

**THE FACTORS INFLUENCING CUSTOMER PURCHASE
INTENTION THROUGH AFFILIATE LINKS ON SOCIAL MEDIA
IN THAILAND**



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**A THEMATIC PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
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entitled
**THE FACTORS INFLUENCING CUSTOMER PURCHASE
INTENTION THROUGH AFFILIATE LINKS ON SOCIAL MEDIA
IN THAILAND**

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ABSTRACT

This thematic paper explores the factors that influence customers' purchase intention through affiliate links on social media. With the increasing use of social media for marketing and advertising purposes, affiliate marketing has emerged as a popular strategy for online marketplaces to promote products. However, the factors that drive customers to make purchases through affiliate links on social media remain poorly understood. To address this gap, this study conducted a literature review and identified several factors that may influence customers' purchase intention, including informativeness, social influence, perceived risk, trustworthiness, and ease of use. The study conducted the quantitative method by collecting data via an online survey from 150 respondents. The results show that the customers, who purchased Shopee and Lazada products through affiliate links on Facebook and Twitter, agreed that the factors of ease of use, informativeness, and social influence influenced them to gain purchase intention. The study also discusses the findings and recommends strategies for affiliates and marketplace applications to enhance the effectiveness of affiliate marketing on social media.

KEYWORDS: Affiliate Marketing/ Purchase Intention/ Social Media

45 pages

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

E-commerce has been growing in Thailand rapidly since the COVID-19 pandemic. By 2023, the Thai E-commerce Association expected the market value to grow by 13% (Leesa-Nguansuk, 2023). Digital marketing becomes one of the most crucial methods for companies to reach and engage with their customers. Digital marketing could be divided into various types, e.g., search engine optimization (SEO), content marketing, pay-per-click (PPC), etc. (Thakkar, 2022). There will be more types of digital marketing in the future as technologies and customer behavior change over time. This report will focus on a type of digital marketing that is currently being used more broadly: affiliate marketing.

Affiliate marketing has been around for decades. Its origin was from Amazon.com in July 1996, when it was called the partnership program (Goldschmidt, 2003). It is the concept of paying a commission to affiliates for referring businesses. As time pass by, customer shopping habits have changed; people shop through an online platform as their usual life. In 2021, Thai people purchased goods via the internet and mobile applications 36.60 million times, with a total value of approximately 638 billion baht (ITA, 2022). Moreover, Thailand also has 56.85 million social media users, which means every user can create their own content on their social media. So, every day, we see many product reviews or advertisements for products from macro-influencers, micro-influencers, or even regular people like our friends or colleagues. So, in our social network feeds, both on Facebook and Twitter, we can see some product review posts that include an affiliate link that leads you to the shopping application.



Figure 1.1 A status posting from a Facebook user with the affiliate links (Wg, 2022)



Figure 1.2 A status posting from a Twitter user with the affiliate links (Daisy Bloom, 2023)

Figures 1.1 and 1.2 show examples of posts on social media from both Facebook and Twitter in which the users post the photo of the products or the references photo idea for home decorations and then put affiliate links below the post. These types of posts are becoming more common as the major online marketplaces in Thailand, such as Shopee and Lazada, have created an affiliate program that anyone can join.

The affiliate program is a marketing campaign created by online marketplaces, such as Shopee, Lazada, Pomelo, etc. which allows any user to apply to

the program, and choose the products they want to promote, the program will generate the affiliate link for them so they can copy it and paste it wherever social media they want to promote the products. If any customer clicks on the link and purchases the products completely, the affiliate user will get the commission from that purchase.



Figure 1.3 The steps to joining the affiliate program of Shopee (Shopee, 2021)



Figure 1.4 The steps to joining the affiliate program of Lazada (Lazada, 2020)

Figures 1.3 and 1.4 show the steps of joining the affiliate programs of Shopee and Lazada, which have only a few steps and are very easy, so everyone could apply and promote the products on their social media platforms without taking any costs. It is another way for the marketplace platform to advertise its product at a cheaper price than paying for online ads or hiring influencers to talk about the product. With the affiliate link, it will be generated personally for each affiliate user, so the marketplace platforms could track the performances of the user and also the product, who has high performance in selling products? what product that people usually click the link to see more information? These trackable data would help the marketplace platforms to develop their marketing strategies in the future.

