



Affiliate Marketing Strategies That Affecting Purchasing Decision Process and Consumer Behavior in Online Shopping: A Case Study of Undergraduate Students in Thailand

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Abstract

This study aims to examine affiliate marketing strategies in online businesses and explore the relationship between affiliate marketing strategies, decision-making processes, and online purchasing behavior among Walailak University students. The sample consisted of 400 undergraduate students enrolled in the academic year 2024, selected from a total population of 13,055 students using proportional stratified sampling based on academic faculties. The data were collected through an online questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were used for analysis, along with inferential statistical methods such as t-tests, one-way ANOVA, Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis, and chi-square tests. The findings revealed that: (1) differences in demographic factors influenced students' perceptions of affiliate marketing strategies, (2) perceptions of affiliate marketing strategies were associated with students' online purchasing decision-making processes, and (3) purchasing decision-making processes were linked to online purchasing behavior. Based on these findings, it is recommended that business operators emphasize the presentation of relevant product information to enhance customer engagement, encourage clicks on affiliate links, and drive product exploration.

Keywords: Affiliate marketing strategy, purchasing decision-making process, online purchasing behavior

Introduction

Consumer spending behavior today is significantly influenced by digital technology and the ease of internet access, particularly in the context of online shopping, which has become a primary channel for both daily life and business transactions. The expansion of online businesses has driven the development of internet-based trading systems, particularly e-marketplaces, which serve as centralized platforms that aggregate various stores and products into a single location.

In recent years, social commerce, or the practice of buying and selling products via social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok, has gained significant popularity in Thailand. Between 2022 and early 2023, the use of these platforms for commercial transactions surged. According to a report by We Are Social and Meltwater, Thailand had approximately 61.21 million internet users, representing 85% of the population. Notably, the country ranked first globally in terms of social media commerce adoption, with 88% of internet users engaging in online shopping via social platforms. Furthermore, digital marketing plays a crucial role in driving sales for online businesses, with affiliate marketing emerging as one of the most widely adopted strategies. Affiliate marketing involves third-party individuals or companies promoting products through social media and earning commissions from sales generated via their referral links. This strategy has been expanding rapidly, with the Digital Advertising Association (Thailand) forecasting a 114% growth in the affiliate marketing sector in 2023, making it the fastest-growing segment within online advertising.

Affiliate marketing has proven to be a particularly effective strategy for influencing online purchasing behavior among Generation Z consumers, particularly university students who frequently obtain product information through social media and online reviews. Given their familiarity with digital platforms and the internet's role in their daily lives, students are more likely to engage in product research and decision-making through affiliate-linked promotions. However, research on the behavioral

and decision-making processes associated with online purchasing through affiliate links remains limited. This study aims to examine the role of affiliate marketing strategies in shaping purchasing behavior among university students, specifically those at Walailak University. The findings will provide valuable insights for business operators seeking to enhance their engagement with student consumers, optimize their marketing strategies, and improve revenue generation while ensuring long-term sustainability in the digital marketplace. The objectives of this study are:

1. To examine affiliate marketing strategies in online businesses.
2. To explore the relationship between affiliate marketing strategies, decision-making processes, and online purchasing behavior among Walailak University students.

Literature Review

Theoretical concepts related to affiliate marketing strategies

Affiliate marketing is an internet-based and e-commerce marketing strategy in which third parties are responsible for assisting in closing sales in exchange for commission-based compensation. These third parties are not limited to legal entities but may also include individual customers who can influence others to purchase products from an organization (Mazurek & Kucia, 2011) ^[11]. Affiliate marketing strategies involve the promotion of products through affiliate partners, allowing consumers to purchase advertised products by clicking on affiliate links (Susilawati T, Maesaroh SS & Prehanto A., 2023) ^[32].

