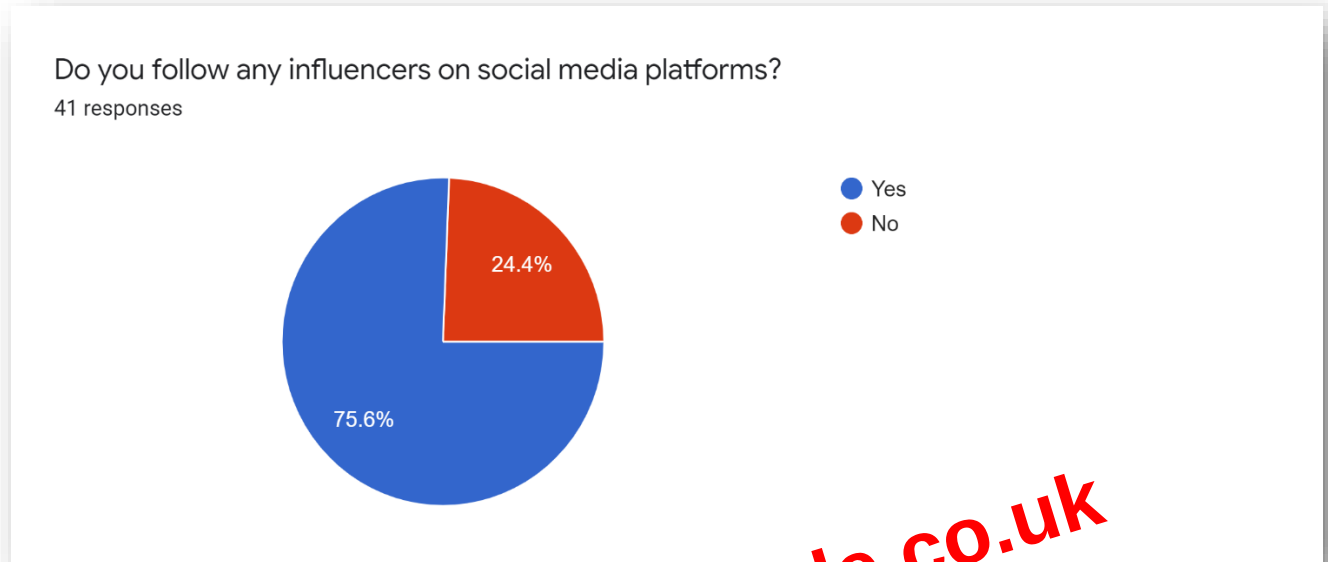


fundamental shifts in understanding of the seller's reputation. Influence can also be defined as the act of creating a favourable environment in order to influence another person's attitude toward a specific topic. (Brown and Hayes, 2008) Such social media influencers have gained authority in a specific field, and their legitimacy and reputation have a strong persuasive effect on others. (De Vries et al., 2012; Gensler et al., 2012; Leeflang et al., 2012). The related information flow and influence theories can be used to interpret this effect. According to Katz and Lazarsfeld's (1955) two-step flow theory, messages distributed through mass media are not directly transmitted to individuals, but rather mediated by opinion leaders who translate messages and mediate information transmission through multiple group interactions. Interpersonal contact has a greater influence on people's attitudes than mass media. Weimann (1994). Opinion leaders' influence is based not on wealth or popularity, but on their ability to serve as a central point of contact, educating their colleagues on what matters in politics, culture, and consumer preference. Nisbet and Kotcher (2009) Influencers, as opposed to celebrities, are found to be more open, realistic, authentic, and normal for people to relate to because they share personal aspects of their lives with their followers. Abidin (2016) and Jensen Schau and Gilly (2003) are two examples. As a result, influencer endorsements are more likely to be perceived as the influencer's genuine opinion rather than paid advertisements. Abidin (2015). This effect can also be explained by sociological theories. Bandura, a social-science theorist, believes that new behaviour patterns can be learned through direct experience or by mimicking the actions of others. Consumers form opinions or hypotheses about the types of behaviours that are most likely to succeed, and these hypotheses serve as guidelines for potential behaviour. To put it another way, people learn by example. Influencers serve as role models for those who follow them. They are more likely to mimic their behaviours if they observe them on social media. Bandura (1971). This explanation explains why influencers

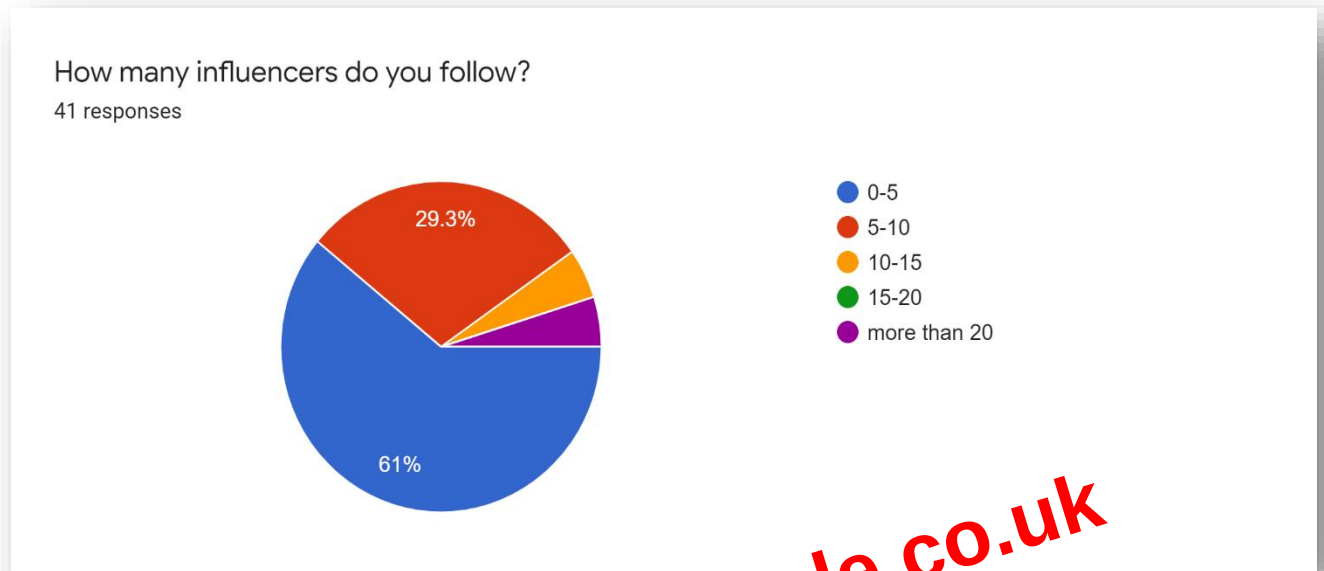
Q4. Do you follow any influencers on social media platforms?