1.2 Problem Statement

Since January 2023, the affiliate program has become a trend to talk about on social media because the affiliates who joined the program came up to talk about their success in terms of receiving the commission. While the bloggers and content creators also posted content about how to do the affiliate program. Since there are many research papers about affiliate marketing that study how affiliates adopted this program, it is interesting to consider the customer's side: how customers choose to buy products from someone's post rather than directly searching on marketplace platforms. Is it correlated to some factor that affects customer purchasing?

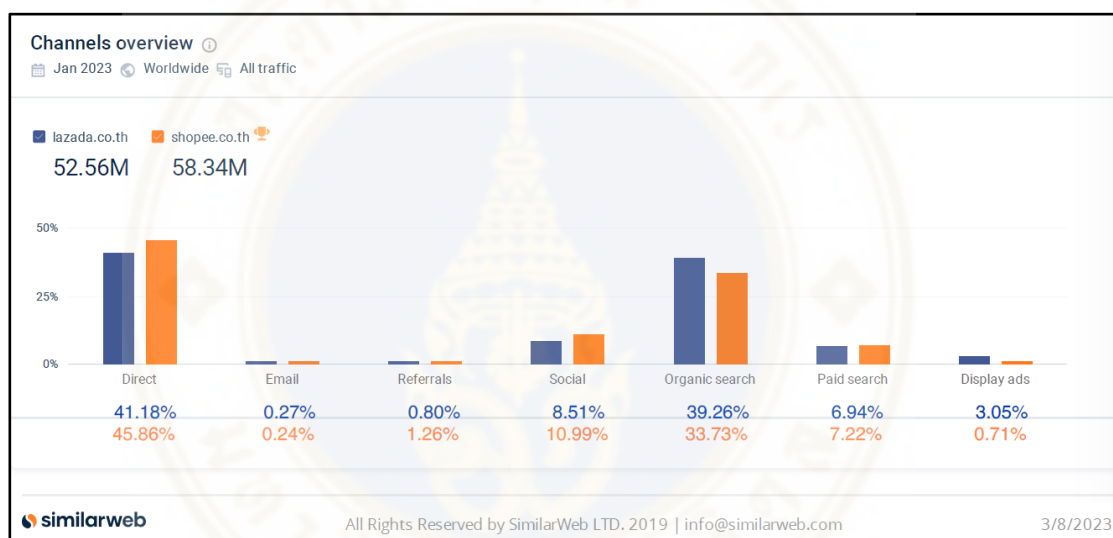


Figure 1.5 Channel traffic of Lazada and Shopee in January 2023 (Similarweb, 2023)

In addition, Similarweb (2023), the web analytics company, calculated the monthly website traffic of Shopee Thailand and Lazada Thailand from social media in January 2023 as 6.4 million and 4.5 million, respectively, or 10.99% and 8.51% of all channels (direct, organic search, display ads, etc.). As seen in Figure 1.5, the report shows that the traffic in the marketplace that is led by social media is more effective than paid search and email marketing. However, the number shows only the traffic to the website; there is no formula for the application companies and the affiliates to

determine what kind of affiliate content gains customer purchase intentions to buy the products through the affiliate links.

There are limited studies that explore customer purchase intention toward online affiliate marketing. The most relevant study is from Ghosal et al. (2021), which studied the factors influencing consumers' purchase intentions redirected through affiliate marketing programs, however, in the context of Indian customers. While the study in Thailand by Suchada et al. (2018) focused more on the tourism industry and specific affiliate websites such as Agoda.com and Airbnb.com. The affiliate programs of Shopee and Lazada Thailand, which allow the affiliates to paste the affiliate links on any social media platform they prefer, are a very new practice of affiliate marketing, and it is rare to find the study of the customer's purchase intention towards the affiliate link.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the factors that influence customer purchases through affiliate links on social media in Thailand, with a focus on the affiliate programs of Shopee and Lazada, two major marketplace platforms in Thailand. Those who use the affiliate program on other marketplace platforms can also use this study to develop their content on social media as well.

1.3 Research Question

Q1: What are the factors that influence customer purchase intention to buy products directly through affiliate links on social media?

Q2: What is the most important factor that affects customer purchase intention to click through affiliate links on social media?

1.4 Research Objective

1. To study the factors that influence customer purchase intention to buy products directly through affiliate links on social media.

2. To identify the important factor that affects customer purchase intention to click through affiliate links on social media.

3. To understand the relationship between the independent variables and purchase intention.

1.5 Scope of study

This study will collect information from the online surveys of 150 customers who always use social media, which is Facebook or Twitter, and have shopped for products through the affiliate links of Shopee or Lazada. Focus on the population aged between 18-50 years old, who are living in Thailand. The study is conducted from January 2023 to April 2023.

