

# Influencer Impact on Gen X Buying Choice and Attitude towards Electronic Product: Insights of Guwahati

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**Abstract:** Influencer-driven campaigns became an impact of the fast growth of the social media. This study focuses on the social media personality influence on the buying decision and the perception of the consumers of Generation X living in Guwahati, an area understudied in the marketing research. Based on the source credibility theory, the present research aims to focus its attention on the variable influences of perceived trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness on the purchase intention. A response rate was obtained of 100. A mixed method approach is adopted which include - survey data and Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) as part of the study to determine the association between influencer attributes and consumer behavioural outcomes including testing the hypothesized relationships. Results shows that influencers have a significant effect on Generation X view of technology, the need of cultural customized marketing strategies. This research is co-opted to theoretical research and give practitioners practical insights through the use of influencer endorsement in the context of technology driven product sector by expanding influencer marketing strategies to Generation X in the context of emerging region market.

**Keywords:** Generation X; Source Credibility Theory; Trustworthiness; Purchase Intention; Influencer; Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM)

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## 1. Introduction

Digitalisation and the rise of social media platforms have transformed the marketing environment in the past decade [1]. With this changing marketing environment, people born between 1965 and 1980, Generation X are a unique and somewhat ignored consumer segment [2]. Gen X has a unique perspective to judge products unlike being often well-credible and useful rather than paying attention to trends or novelty depending on their considerable disposable income, well-established habits of consumption, and growing digital literacy [3]. Influencer marketing had been associated with the younger demographics, mostly with Gen Z and Millennials [4]. However, in the recent trends, the marketers are shifting their attention to Generation X especially for high involvement products, such as electronics [5]. Social media influencers can impact people's perceptions, attitudes, and buying intentions because they are sought-after opinion leaders [6]. However, empirical studies which examine these dynamics among Gen X in an emerging market are scarce. Guwahati, is a particularly interesting city to explore the effects of influencer marketing on consumer behaviour, due to its rich socio-cultural diversity as well as its advancing digital access and evolving local consumption habits [7].

Gen X users are becoming more digitally aware than ever before, giving an increased ability to evaluate online content critically. The availability of new and novel ways of producing and disseminating information from brands, bloggers, and influencers is providing

Gen X an expanded variety of options that are often better matched to their own values and preferences than those previously available. The growing digital literacy among members of Generation X will likely enhance their ability to evaluate a brand's acceptability and authenticity by reducing their reliance on trustworthiness as an indicator of these attributes while increasing their reliance on expertise and the relatability of the communication is in developing their attitudes.

Therefore, this research aims at filling this gap in the research literature by analysing the impact of Influencers' characteristics on the generation of attitudes and purchase decisions among Generation X consumers in the specific regional market. Considering the under-researched subject of the Generation X in the context of consumer behaviour of the generation X in context of shopping for electronic products, following research question is formulated:

R<sub>Q</sub>: To explore the impact of influencer attribute on the purchase intention of consumers belonging to Generation X.

While previous research on influencer marketing has mostly focused at younger age groups, this study assumes that Generation X consumers in Guwahati form a unique segment. Unlike general consumer behaviour models that assume similar digital responses, this group has relatively high purchasing power, established consumption habits, and growing digital involvement, influenced by a mix of social and cultural factors [4].

Additionally, Guwahati offers a special context where traditional cultural values exist alongside rapid digital growth. This setting allows the study to build on Source Credibility Theory by showing how the effectiveness of influencers is affected not just by their credibility but also by generational traits and the local cultural background.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1. Influencer Marketing and Electronic Products*

Electronic products involve technological complexity, significant financial investment, and long-term use, due to this, they are deemed high-involvement purchases [8, 9]. As a result of this, consumers often rely on the use of information sources that are external in order to help them in reducing perceived risk and uncertainty prior to making a decision to purchase [10]. Social media influencers have taken on this role by sharing product demonstrations, reviews, and personal experiences, which help consumers to understand electronic products [11]. From previous studies, the practice of Influencer's Endorsement can generate positive associations of assurance and values for the client/trader within the industry, especially in technology-centred industries [12].

### *2.2. Credibility of Influencer and Consumer Attitude*

According to Source Credibility Theory, the message source's credibility plays significant roles in the persuasive communication's effect [13, 14]. Three dimensions of credibility include: trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness [15]. These attributes affect the interpretation of information by consumers and their attitudes towards the products that are being promoted.

