying eachother and wearing fakes along with that, polls will be conducted over Instagram to get more engagement from the audience. Instagram is a versatile application on which one can add stories, posts, polls or IGTV video.
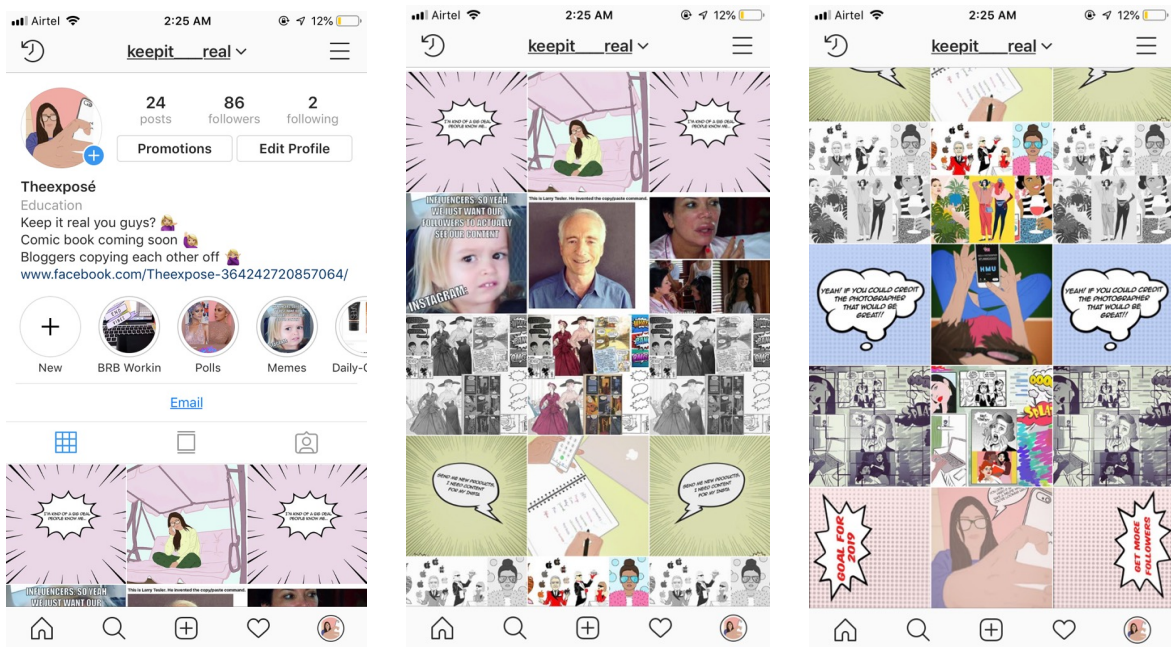

Figure 16: The expose on Instagram
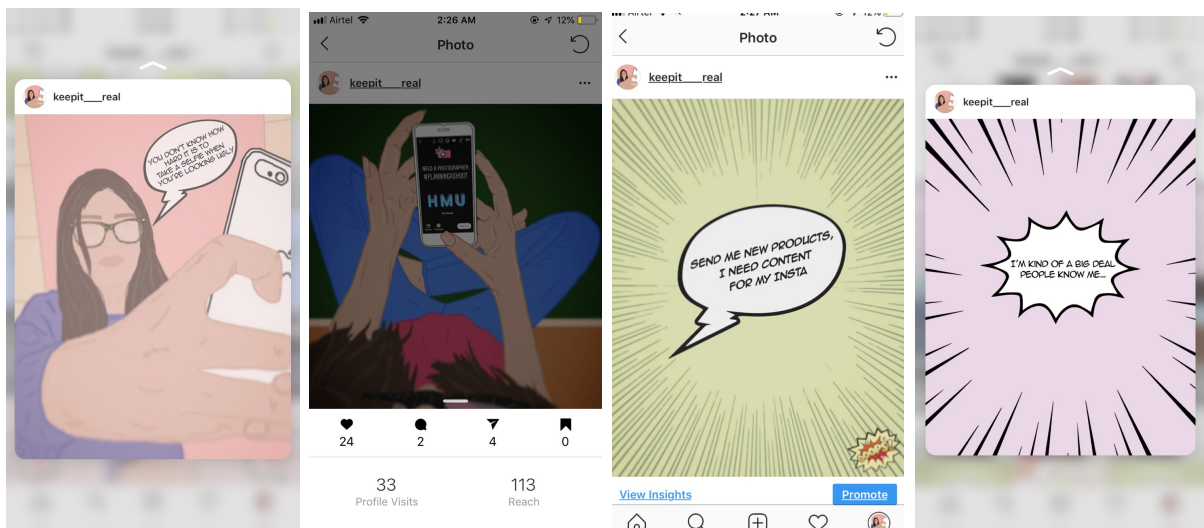

Figure 17 : Types of Illustrations on Instagram page with engagement rate
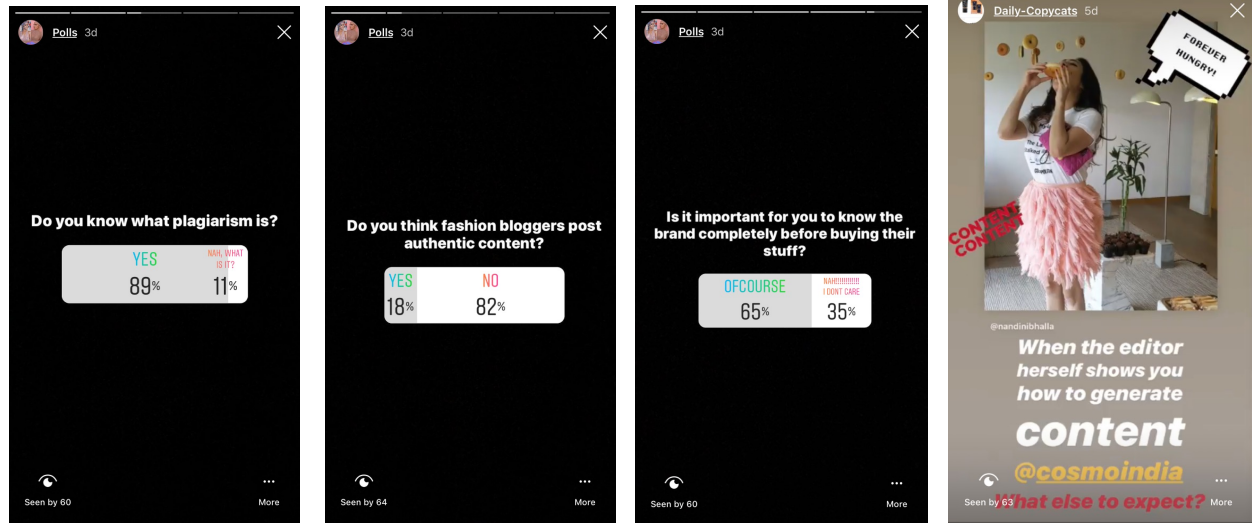
Figure 18: Polls and calling out fashion insider over Instagram stories