1.6 Expected Benefit

This study aims to find the factor that most influence the customer's purchase through affiliate links. The content creators and the marketplace platforms can use the results of this study to develop their affiliate programs and their content to be more favorable for Thai customers.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEWS

2.1 Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate marketing refers to the approach of paying affiliates a commission for referring businesses (Goldschmidt, 2003). It is an agreement between a content provider and a merchant to advertise the merchant's products or services on the content provider's online platform. Content providers are compensated when users click a link on their platform and make a product purchase (Chatterjee, 2002, as cited in Benediktova & Nevosad, 2008). As shown in Figure 2.1, affiliate marketing is a circular system involving merchants, affiliates, and customers. The marketplace platform can monitor the link's performance to see how it performed, including how many times the product and link were viewed, how many times links were clicked, and how many sales leads it generated.

Affiliate means the person who joins the affiliate program and posts the content with the affiliate links on their social media platforms; this person is sometimes called the blogger, content creator, or content provider.



Figure 2.1 How affiliate marketing works
(Brookes, 2022)

Goldschmidt (2003) also mentioned that the click-through rates for affiliate links were six times higher than those for ad banners, demonstrating the effectiveness of affiliate marketing by showing that the affiliates have the ability to connect to their niche audiences with more relevant content than the brand's website.

According to Olbrich et al. (2019), a higher organic ranking for the merchant on the search engine result page is achieved by having more affiliates, when affiliates' organic search results are among the top five results on the search engine result page, there is an increase in consumer trust in them.

2.2 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is the customer behavior that anticipates or plans to purchase a product in the future, and it is the possibility that beliefs and attitudes can be moved to act. (Engel et al., 1986, as cited in Sohn & Kim, 2020) It is directly related to how the customer perceives a product or service and its value. When a customer has a

favorable perception of a product or service, the customer is more likely to purchase it (Rubera et al., 2011).

Purchase intention also refers to a consumer's willingness to purchase products, which acts as a crucial determinant of customer behavior; the responses that represent the final outcomes and decisions of customers based on cognitive and affective responses, such as proximity (positive) or avoidance behaviors (negative) (Zhu et al., 2020)

In this study, "purchase intention" refers to the action of the customer when seeing the affiliates' contents and then clicking on the affiliate links to buy the product.

2.3 Informativeness

The quality of information on a company's website has a direct influence on customers' perceptions of the company and its products (Haq, 2012). One other study by Olbrich et al. (2019) found that the more texts an affiliate uses, the more clicks on the links to the product landing page.

Sharing content makes it easier for social media users to exchange information and stay up to date on the latest trends. According to past interviews, consumers prefer to receive product information and content in the form of images and videos from social media accounts (Erlangga, 2021).

In this study, "informativeness" refers to the information in the content, including texts and photos or videos, that the affiliates provide about the product with the affiliate link and post to advertise on social media platforms, which gives a positive influence on customers to have the intention to purchase the products.

2.4 Social Influence

Social influence can change one's beliefs and further lead one to act in response to social pressure when deciding whether or not to adopt a new product or technology. Furthermore, it has been evaluated across various fields, summarizing social influence perception as an important link in determining the intention to use new products and technology (Venkatesh et al., 2003).

Abdelhady et al. (2020) investigated the affiliate program in the tourism industry and discovered that online word of mouth has increased as a significant role in customers' perception and consumer purchase decisions, resulting in a significant effect of word of mouth through online social communities on perceived value in travel affiliate websites.

The business can use social media to gather a community of people who are interested in or likely to purchase its products. These communities are known as online communities. Based on the results of Erlangga's study (2021), consumers agreed that joining a social media group is beneficial for gathering various information about their interesting products.

In this study, "social influence" refers to the popularity of the product or the content that has high engagement (likes and shares), which has the ability to positively influence one user to click through an affiliate link and purchase the product.

2.5 Perceived Risk

Perceived risk refers to the risk associated with financial transactions that are taken care of and minimized by online shopping portals. It includes cash on payment delivery, payment on delivery, credit card transaction security, and fraud advertisers (Ghosal et al., 2021). It has a negative impact on customers who purchase through affiliate programs.

Consumers prefer to avoid possible financial risk, according to Wai et al. (2019) explanation of five types of perceived risk factors, including financial risk, product risk, convenience risk, non-delivery risk, and return policy risk. Product risk, convenience risk, and return policy risk all have a positive influence on consumer behavior among online shoppers.