Even though Source Credibility Theory has been widely applied, previous studies often treated credibility dimensions as universally valid [15]. New research indicates that how trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness are valued can change based on generational

cohorts and cultural settings [16]. This study offers a new perspective on the theory by exploring how these dimensions function differently among Generation X consumers in a growing urban area.

### *2.2.1. Trustworthiness*

The extent to which an influencer is perceived as honest, reliable, and unbiased is referred to as trustworthiness [4]. When forming positive attitudes about recommended endorsed electronic product trustworthiness is especially important for Generation X consumers as they tend to be more cautious and as a result are less open to clear marketing messages [17].

### *2.2.2. Expertise*

Consumers perceptions of an influencer's knowledge and competence related to electronic products are reflected through the consumer's degree of expertise [14]. Influencers that possess a technical proficiency and have much familiarity with the features of the product are effective in reducing information gaps and building confidence in their purchase decision for the consumers [16].

### *2.2.3. Attractiveness*

Beyond physical appearance, attractiveness includes characteristics such as being relatability, communication style, and overall personal appeal [18, 19]. Attractiveness can help increase audience engagement and enhance the persuasiveness of influencer messages, but may not be a major influence in deciding to purchase high-involvement products [20].

## *2.3. Attitude, Purchase Intention of the Consumer*

The overall way of transformation and emotional response of an individual towards the products is captured in the form of their attitude [21,22]. According to theories of persuasion and behavioural intention, attitude is an important determining factor in purchase intention especially for high-cost and carefully considered purchases, such as electronic products [10].

## *2.4. Mediating Role of Consumers Attitude*

Influencer attributes may have direct impact on the purchase intention, however, usually it occurs by influencing their attitude [11]. In this context, attitude can be defined as a psychological mechanism that transforms the perception of influencer credibility to the intention of consumers to purchase [14, 23].

## **3. Theoretical framework & Hypothesis development**

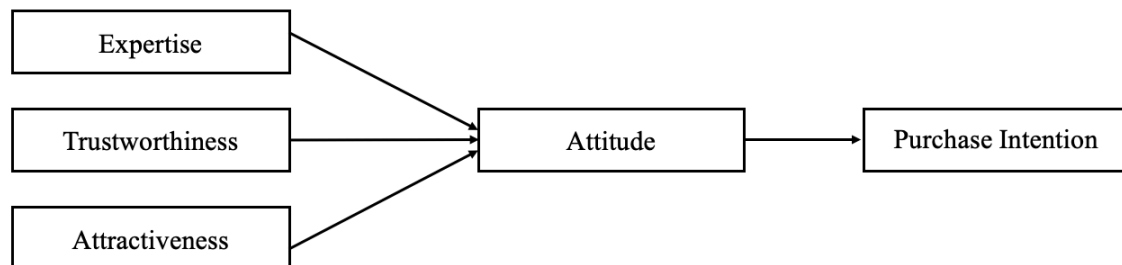
### *3.1. Source Credibility Theory*

Credible sources are important in affecting people's perceptions, decisions, and trust in information or not [24]. Later, the first model of credibility has been improved to understand the impact of influencer credibility [13]. When looking at credibility, important parts of this model such as trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness of these individuals are found to be important. Parasocial interaction has been integrated into the evaluation of social media influencers' credibility in relation to the decision of purchasing by consumer [25]. In this

context, attitude can be defined as a psychological mechanism that transforms the perception of influencer credibility to the intention of consumers to purchase [14].

### 3.2. Hypotheses Development

In accordance with the previous studies, the following hypotheses are proposed in this study. The modified source credibility model is as presented in figure 1.



**Figure 1.** The modified source credibility model  
**Source.** Adapted from Ohanian (1990)

H<sub>1</sub>: There is a positive relationship between influencer expertise and consumer attitude toward electronic products.

H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive relationship between influencer trustworthiness and consumer attitude toward electronic products.

H<sub>3</sub>: There is a positive relationship between influencer attractiveness and consumer attitude toward electronic products.

H<sub>4</sub>: There is a positive relationship between consumer attitude toward electronic products and purchase intention.

H<sub>5</sub>: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between influencer expertise and purchase intention.

H<sub>6</sub>: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between influencer trustworthiness and purchase intention.

H<sub>7</sub>: Consumer attitude mediates the relationship between influencer attractiveness and purchase intention.