Theoretical concepts related to media exposure

Media exposure reflects the concept of selective information processing, a psychological mechanism that plays a critical role in individual decision-making within society. It suggests that people tend to seek information that reinforces their beliefs or attitudes while avoiding content that may cause discomfort or cognitive dissonance, thereby influencing their understanding of news and everyday decision-making (Katewalee Prasit, 2020) ^[15]. In the context of affiliate marketing strategies, effective communication involves developing engaging messages or content and selecting media channels that align with the target audience (Muhammad Candara, 2024) ^[26].

Theoretical concepts related to social influence

According to Friedkin and Johnsen (1999, cited in Valvipa Vongkaveevit, 2023) ^[33], social influence refers to actions or opinions shaped by societal interactions that lead to conformity and influence decision-making. The rise of social media has given birth to influencers—individuals who leverage their social and cultural capital on digital platforms to shape public opinion and purchasing decisions. Influencers often use their credibility or expertise in specific fields to affect their followers' choices, particularly in purchasing decisions and brand endorsements through social media interactions (Robert H. Gass & John S. Seiter, 2022) ^[29]. The integration of affiliate marketing and influencer marketing enhances product or service credibility and consumer trust. By leveraging influencers' follower bases, businesses can achieve cost-effective marketing while improving conversion rates (Ni Putu Christina Piliانا & Agus Fredy Maradona, 2024) ^[27].

Theoretical concepts related to perceived risk

Perceived risk refers to consumers' awareness of potential losses associated with uncertain purchasing decisions, particularly in online shopping, where outcomes are often unpredictable. Perceived risk significantly influences purchasing behavior, as consumers tend to seek information before making a purchase to mitigate risks and avoid errors rather than merely focusing on the benefits of acquiring a product (Mitchell, 1999) ^[34]. Individual perceptions of risk vary based on experience and product characteristics (Paweekorn Supina, 2017) ^[28]. Perceived risk can be categorized into various types, including functional risk, physical risk, financial risk, social risk, psychological risk, and time-related risk.

Theoretical concepts related to perceived ease of use

Perceived ease of use is a concept derived from the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), introduced by Davis (1989) ^[9]. It refers to the extent to which individuals perceive a technology as easy to use, requiring minimal effort to learn and understand. This concept has been widely recognized as a predictor of online purchasing behavior (Khalifa & Limayem, 2003) ^[25]. Perceived ease of use has a positive relationship with consumers' purchase decisions, as it significantly enhances convenience and accessibility for users (Mitchev *et al*, 2022) ^[24].

Theoretical concepts related to purchase decision-making

Consumer purchase decisions are influenced by both internal and external factors, including motivation, perception, learning, personality, and attitudes (Kotler, 2000) ^[18]. These factors shape consumers' evaluation of alternatives before making a final purchase decision. The purchasing decision process involves responding to marketing stimuli and external influences (Sukanda Thinthan, 2022) ^[31]. According to Kotler & Keller (2016) ^[20], the consumer decision-making process consists of five key stages: (1) problem recognition, (2) information search, (3) evaluation of alternatives, (4) purchase decision, and (5) post-purchase behavior. Affiliate marketing plays a crucial role in supporting purchase decisions by providing engaging and persuasive marketing content, which can significantly increase the likelihood of purchase (Kertirasih R., 2023) ^[16].

Theoretical concepts related to online purchasing behavior

Consumer behavior refers to the process by which individuals make decisions regarding the selection, purchase, use, and evaluation of products or services to fulfill personal needs. This process includes seeking product information, choosing items that meet specific needs, utilizing the purchased product or service, and assessing satisfaction post-purchase (Chatyaporn Samerjai, 2013) ^[4]. Advances in technology have significantly transformed consumer behavior, particularly in Thailand, where high internet and smartphone usage rates have made digital platforms the primary channel for accessing products and services. Electronic media and smartphones have become essential tools for businesses to reach customers and respond effectively to market demands (Kannika Thampanichvong, 2017) ^[14].