In this study, "perceived risk" refers to the fact that customers are already aware of the possibility of risk if they click on the affiliate links to buy products from the other platform. The more they perceive the risk of the affiliate links, the more they avoid clicking the link to purchase the products, which is the result of the negative influence.

2.6 Trustworthiness

When customers have trust in a business, they are more likely to purchase from them, share their personal information with them, and consider their advice (Abdelhady et al., 2020). According to the study, trust has a significant impact on how much users value travel affiliate websites, and this effect is influenced by a variety of factors, including the website's design and content quality.

The credibility of brand providers who convey a clear message to develop trust in what is said and done in a positive relationship with what customers want is another definition of trust. According to Erlangga's (2021) study, consumers agreed that they can clearly understand and trust the product information presented on social media for brands' products.

In this study, "trustworthiness" refers to the customer's trust in the content and the affiliate link, giving a positive influence on the intention to purchase, so they click the links and buy the products from the marketplace platform.

2.7 Ease of use

When banner ads are displayed on websites related to the product being advertised, there are positive attitudes toward the ads, positive attitudes toward the brand, and higher purchase intentions (Shamadasani et al., 2001).

According to a study by Mitchev et al. (2022), perceived ease of use was positively and significantly correlated with the decision to make the next online purchase. This indicates that online repurchase intention was significantly influenced by the perceived ease of use of the marketplace platform.

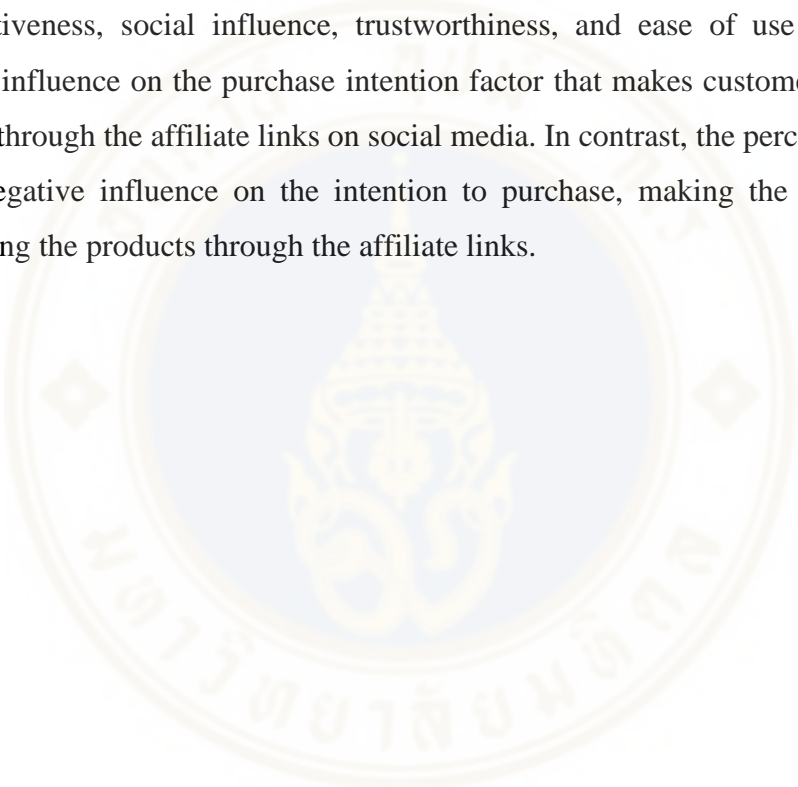
Furthermore, customers will spend less time browsing the internet and will become more utilized to making purchases online as a result of the system's perceived ease of use (Chiu et al., 2009).

In this study, "ease of use" refers to how the affiliates provide the content so that it is easy for the customers to find the affiliate links to click to purchase the product, such as placing the link at the top of the post so the customers don't have to scroll down

to the bottom to find the link, or the process to buy the product through the affiliate links is easy to take.

2.8 The Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework was developed from the literature reviews by considering every possible factor. Figure 2.2 below will illustrate the hypothesis of five variables that affect the customer's intention to purchase products through affiliate links. Informativeness, social influence, trustworthiness, and ease of use factors have a positive influence on the purchase intention factor that makes customers purchase the product through the affiliate links on social media. In contrast, the perceived risk factor has a negative influence on the intention to purchase, making the customer avoid purchasing the products through the affiliate links.