## 4. Research Objectives

The comprehensive process by which social media shapes the Generation X consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions towards electronic products in Guwahati guides this study. Specifically, it aims:

1. To investigate the extent to which influencer expertise affects purchase intentions as well as product evaluation.
2. To understand how consumer attitude of Generation X towards electronic products are affected by influencer trustworthiness.
3. To assess the impact of influencer attractiveness on consumer engagement and decision-making.

4. To assess the relationships among influencer attributes, consumer attitudes and consumer purchasing behaviour.

## 5. Research Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research design and a survey of a structured nature and aims to determine the impact of social media influencers on perception, attitude, and purchase intention of Generation X consumers in the Guwahati region. The target audience is between the ages of 45 to 60, is active on social media, and has made electronic product purchases before. By targeting this specific segment, the study aims to collect information related to the relationship between influencer attributes such as trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness, consumer attitudes and decision-making processes. Primary data collection was adopted using a self-administered survey questionnaire with 13 questions with 5 constructs based on SCT framework (Figure 1) using validated scales used in previous research (Appendix). Respondents were invited to fill the questionnaires during site visits to office spaces, educational institutions, and household residences throughout the Guwahati city.

This study employed non-probability sampling technique, purposive sampling to target Generation X individuals (aged 45-60) who are active on social media and have made electronic product purchases before. Convenience sampling elements were incorporated during data collection through site, visits across offices, educational institutions, and household residences throughout the Guwahati city.

Although convenience sampling was used, diversity in demographic characteristics was considered, including occupation, income, and educational level.

In designing the sample, due to the practical constraints associated with locating Generation X individuals who use social media and have experienced electronic purchases, a convenience sampling method was employed. Furthermore, no significant differences were found between early and late responses, supporting minimal non-response bias.

A 5-point Likert scale was used to obtain participant responses so that a comprehensive measurement could be obtained for the participants and reliability of the findings was improved. A total of valid 100 responses were recorded. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was then employed to analyse the recorded data with the aim of testing the hypothesised relationships between the influencer attributes and the consumer behavioural outcomes.

The sample size was determined by feasibility rather than by performing a power analysis, based on similar studies in this context.

This study used the existing standards for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to evaluate whether an adequate sample size is obtained. The “10 times rule” states that for every structural path directed at an endogenous construct, the minimum sample size shall equal at least 10 times the number of those paths. For this study, since consumer attitude has 3 incoming paths (attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness), it means a minimum of sample size of 30 is required. Therefore, with a sample size of 100, the study exceeds this minimum sample size.

The research method was designed to be reliable and valid, and potential biases were considered. Diverse levels of digital literacy, self-reporting tendencies and regional diversity were taken into account. Overall, this methodical and statistically effective approach provides

a clear takeaway on the effect influencers have on Generation X consumers purchasing behaviour in a culturally specific context.

## 6. Data Analysis and Results

### *Response rate*

Out of 100 distributed questionnaires, all 100 were completed and returned, yielding response rate of 100%.

Demographic profile of the respondents is shown in Table 1. In terms of gender, the majority of respondents were female (61%) respondent. 44% of the respondents were in the age range of 45 to 49, 42% were in between 50 to 54 while 14% were in between 55 to 60. As far as education is concerned, the majority of the respondents were graduates (46%). A total of 47% of all of the respondents were in the service, 34% were self-employed, 16% were homemaker and 3% were retired. Income-wise, 50% have an income of Rs 10,001-20,000, 10% have an income of Rs 20,001- 50,000, 20% have an income of Rs. 50,001- 100,000 and 20% have an income of more than Rs 100,000.

Table 1: Demographic profile

Category	Frequency (n=100)	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	39	39
Female	61	61
<b>Age</b>		
45-49	44	44
50-54	42	42
55-60	14	14
<b>Education</b>		
High school or less	0	0
Higher secondary	13	13
Diploma	6	6
Graduate	46	46
Post Graduate	30	30
PhD	5	5
<b>Occupation</b>		
Service	47	47
Self-employed	34	34
Homemaker	16	16
Retired	3	3
<b>Income</b>		
10001-20000	50	50
20001-50000	10	10
50001-100000	20	20
Above 100000	20	20
Not applicable	0	0

The data from the sample of individuals who provided income information show a skew toward the lower end of the income distribution (i.e., a higher percentage comes from lower income than higher income). This is due to the socio-economic structure of the population being studied particularly the high percentage of service workers, self-employed, and stay-at-home mothers.