Research conceptual framework

Based on the literature review and related studies, a research conceptual framework has been developed to explore the

impact of affiliate marketing strategies on decision-making processes and online purchasing behavior among Walailak

University students. (Figure 1)

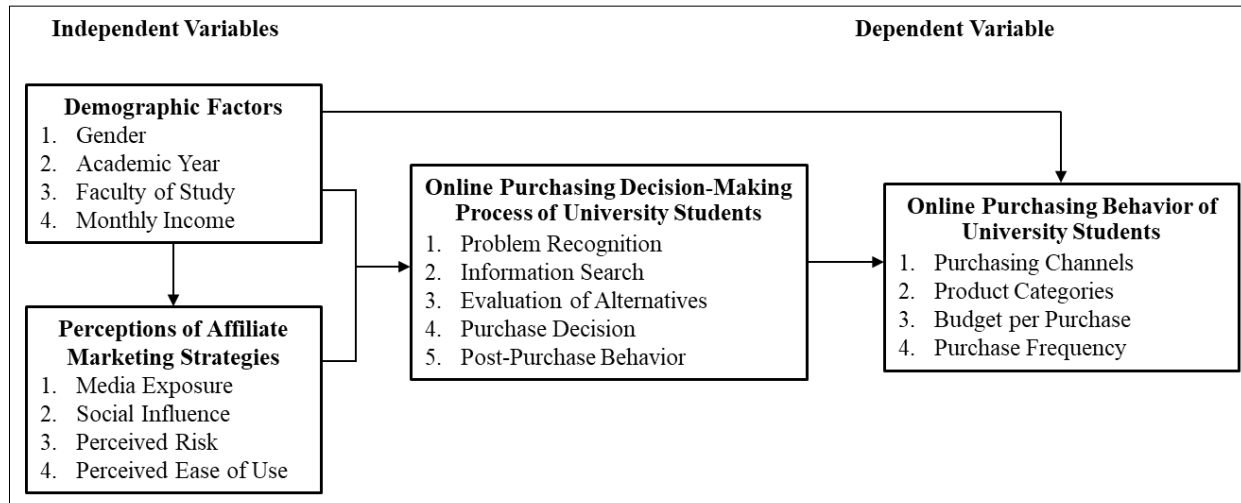


Fig 1: Research Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

Research Instrument

This study employs a quantitative research approach, utilizing a questionnaire as the primary instrument for data collection. The target population comprises undergraduate students at Walailak University who have previously purchased products online. The sample size was determined using G*Power software for Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis with the Exact - Correlation: Bivariate normal model method. The significance level was set at $\alpha = 0.05$, with a statistical power of 80% (Power (1- β err prob) = 0.8). The Pearson's correlation coefficients for the study variables were 0.557, 0.508, 0.150, 0.508, and 0.574, respectively. The sample size was calculated based on the lowest correlation value (0.150), yielding a required sample of 352 respondents. However, to account for potential incomplete responses, the final sample size was adjusted to 400 respondents.

The sampling technique employed was proportional stratified sampling, where participants were categorized based on their respective faculties. Within each faculty, students from first-year, second-year, third-year, fourth-year, and other academic levels were included. The research instrument's content validity was assessed using the Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) index, with values exceeding 0.5, while Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was computed at 0.88, indicating a high level of reliability and alignment with the research objectives.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, to summarize the characteristics of the sample. Additionally, inferential statistical methods were applied to test relationships and differences between variables, including the Independent Samples t-test, One-way ANOVA, Pearson's Correlation Coefficient, and the Chi-Square Test.

Findings

Analysis of demographic factors of respondents

This study included a sample of 400 respondents. The demographic analysis revealed that the majority of respondents were female (64.00%). The highest proportion of

respondents were second-year students (48.30%), with the School of Informatics representing 11.50% of the sample. Additionally, the most common average monthly income among respondents ranged between 10,001 – 15,000 THB (41.50%).

