

# A Study on Buying Behaviour Towards Gen Z Trust Influencer More Than Brands (Cetaphil Skin Care Product) in Coimbatore

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## Abstract

In the last few years, social media has emerged as a principal determinant of consumer buying behaviour, especially for Generation Z consumers. Generation Z consumers follow social media influencers for product reviews, skin care routines, and buy recommendations. In the skin care industry, influencer endorsements often have a greater influence on consumer purchase decisions than brand advertising. Cetaphil is a skin care brand recommended by dermatologists, and its products are often endorsed by influencers on digital platforms. The current research examines the purchase behaviour of Generation Z and explores whether this generation trusts influencers more than the Cetaphil brand when making purchases. This research relies on primary data, which were collected through a structured questionnaire. For the analysis of data, the research uses statistical techniques such as percentage analysis, Chi-square tests. The findings reveal that influencer credibility, perceived authenticity, and content quality are significant determinants of Generation Z purchase intention.

**Keywords:** *Gen Z buying Behaviour, Consumer behaviour Gen Z, Influencer credibility and trust, Celebrity endorsement vs influencer, Purchase intention skincare products*

## INTRODUCTION

The rapid growth of social media and, consequently, influencer marketing has brought about significant changes in the purchasing behaviour of consumers. Generation Z, people born between 1997 and 2012, became the first generation to grow up in an utterly digital environment. This generation is relying more and more on social media platforms like Instagram, YouTube, and for information gathering, product evaluation, and making purchase decisions.

The skincare industry has significantly grown to a point where awareness of healthy skin and personal care has increased. Cetaphil is a globally recognized skincare brand known for its gentle, dermatologist-approved formulations. Traditionally, consumer decision-making was influenced by brand trust, advertising, and endorsements from experts. However, the emergence of social media influencers has altered this dynamic

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This demonstrates the potential of antiquated conventional branding techniques. The main question this study aims to answer is: Do Gen Z consumers trust influencers more than the Cetaphil brand? What impact do influencers' authenticity and credibility have on consumers' purchasing decisions?

## SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The research scope is restricted to analyzing the buying behaviour of Gen Z consumers in relation to influencer marketing compared to brand promotion, with a special focus on Cetaphil skin care products. The research is conducted on Gen Z individuals who are social media platform users and are either aware of or have used Cetaphil products. The research investigates the impact of social media influencers on purchase decisions, trust levels, brand perception, and the preference for influencer marketing recommendations compared to traditional brand advertisements. The results are expected to offer valuable insights to marketers, brands, and influencers for the development of effective marketing strategies targeting Gen Z consumers.

## OBJECTIVES

1. To investigate the connection between influencer trust and Gen Z's propensity to purchase Cetaphil products

2. To evaluate Gen Z's level of trust in Cetaphil in comparison to skincare influencers
3. To identify the crucial factors (credibility, knowledge, and authenticity) influencing Gen Z's faith in influencers.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **SOURCES OF DATA**

The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire with the help of Google Form. Secondary data were collected from published journals, research articles, books, online websites, and previous studies related to influencer marketing, consumer behaviour, Gen Z, and skincare products, to support and strengthen the analysis of the study.

### **AREA OF STUDY**

The study is conducted in Perur, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, a developing area with a high presence of Gen Z consumers, making it suitable to analyze their buying behaviour influenced by social media influencers over brands like Cetaphil.

### **SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND SAMPLE SIZE**

#### **Sample size and Sample data**

The study adopted a convenience sampling technique to select respondents based on their accessibility and willingness to participate. A sample size of 100 Gen Z respondents.

### **PERIOD OF STUDY**

November 2025 to January 2026

#### **Statistical Tools Used**

- Percentage Analysis
- Chi-Square test
- Average score

### **Limitations of the Study**

The study is limited to a small sample size of Gen Z respondents using convenience sampling, which may affect the generalizability of the findings. The research focuses only on Cetaphil skin care products and is based on self-reported responses, which may involve personal bias.

## **REVIEW OF LITREATURE**

**Singh and Agrawal (2024)**<sup>1</sup> examined the effect of social media influencers on purchase intention among Generation Z in the cosmetic and skincare industry. This study found that influencer credibility, trust, and perceived expertise play a vital role in purchase decisions and are usually more effective than traditional brand advertising.

**Dewi and Putri (2024)**<sup>2</sup> studied the impact of influencer credibility and brand image on Generation Z's skincare buying intentions. Their findings indicate that influencer trustworthiness and authenticity have a positive effect on purchase intention through social media platforms.

**Chavare(et al.) (2025)**<sup>3</sup> examined whether brand attitude complements the role of influencer credibility in driving purchase intention among Indian Gen Z consumers. Results indicate that influencer credibility plays a dominant role even when brand attitude is strong.

**Singh (2025)**<sup>4</sup> examined the influencer marketing purchasing intention of Generation Z consumers in India. The authenticity, transparency, and candid review were noted as the major drivers of trust to purchase.

## **DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

Primary data were collected from responses to a structured questionnaire by members of Generation Z. Percentage analysis was conducted to study demographic profiles and purchasing behavior patterns. The Chi-square test was used to assess the relationship between influencer trust and purchase intention: age and gender. A greater portion of the respondents would consider influencer reviews in Cetaphil skincare products. Authenticity of the influencer, personal experience, and product demonstration were pointed out to be the most influential factors. The results show that influencer trust has a great influence on purchase decisions of Gen Z, even in well-established brands like Cetaphil.

**PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS**

**TABLE NO: 4.1 PERSONAL PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENTS (percentage analysis)**

Personal Profile	Particulars	No. of. Respondents	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>	Male	40	40
	Female	60	60
<b>Age Group</b>	18-21	35	35
	22-25	45	45
	Above 25 years	20	20
<b>Educational Qualification</b>	12TH	10	10
	Under graduate	48	48
	Post graduate	28	28
	Professional	14	14
<b>Occupation</b>	Student	42	42
	Employer	38	38
	Self-Employed	12	12
	Others	8	8
<b>Monthly Income</b>	No Income	42	42
	Below Rs.50,000	36	36
	Rs.50,000-1,00,000	17	17
	Above Rs.1,00,000	5	5

**Interpretation**

The table indicates that female respondents form the majority, showing higher influence of social media influencers. Most respondents belong to the 22–25 years age group, representing Gen Z consumers. The majority are undergraduates, reflecting strong digital exposure. Students constitute the largest occupational group, followed by employed respondents. The income analysis shows that respondents with low or no income are more influenced by Gen Z influencers than brands.

**Table 4.2 Frequency of using influencer brand**

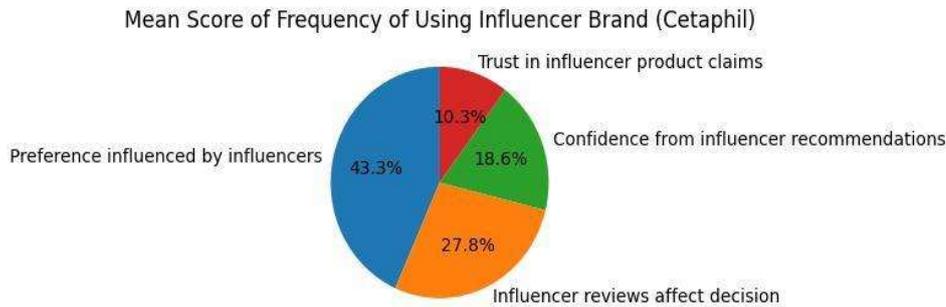
Particulars	Average score	Interpretation
Your preference for skincare products is influenced more by social media influencers than by brand advertisements.	<b>4.22</b>	<b>Always</b>
You feel confident in purchasing Cetaphil products based on recommendations given by social media influencers.	<b>2.71</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>
Influencer reviews and skincare routines on social media sometimes influence your decision to purchase Cetaphil products.	<b>1.811</b>	<b>Rarely</b>
You trust the information and product claims shared by skincare influencers while promoting Cetaphil products.	<b>1.00</b>	<b>Never</b>

**Interpretation**

The chart shows that preference influenced by influencers (43.3%) is the most significant factor in using the influencer-promoted brand Cetaphil. Influencer reviews affecting purchase decisions (27.8%) also play a major role among respondents. Confidence gained from influencer recommendations (18.6%) moderately influences

usage behavior. However, trust in influencer product claims (10.3%) has the least impact. Overall, the findings indicate that influencers shape brand preference and decisions more than direct trust in product claims.

**Chart 4.2 (Mean Score of Frequency of using influencer brand)**



**Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>)**

It indicates that there is no significant relationship between the personal factors of Gen Z respondents and their buying behaviour towards influencer marketing over brand preference (Cetaphil skin care product).

**Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>1</sub>)**

It indicates that there is a significant relationship between the personal factors of Gen Z respondents and their buying behaviour towards influencer marketing over brand preference (Cetaphil skin care product).

**Table 4.3 Chi-square Analysis**

S.No	Personal factors	Chi-square Value	Significance Value	S/NS
1	Age	10.214	0.018	S
2	Gender	2.467	0.291	NS
3	Area	3.102	0.376	NS
4	Education Level	3.689	0.298	NS
5	Income Level	4.057	0.255	NS

**Interpretation**

The chart shows that **preference influenced by influencers (43.3%)** is the most significant factor in using the influencer-promoted brand Cetaphil. **Influencer reviews affecting purchase decisions (27.8%)** also play a major role among respondents. **Confidence gained from influencer recommendations (18.6%)** moderately influences usage behavior. However, **trust in influencer product claims (10.3%)** has the least impact. Overall, the findings indicate that influencers shape brand preference and decisions more than direct trust in product claims.

**FINDINGS**

**Percentage Analysis**

- The majority of respondents are female (60%).
- Most respondents belong to the 22–25 years age group (45%).
- A majority are undergraduates (58%).
- Most respondents are students (42%).
- The majority have no monthly income (42%)

**Average Score Analysis**

The average score of 4.22 indicates that respondents are highly influenced by Gen Z influencers when purchasing Cetaphil skincare products. This shows that influencer recommendations play a greater role than brand advertisements in shaping buying behaviour.

### **Chi-Square Test Analysis**

The Chi-square test result shows a significant relationship, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. Hence, Gen Z influencers significantly influence consumers' buying behaviour towards Cetaphil skincare products.

### **SUGGESTIONS**

- Cetaphil should work more with trusted Gen Z influencers to build stronger consumer trust and engagement.
- Influencers should share authentic and informative content to keep their credibility with Gen Z consumers.
- The brand can focus on influencer-driven skincare education rather than just promotional ads.
- Future research can involve a larger sample size and compare multiple skincare brands.

### **CONCLUSION**

The study concludes that Generation Z consumers trust social media influencers more than traditional brand communication in the purchase of skincare products, such as Cetaphil. Influencers drive a stronger influence because of the authenticity, relevance, and experience-based content they create and communicate. Even though Cetaphil maintains a strong brand reputation, the endorsements by these influencers uplift product awareness, trust, and trial among Gen Z consumers. Therefore, collaboration with credible influencers and transparency will be key considerations for any skincare brand to engage with Generation Z for long-term trust.

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