*Common Method Bias*

The potential issue of common method bias (CMB), which may occur when data is collected from a single source using a uniform instrument, was addressed. To assess the presence of CMB, multicollinearity diagnostics were conducted. The variance inflation factor (VIF) values for all items ranged from 1.423 to 2.353, which are well below the recommended threshold of 3.3 proposed by Kock (2015). These VIF results are depicted in Table 3 demonstrating that CMB is not a problem for this study.

The data were analysed with the use of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) which is a variance-based approach well suited for studies which focuses on prediction and examines complex relationships, including the qualities of mediation effects, etc. Analysis was performed in two stages according to the established methodological guidelines. In order to ensure the reliability and validity of the construct, the measurement model was firstly assessed. The second stage was focused to tested the proposed hypotheses and evaluation of ability to explain the structural model.

*6.1. Evaluation of Measurement Model Evaluation*

Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (ra and rc), as well as and standardised indicator loadings were used to assess the reliability of the measurement model. As mentioned in Table 2, all the constructs, namely Attractiveness (A), Attitude (AT), Expertise (E), Purchase Intention (PI), and Trustworthiness (T), had Cronbach's alpha values above the recommended limit of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency [26,27].

The reliability of the constructs was further supported by values of composite reliability (rho\_c) which ranged between 0.870 to 0.917. Moreover, there was indication of convergent validity for all Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values, all of which were above the recommended cutoff level of 0.50. As presented in Table 2 all of the standardized loadings of the indicators were above 0.70 which indicated that the measures of observation accurately represented their respective latent constructs.

**Table 2.** Reliability analysis and Convergent Validity

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Factor Loading</b>	<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>	<b>Composite reliability (rho_a)</b>	<b>Composite reliability (rho_c)</b>	<b>Average variance extracted (AVE)</b>
<b>A</b>	A1	0.806	0.789	0.797	0.876	<b>0.703</b>
	A2	0.837				
	A3	0.871				
<b>AT</b>	AT1	0.864	0.856	0.856	0.912	<b>0.776</b>
	AT2	0.884				
	AT3	0.896				
<b>E</b>	E1	0.852	0.789	0.791	0.876	<b>0.703</b>
	E2	0.820				
	E3	0.842				
<b>PI</b>	PI1	0.907	0.706	0.732	0.870	<b>0.770</b>
	PI2	0.847				
<b>T</b>	T1	0.919	0.819	0.820	0.917	<b>0.847</b>
	T2	0.921				

Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were computed for all the indicators to study any multicollinearity problems. As indicated in Table 3, the VIF values, which ranged from 1.423 to 2.353, which are less than the recommended VIF of 3.3. These results indicate that multicollinearity is not a concern and that the estimated relationships in the model are stable and reliable.

**Table 3.** VIF values

	VIF
<b>A1</b>	1.606
<b>A2</b>	1.610
<b>A3</b>	1.824
<b>AT1</b>	1.973
<b>AT2</b>	2.165
<b>AT3</b>	2.353
<b>E1</b>	1.850
<b>E2</b>	1.464
<b>E3</b>	1.845
<b>PI1</b>	1.423
<b>PI2</b>	1.423
<b>T1</b>	1.930
<b>T2</b>	1.930

The Fornell-Larcker criterion was applied to check the discriminant validity. The square root of the AVE for each construct was found to be higher than correlation with other constructs. Specifically, Attractiveness (0.838), Attitude (0.881), Expertise (0.838), Purchase Intention (0.878) and Trustworthiness (0.920) had greater variance share with their respective indicators than with the other latent variables. These results support the conceptual strength of the constructs and that they possess a high degree of discriminant validity (Table 4).

**Table 4.** Discriminant validity

	A	AT	E	PI	T
<b>A</b>	0.838				
<b>AT</b>	0.829	0.881			
<b>E</b>	0.757	0.786	0.838		
<b>PI</b>	0.583	0.660	0.675	0.878	
<b>T</b>	0.755	0.774	0.753	0.640	0.920

## 6.2. Evaluation of Structural Model Evaluation

The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) was used to determine the model's predictive power. The  $R^2$  value for consumer attitude was 0.764 (Adjusted  $R^2 = 0.757$ ), implying that influencer attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness together accounted for a significant amount of variance in attitude. Purchase intention  $R^2$  value was 0.435 (adjusted  $R^2 = 0.429$ ), which shows that the variance in purchase intention could be explained moderately and substantially by the attitude of the consumer (Table 5).