## b. Facebook

Facebook as a social media platform has a massive reach over the audience and people actually collaborate on that medium. A Facebook page will be made in order to gain more audience and to promote it.
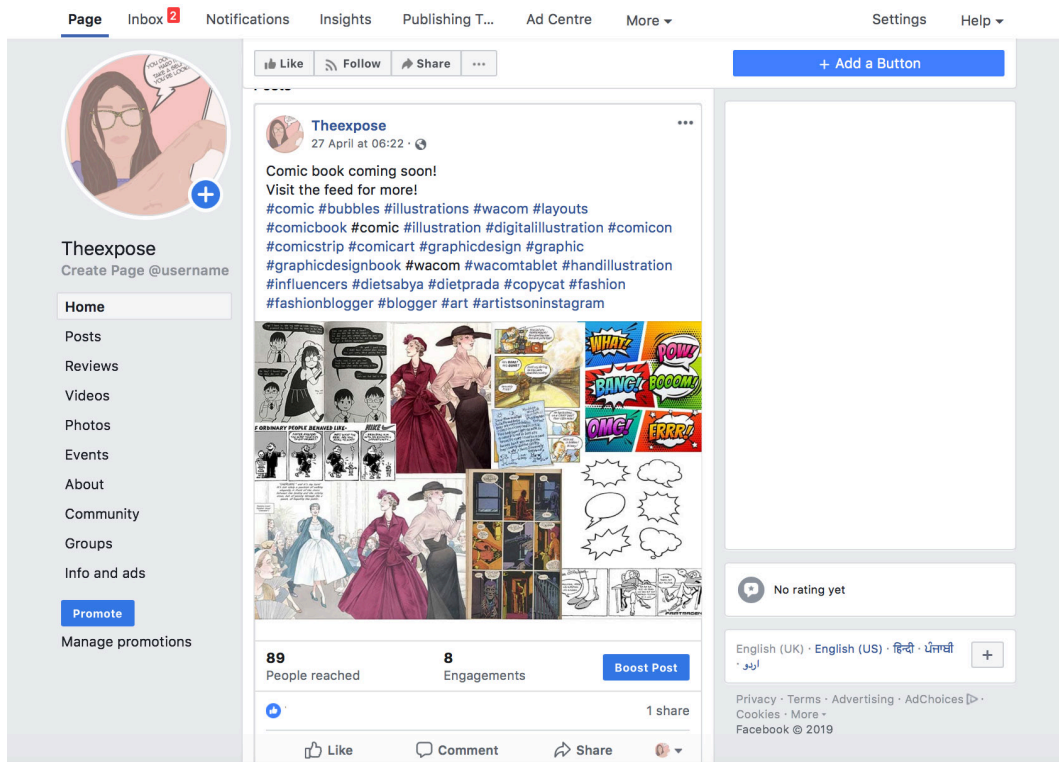