Analysis of affiliate marketing strategies influencing purchase decisions

Table 1: presents the analysis of affiliate marketing strategies that influence consumer purchase decisions.

Affiliate Marketing Strategy	\bar{X}	S.D.	Level of Agreement
Media Exposure	3.98	0.56	High
Social Influence	4.05	0.53	High
Perceived Risk	3.98	0.35	High
Perceived Ease of Use	4.04	0.37	High
Overall	4.06	0.27	High

Table 1 illustrates respondents' opinions on affiliate marketing strategies that influence purchase decisions. The overall perception of these strategies was rated at a high level ($\bar{X} = 4.06$, S.D. = 0.27). When analyzed by specific aspects, the highest-rated factor was social influence, perceived at a high level ($\bar{X} = 4.05$, S.D. = 0.53), followed by perceived ease of use ($\bar{X} = 4.04$, S.D. = 0.53), media exposure ($\bar{X} = 3.98$, S.D. = 0.56), and perceived risk, which was also rated at a high level ($\bar{X} = 3.98$, S.D. = 0.35).

Analysis of online purchasing behavior via affiliate links

The majority of respondents reported using social media platforms as their primary channel for accessing affiliate links (65.30%, $n = 261$). The most commonly used platform for purchasing through affiliate links was TikTok (39.30%, $n = 157$). The most frequently purchased product category was daily essentials (e.g., soap, toothpaste, shampoo, facial cleanser), accounting for 23.00% ($n = 92$) of purchases. Regarding the budget allocated for online purchases per transaction, the most common spending range was 300 – 500 THB (34.50%, $n = 138$). The preferred payment method was PromptPay (35.00%, $n = 140$). Additionally, the majority of respondents engaged in affiliate-linked online purchases at a

frequency of 1–2 times per month (66.00%, n = 264).

Analysis of the online purchasing decision-making process via affiliate links

Table 2: presents an analysis of the decision-making process for online purchases made through affiliate links.

Online Purchasing Decision-Making Process via Affiliate Links	\bar{X}	S.D.	Level of Agreement
Problem Recognition	4.24	0.41	Very High
Information Search	4.13	0.34	High
Evaluation of Alternatives	4.12	0.49	High
Purchase Decision	4.12	0.48	High
Post-Purchase Behavior	4.05	0.36	High
Overall	4.12	0.24	High

Table 2 presents the respondents' opinions on the online purchasing decision-making process through affiliate links, which were rated at an overall high level ($\bar{X} = 4.12$, S.D. = 0.24). When analyzed by specific aspects, the highest-rated factor was problem recognition, rated at a very high level ($\bar{X} = 4.24$, S.D. = 0.41), followed by information search at a high level ($\bar{X} = 4.13$, S.D. = 0.34). Additionally, evaluation of alternatives ($\bar{X} = 4.12$, S.D. = 0.49) and purchase decision (\bar{X}

= 4.12, S.D. = 0.48) were both rated at high levels. The lowest-rated factor was post-purchase behavior, which was still rated at a high level ($\bar{X} = 4.05$, S.D. = 0.36).

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1: Differences in demographic factors influence the online purchasing decision-making process among Walailak University students.

Table 3: Presents The Results Of Hypothesis Testing On The Relationship Between Demographic Factors And The Online Purchasing Decision-Making Process Of Walailak University Students.

Online Purchasing Decision-Making Process	Statistic	Demographic Factors			
		Gender	Academic Year	Faculty of Study	Average Monthly Income
Problem Recognition	T	2.410	3.471	2.659	1.685
	Sig.	0.016*	0.001*	0.004*	0.093
Information Search	F	7.492	8.115	7.563	2.094
	Sig.	0.001*	0.001*	0.001*	0.100
Evaluation of Alternatives	F	1.162	2.342	2.168	0.767
	Sig.	0.300	0.003*	0.007*	0.715
Purchase Decision	F	10.181	27.944	9.118	5.218
	Sig.	0.001*	0.001*	0.001*	0.002*
Post-Purchase Behavior	F	2.644	15.556	2.237	19.162
	Sig.	0.009*	0.001*	0.005*	0.001*