**Table 5.** Coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ )

	R-square	R-square adjusted
<b>AT</b>	0.764	0.757
<b>PI</b>	0.435	0.429

The relative contribution of each exogenous construct to endogenous variables was examined in terms of values of effect size ( $f^2$ ). The effect size of the current study was assessed in terms of Cohen's  $f^2$ , a commonly used measure that classifies effects as small, medium or large if the effect exceeds 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35 respectively [28]. Influencer attractiveness had a medium to large effect on the consumer attitude ( $f^2= 0.297$ ) and expertise had a small to medium effect ( $f^2 = 0.112$ ). Trustworthiness had a relatively small effect ( $f^2= 0.078$ ). Specifically, consumer attitude had large effect on purchase intention ( $f^2 = 0.770$ ) which points out the significant role of this attitude in altering the influencer perceptions into behavioural intentions (Table 6).

**Table 6.** Effect size ( $f^2$ )

	<b>A</b>	<b>AT</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>PI</b>	<b>T</b>
<b>A</b>		0.297			
<b>AT</b>				0.770	
<b>E</b>		0.112			
<b>PI</b>					
<b>T</b>		0.078			

Using established indexes of goodness of fit, model fit was determined. The SRMR values for both the saturated model (0.71) and the estimated model (0.08) were examined. Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) values were less than the recommended value of 0.10 or of 0.08 are considered a good fit [29]. Acceptable levels of difference between the empirical and model-implied correlation matrices were also represented by other indices, such as dULS and dG. The overall model fit is further supported by the values of the Normed Fit Index (NFI) which was 0.741 and 0.729 for the saturated and the estimated models, respectively (Table 7). The chi-square statistics also show that the proposed structural model is a reasonable representation of the observed data.

**Table 7.** Model fit results

	<b>Saturated model</b>	<b>Estimated model</b>
<b>SRMR</b>	0.071	0.08
<b>d_ ULS</b>	0.461	0.579
<b>d_ G</b>	0.398	0.432
<b>Chi-square</b>	234.052	245.236
<b>NFI</b>	0.741	0.729

In order to estimate the structural path coefficients and their associated t-values, a bootstrap approach in SmartPLS 4 was used to test the hypothesised relationships (Table 8). Influencer expertise showed a positive and statistically significant impact on consumer attitude ( $\beta = 0.274$ ,  $t = 2.581$ ,  $p = 0.010$ ) which supports H1. This finding implies that when influencers are loaded with perception of knowledge and competency to the consumers, they are more likely to develop a positive attitude towards electronic products. The results indicate that influencer trustworthiness has a positive but statistically insignificant effect on consumer attitude for electronic products ( $\beta = 0.230$ ,  $t = 1.954$ ,  $p = 0.051$ ). Although the direction of

relationship is positive, it is not statistically significant, therefore Hypothesis H2 is not supported.

However, Influencer attractiveness has a high and a positive and significant influence on consumer attitude ( $\beta = 0.447$ ,  $t = 4.264$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), which emphasises the importance of personal appeal and regard for attracting consumers. H3 is therefore supported. Also, the result displays a strong and statistical relationship between the consumer attitude, and the purchase intention ( $\beta = 0.660$ ,  $t = 3.699$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). This finding supports H4 by indicating that consumers who have a favourable attitude towards electronic products are significantly more willing to develop purchase intention.

**Table 8.** Path Coefficient

	<b>Original sample (O)</b>	<b>Sample mean (M)</b>	<b>Standard deviation (STDEV)</b>	<b>T statistics ( O/STDEV )</b>	<b>P values</b>
<b>A -&gt; AT</b>	0.447	0.431	0.105	4.264	0.000
<b>AT -&gt; PI</b>	0.660	0.620	0.179	3.699	0.000
<b>E -&gt; AT</b>	0.274	0.261	0.106	2.581	0.010
<b>T -&gt; AT</b>	0.230	0.224	0.118	1.954	0.051

Through the bootstrapping method, an analysis for specific indirect effects, the mediating role of attitude of consumer in the relations between influencer attributes and purchase intention was studied (Table 9). The indirect effect of influencer expertise on purchase intention through the mediation of consumer attitude is positive and statistically significant ( $\beta = 0.181$ ,  $t = 2.567$ ,  $p = 0.010$ ). This result suggests that expertise affects purchase intention mainly by affecting the attitudes of consumers, and therefore, it confirms the role of expertise in affecting mediating variables, namely attitude, in order to support H5. The results show the indirect impact of influencer trustworthiness on purchase intention through consumer attitude is positive and not statistically significant ( $\beta = 0.152$ ,  $t = 1.719$ ,  $p = 0.086$ ). This finding suggests that consumer attitude does not mediate this relationship; therefore, H6 is not supported.

