

Influencer Marketing and Adolescent Buying Behavior: A Quantitative Survey Across Key Product Segments

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Abstract

Teenagers, especially those between twelve, eighteen who spend time on social media, often buy things because of people they follow online. These online personalities really affect what teens choose to purchase. We asked 500 people in a survey about how much a promoter's trustworthiness, how well the content fits their interests, how often they see posts, affect their desire to buy things like clothes, gadgets, makeup, workout items, or groceries. People are much more likely to buy something when they trust the person promoting it, interact with the content often, or find the content useful. Data shows a clear link between trustworthiness, frequent interaction, relevant content, a willingness to buy. Stronger trust means a bigger impact on sales. More interaction also boosts sales. Helpful content improves sales too. Looking at where people get shopping ideas, Instagram works best, inspiring purchases from 38% of customers, who rate it 4.6 out of 5. YouTube comes next, affecting 34% of shoppers with a 4.4 rating. TikTok influences 28% of people, earning a 3.9 rating. The research showed teens view smaller influencers as more real, easier to connect with, when compared to larger influencers. This builds confidence, making them more likely to buy things. Good content that people trust, regular interaction, approaches tailored to each platform, honesty, responsible behavior all matter when influencers market to young people.

Keywords: teenagers, online platforms, Instagram, YouTube, and TikTok.

1. Introduction

Today, marketing online often involves working with popular people. Brands use this approach to reach younger customers. Teenagers between twelve, eighteen years old spend a lot of time on apps like Instagram, YouTube, TikTok. This makes them easily influenced by advertising hidden within fun content, interactions with friends. People with a strong online following often seem down to earth, so others trust them. This really affects what products people want to buy. Influencer posts feel natural, like recommendations from people you know, so they are more convincing. They get people involved more effectively than typical ads.

People with a lot of followers make products seem better, influencing what people think about them, how they feel, the decisions they make [1]. How much teenagers trust a brand, how real it seems, with good content really affects if they'll pay attention to it, then buy things from it. It's really important to be careful with how we market to young people because they easily take things to heart. Companies need to be upfront, honest, with their advertising. This research explores how people popular on social media impact what teenagers buy, specifically looking at different types of products. It gives useful information to those who create marketing, teachers, government officials about how to run campaigns that work well, are fair.

2. Related Works

People now connect with companies differently because of social media. Getting popular people to promote things works really well when trying to reach teenagers. People with a following connect brands with younger customers [1]. They use what seems like knowledge, trustworthiness, or a sense of connection to change how people think about products or what they choose to buy. Studies repeatedly demonstrate that how much people believe an influencer affects whether consumers trust them, then buy things. Teenagers generally react better to recommendations when people they follow online seem like experts, appear genuine, deliver clear messages repeatedly [2]. Good content, relevant to what people want, builds confidence, making them more likely to buy.

Teens feel connected to people they watch online, this connection greatly affects how interested they are in those individuals. Young people frequently form strong feelings for people they see online, viewing them as people to look up to or friends [3]. Feeling connected to people you only see online makes you more likely to try things they suggest, or buy items they promote [4]. Posts that invite comments, sharing stories, using great images build interest, creating lasting relationships with customers, strengthening their feelings for a product [5]. Influencers build stronger connections when they regularly talk with their followers, listen to what people say, then make the experience feel individual for each person.

Studies show a clear difference between people with small, dedicated followings online those with huge fame[6]. People with a modest social media following often seem more down-to-earth, genuine. People connect with their material, specifically smaller groups, building strong belief, real interest [7-10]. Teens especially respond well, preferring genuine content to things that seem out of reach. Famous people online often gain attention because of who they are, how many followers they have. This helps brands get noticed, yet it doesn't always mean younger people will actually buy things [11]. Choosing the right influencers highlights how vital it is to pick people who fit your campaign's aims, as well as the group you're trying to reach.

