International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 11, CONFLUENCE - 2026

Consumer Perception Towards Direct-to-Consumer Skincare and Beauty Brands in India: Awareness, Trust, Influencer Marketing and Repurchase Intention

Conference research paper working draft

Author: Sourabh Kalyanashetti | Affiliation: BMS College of Commerce and Management, Bengaluru, India

Corresponding author email: [Add institutional or preferred academic email]

Abstract - Direct-to-consumer (D2C) skincare and beauty brands increasingly engage consumers through digital discovery, product claims, customer reviews and creator-led promotion. Yet awareness does not necessarily translate into trust, satisfaction or repeat purchase, particularly for products applied to the skin, where perceived suitability and safety matter. This study examines consumer perceptions of D2C skincare and beauty brands in India, focusing on brand awareness, purchase criteria, social-media and influencer exposure, channel preference, satisfaction and repurchase intention. A structured questionnaire dataset currently contains 101 response records collected in August 2026. Preliminary descriptive summaries indicate that 76 respondents (75.2%) report having heard of D2C skincare/beauty brands; product quality is the most frequently selected single purchase factor (36/101; 35.6%); and channel preference is divided between online (35), offline (28) and both equally (37), with one missing response. Repurchase likelihood is most frequently neutral (41/101; 40.6%). These figures are provisional because the available workbook contains response-pattern inconsistencies that require reconciliation with the original survey export before inferential claims can be accepted. The paper therefore frames its current results as exploratory and emphasizes transparent data validation, cautious interpretation and practical implications for trust-centred, omnichannel D2C marketing.

Keywords: direct-to-consumer; skincare; beauty brands; consumer perception; influencer marketing; brand trust; purchase intention; India

Manuscript status

IMPORTANT: This is an editable working draft, not a submission-ready paper. Verify the original response file, ethics/consent documentation, all statistics and the target conference template. Do not submit the provisional findings until the data audit is completed.

(This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.)

International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 11, CONFLUENCE - 2026

1. Introduction

Digital commerce has changed how consumers discover, evaluate and purchase skincare and beauty products. Direct-to-consumer (D2C) brands seek to own more of the customer relationship through brand websites, social media, direct communication and first-party customer data. In practice, however, consumer journeys are rarely confined to a brand-owned channel: a shopper may discover a serum on Instagram, watch a creator review, compare marketplace ratings, and finally purchase through an e-commerce platform or a physical retailer.

Skincare purchases involve more than price and visual appeal. Consumers may consider ingredients, suitability for their skin type, safety, product performance, authenticity, reviews, brand reputation and the credibility of promotional claims. Online channels offer convenience, choice and access to information, but they limit physical inspection and may increase uncertainty about product suitability. These tensions make skincare a useful context for examining how awareness, trust and digital persuasion relate to purchase and repurchase intentions.

Influencer marketing is particularly relevant in beauty categories because creators demonstrate routines, explain ingredients and share product experiences. Evidence from Indian consumers indicates that beauty-vlogger credibility can be associated with purchase behaviour, with trust playing a mediating role in the relationship between credibility and purchase intention (Garg & Bakshi, 2024). At a broader level, research on electronic word of mouth suggests that the usefulness, credibility and quality of online information are relevant to purchase intention (Ismagilova et al., 2020). These findings do not mean that all influencer exposure is persuasive; consumers can distinguish between exposure, perceived credibility and actual purchase behaviour.

This paper studies these connected dimensions within a consumer survey focused on D2C skincare and beauty brands in India. Its contribution is intended to be integrative rather than causal: it brings awareness, purchase criteria, influencer perceptions, channel preferences, satisfaction and repurchase intention into one exploratory analysis. The achieved sample is heavily weighted toward students and younger respondents, so the findings should be interpreted as evidence about this sample rather than as nationally representative estimates.

1.1 Problem statement

D2C beauty brands can achieve high visibility through digital platforms, but the conversion of visibility into confidence, satisfaction and repeat behaviour is not automatic. The research problem is to understand how respondents in the available sample describe their awareness, evaluation criteria, digital discovery, channel preferences and future purchase intentions, while carefully separating descriptive patterns from causal explanations.

1.2 Research questions

- RQ1: What levels of awareness and self-reported knowledge of D2C skincare/beauty brands appear in the achieved sample?
- RQ2: Which product and brand factors are most frequently prioritized when respondents choose skincare/beauty products?
- RQ3: How do respondents report social-media exposure, influencer influence and trust in digital information?
- RQ4: How are online, offline and blended channel preferences distributed?
- RQ5: What do satisfaction, repurchase-likelihood and recommendation responses suggest about the sample's relationship with D2C brands?