Figure 19: The expose on Facebook
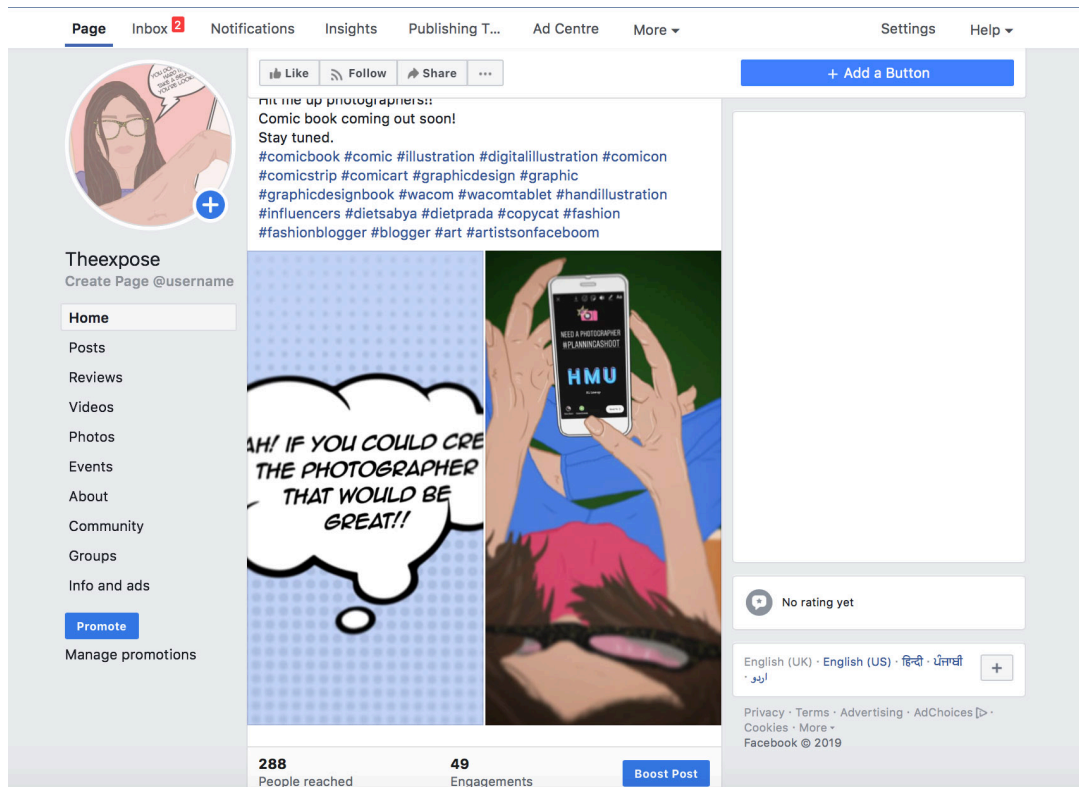
Figure 20: Illustration on Facebook
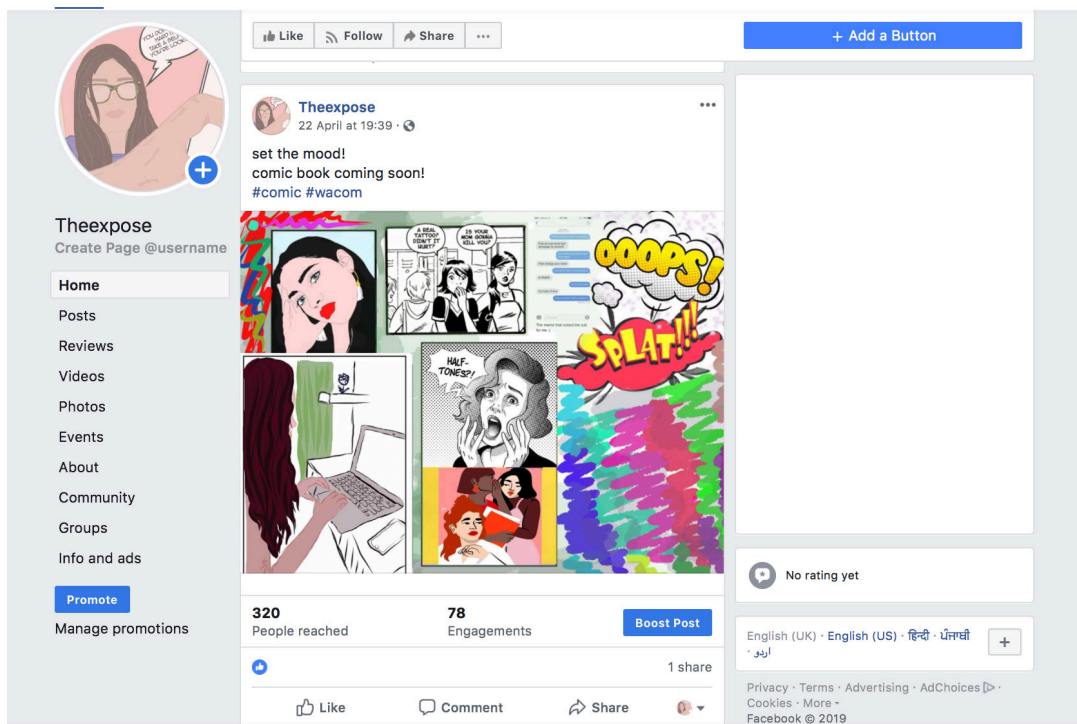


Figure 21: Mood board on Facebook along with the reach

## 3. Word of Mouth
It's effective if the book is promoted in person, it helps in getting the initial audience.

## 4. Bookstores
Flyers will be distributed in the local bookstores and Cha Bar, Cannaught place, Delhi which is a hotpot for

young readers. The flyers would have a link from which people can actually buy the book and read it online.

## 5. Digital Presence

Since the book will be available online, it will be self-published on websites like Kindle, amazon.com and google books.

## 6. Event

For the initial stage, only few printed copies of the book will be distributed at ComiCon 2019.

### a. Budget

For the book signing, a stall will be taken at ComiCon with the help of Angel investors. As to reach larger audience, few signed copies will be sold out at the event in order to get initial target. 50 copies will be sold at the stall

Size- 2mts x 2mts and 3mts x 2mts

Amount for booking 1 stall-Rs. 30,000/- (the share will be divided by me and 2 angel investors).

Budget-

| Sno. | Item/Service/Personnel | Amount (INR) |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Publisher  (1 copy= Rs. 125/-) 50 copies | 6,250 |
| 2 | Stall                               10,000<br>2 other angel investors        20,000 | 10,000 |
| 3 | Travel | 500 |
| 4 | Food | 2000 |
| 5 | Parking | 200 |
|  |  |  |
|  | Total | 18,950/- |

Table 2: Budget for Comicon event

## 7. Press Kit

The general press kit will be made which will include about the book, visiting card, bookmarks and posters.



Figure 22: Press Kit- Visiting Card

Figure 23: Press Kit- About the Book



Figure 24. Press Kit- Posters

Figure 25: Press kit- Bookmarks

## 8. Comic Book Budget

**Summary Page**

| Title:          The Exposé | 35 pages |
|---|---|
| | |

Table 3: Summary Page

| **Formats:** | Publish: Digital | Post: Digital | Distribute: self publish, publisher- Alter-Native |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |

Table 3: Summary Page

| PERSONNEL | PHONE |
|---|---|
| Designer, Writer and Illustrator: SHIRIN RAJPUT | 9958006514 |

Table 4: Personnel

**BUDGET SUMMARY**

1)Preproduction Total: 4,150 INR
2) Production Total: 1,000 INR
3) Postproduction Total: 18,950 INR

**GRAND TOTAL:  Rs. 24,100/-**

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

**Comic Book Breakdown**

| Title: | The Exposé | 35 pages |
|---|---|---|

| Formats: | Publish: Digital | Post: Digital | Distribute: self publish, publisher-Alter-Native |
|---|---|---|---|

| Number of pages: 35 | Size: 8.5 x 6 inches | Designing days: 40 days |
|---|---|---|

Table 5: Comic Book Details

**1) Preproduction Breakdown:**

| Item/Service/Personnel | Unit price/Rate | Cost |
|---|---|---|
| Transportation(scouting) | 150 INR | 150 INR |
| Photocopying | 4000 INR | 4,000 INR |
| **PREPRODUCTION TOTAL** | | **4,150 INR** |

