



Unit	Social Media
Sub-unit	The risk of social media
Title	Advertisement in Social Media <i>The effect of Influencers on youth</i>
Short summary	This unit deals with the impact of advertisement and of influencers on young people's behaviour. Students will reflect on the behaviour of influencers and look behind the motivation of the industry to engage influencers in social media for advertising purposes.
Learning Objectives	The student is able: *to determine who is an influencer * to explain possible impacts of influencers on young people *to explain the motivation of companies to advertise through an influencer; *to reflect the possible impact of an influencer on the particular student.
Method	<p>Mind mapping</p> <p>"Mind mapping" is a graphical technique for visualizing connections between several ideas or pieces of information. It is often created around a single concept, drawn as an image in the center of a blank page, to which associated representations of ideas such as images, words and parts of words are added. Major ideas are connected directly to the central concept, and other ideas branch out from those major ideas.</p> <p>Picture analysis</p> <p>The aim is to enable the students to carry out a competent and critical analysis and interpretation. Pupils should be made aware that images are not images of reality, but rather represent a reality, a specific snapshot and that their origins and reception history are</p>

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	determined by various interests and socio-political framework conditions. Information is needed to convey the additional context and knowledge about the history or the subject of the image. The discussion in the class is very important in the analysis process, so that the different reception of images and their effects become clear: The pupils should recognize that images depend on the recipient and can be interpreted differently. Media representations are based on the decodability and readability of the majority, for a certain purpose, but essential elements are often not communicated.
Material	See attachment 1 – 4
Target group	Students 15+
Duration	45 min
Introduction	<p>1. Step: The teacher asks students if they know any popular influencer or if they are following any influencers? Then, students are asked to define more generally who is an influencer? The teacher writes the suggestions from the students on the white board and complement with further characteristics, if any are missing (The guideline for step 1 is in the attachment 1).</p>
Development	<p>2. Step: Based on the knowledge and self-experience of the students with influencers the students discuss possible impacts of influencers on young people. The teacher uses mind mapping (attachment 2) for the elaboration of impacts.</p> <p>3. Step: After collecting all ideas about possible impacts of influencers on young people the teacher starts a discussion with the students about the idea of involving influencers in advertising in social media (guideline for step 3 is in the attachment 3) while the students</p>

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	integrate "the function" of influencer into the overall economic and societal context.
Assessment of learning outcomes	4. Step: The teacher shows pictures of famous and popular influencers to the students and asks students to guess which product or service the influencers advertise and to guess how many followers these influencers have. The number of followers should underline the popularity of the products/services which is promoted by the particular influencer. Students are asked to share their opinion and their attitude towards influencer (attachment 4).

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Attachment 1 Who is an influencer?

Supportive material for the classroom teaching



Definition

Influencers are people who, on their own initiative, publish content (text, images, audio, video) on a topic in a high and regular frequency and thus initiate social interaction. This is done via internet-based communication channels such as blogs and social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube,

Snapchat or Twitter. Influencers stand out from the crowd of social media users because they achieve long reach with their work.

Characteristics of influencers

- Influencers are often experts in their field. They are enthusiastic about their profession or their calling, they pursue a hobby or live out a passion for collecting. They are interested in lifestyle, fitness, sports, fashion, travel or nutrition.
- They are opinion leaders because in social media they exert a stronger influence than other social media users through the quality of their communication and reasoning and through a high level of activity. Due to their virality, the network effects develop a momentum that the influencer did not initially anticipate.
- Social media influencers are a) active on one or more communication channels and intuitively master their functions and tools; b) they have a high level of self-

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motivation and a

need to pass on information, c) are enthusiastic about themselves and their fan base with professional competence and expertise, d) communicate and interact promptly and regularly with their fans and e) enjoy a high level of recognition and social acceptance in their community.

- An influencer's persuasiveness is based on his personality and positive character traits. The ideal image of an influencer combines properties such as credibility, trust, authenticity and charisma.
- The everyday life of an influencer may be accompanied by beautiful and expensive things. They present their followers on Instagram every day, for example the latest care products, the greatest vacation spots, the coolest technology and convey their lifestyle. But we must be aware of the reality behind this "façade". In most cases, the presentation of these products, places or services is advertising. This means that companies commission influencers to market their products or services. That means chic clothes, great technology or breathtaking vacation spots are promotional products that should convey a feeling of life. However, this external representation often does not correspond to the real life circumstances of the influencers.