Similarly, it is found that the indirect effect of influencer attractiveness on purchase intention through consumer attitude and positive and highly significant ( $\beta = 0.295$ ,  $t = 3.015$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ). This means that influencer attractiveness impacts purchase intention by having a positive effect on consumer attitudes while providing empirical support for H7.

**Table 9.** Specific indirect effect

	<b>Original sample (O)</b>	<b>Sample mean (M)</b>	<b>Standard deviation (STDEV)</b>	<b>T statistics ( O/STDEV )</b>	<b>P values</b>
<b>A -&gt; AT -&gt; PI</b>	0.295	0.270	0.098	3.015	0.003
<b>E -&gt; AT -&gt; PI</b>	0.181	0.167	0.070	2.567	0.010
<b>T -&gt; AT -&gt; PI</b>	0.152	0.148	0.088	1.719	0.086

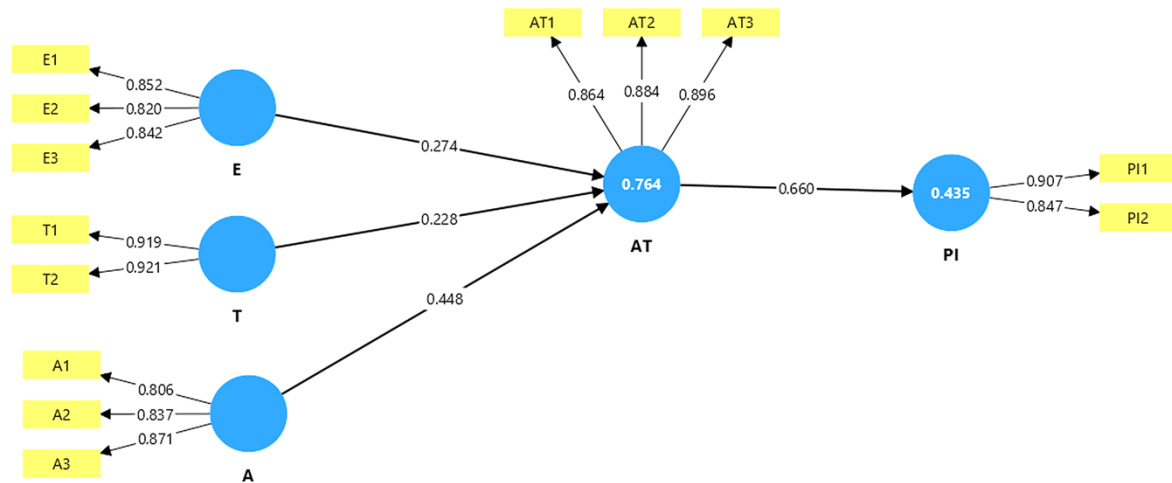


Figure 2. SEM model

## 7. Findings and Discussion

The results of this study show that influencer credibility varies depending on the situation, which offers significant theoretical insights. In particular, the findings improve Source Credibility Theory by demonstrating that the relative significance of credibility dimensions varies according to sociocultural context and generational traits.

This study reveals that attractiveness, conceived as relatability and communication appeal, emerges as the strongest predictor of consumer attitude among Generation X consumers in Guwahati, resisting conventional assumptions in high-involvement product contexts where expertise and trustworthiness are expected to dominate.

The strength of the sample is evident in the acceptable results of measurement and structural model as the reliability indicators (Cronbach’s alpha; composite reliability) exceed what is recommended and average variance extracted (AVE) demonstrates convergent validity. Additionally, there was no evidence of multicollinearity based on variance inflation factor (VIF) values; and the model demonstrates good predictive power as determined by R<sup>2</sup> values of 0.764 for consumer attitudes and 0.435 for purchase intentions.

The results of this study establish strong evidence that social media influencers impact the attitudes and purchase intentions towards electronic products of the Generation X consumers living in Guwahati region. In general, the findings support the conceptual framework that was proposed and highlight the importance of influencer-related attributes to impact consumer responses in high-involvement product category. These findings are in line with prior studies that have found influencer credibility to play a significant role in consumers evaluations and intentions particularly in technology-driven markets [6,18]. Statistically significant effect of influencer attractiveness on consumer attitudes is one of the important findings. Attractiveness is the most significant and predictive, among the influencer attributes analysed. This means that factors such as perceived relatability, effective communication, and similarity between the influencer and the audience are particularly effective for Generation X consumers. These findings are consistent with prior findings that describe the influence of attractiveness on persuasive effectiveness, which promotes identification and affective connections with the message source [11,13]. While previous research has mainly focused on attractiveness to younger audiences such as Millennials and Generation Z [30], this study

extends literature by showing that Generation X consumers respond positively to influencers who seem authentic, approachable, and relatable as well.