Table 6: Preproduction Breakdown

**2) Production Breakdown**

| Item/Service/Personnel | Unit price/Rate | Cost |
|---|---|---|
| Supplies and equipment used: | | |
| Stationary | Diaries/ pens | 1,000INR |
| Laptop | Macbook Pro | Shirin Rajput |
| Illustration Tablet | Wacom CTL-671 Tablet, 7.5 inches | 8,000 INR |
| Phone | I-phone 8 | Shirin Rajput |
| **PRODUCTION TOTAL** | | **1,000 INR** |

Table 7: Production Breakdown

**3) Post-Production Breakdown**

| Item/Service/Personnel | Unit price/Rate | Cost |
|---|---|---|
| Distribution | 50 copies at Comicon (Budget breakdown mentioned above) | 18,950 INR |
| Publishing | Self-Publish online | - |

| Software used for editing and layouting | Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Indesign | |
|---|---|---|
| Software used for Illustrating | Medibang Paint Pro | |
| **POST-PRODUCTION TOTAL** | | **18,950 INR** |

Table 8: Post-Production Breakdown

## Disclaimer

The information found in this book is designed to provide helpful information on the subjects discussed. The sole purpose of the book is to spread awareness. By accepting this document, the recipient agrees to keep the particulars in strictest confidence and not reproduce any further copies. This document is a solely business plan of a Book in the industry and the comic is not to be construed as an offering for securities.

If you are interested in getting more information on the comic book, please contact:

**Shirin Rajput**
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Phone:+919958006514
Instagram: @shirinrajput

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**ANNEXURE**

## Survey Questions

Q1 How many fashion/ influencers/bloggers do you follow on your social media accounts?
a) 1-10
b) 10-20
c) 20+Q2- Do you know about sponsored and paid posts?
a) Yes
b) No

Q3- Do you feel like influencers/bloggers always make it obvious when they are doing a sponsored social media post?
a) Always
b) Some of the time?
c) Never

Q4- Does It annoy you when Social Media Influencers do sponsored posts?
a) yes
b) no
c) I don't really care

Q5- Have you ever bought anything because it was recommended by a social media influencer?
a) yes
b) no

Q6- If you have, did it live up to your expectations?
a) Yes, I really liked the product
b) It was okay, but not as good as I expected
c) No, I was very disappointed
d) Other (Please specify)

Q7- If a blogger/influencer's Instagram post is sponsored, are you less likely to buy what they are promoting?
a) Yes
b) No
Please explain why?

Q8- How likely are you to buy something that is promoted/worn by an influencer?
a) Not likely to
b) Quite likely to
c) Very likely to

Q9- If you wanted to buy something that a blogger/influencer was wearing, would you use their sponsored link or would you search for it yourself?
a) I would use their link
b) I would search it myself

Q10- Have you followed a brand directly from an influencer's sponsored post?
a) Yes

b) No

Q11- Do you follow an influencer just for the product discount?
a) Yes
b) No
c) usually
d) Rarely

Q12- On which social media sites are you following a celebrity or an influencer?
a) Youtube
b) Facebook
c) Piterest
d) Instagram
e) Snapchat
f) Twitter
g) Other

Q13- Have you unfollowed an influencer because they post too much sponsored content?
a) Yes
b) No
c) Usually
d) Never
e) Rarely

Q14- Out of all of these images, choose sponsored/ paid posts by social media influencers?

A)

B)
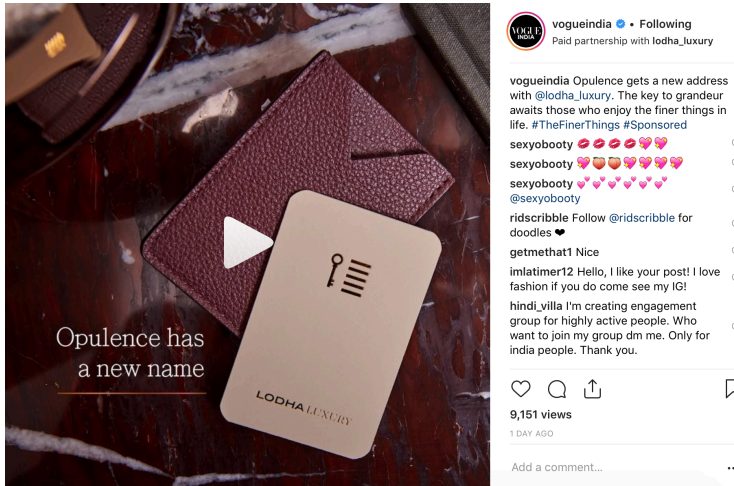


C)



D)

1- A and B
2- B and C
3- A, B and D
4- all of the above

Q15- Rank accordingly- the top most purchase category -
Food
Entertainment
Apparel
Technology
Beverage
Beauty

Q16- Does a post change your sentiment about that influencer?
a) Yes
b) No
c) Sometimes
d) Never

Q18- Q17- Which of the following hashtag(s) indicates that a post is sponsored? (select all that apply)
a) #partner
b) #ad
c) #spon
d) #paid
e) #collab

Q19- Do you have a favourite online personality) Why are they your favourite?

Q20- 1How much do you agree with the following statements?
I buy products depending on the recommendations being made online
before buying something, I watch online reviews
if one of my likeable influencer recommends a particular brand, I buy it.
Social media bloggers are just the intermediate between the brands being promoted and the target audience
Social media profiles are behaving as paid actors in a role and their content/posts are the adverts

-Agree
-Strongly Agree
-I'm not sure
-strongly disagree
-disagree

**Survey Results**

How many fashion/ influencers/bloggers do you follow on your social media accounts?