Significant at the 0.05 level

Table 3 presents the results of hypothesis testing, indicating that differences in demographic factors influence the online purchasing decision-making process among Walailak University students at a statistical significance level of 0.05. The key findings from the analysis are as follows:

- Gender, academic year, and average monthly income significantly influence the problem recognition stage in the online purchasing decision-making process.
- Gender, academic year, faculty of study, and average monthly income significantly influence the information

search, evaluation of alternatives, and post-purchase behavior stages in the online purchasing decision-making process.

- Average monthly income significantly influences the purchase decision stage in the online purchasing decision-making process.

Hypothesis 2: Demographic factors are associated with the online purchasing behavior of Walailak University students.

Table 4: presents the results summarizing the relationship between demographic factors and the online purchasing behavior of Walailak University students.

Online Purchasing Behavior via Affiliate Links	Statistic	Demographic Factors			
		Gender	Academic Year	Faculty of Study	Average Monthly Income
Affiliate Link Access Channels	Chi-square	16.213	23.498	96.981	74.503
	Sig.	0.001*	0.013*	0.001*	0.004*
Online Shopping Platforms via Affiliate Links	Chi-square	7.902	32.064	38.068	84.661
	Sig.	0.162	0.006*	0.001*	0.021*
Frequently Purchased Product Categories	Chi-square	28.890	54.889	80.884	133.893
	Sig.	0.001*	0.001*	0.001*	0.182
Budget for Online Purchases	Chi-	21.752	52.905	131.655	125.340

	square				
	Sig.	0.003*	0.001*	0.001*	0.001*
Payment Methods	Chi-square	12.378	25.983	62.116	58.032
	Sig.	0.013*	0.011*	0.001*	0.091
Frequency of Online Purchases	Chi-square	4.685	9.447	15.579	23.184
	Sig.	0.096	0.150	0.016*	0.808

Significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4 presents the results of hypothesis testing, indicating that demographic factors are significantly associated with online purchasing behavior among Walailak University students at a statistical significance level of 0.05. The key findings from the analysis are as follows:

- Gender, academic year, faculty of study, and average monthly income are significantly associated with students' choice of affiliate link channels in affiliate marketing.
- Academic year, faculty of study, and average monthly

income are significantly associated with students' choice of online shopping platforms.

- Average monthly income is significantly associated with students' frequency of online purchases through affiliate links.

Hypothesis 3: Differences in demographic factors influence the perception of affiliate marketing strategies among Walailak University students.

Table 5: presents the results summarizing the differences in demographic factors and their impact on the perception of affiliate marketing strategies among Walailak University students.

Affiliate Marketing Strategies	Statistic	Demographic Factors			
		Gender	Academic Year	Faculty of Study	Average Monthly Income
Media Exposure	T	6.280	14.030	1.988	45.601
	Sig.	0.001*	0.001*	0.015*	0.001*
Social Influence	F	2.242	2.819	1.631	13.966
	Sig.	0.026*	0.039*	0.063	0.001*
Perceived Risk	F	3.013	13.559	1.662	12.303
	Sig.	0.003*	0.001*	0.056	0.001*
Perceived Ease of Use	F	2.773	6.666	1.581	18.277
	Sig.	0.006*	0.001*	0.076	0.001*

Significant at the 0.05 level

Table 5 presents the results of hypothesis testing, indicating that differences in demographic factors influence the perception of affiliate marketing strategies among Walailak University students at a statistical significance level of 0.05. The key findings from the analysis are as follows:

- Gender, academic year, faculty of study, and average monthly income significantly influence the perception of media exposure in affiliate marketing strategies.

- Gender, academic year, and average monthly income significantly influence the perception of social influence, perceived risk, and perceived ease of use in affiliate marketing strategies.

