

## **The Role of YouTube Unboxing Review Videos on Smartphone Purchase Intention: A Case on Gen z and Millennials in Sri Lanka**

**H P D Silva**

Department of Marketing Management, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka  
*dpasindu87@gmail.com*

**S S J Patabendige**

Department of Marketing Management, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka  
*sugeeth@kln.ac.lk*

User-generated videos (UGVs), created by users rather than manufacturers or sellers, have gained substantial popularity among social media users, particularly Gen Z and Millennials. Platforms such as YouTube have facilitated the use of UGVs to generate awareness and influence purchasing decisions through reviews. This study aims to examine the impact of UGVs by specifically investigating the role of unboxing YouTube videos on smartphone users' purchasing intentions. The study is grounded in the gratification theory, which posits that media users actively seek content that fulfills their needs, including cognitive (information seeking), social integrative (connecting with others), affective (entertainment needs), and tension-release (to pass the time). Data for this study were collected through an online survey of 390 respondents using a convenience sampling method, targeting both Gen Zs and Millennials in Sri Lanka. The collected data were analyzed using correlation and regression techniques with the aid of SPSS 26 software. The study reveals that viewing unboxing YouTube videos aligns with all four motives identified by the gratification theory, and that these motives significantly and positively influence smartphone users' purchasing intentions. Furthermore, among the four motives, the information-seeking motive related to smartphones demonstrates the strongest correlation with purchasing intention. The findings contribute to theoretical discussions on social media content and purchasing intention and offer practical insights for UGV creators and influencers on how to effectively target their messages.

**Keywords:** *Gratification Theory, Purchase Intention, Unboxing Videos, User-Generated Videos*