70 responses
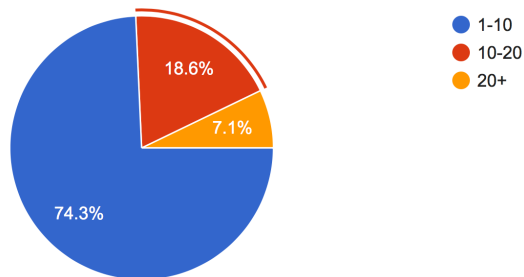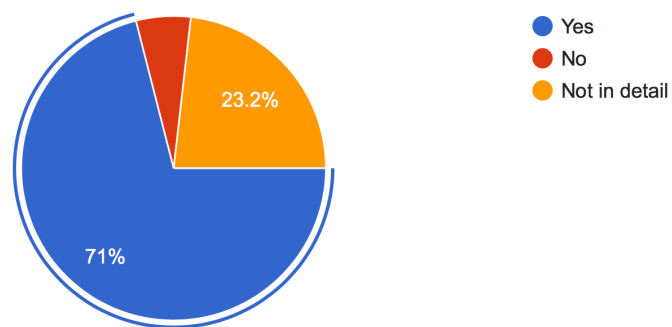


- 1-10
- 10-20
- 20+

18.6%
7.1%
74.3%

Do you know about sponsored and paid posts?

69 responses



- Yes
- No
- Not in detail

23.2%
71%

Do you feel like influencers/bloggers always make it obvious when they are doing a sponsored social media post?

70 responses



- Always
- Some of the time
- Never

51.4%
47.1%
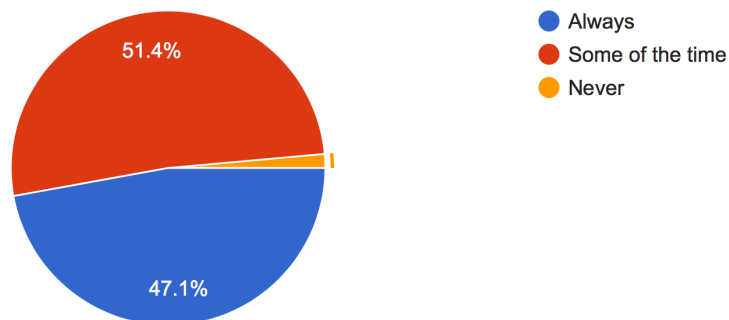
## Have you ever bought anything because it was recommended by a social media influencer?

70 responses
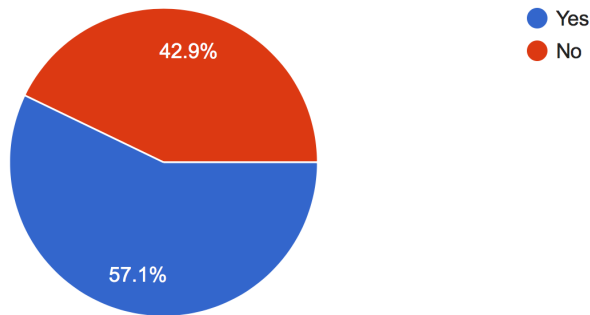


Yes 57.1%
No 42.9%

## On which of the following sites are you subscribed to or follow celebrity* or popular accounts? (Tick all that apply)

69 responses



| Site | Count |
|------|-------|
| Instagram | 63 (91.3%) |
| Piterest | 16 (23.2%) |
| Facebook | 33 (47.8%) |
| Youtube | 27 (39.1%) |
| Twitter | 8 (11.6%) |
| Snapchat | 33 (47.8%) |
| Tumblr | 1 (1.4%) |
| Not following | 1 (1.4%) |
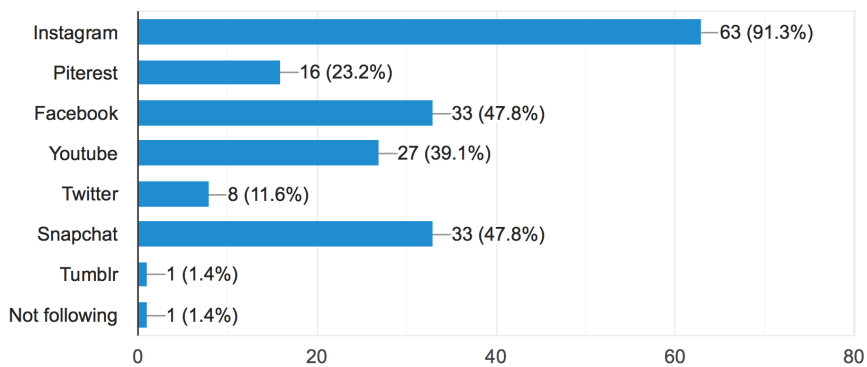
## Have you unfollowed an influencer because they post too much sponsored content?

69 responses



Yes 44.9%
No 23.2%
Usually
Rarely 26.1%
Never
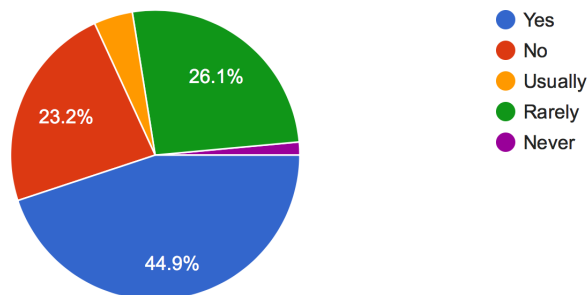
## Do you know any hashtag(s) that indicates a post is sponsored? (select all that apply)

68 responses
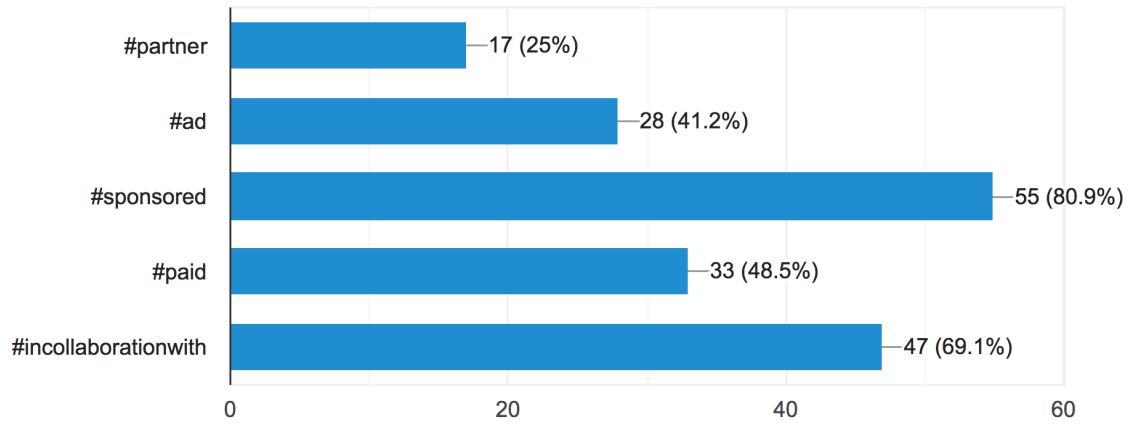
**Interview Questions**

Q1- What are the social media platforms you use?