Researchers previously showed how well something works depends on the specific system it's used with. Teens respond best to influencer marketing on Instagram, YouTube. These platforms consistently deliver the strongest results [12]. Instagram shows content with images, it lets people interact with quick videos. YouTube hosts videos that are longer, people use them to tell stories or thoroughly explain products. TikTok gains users quickly, yet it seems better at making people aware of products than at getting them to buy things immediately. Marketers should create content that fits each platform well, this will help people notice it more, then take desired actions.

Thinking about what is right matters a lot in influencer marketing. Young people frequently have trouble telling what's real content from advertising, which causes worry about honesty, the possibility of being misled [13-15]. It's important to clearly state when content is sponsored to be honest, safeguard kids. Clear rules for advertising, alongside school lessons about how ads work, will help young people spot marketing, then choose wisely. When influencers act with fairness, campaigns connect with people for a longer time, building confidence between customers plus the companies reaching them.

People have studied influencer marketing quite a bit, but they haven't looked closely at how it affects teenagers, specifically those between twelve to eighteen years old, when it comes to different types of products [16]. Researchers haven't thoroughly examined how much a spokesperson's trustworthiness, how well content matches interests, how often people interact with it, or which social media site matters when young people decide to buy something. This research looks at how different things affect what teenagers choose to buy. It uses a detailed questionnaire to gather numbers, examining how these elements work together to shape young people's shopping choices [17]. This research looks at understanding what's right, emphasizing honest advertising, revealing when content is sponsored. The research looks at teenagers, offering ideas for creating good, suitable influencer marketing campaigns. It shows how to market to young people in a way that is careful, thoughtful, respecting their age.

3. Research Methodology

We used a questionnaire to find out how much social media personalities affect what teenagers buy. The study used a set questionnaire. People responded to questions using a scale from one to five, showing how much they agreed, or disagreed, with each statement. The survey checked important ideas like how much people trust social media personalities, how often they see posts, how they interact with content, which products they like, whether they plan to buy things. The research team used the same tool to gather information from everyone. This made sure the data was consistent, helping them spot trends or connections among the people involved.

We studied 500 teenagers, between 12 to 18 years old. We chose them carefully, using a method to guarantee the group mirrored the overall population in terms of age, sex, what they liked, regarding products. The way we chose examples reduced unfairness, boosting how well the findings apply to other situations. We gathered information through surveys shared online using social media, learning websites, also with paper surveys given out at schools, community centers. We received approval to conduct the study, then got permission from parents for anyone under 18, following rules for responsible research.

A. Looking at survey results with numbers.

Looking at the survey results first, we see patterns that appear throughout all the information. Table I shows results from ten people. It gives examples of how trust in people who promote things, how useful the content is, how often people interact with it, affect whether they plan to buy something. Information shows people are more likely to buy things when they see a source as trustworthy, interact with its content often.

Table I – Sample Survey Data

Respondent ID	Influencer Credibility (1–5)	Content Relevance (1–5)	Frequency of Engagement (1–5)	Purchase Intent (1–5)
1	4	3	4	4
2	5	4	5	5
3	3	3	2	3
4	4	5	4	4
5	4	4	5	5
6	5	5	5	5
7	3	3	2	2
8	4	4	3	4
9	5	5	5	5
10	4	4	4	4

We looked at how closely different things connect with each other using a correlation study. The data in Table II shows a clear link: when influencers seem trustworthy, people interact with their content often, they are more likely to buy what’s promoted. People who often interacted with influencer posts were very likely to buy things. Seeing content repeatedly made them much more inclined to make a purchase, with a strong connection between interaction frequency with purchase plans. Teens really trust people online when they post often, show things teens care about. We discovered a strong connection: the more someone interacts with followers, the more believable they seem. Content that matches a teen’s hobbies also builds trust. Teens choose to follow people they consider trustworthy, people who share things they enjoy.