(This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.)

International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 11, CONFLUENCE - 2026

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Background

2.1 Purchase intention and planned behaviour

The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) proposes that behavioural intention is shaped by attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norms and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). In a skincare context, attitude may reflect beliefs about product quality or value; subjective norms may include recommendations from peers or creators; and perceived control may include affordability, availability and confidence in selecting a suitable product. The present questionnaire does not measure every TPB construct with a validated multi-item scale, so TPB is used as a sensitizing framework rather than claimed as a fully tested model.

2.2 Influencer credibility and trust

Influencer communication can provide product information and social cues, but its value depends on how consumers evaluate the source. Garg and Bakshi (2024) examined beauty-vlogger credibility, parasocial interaction, trust and purchase intention using 357 respondents in North India. Their results indicated that credibility traits were relevant to consumer behaviour and that trust partially mediated the relationship between source credibility and purchase intention. The study is directly relevant to the beauty category, although its respondent profile and regional sampling differ from the current dataset.

For this paper, influencer exposure, perceived influence and trust must remain conceptually distinct. Seeing an influencer mention a product does not establish that the respondent trusts the influencer; reported trust does not necessarily establish that the person bought the product; and a self-reported past purchase does not establish that influencer content caused the purchase.

2.3 Electronic word of mouth and online reviews

Online reviews reduce information asymmetry by giving consumers access to other buyers' experiences. Ismagilova et al. (2020) synthesized evidence from 69 studies on electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and purchase intention. Their meta-analysis highlighted argument quality, valence, usefulness and trust in the message among the stronger predictors discussed in the review. For skincare, detailed reviews about texture, irritation, suitability and performance may be more actionable than high-volume but vague praise. The current survey includes review-related responses, but their measurement and coding must be checked before constructing composite scores.

2.4 D2C and omnichannel behaviour

D2C describes a route-to-market relationship, not necessarily a single shopping location. A brand may sell through its own website while also distributing through marketplaces or retail partners. Therefore, respondents' familiarity with a D2C brand should not be treated as equivalent to a preference for the brand's own website. A consumer can value direct brand communication and still prefer a marketplace for comparison, delivery or perceived transaction security. The questionnaire's channel items are useful for describing this distinction, provided that response categories are interpreted as asked.

2.5 Research gap and intended contribution

Prior studies examine influencer credibility, eWOM and purchase intention, but a practical question remains: how do these digital factors sit alongside product quality, ingredients, price, skin-type suitability and channel choice in consumers' reported D2C skincare evaluations? This study offers an exploratory, multi-dimensional description of these factors in one sample. The gap should be stated cautiously: the paper cannot claim that no prior study has integrated these variables until a reproducible literature search across databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar and publisher platforms has been completed.

(This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.)

International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 11, CONFLUENCE - 2026

3. Conceptual Framework and Propositions

The proposed framework organizes the questionnaire domains into three broad groups: (1) consumer and product evaluations, including awareness, perceived quality, ingredient interest, price and skin-type suitability; (2) digital information and social influence, including social-media exposure, online reviews, influencer influence and trust; and (3) outcomes, including satisfaction, repurchase likelihood and recommendation intention.

Domain	Questionnaire indicators	Expected analytical role
Awareness	Heard of D2C; self-rated knowledge; brand familiarity	Descriptive profile; possible association with outcomes
Product evaluation	Quality, ingredients, price, brand reputation, reviews, suitability	Purchase priorities and perceived value
Digital influence	Social content exposure, influencer influence/trust, review perceptions	Describe exposure and test carefully defined associations
Channel choice	Usual purchase location; online/offline/equal preference; reasons	Describe channel mix and concerns
Relationship outcomes	Satisfaction, repurchase likelihood, recommendation intention	Describe loyalty-related intentions; not actual future behaviour

3.1 Proposed hypotheses for testing after data validation

The following are candidate hypotheses, not confirmed findings. They should be retained only if the corresponding items are conceptually valid and sufficiently complete.

- H1: Higher self-reported D2C brand knowledge is associated with stronger repurchase intention.
- H2: Greater perceived influencer influence is associated with stronger repurchase intention.
- H3: Greater trust in online reviews is associated with stronger purchase or repurchase intention.
- H4: Perceived skin-type suitability and product quality are positively associated with satisfaction.
- H5: Channel preference differs across respondent groups, subject to adequate expected cell counts.