Hypothesis 4: Perceptions of affiliate marketing strategies are associated with the online purchasing decision-making process among Walailak University students.

Table 6: presents the results analyzing the relationship between perceptions of affiliate marketing strategies and the online purchasing decision-making process among Walailak University students.

Variables	X1	X2	X3	X4	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5
X1	1								
X2	0.337*	1							
X3	0.244*	0.254*	1						
X4	0.356*	0.276*	0.347*	1					
Y1	0.302*	0.224*	0.236*	0.289*	1				
Y2	0.416*	0.326*	0.281*	0.353*	0.293*	1			
Y3	0.113*	0.043*	0.305*	0.130*	0.288*	0.120	1		
Y4	0.237*	0.215*	0.112*	0.165*	0.009	0.232*	0.174*	1	
Y5	0.367*	0.143*	0.399*	0.347*	0.366*	0.328*	0.358*	0.057	1

Let:

X represent perceptions of affiliate marketing strategies

X1 = Media exposure

X2 = Social influence

X3 = Perceived risk acceptance

X4 = Perceived ease of use

Y represent the online purchasing decision-making process

Y1 = Problem recognition

Y2 = Information search

Table 6 presents the correlation coefficients between perceptions of affiliate marketing strategies and the online

purchasing decision-making process among Walailak University students. The top three highest positive correlations were identified as follows:

- Media exposure (X1) had a positive correlation with information search (Y2) ($r = 0.416$) at a statistical significance level of 0.05.
- Perceived risk acceptance (X3) had a positive correlation with post-purchase behavior (Y5) ($r = 0.399$) at a

statistical significance level of 0.05.

- Media exposure (X1) had a positive correlation with post-purchase behavior (Y5) ($r = 0.367$) at a statistical significance level of 0.05.

Hypothesis 5: The online purchasing decision-making process is associated with online purchasing behavior among Walailak University students.

Table 7: summarizes the results of hypothesis testing on the relationship between the purchasing decision-making process and online purchasing behavior of Walailak University students.

Online Purchasing Behavior via Affiliate Links	Statistic	Purchase Decision-Making Process				
		Problem Recognition	Information Search	Evaluation of Alternatives	Purchase Decision	Post-Purchase Behavior
Affiliate Link Access Channels	Chi square Sig.	46.977 0.005*	100.563 0.001*	37.681 0.158	26.366 0.154	86.445 0.001*
Online Shopping Platforms via Affiliate Links	Chi square Sig.	37.250 0.055	49.307 0.015*	26.231 0.663	15.019 0.775	54.638 0.004*
Frequently Purchased Product Categories	Chi square Sig.	57.004 0.040*	79.643 0.003*	43.406 0.661	43.986 0.077	75.155 0.007*
Budget for Online Purchases	Chi square Sig.	66.704 0.001*	108.929 0.001*	41.217 0.505	23.744 0.695	96.495 0.001*
Payment Methods	Chi square Sig.	35.766 0.016*	44.239 0.007*	45.157 0.006*	35.300 0.004*	42.629 0.011*
Frequency of Online Purchases	Chi square Sig.	27.479 0.002*	21.856 0.039*	23.010 0.028*	5.868 0.662	28.239 0.050

Significant at the 0.05 level

Table 7 presents the results of hypothesis testing, indicating that the online purchasing decision-making process is significantly associated with online purchasing behavior among Walailak University students at a statistical significance level of 0.05. The key findings from the analysis are as follows:

- The decision-making process, particularly in problem recognition, information search, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior, is associated with affiliate link selection, product categories frequently purchased, and the average budget per online purchase.
- The decision-making process, particularly in information search, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior, is associated with affiliate link selection and online shopping platforms.
- The decision-making process, particularly in problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, and post-purchase behavior, is associated with preferred payment methods.
- The decision-making process, particularly in problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, and purchase decision, is associated with the frequency of online purchases.

