

## 'Conflict of Interest': Domestic Fights on Instagram Grab Eyeballs But Can Also Mess with The Mind

• By: [Kakoli Mukherjee](#) • [News18.com](#) • Last Updated: JULY 30, 2022, 09:25 IST • New Delhi, India



Broadcasting family fights, particularly between couples, has become a trend on Instagram. A quick search with the tag "couple fights" throws up numerous screenshots or videos of tiffs with lakhs of views. (Image for representation/Shutterstock)

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**I**n 2018, a couple from Brooklyn— Steven Negron and his girlfriend Melani Cruz— went viral on Instagram for posting their outrageous fights. They earned millions of followers as people took sides and debated who was right.

Broadcasting family fights, particularly between couples, has become a trend on Instagram. A quick search with the tag “couple fights” throws up numerous screenshots or videos of tiffs with lakhs of views. No doubt, such videos feed the schadenfreude needs of viewers. It’s not different from the neighbourhood family brawls that people like to talk about for days. It is already an established fact that negativity thrives on social media, with users getting addicted to doomsscrolling.

#### **EFFECTS ON VIEWERS AND CONTENT CREATORS**

Though such videos might come off as “innocent fun” for many, they could trigger the buried traumas of viewers who have witnessed similar situations in real life. On the other hand, such Reels can make the creators susceptible to harsh comments.

Pooja Khara, a relationship and dating coach, says, “The minute you post about the problems you’re facing as a couple, you are opening a Pandora’s box of inappropriate comments. Millions of people have access to the internet in India and the viewers come from all walks of life and age groups. Some might not have the maturity to take these publicised fights the right way.”

Explaining how such content might affect the viewers, she adds: “These Reels might trigger the memories of similar experiences or buried trauma in others. They might be affecting the healing process of many Instagram users. This might result in people posting inappropriate comments in the cloak of anonymity. The signals that the couples are sending might start acting as guidelines for some people.”

Such content can also make the green-eyed monster of jealousy crop up between creator couples and strain their relationship.

Unfollowing an account does not work nowadays because even if you view such a Reel once, Instagram aggressively pushes similar content into the feed. Hence, the only way to get rid of this is to draw strict online boundaries.

“Content creators have to consider seriously what the aim of their content is and how it is going to affect users who do not have the same level of awareness. We live in a country where phones and the internet are affordable, but not education. So there is a need to think about the impact their content is creating,” says Pooja.

### IS THERE MONEY IN IT?

Saurabh Pandey, an Instagram growth expert, tells News18 that these videos do not generate much money for the creators. The photo-sharing app does not pay creators in India, though it does so in Europe and America. However, the app’s main goal is to keep as many viewers as possible engaged on the platform. “Once you view a Reel in which a couple is seen fighting, Instagram will go on pushing such content towards you till you reach an ecosystem where all you see will be people fighting,” explains Saurabh.

Talking about how content creators land brand endorsement deals, the Instagram strategist says, “There are two types of creators— entertainers and those who share information. Even if the latter has 10,000 followers with a niche audience, they will get good brand deals between Rs 50,000 and Rs 1 lakh. But the entertainers manage to get deals ranging between Rs 10,000-15,000 only even with lakhs of followers.”

It is the desire to become famous that pushes people to find new avenues to get views. “After TikTok was banned in India, millions of content creators who were already famous had to migrate to Instagram. Hence, this trend too is a part of creators trying to get a slice of viewership,” says Saurabh.



About the Author

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