Because the dataset appears to be a convenience or voluntary-response sample, any inferential results should be framed as associations within the achieved sample. Cross-sectional self-report data cannot establish that social media or influencers caused a purchase.

3.2 Measurement caution

Single-item ordinal responses should not automatically be combined into a scale. Before computing a composite score, inspect the exact wording, response anchors, direction of scoring, missingness and construct coverage. Reliability statistics such as Cronbach's alpha are appropriate only for a defensible multi-item scale, not for unrelated questions simply because they use similar response labels.

(This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.)

International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 11, CONFLUENCE - 2026

4. Research Methodology

4.1 Research design

The study is designed as a cross-sectional, descriptive survey with exploratory association testing. The instrument contains 28 numbered questions covering respondent profile, D2C awareness and knowledge, brand familiarity, purchase criteria, purchase frequency, discovery channels, social content exposure, influencer influence, channel preference, satisfaction, repurchase intention and recommendation behaviour.

4.2 Dataset and achieved sample

The available cleaned workbook contains 101 response records. Its timestamps indicate collection between 24 and 27 August 2026. The sample is not demonstrated to be probability-based; therefore, the manuscript should describe the actual recruitment process and avoid claiming representativeness. Before submission, document how the questionnaire was distributed, eligibility criteria, recruitment locations or networks, consent language, and whether duplicate or incomplete records were screened.

4.3 Data preparation

The workbook contains four sheets: Summary, Clean Data, Raw Import and Codebook. The codebook reports standardization of whitespace, response capitalization, trailing commas, common yes/no categories, multi-select formatting and timestamps. The audit should preserve the original export and document every cleaning rule. Corrections should be based on the source record and pre-defined rules, never on whether a response supports a preferred hypothesis.

4.4 Statistical analysis plan

- Descriptive analysis: counts, valid percentages and missing values for categorical responses; median and mode for ordinal items where useful.
- Multiple-response questions: count each selected option and report the denominator clearly; percentages may sum to more than 100%.
- Cross-tabulation: use only pre-specified, interpretable comparisons. Merge categories only when theoretically defensible and documented.
- Chi-square tests: check expected cell counts; use an exact or Monte Carlo approach, or avoid the test, when assumptions are not met.
- Ordinal association: consider Spearman correlation only when item coding and direction are defensible.
- Report effect sizes and confidence intervals where feasible, not p-values alone. Treat multiple exploratory tests as exploratory and disclose the number of tests.

4.5 Ethics and privacy

Before submission, confirm that respondents were informed about the survey purpose and voluntary participation, that identifying data are not exposed, and that storage and access are appropriate. The workbook includes six records categorized as below 18. Confirm whether parental/guardian consent or institutional ethics approval was required and obtained under the applicable rules. If this cannot be verified, seek guidance from the faculty supervisor or ethics authority before using those records in a publication.

(This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.)

International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 11, CONFLUENCE - 2026

5. Data Quality Audit: Required Before Publication

A preliminary inspection of the available workbook found patterns that require source-level reconciliation. These are audit flags, not proof of misconduct or proof that a respondent is invalid.

Audit flag	Observed in workbook	Required action
Purchase eligibility	All 101 records say they purchased D2C products, while 25 respondents report being unsure whether they have heard of D2C brands.	Check question wording, branching logic and original row values.
Influencer purchase	All 101 records say they purchased after an influencer recommendation, although reported influence varies substantially.	Check whether the question was yes/no, mandatory, pre-filled or mis-coded.
Social discovery	A social-media discovery Likert item has many disagreement responses, while Instagram is frequently present in the multi-select discovery item.	Verify whether the two items measure different constructs or were mapped incorrectly.
Non-user satisfaction	Some satisfaction answers are “never purchased online” or “haven’t used any,” despite universal D2C purchase responses.	Confirm skip logic and distinguish online purchase from any D2C purchase.
Under-18 respondents	Six records are categorized as below 18.	Verify consent and ethics requirements, and document handling of these records.
Missing responses	Several questions contain one or two blank cells.	Report valid denominators per item; do not silently impute categorical answers.

5.1 Reconciliation protocol

1. Obtain the original Google Forms CSV/XLSX export directly from the form owner or response source.
2. Compare the original export with the Raw Import sheet row by row, using timestamps or a non-identifying row key.
3. Inspect the original question text, answer options, required/optional status and any branching logic for Q9, Q15, Q17, Q21 and Q22.
4. Document discrepancies and apply only source-verifiable corrections. Preserve a copy of the untouched original.
5. Re-run all tables and statistical tests from the reconciled file. Save the code or analysis steps so another researcher can reproduce the results.
6. If a pattern is present in the original responses and is not a processing error, report it transparently and discuss its implications rather than changing it.