Table II – Correlation Matrix Interpretation

Variable Pair	Correlation Coefficient	Interpretation
Influencer Credibility & Purchase Intent	0.893	Strong positive correlation
Content Relevance & Purchase Intent	0.684	Moderate positive correlation
Frequency of Engagement & Purchase Intent	0.943	Very strong positive correlation
Influencer Credibility & Frequency of Engagement	0.893	Strong correlation; trusted influencers are followed more frequently
Influencer Credibility & Content Relevance	0.738	Moderate-to-strong correlation

We used a basic method to guess how likely people were to buy something, looking at how often they interacted with it. The model shows how things relate like this:

The value of y equals 0.78 times x , with 1.05 added to it. Here, y shows how likely someone is to buy something, while x indicates how often they interact with it. The data shows that each time teens interact with something, their desire to buy it goes up around 0.78. Frequent views really affect what they decide to purchase.

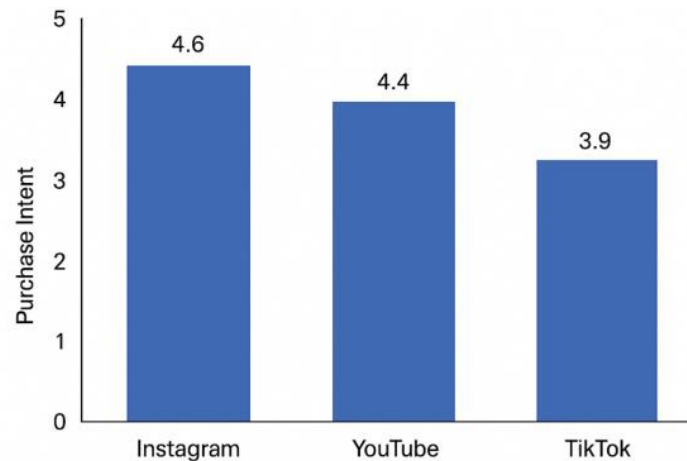


Fig 1 . Social Platform effectiveness

We looked closely at each social media site to see which ones best encourage people to buy things. People showed Instagram was the best at encouraging purchases, with 38% saying they were very likely to buy something (on a scale of 1 to 5, they gave it 4.6). YouTube came in second, with 34% reporting high purchase intent (a 4.4 rating), while TikTok got 28% (with a 3.9 rating). Figure 1 shows how well each platform performs with a chart. Teens seem most affected by visually rich, engaging sites like Instagram or YouTube. They spend a lot of time on these platforms, seeing content from people they admire.

Demographic Distribution of Respondents:

The data focuses on teens, people who are twelve to eighteen years old. Table III shows how many people identify as male, female, or choose not to share that information. The group includes roughly equal numbers of men, women, with a few people declining to state their gender (fig.2). Most people who answered are between 15 to 17 years old, a time when teens are really involved with social media, discovering who they are.

Table III: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Count	Percentage
Male	145	48%
Female	150	50%
Prefer not to say	5	2%

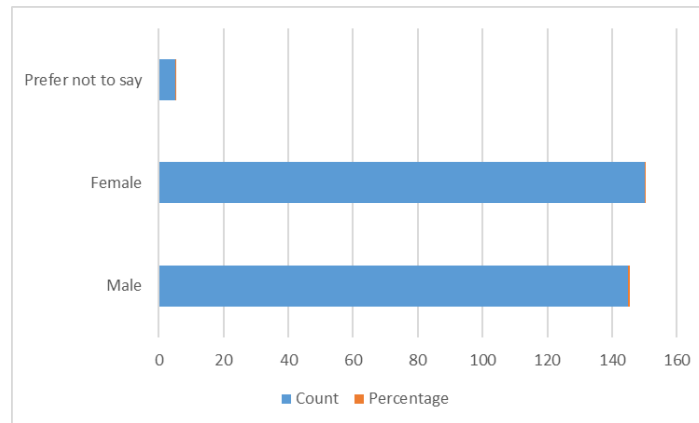


Fig.2. Gender Distribution of Respondents

Social Media Usage Patterns:

People use social media for different amounts of time, most spend between one to three hours each day on these sites (see Figure 3). Teens spending over three hours daily online face a greater chance of being affected by what they see. Table IV shows how often people use social media, broken down by gender. Women report spending a bit more time on these platforms, typically between three to five hours.

