

Skinfluencers: Emotional vs. Informational Appeals in Shaping Gen Z Skincare Behaviors

Aniket M. Swaraj

SIES College of Commerce and Economics (Autonomous), Mumbai, India

aniket.swaraj22@gmail.com

Abstract: *The rise of “Skinfluencers” has reshaped how Gen Z consumes skincare information, raising critical questions about the effectiveness of different message framing strategies. This study experimentally compared emotional and informational appeals in skinfluencer content among 350 undergraduates. Participants were randomly assigned to view posts framed either emotionally (e.g., glow, confidence) or informationally (e.g., sunscreen efficacy). Responses were collected through a 10-item Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed using independent samples t-tests. Findings revealed that emotional appeals significantly enhanced engagement and positive attitudes toward influencers, while informational appeals improved credibility and produced stronger intentions to adopt evidence-based skincare practices. These results align with the Elaboration Likelihood Model and the Health Belief Model, showing how peripheral cues foster connection while central cues motivate preventive action. The study advances theory by clarifying how message framing shapes digital health persuasion and offers practical guidance for influencers, dermatologists, and educators. Ultimately, it demonstrates that the most effective communication with Gen Z is not emotional or informational but a strategic balance of both.*

Keywords: Skinfluencer, Emotional appeal, Informational appeal, Gen Z, Skincare behavior