5.2 Publication gate

Do not submit the present results as validated empirical evidence until the original data source and these flags have been checked. If the original export cannot be obtained or provenance cannot be established, consider redesigning the paper as a clearly labelled pilot study or conceptual paper, subject to the target conference’s rules. Do not present unverifiable data as genuine survey evidence.

(This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.)

International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 11, CONFLUENCE - 2026

6. Preliminary Descriptive Results

The values below are reproduced from the current cleaned workbook and are provisional. They are not yet cleared for publicati on because of the data-quality flags described in Section 5. Counts are shown alongside percentages to make denominators transparent.

6.1 Respondent profile

Variable	Category	n	% of 101
Age	Below 18	6	5.9
Age	18–20	62	61.4
Age	21–25	14	13.9
Age	26–30	10	9.9
Age	31–40	6	5.9
Age	Above 40	3	3.0
Gender	Male	53	52.5
Gender	Female	48	47.5
Occupation	Student	71	70.3
Occupation	Employed	17	16.8
Occupation	Self-employed	7	6.9
Occupation	Homemaker	6	5.9

The sample is concentrated among respondents aged 18–20 (62/101, 61.4%) and students (71/101, 70.3%). This concentration is a key limitation for generalization. The gender distribution is relatively balanced in this sample, but that does not make the sample nationally representative.

6.2 Awareness and self-rated knowledge

Seventy-six respondents (75.2%) selected “Yes” to having heard of D2C skincare/beauty brands, while 25 (24.8%) selected “Not sure.” Self-rated knowledge was most commonly “Moderate” (52/101, 51.5%), followed by “Low” (22/101, 21.8%), “High” (13/101, 12.9%), “Very low” (8/101, 7.9%) and “Very high” (6/101, 5.9%). These measures suggest that claimed awareness and confidence in knowledge should be discussed separately. The awareness response pattern must be checked against purchase eligibility before this result is used in a final paper.

(This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.)

International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 11, CONFLUENCE - 2026

6.3 Purchase priorities and channel preferences

Most frequently selected single purchase factor

Factor	n	%
Product quality	36	35.6
Price	18	17.8
Ingredients	17	16.8
Reviews and ratings	10	9.9
Brand reputation	10	9.9
Product suitability	4	4.0
Discounts/offers	3	3.0
Influencer recommendations	3	3.0

Product quality is the most frequently selected single factor in the current workbook, followed by price and ingredients. This ranking should be interpreted as the respondent's selection of one most-important factor, not as a complete ranking of every product attribute. The separate importance items use ordinal categories and should be analysed separately after verifying their labels and coding.

Channel preference

Preferred D2C channel	n	% of all records
Both online and offline equally	37	36.6
Online	35	34.7
Offline	28	27.7
Missing	1	1.0

The channel distribution is divided across online, offline and blended preferences. This is consistent with examining D2C as a brand relationship that can coexist with multiple purchase routes, rather than assuming that consumers always want to purchase directly from a brand website. The most frequently reported reason for channel preference in the workbook is trust/authenticity (22 responses), followed by better discounts (19), convenience (15) and the ability to physically inspect or test products (15). One response is missing for this question.

6.4 Discovery, satisfaction and repurchase

The workbook's multi-select brand-discovery item lists Instagram among the selected channels for 72 respondents in the accompanying project summary. However, a separate social-media discovery item contains a high number of disagreement responses. This discrepancy requires reconciliation before a single interpretation of social-media influence is published.

Overall satisfaction is most frequently neutral (35/101, 34.7%), followed by satisfied (29/101, 28.7%). Repurchase likelihood is also most frequently neutral (41/101, 40.6%), with 31 likely (30.7%), 17 unlikely (16.8%), six very unlikely (5.9%) and six very likely (5.9%). These are intentions, not observed future purchases. Interpretations remain provisional until the underlying response logic is verified.

(This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.)

International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 11, CONFLUENCE - 2026

7. Analysis Plan and Results Tables to Finalize

Once the data audit is complete, the final analysis should be concise and aligned to the research questions. A conference paper does not need to reproduce every table from the college project report. Select only the results that answer the research questions and support the contribution.