Table IV. Average Social Media Usage by Gender (Hours/Day)

Gender	<1 hr	1–3 hrs	3–5 hrs	>5 hrs
Male	30	60	40	15
Female	20	55	50	25

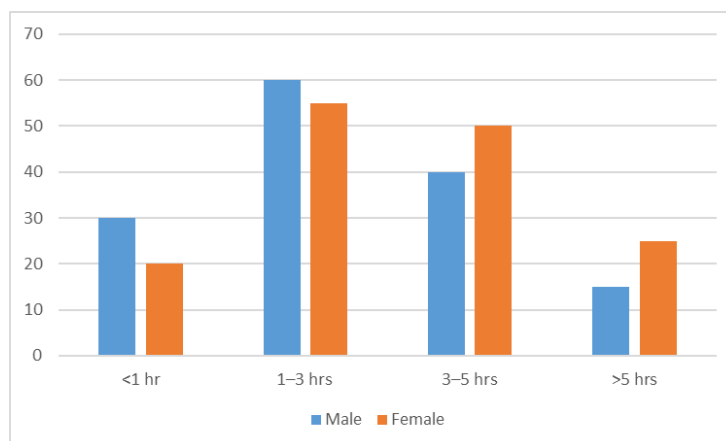


Fig.3. Social Media Usage by Age Group

Product Interest Preferences:

Young people shared a lot of different things they like to buy. Girls often mentioned clothes, makeup. Boys frequently talked about technology, getting in shape (Table V). Everyone, regardless of gender, frequently chose items connected to food, showing these products have broad interest.

Table V. Product Interest Distribution

Product Category	Male	Female	Total
Fashion	25	65	90
Cosmetics	10	60	70
Technology	50	20	70
Fitness	30	15	45
Food	25	30	55

Correlation Between Social Media Hours and Product Interest:

Looking at things from different angles, teenagers who use social media for three to five hours, or even longer each day, generally show a greater focus on clothes style, makeup. People who use it less, below an hour, generally like tech items or things for learning. Spending more time looking at posts makes people more likely to be affected by them.

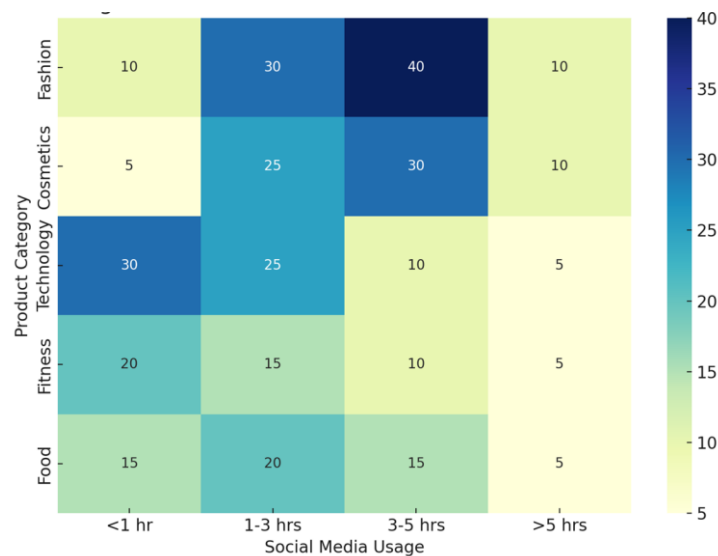


Fig.4. Heatmap of Social Media Hours vs. Product Interest

Gender-Based Influence Dynamics:

Information shows people connect with influencers differently depending on gender (Figure 5). Girls in their teens like people who share about daily life or makeup, boys tend to watch people focused on tech, video games, or working out. People who don't want to share their gender say influencers can be popular with everyone, showing a more welcoming online world for influence.