Q2- Social media breaks the forth wall of fashion. What do you think?

Q3- Have you heard of Diet Prada?

Q4- The public actually feeds DP with information and DP being invisible, they say is as it is. What do you think? Is it funny, engaging or you don't like the way they portray their feed?

Q5- DP calls out certain things, should a person have that ability to question in Fashion? Is it important to always have an opinion to stand out? What are your thoughts?

Q6- According to you what is the importance of Diet Prada in fashion?

Q7- In your view, Diet Prada is helping in promoting authentic and original designs or is it like just another page on a social networking site?

Q8- Will an enterprise like Diet Prada be relevant in coming years too or it would be a fad? How will DP affect the fashion industry in future?

Q9- What are your views on –''ppl knocking each other off'', the caption in the bio of Diet Prada's Instagram page.

Q10- Diet Sabya is a substitute of Diet Prada, which has an Indian audience; do you feel that there will be more pages like Diet Sabya which copies the algorithm of Diet Prada?

Q11- Do you think that influencers like the Kardashians or Jenners should be cognizant of DP?

Q12- DP tells the truth about fashion and help the followers become more conscious shopper, do you agree?

## Interview Transcripts

**Interviewer 1. LAUREN INDVIK**
**(Head Of News And Features- British Vogue)**

Shirin- What are the social media platforms you use?
Lauren- Instagram, Twitter mainly

S-Social media breaks the forth wall of fashion. What do you think?
L-I'm not familiar with the 'fourth wall' concept.

S-Have you heard of Diet Prada?
L-Yes

S-The public actually feeds DP with information and DP being invisible, they say is as it is. What do you think? Is it funny, engaging or you don't like the way they portray their feed?
L-DP isn't invisible, exactly - the founders have been named and profiled in BoF and the New Yorker. It's a fresh voice. I don't always agree with it, but they have an engaging manner of storytelling.

S-DP calls out certain things, should a person have that ability to question in Fashion? Is it important to always have an opinion to stand out? What are your thoughts?
L-I support free speech and a culture of criticism, whether in fashion or elsewhere.

S-According to you what is the importance of Diet Prada in fashion?
L-They are advocates for originality in design. Copyright laws are not often favorable to young designers, for example in the US; DP offers another recourse of sorts.

S-In your view, Diet Prada is helping in promoting authentic and original designs or is it like just another page on a social networking site?
L-Anecdotally, yes, I have heard of designers who are worried a design might end up on DP.

S-Will an enterprise like Diet Prada be relevant in coming years too or it would be a fad? How will DP affect the fashion industry in future?
L-It depends how they evolve.

S-What are your views on –''ppl knocking each other off'', the caption in the bio of Diet Prada's Instagram page.
L-It's consistent with their tone of voice.

S-Diet Sabya is a substitute of Diet Prada, which has an Indian audience; do you feel that there will be more pages like Diet Sabya which copies the algorithm of Diet Prada?

L-Possibly. Successful enterprises are often imitated.

S-Do you think that influencers like the Kardashians or Jenners should be cognizant of DP?

L-I think it's good to be cognizant of things in general.

S-DP tells the truth about fashion and help the followers become more conscious shopper, do you agree ?

L-I don't have any evidence of this.

**Interviewer 2. NITYA CHABLANI**

**(Digital Feature Editor- Vogue India)**

Shirin-What are the social media platforms you use?

Nitya-Facebook, Instagram

S-Social media breaks the forth wall of fashion. What do you think?

N-Absolutely. Social media gives everyone across the globe access to the newest, freshest, coolest trends, and it works the same way in every field, be it food, culture, art, movies, beauty.

S-Have you heard of Diet Prada?

N-Yes

S-The public actually feeds DP with information and DP being invisible, they say is as it is. What do you think? Is it funny, engaging or you don't like the way they portray their feed?

N-I think it can sometimes be negative, but at the same time, pages like DP do also help keep plagiarism in check. It hopefully motivates designers to be original and be wary of copying others. The fun, tongue-in-cheek captions are always a treat for people who use the page solely for entertainment.

S-DP calls out certain things, should a person have that ability to question in Fashion? Is it important to always have an opinion to stand out? What are your thoughts?

N-I think it is very important to have an opinion, but not necessarily to stand out. In DP's case, the page is based on shock value, so yes, it has become a necessity to have an opinion on every so-called copy. But for other pages and personalities, it's just important to be true to what that page values.

S-According to you what is the importance of Diet Prada in fashion?

NI see DP as a fun, cheeky page to follow for a peek into the fashion world. But the page is powerful and well-informed too. DP was the first page to highlight the existence of racism in Dolce & Gabbana's latest China-oriented ad campaign. The controversy then spread over the internet and led to the D&G China show being cancelled. Clearly, DP's reach and influence is substantial.

S-In your view, Diet Prada is helping in promoting authentic and original designs or is it like just another page on a social networking site?

N-I think DP is playing a strong role in highlighting not-so-original work in front of fashion enthusiasts, and in the case of consumers who aren't as well-versed in fashion, the page helps educate them in an interesting, new way.

S-Will an enterprise like Diet Prada be relevant in coming years too or it would be a fad? How will DP affect the fashion industry in future?

N-I think as long as DP provides consumers with fresh, new content, it will remain relevant. It was the first page of its kind when it came out first and already has a website too. There's definitely room for it to continue growing, keeping it relevant for a long time.

S-What are your views on –''ppl knocking each other off'', the caption in the bio of Diet Prada's Instagram page.

N-Personally, I do find DP's tone negative sometimes and I do feel like it can have a detrimental effect on its users/the designers it features. The idea behind the page is definitely interesting and fun to consume though.

