

How consumption-oriented or green is influencer content on TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram?

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As young people are specifically vulnerable to and concerned about the environmental crisis, it is important to understand what drives young adults' consumption and pro-environmental behavior. Social media influencers particularly play an important role in young adults' lives and have the ability to set the norm. Therefore, it is vital to understand how these digital opinion leaders communicate about issues such as climate change and consumption. This study investigates the extent to which social media influencer content is commercialized and consumption-oriented, and to what extent their content is more green and sustainability-oriented. Specifically, we analyze over 100,000 influencer posts on Instagram, TikTok and YouTube to capture the proportion of sustainability-oriented and consumption-oriented content. Preliminary results show that consumption-oriented content far outweighs sustainability content. In addition, we find relevant differences between platforms, with TikTok content having a more ecofriendly focus, and Instagram being mostly consumption-oriented.

Keywords: influencer; climate change; content analysis; social media; sustainability; environmental communication; consumption; advertising