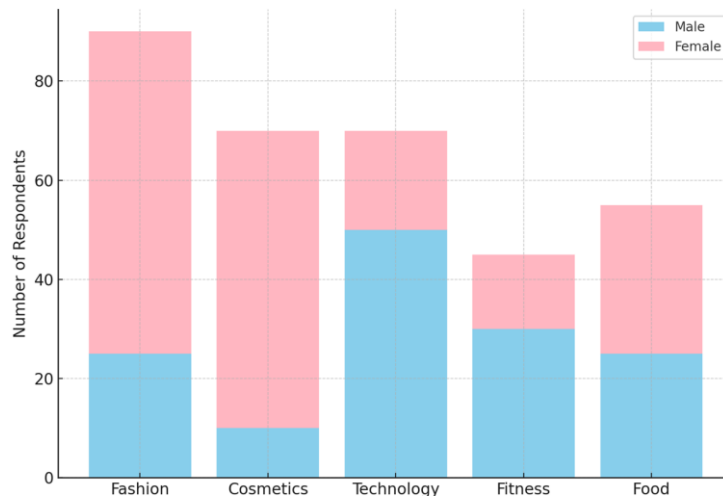


Figure 5: Stacked Bar Chart of Product Interest by Gender

The Influence Index and High-Exposure Groups:

Teens who spend more than three hours each day on social media really like products influencers suggest, especially clothes or makeup. Teens who use social media less often choose things based on how useful they are for them personally. Seeing things on social media really shapes who people listen to.

Overall Interpretation:

Teenagers' shopping choices connect strongly with how they use social media. People with a following affect what others like, what they want to become, how they show who they are. People who spend more time online are more likely to be influenced by social media personalities, especially when it comes to things like fashion or hobbies. This matters to those who advertise products, teachers, families, because it shows how much young people are affected by what they see online.

4. Discussion

This research shows teens make buying choices based on what influencers suggest. Looking at survey results, we discovered a strong link between how much people trust influencers, how related the content is to their interests, how often they interact with it, also their willingness to buy something. Interaction frequency showed the strongest connection, with a score of 0.943, as shown in Table II. Seeing influencer

content often matters a lot. Teens want to buy things more if they view influencer posts, videos, or stories frequently.

People are much more likely to buy something if they believe the person recommending it is trustworthy, knowledgeable, feels real, delivers a clear message. Teens especially seem to trust people who share information online when those people appear to know what they're talking about, feel like friends, say similar things each time. Previous studies show people tend to trust marketing on social media when they believe the source is reliable. , This belief strongly influences how much people trust the marketing. People showed a noticeable tendency to buy things they found interesting. However, trustworthiness, how often they interacted with the content, seemed to matter more when it came to making a purchase.

Looking at each system individually shows they work differently. Instagram leads as the top platform influencing purchases, 38% of people said they are likely to buy something they see there, giving it an average rating of 4.6 out of 5. YouTube follows with 34% reporting a high intent to purchase, at 4.4/5. TikTok comes in third, inspiring purchases from 28% of users, who rated it 3.9/5. Instagram's focus on pictures, videos, alongside tools for audience connection probably make influencer marketing more convincing. It mixes images of desirable lifestyles with messages that feel real. Videos on YouTube let creators tell more complete stories, building connections with viewers. These connections improve how well viewers respond to products brands suggest. TikTok gets popular quickly, yet it seems better at making people aware of things than at getting them to buy something right away. This shows how people act differently on this platform.

The research shows what kind of people with a following matter, too. People with a smaller online following often seem more genuine, creating better connections with teenagers who trust them more. Famous people who promote products often seem like people others want to be like. They do help more people learn about brands, yet they don't strongly motivate people to buy things immediately. Genuine connection, seeming easy to talk to, truly matters when teens move from liking something to actually buying it [5,9,12].

