

Online Influencing of Overconsumption

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Overconsumption is the excessive buying or use of products. This includes things like clothes, accessories or food and largely trends or popular items. Overconsumption has a huge impact on the environment and contributes to climate change due to the excess products we buy usually going to landfill where they produce greenhouse gases. Society over consumes for many reasons, but a huge factor that is influencing us and especially this generation is online media.



Apps like TikTok and Instagram are very popular with the newer generations as well as past ones. On these platforms are big influential accounts, some of which can hold great power in their audience. Over the past few years social media has grown massively and with this there has become more people who work full time on social media. This means more content is being put out and not all of it is as positive as it appears to be.

Things like 'Haul culture' and restocks have become trends as well as skin and self-care routines. Although some of these videos are harmless a lot of them promote overconsumption and single use products. Many celebrities take pride in showing off their thousand-pound hauls to their audience, some not realising the effects it has. Hauls glamorise buying things excessively as well as impulsive buying, both of which can have immense negative impacts on our planet.

As well as this restocks have become very popular. This is where influencers video themselves filling their drawers, fridges or rooms with new products. These videos often feature things like unnecessary amounts of waste and taking items out of their original packaging to put in other containers. This means that more materials are being used and put into landfill, with the only purpose for them being to look better. Most packaging is also used for a reason and is specifically shaped for the product it has inside and taking them out of this can cause safety issues to small kids as well as being all round impractical. These types of hauls and restocking videos can have an enormous impact on the people who watch them. They can cause people to idolise that lifestyle and make unnecessary purchases, especially people who are vulnerable to online influence. It can cause people to feel bad about themselves and their household, while really, they are living perfectly normally and the videos are simply unrealistic.



Additionally, while skin and self-care have been on the rise, many videos of people's routines are just as bad. Videos with endless steps and different products, a lot of which have no real purpose, are on trend. These videos are made only for the need to look aesthetic and some just for rage bait to increase views. They are filled with single use products that are completely avoidable, which also has a big impact on their followers and the products they choose to use.

Along with these things are the endless social media ads, advertising more products to their viewers. Almost half of US consumers have said they have purchased things off of social media, with 39% saying they would again. Sponsorships of influencers are rampant accompanied by ads put out by big companies. These promote the consumerism lifestyle even more by encouraging people to make impulsive purchases of things they don't really need. Seeing their favourite celebrities or creators with these products motivate people to buy them unnecessarily, particularly because of the influencers Z list status, meaning that many of their audience sees them as almost a friend figure but also someone to look up to.

All of these things have a huge impact on our environment and climate change. Most of the excess products that we use end up in landfills which causes even more air pollution. Our things decompose and let out greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and methane, contributing to global warming. The plastic that is used for so many things, also harms our environment greatly. A lot of the plastic we produce ends up in the ocean where it can cause danger to many different sea life species. Around 12 million tonnes of plastic is put into the ocean every single year, with around 100 million sea creatures dying every year due to it. Overconsumption also means that there is more production and distribution of parcels. Making these things can be very expensive and pollutive and shipping them from the other side of the country or the world takes a lot of energy. Transport for these things means more fossil fuels have to be burnt to get the energy needed for vehicles, further contributing to climate change. The excessive purchasing of these goods also means that there is less available for those who need it more when we should be using the materials to help them.



In conclusion, the online influence of overconsumption is having a very big impact on our climate. These online videos and trends are guiding many audiences to make irresponsible financial decisions at the cost of our climate. This, as well as many other causes of overconsumption and reckless buying needs to change in order to prevent climate change. Influencers and celebrities should focus on encouraging sustainable use and promote products that are better for our environment with their status. With global temperatures estimated to rise 1.5 Celsius by 2050 we need to make changes fast in order to make a better future for the next generations to come.

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