

## **The Impact of YouTube UGC Source Redibility on Gadget Purchase Intentions among Gen Z in Sri Lanka: The Mediating Role of Attitudes toward UGC**

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In an era defined by digital consumerism, YouTube emerged as a transformative platform for User-Generated Content (UGC), significantly influencing consumer purchase intentions. This study investigates the impact of YouTube UGC source credibility measured through trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness—on gadget purchase intentions among Sri Lankan Generation Z, with a specific emphasis on the mediating role of attitudes toward UGC. While previous studies highlight the global significance of UGC, there is limited studies addressing its influence on consumer behavior in Sri Lanka, especially within the gadget industry and among Gen Z consumers.

The study adopts a quantitative approach, collecting data through an online survey from 416 participants aged 18–27 who engage with gadget-related YouTube content. A structured questionnaire was employed to measure perceptions of source credibility, attitudes toward UGC, and purchase intentions. Regression analysis was utilized to test the hypotheses, ensuring a robust examination of the proposed relationships.

Findings show that source credibility has a significant positive effect on gadget purchase intentions. Trustworthiness was identified as the most influential dimension, followed by expertise and attractiveness. Additionally, attitudes toward UGC were found to play a key mediating role, strengthening the relationship between source credibility and purchase intentions. These results validate the Stimulus-Organism- Response (SOR) framework by demonstrating how credible stimuli (UGC) influence internal states (attitudes), driving behavioral responses (purchase intentions).

The research contributes to both theory and practice. It extends the source

credibility model and the SOR framework in the context of an emerging market and offers valuable insights for marketers and content creators. The findings highlight the importance of partnering with trustworthy and knowledgeable YouTube creators to build consumer trust and enhance engagement. For marketers, this study underscores the need to design authentic and relatable UGC campaigns to leverage the full potential of YouTube as a marketing platform. Future research could consider longitudinal designs and explore additional mediators, such as trust and perceived usefulness, to enrich the understanding of UGC's role in influencing consumer behavior.

While the study offers valuable insights, it acknowledges certain limitations. Its focus on Generation Z limits the generalizability of findings to other demographic groups. Additionally, the reliance on cross-sectional data constrains the ability to capture longitudinal changes in consumer behavior. Moreover, the study focuses exclusively on the gadget industry, which may yield different results compared to other product categories.

**Keywords:** *Attitudes Toward UGC, Gadget Purchase Intentions, Generation Z, Source Credibility, YouTube UGC*