The results also show that there is a significant positive relationship between influencer expertise and consumer attitudes. Influencers considered as knowledgeable and skilful have a positive effect on an attitude towards electronic products. This result supports the Source Credibility Theory [24] and confirms the results of previous research, which identified expertise as an important factor in persuasion in high-involvement purchases [31,32]. To minimize perceived risk, Generation X consumers typically employ a meticulous and deliberate decision-making approach, placing considerable reliance on expert opinions, given the complexity and financial risks associated with electronic products. In previous studies of tech-related domains, similar patterns are identified where the endorsements of experts have a significant impact on enhancing consumer confidence in product evaluations [33,34]. These findings highlight the accomplishment of expertise-based influencer communication for more experienced consumer groups.

Trustworthiness's insignificant effect provides an important theoretical insight. This finding indicates that trustworthiness may serve as a reference point for expectation rather than an actual differentiator among Generation X consumers, even though it is considered a core dimension of credibility. Since this cohort of consumers has previous experience and tends to make decisions more cautiously, they may be more inclined to rely on cognitive diagnostic cues (expertise) rather than on global perceptions of honesty. This study reinforces the need to re-evaluate the relative importance of the credibility dimensions in high-involvement contexts [32, 35].

Another important finding of the study is the statistically significant relationship between consumer attitudes and purchase intentions. Attitudes are a key predictor in the purchase intentions, indicating that they play a major role in the decision-making process of electronic products. This finding supports the accepted theories such as the Theory of Reasoned Action and the Elaboration Likelihood Model because these theories suggest that attitudes affect behavioural intentions, especially in high-risk and high-cost buying situations [36,37]. The study also indicates that the relationship between the influencer attributes and purchase intentions is mediated by consumer attitudes. The substantial indirect impacts of influencer attractiveness and expertise on the intentions to purchase by individuals through attitudes suggest that these traits exert their main impacts on consumer behavior by influencing the evaluation of consumers rather than by convincing them. This is consistent with the previous research that state that, attitude as an important psychological link between source credibility and behavioral outcomes [11, 30]. The lack of a significant mediating effect for trustworthiness would also mean that Generation X consumers need expertise and engagement to move from trust to actual purchase intention.

Overall, these are the findings that add to the influencer marketing literature by providing insight from an under-explored generational and regional perspective. Generation X consumers overall are open to influencer marketing in Guwahati, but the answers vary among younger generations. As noted in prior research investigating the older consumers, they do not appreciate the contribution of trendy or overly promotional content but rather the contribution of expertise, authenticity, and meaningful engagement [38,39]. Theoretically, this study emphasizes the importance of Source Credibility Theory and encourages the consideration of generational and cultural factors of influencer effectiveness.

## **8. Managerial and Theoretical Implications**

### *8.1. Theoretical Implications*

This study uses the concept of source credibility to examine Generation X consumers in a developing regional market. The findings contradict the assumption that influencer marketing is most effective towards younger audiences by showing how Generation X attitudes are significantly influenced in terms of trustworthiness, expertise, attractiveness.

This research reveals three theoretical insights:

- (1) Credibility dimensions are contextual and based on situational characteristics, thus expanding Source Credibility Theory into a situational model
- (2) Generation X consumers process credibility differently than younger generations, placing more emphasis on expertise and relatability, while using trustworthiness as a base level of acceptance
- (3) The results indicate that attractiveness can serve as a cognitive shortcut that enhances the processing of messages even in high-involvement purchases through relatability and communication style, contradicting traditional beliefs surrounding the purchase decision, where rationality predominates.

### *8.2. Managerial Implications*

For practitioners, credibility should be the centre of influencer marketing strategies which are aimed at Generation X. Marketers should prioritize working with influencers who demonstrate authentic communication, relevant expertise, and relatable life experiences, as these characteristics are more likely to build trust with this segment. Rather than doing one-time promotions, they should invest in long-term collaboration with influencers.

Regionally relevant influencers who understand the cultural traditions in the region they are working in can further boost trust. Because attitudes mediate the influence of credibility attributes, marketers should try to develop content that builds trust and emotional engagement, as opposed to only technical features. Customization of campaigns according to demographic characteristics can increase their effectiveness in line with the principles of segmentation [39].