S-Diet Sabya is a substitute of Diet Prada, which has an Indian audience; do you feel that there will be more pages like Diet Sabya which copies the algorithm of Diet Prada?

N-I think now that Diet Sabya already exists and has a loyal following, it may be very difficult for another similar page to grow. Though I'm sure many have tried!

S-Do you think that influencers like the Kardashians or Jenners should be cognizant of DP?
N-Why not? DP has earned its place.

S-DP tells the truth about fashion and help the followers become more conscious shopper, do you agree ?
N-Yes

**Interviewer**

**3. PRAACHI RANIWALA**

**(Freelance Fashion and Lifestyle Journalist, Content Creator and a Brand Consultant. She writes for Vogue India and Condé Nast Traveller)**

Shirin-What are the social media platforms you use?

Praachi- I use Facebook and mostly Instagram, I've never used Snapchat, Twitter- on and off but not in terms of fashion.

S-Social media breaks the forth wall of fashion. What do you think?

P- I don't know if it breaks the forth wall of fashion but yes, I believes that it makes fashion more accessible by bringing down the cloud of mystery around a lot of brands specially luxury brand. With Instagram being such an important platform for fashion today, brands are taking a younger approach to connect directly with the customers and potential customers through their social media so it thus creates more accessibility rather than just keeping the brand aspirational.

S-Have you heard of Diet Prada?
P- Yes I have heard of Diet Prada

S-The public actually feeds DP with information and DP being invisible, they say is as it is. What do you think? Is it funny, engaging or you don't like the way they portray their feed?
P- I think DP is a classic example of modern day investigator fashion journalism done right. I think they do

ample research before sharing anything with the viewers, if you read their captions they are very informative, there's references, there's history, there's solid facts.

S-DP calls out certain things, should a person have that ability to question in Fashion? Is it important to always have an opinion to stand out? What are your thoughts?

P- I think that an industry with the amount of plagiarism did need an account like this. It helps in starting off the conversations, it helps in promoting the concept of accountability and responsibility for your actions and just being more conscious of what a brand puts out, especially when it's a bigger brand and have this kind of platform.

S-According to you what is the importance of Diet Prada in fashion?

P- I think DP has already started affecting the industry as brands and designers have become more conscious now of what they put in their collection.

S-In your view, Diet Prada is helping in promoting authentic and original designs or is it like just another page on a social networking site?

P- They can't take the audience for granted anymore because the people following this account have become more aware. People are demanding more from the brands and they don't want to be taken for a ride. If one follow's the whole Dolce & Gabbana incident with DP, it had a huge impact. The D&G market in China and amongst the south East Asians were hit in a way like one can never imagine.

S-Will an enterprise like Diet Prada be relevant in coming years too or it would be a fad? How will DP affect the fashion industry in future?

P- It's not a fad it's a start of a big revolution on the contrary of accountability and responsibility of knowing that a brand's customers and potential customers are well aware.

S- Diet Sabya is a substitute of Diet Prada, which has an Indian audience; do you feel that there will be more pages like Diet Sabya which copies the algorithm of Diet Prada?

P- I think there were some pages like DP like Diet Malhotra. my take on Diet Sabya is, yes, some of the copies that they call out are legit and genuine and some are far reaching I feels that DP has a more serious and factual tone, DS is a bit bitchy, they need to turn it down as this should not be a mean girl platform, it is a form of modern day investigative journalism so they need to adopt a more kinder tone.

S-DP tells the truth about fashion and help the followers become more conscious shopper, do you agree?

P- I don't think that is it's changing the fashion behavior on a large scale but are making the shoppers conscious as a whole and at the end of the day there are a lot of other factors that come into play when somebody is taking a decision to buy something. DP is more that just raising awareness and starting a conversation and in the case of the D&G incident that she mentioned, yes it impacted in a very big way but I don't think if it's the case with every knock off that they call out.

**Interviewer 4. RUJUTA VAIDYA**

**(Fashion and E- commerce Editor of Vogue.in)**

Shirin-What are the social media platforms you use?

Rujuta- I use Instagram primarily, Facebook, sometimes Snapchat and very rarely Twitter.

S-Social media breaks the forth wall of fashion. What do you think?

R- It is one of the strongest means to communicate, It has taken over pinterest and everything. It is a way a story is distributed which are primarily digitally and has a very high impact on the viewers. Social media has changed many things in fashion from the last few years.

S-Have you heard of Diet Prada?

R- Yes

S-The public actually feeds DP with information and DP being invisible, they say is as it is. What do you think? Is it funny, engaging or you don't like the way they portray their feed?

R- So first of all they were secret and anonymous for a while and, the people behind them whatever they say is little more powerful. They have a wide chain of people who are supporting their cause, they get information from different sources. They are funny to a level and I think they have done a good job in sensationalizing things which has brought those eyeballs and what they are doing is nobody else's doing.

S-DP calls out certain things, should a person have that ability to question in Fashion? Is it important to always have an opinion to stand out? What are your thoughts?

R- That's the power of social media, individual is more important than so to speak in a larger part, and for that you have social media, people will hear you out and that's a very important change has come in the way we consume things and they way we communicate. They are not saying anything wrong by pulling out people who are copying other people's work, they're talking about abuse in fashion and media, and they're talking about people being racist like the whole Dolce & Gabbana thing happened. All of these are important as for the consumer who is really buying labels should also understand where fashion comes from and if a label is unethical because it makes good clothes doesn't mean one should support them.

S-According to you what is the importance of Diet Prada in fashion?

R- DP is important because it has an insider as well as an outsider's perspective. People are now genuinely scared and they will think twice before stealing someone's designs in the market and making profit out of it as they are no longer allowed to steal ideas.

S-In your view, Diet Prada is helping in promoting authentic and original designs or is it like just another page on a social networking site?

R- It not just another account on Instagram, everyone watches it people are scared to be named on it. DP talks about the designers work, their archives and it comes through not only the people working behind that page but they also have a very good knowledge of fashion. It's interesting what they're doing. I don't know for how long it will last but what they are doing is quite sensational.