7.1 Core tables recommended for the final manuscript

Table	Content	Decision rule
Table 1	Sample profile and valid denominators	Include counts and percentages; disclose sampling method.
Table 2	Top purchase criteria and perceived concerns	Separate single-choice from multi-select items.
Table 3	Social-media discovery, influencer influence and trust	Verify item coding and question wording first.
Table 4	Channel preference and reasons	Show missing values and category totals.
Table 5	Satisfaction, repurchase and recommendation	Keep “not applicable” distinct from neutral.
Table 6	Only validated hypothesis tests	Report test statistic, degrees of freedom, p-value, effect size and assumptions.

7.2 Statistical test selection

For categorical relationships, Pearson’s chi-square test may be suitable if observations are independent and expected cell counts are adequate. Sparse tables may require category consolidation with a substantive rationale, an exact test, or descriptive-only reporting. Ordinal variables may be analysed using rank-based association measures if coding is meaningful. A regression model should not be used merely to make the paper look advanced; it requires a defensible outcome measure, appropriate predictors, sufficient variation, acceptable missingness and checks for model assumptions.

7.3 Avoiding overclaiming

- Use “associated with” rather than “caused” for cross-sectional survey associations.
- Use “respondents in this sample” rather than “Indian consumers” when describing the achieved sample.
- Do not treat $p > .05$ as proof of no relationship or $p < .05$ as proof of practical importance.
- Do not claim mediation, validated constructs or causal pathways without suitable measurement and analysis.
- Report non-significant as well as significant results, including null or contradictory patterns.

7.4 Reproducibility package

Retain a de-identified analysis dataset, data dictionary, cleaning log, questionnaire, code or calculation workbook, and a table-to-source audit trail. Share only data that the consent terms and applicable privacy rules permit. If data cannot be shared publicly, state the reason and the access conditions.

(This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.)

International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 11, CONFLUENCE - 2026

8. Discussion

The provisional descriptive pattern suggests that respondents in this sample place substantial emphasis on product quality, with price and ingredients also frequently selected as top purchase considerations. For skincare, this points to the importance of communicating concrete product information rather than relying exclusively on aspirational branding. However, the current instrument captures stated priorities, not verified product performance or the causal effect of a marketing message.

The divided channel preferences suggest that consumers may value different benefits at different stages of the journey. Brand-owned channels can provide detailed ingredient explanations and direct communication; marketplaces can support comparison and transaction convenience; physical stores can allow inspection and reassurance. The survey's reported preference for both online and offline channels is compatible with an omnichannel interpretation, but the sample and measurement limitations prevent broad market-level claims.

The neutral concentration in satisfaction and repurchase intention may indicate an unresolved gap between trial and loyalty, but several interpretations are possible. Neutral responses may reflect mixed experiences, insufficient usage, uncertainty about future needs, price sensitivity or a response scale that does not capture the respondent's situation. Before drawing conclusions, the analysis should distinguish actual users from non-users and recent buyers from respondents who have not used a product for a meaningful period.

The role of influencers requires particular caution. Prior research on Indian beauty vloggers finds that credibility traits and trust can be relevant to purchase intention (Garg & Bakshi, 2024). Yet the current dataset reports universal past purchase after influencer recommendation, while the degree of perceived influence varies. The first task is therefore not to claim that influencer marketing is universally effective, but to verify whether the yes/no item was correctly presented and recorded. If the pattern is authentic, the paper should explain the wording and possible recall interpretation; if it is a data-processing error, the corrected analysis should replace the provisional result.

Online reviews deserve similarly nuanced treatment. Meta-analytic evidence suggests that message quality and usefulness matter in eWOM (Ismagilova et al., 2020). For skincare, detailed reports of skin compatibility, irritation, texture and sustained use may be more useful than raw review volume. The current survey can contribute to this discussion only if its review-related questions are interpreted according to their actual wording and response coding.

8.1 Contribution

The paper's defensible contribution is an exploratory description of how product priorities, digital information and channel choice coexist in a young, student-heavy sample of D2C skincare/beauty consumers. A stronger theoretical contribution would require validated constructs, a more clearly justified sample and hypothesis tests that survive the data audit.

(This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.)