Discussion and Conclusion

Demographic factors, particularly gender, influence the decision-making process and online purchasing behavior, with female consumers demonstrating a greater tendency to purchase products online compared to male consumers. This finding aligns with the study by Wisit Ketrattanakul (2019)^[36], which revealed that women are more likely to engage in

online live streaming and share product information with friends than men. However, research by Bouvonluck Sanohkham (2019)^[3] suggested that gender does not significantly impact the online purchasing decisions of undergraduate students in Bangkok. This discrepancy may be attributed to the diversity of products purchased online, as male and female consumers exhibit different purchasing behaviors across various product categories. For instance, female consumers are more likely to purchase fashion items, cosmetics, and health products, whereas male consumers may focus on different product types. Additionally, payment methods vary by gender; female consumers tend to prefer credit card payments or mobile banking transfers, whereas male consumers may opt for cash-on-delivery or other convenient payment options. This study is also consistent with Siriwan Sereerat (2015)^[30], who found that gender influences consumer behavior and online purchasing decisions, particularly in terms of attitudes and perceptions toward online shopping.

Differences in academic year levels also influence online purchasing decisions, purchasing behavior, and perceptions of affiliate marketing strategies. Students at different academic levels often exhibit varied thought processes, decision-making approaches, and lifestyle preferences, which impact their purchasing behavior. This finding supports the research by Benjawan Yotrawat and Duangsamorn Rungsawanpho (2022)^[2], which found that online purchasing behavior among students varies according to their year of study.

Furthermore, faculty of study also plays a role in shaping online purchasing decisions and purchasing behavior. The

study by Chonnikarn Julamakron (2012) ^[5] indicated that students from different academic disciplines are influenced by distinct factors when making online purchase decisions, reflecting the diversity in perspectives and thought processes across various fields of study.

Differences in income levels influence online purchasing behavior, as students with higher incomes tend to purchase higher-priced products, while those with lower incomes are more likely to opt for lower-priced items. This finding aligns with the study by Kanlaya Tothonglang (2019) ^[13], which indicated that income levels significantly impact online purchasing decisions, as consumers make purchases based on their financial capacity. The study also highlights that low-income consumers tend to spend more time engaging with online media, particularly social media, as it provides easy access to product information and promotions. This is consistent with the research by Gregori & Katsingris (2012) ^[12], which found that low-income consumers exhibit a higher tendency to engage with online media compared to high-income consumers. Additionally, Chutiman Sasong (2019) ^[7] found that perceptions of affiliate marketing strategies are correlated with income levels and media exposure, which in turn influence purchase decisions through affiliate marketing. These findings confirm that income plays a crucial role in online purchasing behavior.

Perceptions of affiliate marketing strategies are significantly associated with the online purchasing decision-making process among Walailak University students. When consumers recognize the benefits and convenience of digital marketing technologies, they are more likely to engage in affiliate marketing-driven purchases. This finding aligns with the perspectives of Chu & Chu (2011) ^[6] and Davis (1989) ^[10], who identified media exposure, social influence, perceived risk, and perceived ease of use as key factors influencing purchase decisions. In particular, social influence plays a significant role, as students perceive that affiliate links receiving a high number of likes, shares (share, re-post, retweets), or recommendations increase their likelihood of clicking the link to make a purchase. The study further demonstrates that affiliate link engagement enhances product information accessibility, supporting the view that online media exposure is increasing. This finding is consistent with Kotler (2013), who asserted that alternative evaluation contributes to shaping consumer attitudes and purchase intentions in online shopping. Moreover, ease of use and accessibility of online product information significantly influence purchasing decisions.