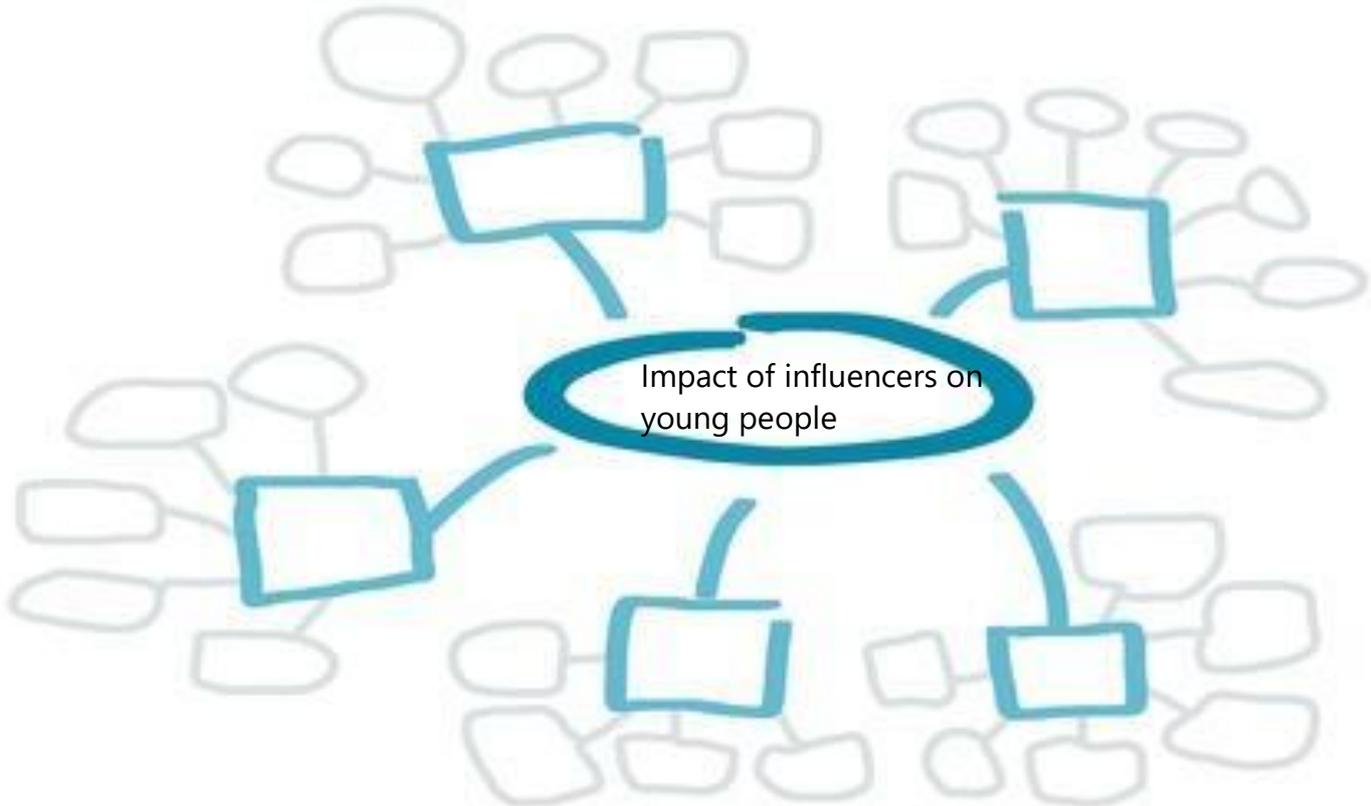
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Attachment 2 Impact of influencers on young people



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Background Information

Social Media Influencers and the Vulnerability of Youth to such Influences (Abstract)

(...) Firstly, addiction to social media itself is a huge problem looming over today's youth. It is obvious that the use of social media is increasing day by day. But how much is too much? Two hundred sixty million Indians are active social media users (Translate media, n.d.) and are found to spend 70% of their time on the smartphone on social media purely for entertainment preferred (Pillai, 2017). There's a grave problem here. Teenagers, in the years of innocence and discovering themselves and their goals in life, **spend a majority of their time looking into the picture perfect lives of such individuals**. Hobbies become non-existent, self-development gets hampered, and the mind is tuned to spending hours in front of the screen.