## **9. Conclusions**

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the Generation X consumers in the context of Guwahati who are influenced by social media influencers in Guwahati in terms of their attitude and buying decision. Consumer attitudes were found to be significantly predicted by trustworthiness, expertise and attractiveness which positively influenced purchase intentions and are consistent with the findings in the wider influencer marketing literature [18]. These findings focus on how important it is to match influencer strategies with the values and expectations of older consumers. Additionally, the results highlight the importance of regional context by demonstrating the influence of socio-cultural and demographic variables on the interpretation of influencer messages by consumers [38]. Future research could investigate qualitative approaches or investigate comparisons between several generational groups even though it provides meaningful contributions to the topic. Overall, the research provides insight for a better understanding of influencer marketing in emerging markets and offers practical strategies for better engaging Generation X consumers.

As such, the research contributes to theory through illustrating that the credibility of an influencer is subject to individual interpretation based on generational factors, levels of digital literacy, and cultural influences from their geographic location.

## **10. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research**

While this study provides valuable insights, there are several limitations, which should be acknowledged. First one is geographic focus on Guwahati that leaves the findings of this study to be limited to the geographical area of other regions or countries. Second, the cross-sectional design despite application of Structural Equation Modeling restricts the possibility of inferring causality. Comparative studies across generational segments, product types and cultural context would help to determine the greater applicability of these findings. The study also focuses only on electronic products; results for other product types may be different, particularly products with lower levels of involvement or attachment. The potential impact of different content formats, i.e., video vs. static posts, and platform-specific dynamics of engagement was not as fully explored, though these could influence the strength of consumer responses.

Convenience sampling limits the ability to generalise results; selecting more widely accessible respondents creates potential bias. While steps have been taken to try and provide diversity within the sample, probability sampling should be used to provide better support for external validity in future research projects.

Because of the skew towards the lower end of income, the study's Generalisability of findings may be limited when speaking to those in the higher income categories, therefore future studies should be designed to achieve a more representative income distribution among participants/subjects.

Additionally, looking at emerging technologies, such as AI-driven influencers, virtual reality, and integration of social commerce, would be able to reveal new dimensions of digital consumer behavior. Future studies are recommended to conduct a priori power analysis to ensure appropriate sample size determination.

Qualitative methods such as interviews or focus groups could be used to further clarify the cognitive and emotional mechanisms that motivate influencer impact-completing the results of the quantitative methods and adding to the development of theory.

## **Multidisciplinary Domains**

This research covers the domain: (a) Influencer Marketing, (b) Consumer Behaviour, and (c) Marketing.

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## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## Declaration on AI Usage

The article has been prepared without the use of AI tools.

## Ethical approval and informed consent statement

University Ethics Committee has approved the study. (IEC NO: DoRD/TUEC/PROP/2025/26).

Informed consent to participate was both written and verbal depending on respondent choice.

I have obtained written informed consent to publish.

## Data availability statement

The data supporting this study's findings are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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## Appendix

**Table A1.** Questionnaire

<b>Variables</b>	<b>Items</b>	<b>Sources</b>
<b>Expertise</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The influencers I follow are expert in their field.</li> <li>2. The influencers I follow have amazing knowledge.</li> <li>3. The influencers I follow provide references based on their expertise.</li> </ol>	(Bergkvist, 2016 ; Ohanian, 1990)
<b>Trustworthiness</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Influencer I follow is knowledgeable about the products they promote.</li> <li>2. I trust the Influencer’s recommendations.</li> </ol>	(Lou & Yuan, 2019; Hovland & Weiss, 1951; Ohanian, 1990)
<b>Attractiveness</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Influencer’s style and personality are relatable to me.</li> <li>2. I admire the Influencer lifestyle.</li> <li>3. The Influencer’s appearance enhances their credibility.</li> </ol>	(McGuire, 1985)
<b>Attitude</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I believe that the Influencer I follow is the best influencer for me to get the desired product.</li> <li>2. I truly believe that the Influencer I follow provide new offers on various electronic product I want.</li> <li>3. I consider the Influencer I follow to be a reliable source of information.</li> </ol>	(Chen and Lee, 2008)
<b>Purchase Intention</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It is very likely that I will consider purchasing the electronic product recommended by the online influencer.</li> <li>2. I would like to purchase electronic product of the brand recommended by online influencer in live show.</li> </ol>	(Dodds et al., 1991)