The online purchasing decision-making process is strongly associated with online purchasing behavior among Walailak University students. The findings suggest that students acknowledge various factors influencing their purchasing decisions through affiliate links, particularly in terms of convenience and product information accessibility. This result is consistent with Mehrabian & Russell's (1974) ^[22] theory (as cited in Richard & Chebat, 2016), which states that consumer responses to media stimuli influence purchasing decisions. In the context of online shopping, consumers' perception and exposure to online information serve as stimuli that drive purchase decisions. Additionally, the study by Wanika Jittinarakorn (2018) ^[35] found that online media exposure significantly influences purchasing decisions, as consumers can conveniently access product information without the need to visit physical stores. These findings are further supported by the present study, which reveals that

Walailak University students express a high level of satisfaction with the products they have purchased through affiliate links.

Recommendations

1. Business operators should focus on maintaining relationships with female customers by implementing customer retention strategies, such as post-purchase follow-ups and exclusive privileges for repeat customers, to enhance customer loyalty and reduce attrition rates.
2. Integrating social media marketing strategies with affiliate marketing is recommended. For instance, presenting product information through short-form videos or live-streaming on TikTok can facilitate easier access to product details and assist consumers in their purchase decision-making process.
3. Building customer trust through consistent communication is essential. Regular engagement with customers by providing up-to-date product information is crucial. As most respondents seek product reviews within affiliate links, business operators should prioritize selecting reliable affiliate partners, product reviewers, or influencers with credibility, expertise, and first-hand experience with the products to enhance consumer confidence.
4. Business operators can leverage the findings of this study to develop a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system aimed at strengthening relationships with student consumers. Tailored services or exclusive offers catering to students' needs, such as special student discounts, should be integrated with affiliate marketing strategies through online shopping platforms to optimize customer engagement and purchasing behavior.

Recommendations for future research

1. Future studies should investigate multiple product categories, as different types of products influence purchasing decisions in distinct ways. This would provide insights that enable business operators to tailor their marketing strategies more effectively to specific customer segments.
2. Expanding the target demographic to include a broader age range would enhance the understanding of online purchasing behaviors across different consumer groups, allowing for the development of more comprehensive and targeted marketing strategies.
3. While this study focused on affiliate marketing (Affiliate Marketing) and its influence on purchase decisions, future research should explore additional aspects, such as alternative purchasing channels through WhatsApp, Line, or even offline stores. This would provide a more holistic perspective on consumer behavior and assist businesses in refining their sales approaches to better align with customer preferences.
4. Further research should explore the integration of social media with affiliate marketing to better understand effective promotional strategies and improve the efficiency of digital marketing campaigns.
5. Examining the impact of emerging technologies on online purchasing behavior among students would be beneficial. Technologies such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), Virtual Reality (VR), and digital payment systems (Digital Wallets) are increasingly shaping consumer

experiences. Investigating how these advancements influence purchasing decisions would provide valuable insights for developing adaptive marketing strategies in response to technological evolution.

6. Future research should incorporate qualitative methodologies to explore students' perceptions and experiences in the online purchasing decision-making process. Qualitative research can offer deeper insights into the motivations and factors influencing purchase decisions, such as consumer attitudes toward online shopping, satisfaction with various platforms, and perspectives on affiliate marketing (Affiliate Marketing). By gathering feedback from students with real purchasing experiences, businesses can refine their marketing strategies to better align with their target audience's expectations and preferences.

Research Limitations

1. Some survey questions may lack clarity, particularly regarding the definition of daily-use products. As the study did not specify which items fall under this category, respondents may have interpreted the term differently, potentially leading to misunderstandings and inconsistencies in responses.
2. The use of an online questionnaire may have introduced response variability or inaccuracies, such as social desirability bias, where respondents provide answers they believe are expected by the researcher, or lack of attentiveness in responses, which may affect the accuracy and reliability of the study's findings in fully reflecting actual consumer behavior.
3. This study examined the exposure to affiliate marketing strategies from the perspective of university students but did not explore the actual impact of these strategies in depth. For instance, the influence of specific marketing techniques, such as influencer marketing, may vary based on product categories and the nature of consumer-brand relationships.

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