Secondly, following Social media influencers often lead to a **life of comparison**. Young girls and boys of impressionable ages have access to such content, **look at it, admire it to the point of idolising it** and therefore form a construct of what constitutes the "appropriate" or the "accepted" form of lifestyle. **The life of their favourite influencers is a lot different than what it is portrayed-** they too have their struggles, weaknesses and days when they do not look their best but their social media is structured in a way to portray only the brighter side. **The problem begins when there is a failure to recognize this truth and teenagers start comparing the highlights and the 'picture perfect' moment of such people to their everyday life which might not seem as glamorous in comparison.** This life of **constantly feeling 'not good enough' or 'not content'** with yourself leads to various other problems that highlight the third issue is revolving around the overuse of social media. Teens addicted to social media are found to be more susceptible to grave issues such as **depression** and others such as **body dysmorphia** and a complete **lack of communication skills** due to a cut off from the real world (Gordon, 2018). Other problems emerge as well such as **privacy issue emerging out of sharing too much, putting out false information** and many other instances of **bullying**. While problems are many, these have emerged as few of the key issues revolving around this culture of social media and its influencers.

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Girls seem to get more affected by social media and are found to fall prey to its side effects much more than boys. For example- A survey conducted by The Guardian observed the ever-increasing dissatisfaction that young girls harbour within them in regards to their **body**. They continue to face the harsher side-effects of cyberbullying and online harassment on their own without even confiding to their parents or friends. 51% of girls of the age of 14 and 16 tend to be unhappy with their appearance and want to look like someone else. They are also found to be deeply affected and go in self-doubt about their looks when they see celebrities who they think of **to be 'perfect'** being poorly trolled on social media for their appearance (Meikel, 2013). They are found to begin **seeking validation from the virtual world**, mindlessly aping these influencers ignoring the loss of individuality and self-worth. Likes determine their number of friends; comments determine their worth and a **dislike can affect them** much more than what is required. This isn't safe. While many such studies have been conducted, many statistics been formulated not much has been done to curb these threats. (...)

(Autor: Gayatri Nagu, O.P. Jindal Global University, URL:

<https://www.youngbhartiya.com/article/social-media-influencers-and-the-vulnerability-of-youth-to-such-influences>

Sources used in the abstract:

Translate Media, (n.d). India Social Media. *The Translate Media*. Retrieved from: <https://www.translatemedia.com/translation-services/social-media/india-social-media/>

Pillai, S. (2017). Indians spend 70% of their mobile internet time on social media, entertainment. *The Times of India*. Retrieved from: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/business/india-business/indians-spend-70-of-mobile-internet-time-on-social-entertainment/articleshow/62125840.cms>

Gordon, S. (2018). 5 ways social media affects teen mental health. *The Very well family*. Retrieved from: <https://www.verywellfamily.com/ways-social-media-affects-teen-mental-health-4144769>

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Growing number of girls suffer low self-esteem, says report. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2013/nov/29/girls-low-self-esteem-rising-girlguiding-report>

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Attachment 3 The “function” of influencer from a socio-economic perspective

Supportive material for the classroom teaching

Following questions can encourage the discussion about the “function” of an influencer in the economic and societal context.

1. Who is the customer/contractor for influencing activities?
2. Why companies pay for an influencer? What is the benefit for them?
3. What do companies expect from an influencer? What are possible challenges for companies?
4. How is the reputation of the job as influencer in the society?
5. How does the life of an influencer look like?
6. What are the challenges of an influencer?
7. What are the benefits of an influencer?
8. What could be possible motivation to become an influencer?
9.

Some interesting information in addition

How do Influencers on YouTube advertise?

1. YouTube affiliate program

Youtubers with more than 1000 subscribers can sign up for the YouTube affiliate program. Then commercials are placed in their videos and the YouTuber gets a small amount of money for each video view.

2. Promo links

If a YouTuber mentions a product in a video, he/she can let the viewer know where the product can be found at. If someone clicks on the link, the YouTuber gets money. If the person also buys the product, the YouTuber gets even more money.

3. Paid videos

4

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Companies can pay YouTubers to test and promote certain products. The YouTubers then make a video in which the product appears.

4. Sponsors

If a company finds a YouTuber particularly interesting, they can pay the YouTuber for briefly mentioning the company in every video.

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Attachment 4 Reflection

Supportive material for the classroom teaching

What products/services do the following influencers advertise?
How many followers do you think these influencers have?

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tutorial link below
youtu.be/cAAqx_6PDWE



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Julia Engel (Gal Meets Glam) Founder of Gal Meets Glam. Lover of all things feminine. Launching my dress line @galmeetsglam April 20th.
mglam.me/charlestonguide



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Food



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Attachment 4 Part

II

Supportive questions for the students to encourage the discussion about their opinion and their attitudes:

*Do you follow any influencers?

*If not, why not?

*If yes, what kind of services do your influencers advertise?

*What do you like most in the way, how the influencer presents the product/services/others?

*Would you become an influencer too?

*Which product would you advertise?

*Which product would you not advertise at all?

....

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