31 respondents follow influencers on various social media platforms, whereas 10 respondents do not follow any influencer. This shows that the popularity of influencers is significantly increasing.

It can also be noted that the growing access to social media platforms is the main reason for the growing importance of social media influencers.

Q5. How many influencers do you follow?

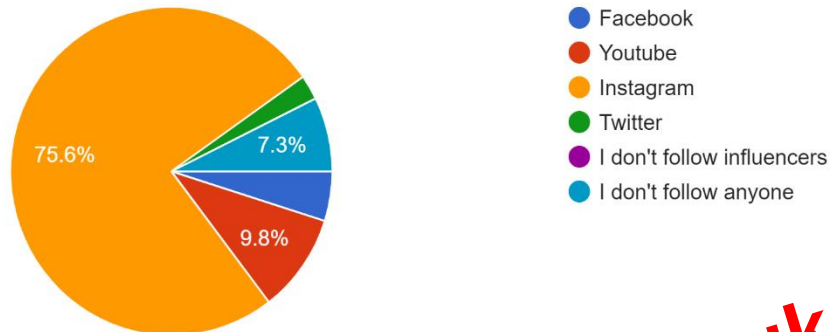


25 respondents follow 0-5 influencers, 12 respondents follow 5-10 influencers, 2 respondents follow 10-15 influencers and 2 respondents follow more than 20 influencers. The majority of respondents follow influencers and the number of influencers followed according to this data ranges from 5 to 20.

Q6. Which social media platform do you use to follow influencers?

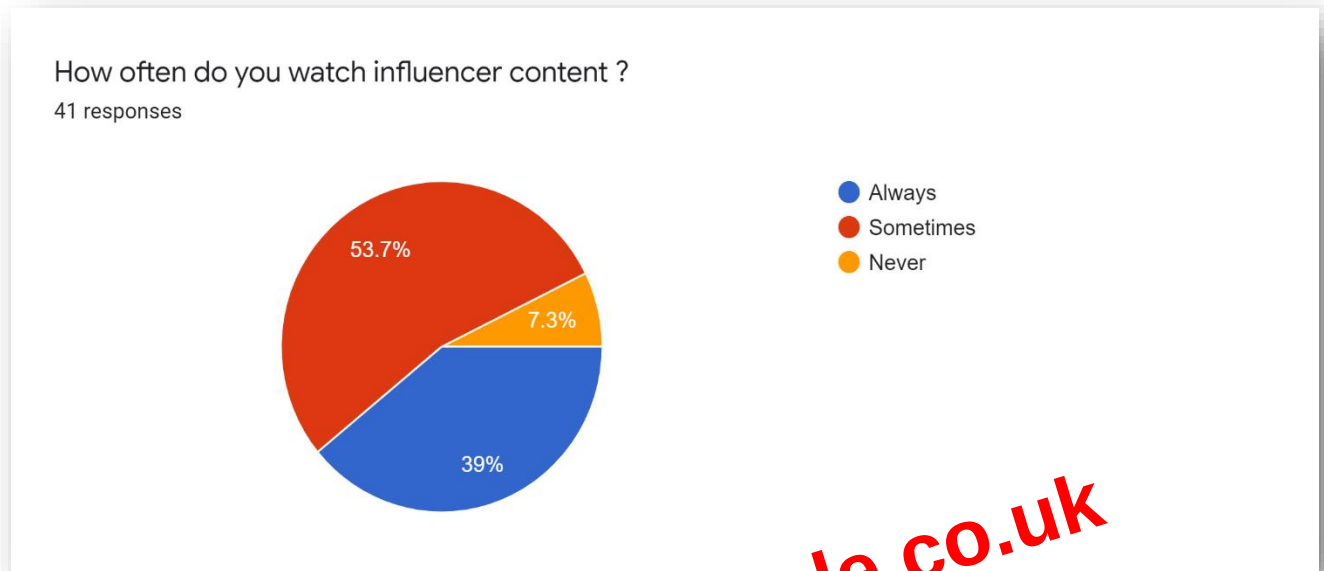
Which social media platform do you use to follow influencers

41 responses



31 respondents were for, 4 responses were for YouTube, 3 responses were for Facebook and only 1 for twitter. This indicates that Instagram is the most used social media platform by the users to follow influencers.

Q9. How often do you watch influencer content?



22 respondents watch influencer content sometimes, 16 respondents watch influencer content always while 3 respondents do not watch influencer content. Consumers find influencer content useful to gather information about products (as per previous question and data). Influencers understand their audience and what type of content they want to consume. As a result, they create content that connects with their audience and fosters a sense of bonding and trust.