International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 11, CONFLUENCE - 2026

9. Managerial Implications, Limitations and Conclusion

9.1 Managerial implications

- Lead with product evidence: explain ingredients, intended use, skin-type suitability and realistic outcomes in clear language.
- Treat trust as a system: align creator claims, product pages, customer service, ingredient explanations and post-purchase support.
- Make reviews useful: encourage specific, authentic feedback on texture, usability, compatibility and time-to-result, without suppressing negative experiences.
- Design for omnichannel journeys: allow consumers to research online, compare alternatives and access physical reassurance where feasible.
- Address safety concerns responsibly: provide accurate usage guidance, transparent ingredient information and clear complaint/return pathways; avoid unsupported medical or efficacy claims.
- Measure loyalty beyond intention: where feasible, use later follow-up or consented behavioural data to distinguish stated repurchase likelihood from actual repeat purchase.

9.2 Limitations

The achieved sample is small and concentrated among younger respondents and students. The sampling frame and recruitment method require fuller documentation; selection bias and self-report bias are likely. The study is cross-sectional, so it cannot establish causal effects or observe future repurchase. Several constructs appear to be measured with single items rather than validated scales. Some questions are multi-select and some responses are missing. Most importantly, the current workbook contains inconsistencies that must be checked against the original export, and consent/ethics arrangements for under-18 respondents need confirmation. Until these checks are completed, the descriptive results should not be presented as definitive.

9.3 Conclusion

This paper examines consumer perceptions of D2C skincare and beauty brands through the connected themes of awareness, product evaluation, digital influence, channel preference, satisfaction and repurchase intention. The current workbook provisionally points to product quality as the most frequently selected purchase factor, divided online/offline preferences, and neutral responses as the modal categories for overall satisfaction and repurchase likelihood. These patterns offer a useful starting point for investigating how D2C brands can move from visibility toward confidence and sustained customer relationships. The paper's final contribution, however, depends on data provenance, response consistency, ethical documentation and reproducible analysis. Transparent validation is not an administrative afterthought; it is a condition for credible publication.

Acknowledgement and declarations

Funding: [State funding, or "No external funding was received," only if accurate.]

Conflict of interest: [Declare any actual conflicts, or state none only if accurate.]

Ethics and consent: [Insert verified institutional approval/consent details. Do not invent an approval number.]

Data availability: [State whether de-identified data can be shared and under what conditions.]

AI assistance: Follow the selected conference/publisher policy. If disclosure is required, identify the tool and describe the sections and level of assistance accurately. Do not use a generic disclosure that conflicts with the actual writing process.

(This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.)

International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 11, CONFLUENCE - 2026

References

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 50(2), 179–211. https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T

Garg, M., & Bakshi, A. (2024). Exploring the impact of beauty vloggers' credible attributes, parasocial interaction, and trust on consumer purchase intention in influencer marketing. Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, 11, Article 235. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-02760-9

Ismagilova, E., Slade, E. L., Rana, N. P., & Dwivedi, Y. K. (2020). The effect of electronic word of mouth communications on intention to buy: A meta-analysis. Information Systems Frontiers, 22, 1203–1226. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10796-019-09924-y

Conference and integrity checks before submission

- Select a conference with a verifiable organizing institution, named committee, transparent peer-review process, clear fee policy, publication agreement and accessible past proceedings. Use Think. Check. Attend. as a screening checklist.
- Download the official author template and verify the page limit, citation style, anonymization rules, publication venue and whether the 12-page limit includes references.
- Read the exact AI policy. Policies differ: for example, IEEE publication guidance calls for disclosure of AI-generated content in acknowledgements and identification of affected sections; grammar-only editing may be treated differently. Follow the target venue's own rules.
- Check that the conference proceedings are indexed only if the conference can substantiate the claim directly through the indexing service. Indexing should never be inferred from a logo on a website.
- Confirm that the manuscript is original, not submitted simultaneously elsewhere, and that all authors have reviewed and approved the final version.

Verified online sources used to establish the reference details

Ajzen article record: https://doi.org/10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T

Garg and Bakshi article: https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-024-02760-9

Ismagilova et al. article: https://doi.org/10.1007/s10796-019-09924-y

Think. Check. Attend. conference checklist: https://thinkchecksubmit.org/think-check-attend/

IEEE author policy on AI-generated text: https://journals.ieeeauthorcenter.ieee.org/become-an-ieee-journal-author/publishing-ethics/guidelines-and-policies/submission-and-peer-review-policies/

Final author checklist

- Original raw export reconciled; all flagged patterns resolved or transparently explained.
- All statistics re-run from the validated dataset; tables use the correct denominator.
- Consent/ethics requirements verified, especially for respondents under 18.
- Literature review expanded using a documented search strategy; all citations checked against publisher records.
- Conference identified and screened; template and AI disclosure rules followed.
- All authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

(This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.)