It's still really important to think about what's right when marketers work with popular people to reach teens. The survey showed many young people don't notice when social media posts are ads. This means they might not realize influencers are trying to sell them something. This shows brands, government groups need to be open about what they do. They should clearly state things to build trust, keep people from being misled [3,15]. Content plans work better when they are honest, build trust, get people involved, then keep customers coming back for a long time.

To sum things up, the conversation shows us a few important ideas. Seeing trustworthy people recommend products often makes teens want to buy them. Instagram, YouTube work best for reaching teens with influencer marketing. Smaller influencers seem more genuine, build more confidence. Being open about marketing is key to doing things the right way. Marketers can use these results to improve how they work with influencers targeting teens, keeping things honest.

5. Implications and Recommendations

This research, developed from a survey, suggests ways marketers, teachers, families, government officials can improve influencer marketing with young people. It focuses on getting better results while keeping things honest.

A. What this means for people who promote things

- **Leverage Micro-Influencers:**

People with a smaller online following, yet feel more like everyday individuals, build greater trust, receive more interaction. To connect with teenagers, marketers should work with popular people online. This builds trust, encourages buying things.

- **Optimize Platform Strategy:**

The research showed how much impact varied depending on the specific website. People showed the greatest desire to buy things after seeing posts on Instagram, or YouTube. TikTok did a better job of getting people to notice the product. To get the best results, marketing should make sure influencer posts fit each platform well, boosting how many people see them, leading to more customers.

- **Focus on Credibility and Consistency:**

Seeing people we trust talk about products often makes us want to buy them. Companies need to choose people who share ideas that fit the company's style. They must also talk with their audience often to build confidence, 1,61,61,6.

- **Content Relevance and Engagement:**

Good content keeps people interested, it also influences what they buy. To keep teens interested, share stories, create posts people can join in on, use pictures or videos that look nice. This helps them pay attention, then they'll want to show it to their friends.

B. What teachers, moms, dads need to know

- **Promote Media Literacy:**

Teens frequently have difficulty telling the difference between real posts with information someone created themselves versus advertisements people pay for. Teachers need to add lessons that help students think carefully about what people post online, also learn how to spot when posts are actually ads.

- **Encourage Ethical Awareness:**

Moms, dads, talk to teens about how things are advertised online. Help them recognize when advertising tries to influence them, encourage smart spending choices. This helps lessen the impact of information that is not checked or seems unrealistic.

C. What this means for people making rules

- **Standardize Sponsorship Disclosure:**

Teens don't often notice when things are sponsored, so we require better rules to make it clear. Rules need to make content creators clearly state when they get money for promoting something, using words, plus pictures, that kids easily grasp.

- Monitor Platform Practices:

Social networks need to mark ads very visibly, especially when kids see them, to be honest, follow the rules.

When brands work with people online, making sure those people are trustworthy, use the right social media sites, operate openly, honestly builds a stronger desire for teens to buy things, keeps them safe. Working with everyone involved creates marketing that lasts, respecting people along the way.

6. Conclusion

The research shows teens between 12 to 18 years old often decide what to buy because of what people they follow online recommend. Research reveals that how much people trust influencers, how useful the content is, how often they interact with it, really affect whether teens will buy something. Seeing something multiple times makes teens more likely to make a purchase. Looking at how things perform on different platforms, Instagram, YouTube work best when influencers promote products. TikTok mostly helps people learn about products, it doesn't usually lead to immediate buying. The research shows people think smaller influencers feel more genuine, more like someone they know, than famous personalities.

It is important to think about what is right, because teenagers often don't notice when something is an advertisement. Brands need to be open, teachers should help people understand media, government officials should create simple rules for sharing information. This research gives useful ideas for creating good, honest influencer campaigns aimed at teens. It shows the importance of being real, building confidence, selecting the right social media sites.

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