S-Will an enterprise like Diet Prada be relevant in coming years too or it would be a fad? How will DP affect the fashion industry in future?

R- Unless it will go out of shape of Instagram or maybe it becomes a blog on which people will go onto As far as its content is interesting but people who are engaged with them will get bored of it someday.

S-What are your views on –''ppl knocking each other off'', the caption in the bio of Diet Prada's Instagram page.

R- People don't take the bios so seriously, it's the way of making things sound catchy like they do sensationalize things up, like they are strong and harsh in their judgement. They put out the things in the best way possible and I realy enjoy their content.

S-Do you think that influencers like the Kardashians or Jenners should be cognizant of DP?

R- I think they already are. Nobody need to be cognizant of anyone but should be well aware of them and Diet Prada is well known, I think the designers and the brand that should be aware of it.

S-DP tells the truth about fashion and help the followers become more conscious shopper, do you agree ?

R- Yes

**Interviewer 5. PRIYANKA KHANNA**

**(Associate Fashion Feature Director, Vogue India)**

Shirin- What are the social media platforms you use?

Priyanka-I post regularly on Instagram, catch up on news on Twitter, and sometimes, check Facebook.

S-Social media breaks the fourth wall of fashion. What do you think?

P- I'm not sure what you mean by fourth wall, but social media has definitely made fashion more inclusive and democratic. It gives everyone a seat at the table, so as to speak.

S-Have you heard of Diet Prada?

P-Yes, I do follow them.

S-The public actually feeds DP with information and DP being invisible, they say is as it is. What do you think? Is it funny, engaging or you don't like the way they portray their feed?

P-Diet Prada, actually revealed themselves a few months ago but yes they were an anonymous account that used to and still do source their information. I actually think it's a great page, they do incredible research and always back up any allegations.

S-DP calls out certain things, should a person have that ability to question in Fashion? Is it important to always have an opinion to stand out? What are your thoughts?

P-When it comes to creativity, everyone has an opinion, and that's of course what all art is, subject to personal viewpoints, but what DP do is back their assertions with hard evidence. In their case, its calling out copycats but also any other negative behavior in the fashion industry. Its important to have a voice on social media and to use that voice in a positive manner.

S-According to you what is the importance of Diet Prada in fashion?

P-Every industry must have checks and balances, and in many ways DP serves that in fashion.

S-In your view, Diet Prada is helping in promoting authentic and original designs or is it like just another page on a social networking site?

P-I think its ensuring that designers and houses are not complacent and also that credit is given where credit is due. So no, I don't think its like other pages. It has a singular viewpoint and voice that makes it unique.

S-Will an enterprise like Diet Prada be relevant in coming years too or it would be a fad? How will DP affect the fashion industry in future?

P-Its definitely made designers and stylists more aware. Inspiration is everywhere but its still important to tread the line between inspiration and imitation, so I think they will continue to be relevant.

S-What are your views on –''ppl knocking each other off'', the caption in the bio of Diet Prada's Instagram page,

P-It sums up their page's point of view.

S-Do you think that influencers like the Kardashians or Jenners should be cognizant of DP?
P-I think anyone who has an interest in fashion, should be aware of DP.

S-DP tells the truth about fashion and help the followers become more conscious shopper, do you agree ?
P-I don't know if I would use the word conscious (it has other connotations in fashion at this moment), but I definitely think its made its followers more informed shoppers.

**Interviewer 6. ALESSIA GLAVIANO**

**(Brand Visual Director, Vogue Italia, handles Art and Photography)**

Shirin-What are the social media platforms you use?

Alessia- As Vogue Italia we use everything Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest and as a person I use Instagram

S-Social media breaks the forth wall of fashion. What do you think?
A-Yes Of course

S-Have you heard of Diet Prada?
A- Yes,I have

S-The public actually feeds DP with information and DP being invisible, they say is as it is. What do you think? Is it funny, engaging or you don't like the way they portray their feed?
A- I don't like Diet Prada, I think that there is too much hatred and violence on social media in general, I think that some of the things which they brought up were necessary and good but it feels like it's a bit of a gossip thing going on. I feel that there is too much violence around and in terms of words that people use, in terms of finding faults everywhere when there are not.

S-DP calls out certain things, should a person have that ability to question in Fashion? Is it important to always have an opinion to stand out? What are your thoughts?
A- Of course it is

S-According to you what is the importance of Diet Prada in fashion?
A- I think that right now it has a lot of followers, in whatever they say has a lot of impact on the people. Also, sometimes the things they bring up are appropriate, it must be what we all think about. Most of the time I feel it's a bit gossipy and they try to find something bad all the time.

S-In your view, Diet Prada is helping in promoting authentic and original designs or is it like just another page on a social networking site?

A-I don't know if it's helping in that or not, I don't have an answer to that, I mean I don't know if it's helping in what is authentic today. I mean as If you know the truth and we people don't?

S-Will an enterprise like Diet Prada be relevant in coming years too or it would be a fad? How will DP affect the fashion industry in future?

A- We have to see whats going to be in the future, I can't predict whats gonna happen in the future. The thing is these blogs are getting a lot of attention that we have to see with time whats gonna happen. At the moment, yes it has a lot of influence about whatever is going on.  Like what happened with Dolce & Gabbana in China.

S-Do you think that influencers like the Kardashians or Jenners should be cognizant of DP?

A-I think they should be aware of it not scared.

## Group Discussion Questions

-Are you on social media?

What all social networking sites do you use?-What is social media? Are you aware of social media influencers?

-Who do you think a social media influencer is?

(Someone who is famous

Someone who engages with a brand to help promote their products and services

Someone who has more than 10,000 followers)

-How is a social media influencer different from that of average social media users?

(They share more information, have higher quality posts and they use more ads in their posts)

-What type of influencer content do you prefer and why?

(videos with sound-stories, still images in their feeds)

Do you use the people you follow on social media to get inspiration for your outfits?



-Have you ever come across posts like these? All of these are sponsored. Discuss!

-Have you ever bought anything because it was recommended by a social media influencer?

-Do you trust product reviews influencers give when they are sponsored?

-Do you realize "recommendations" made by online influencers on social media are often scripted by the brand itself?