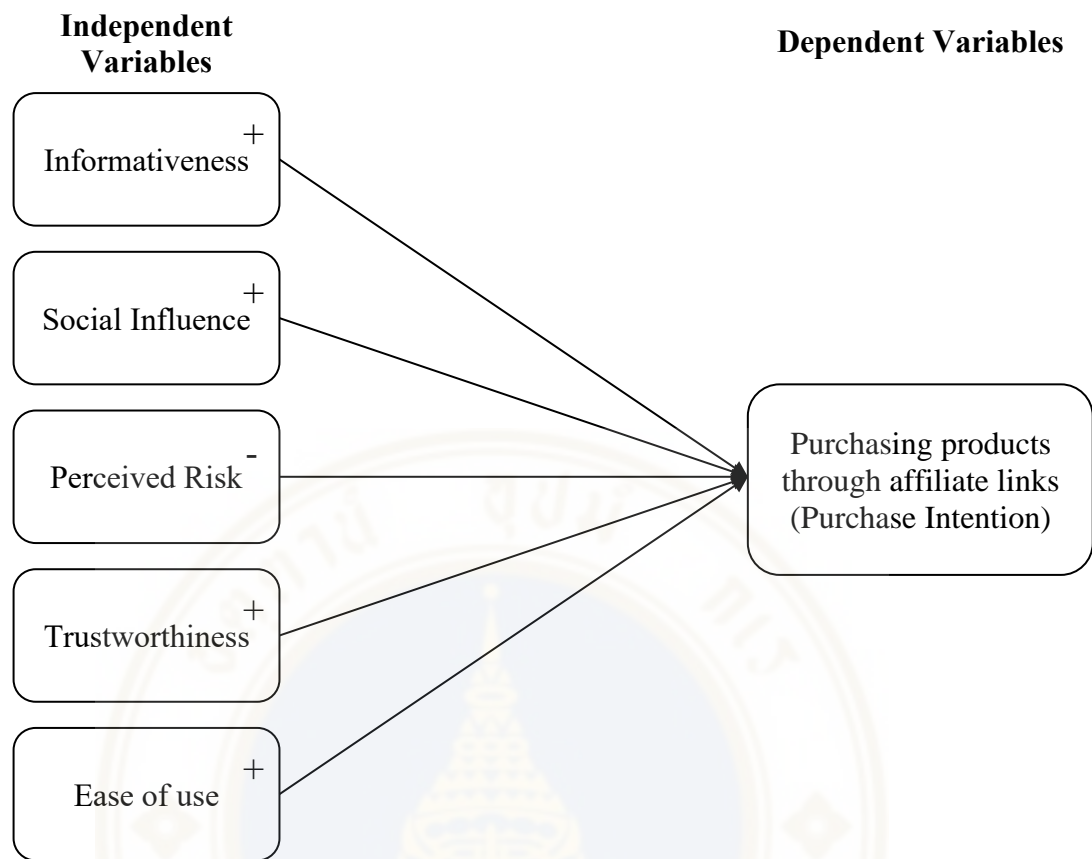


Figure 2.2 The Conceptual Framework of The Factors Influencing Customer Purchasing Intention

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study focuses on the factors that influence customer purchases via affiliate links on social media, particularly Facebook and Twitter, which are two popular social media platforms in Thailand. The study will employ quantitative descriptive research methods by conducting a questionnaire survey via an online platform. Using the numeric data to find the correlation between variables and compare which independent variable is most correlated to the customer purchase intention (dependent variable), making the customer click through the affiliate link to purchase products.

3.2 Population & Sampling Method

The target population of this study is the customers who are using social media on a regular basis and who have also previously used affiliate links from content posted by affiliates on social media platforms to shop for products.

This study will emphasize the sample of customers who are living in Thailand, normally shop through social media platforms, which is Facebook or Twitter, and have previously clicked through affiliate links on the social media content that led to Shopee or Lazada applications to shop for products. The sample's age ranges from 18 to 50, which corresponds to the age group of the majority of Shopee and Lazada's customers. The questionnaire survey will be made available on Google Form and released through social media, and it will be filled out using simple random sampling until a sample size of 150 respondents is reached.

3.3 Research Instrument

The study will collect data through the online survey. To make it easier for Thai customers to understand, the questionnaire will be in Thai and English. The questionnaire contains three parts, as follows:

Part 1: Screening questions

Part 2: Personal information, including gender, career, education, and income

Part 3: The factor that most influence the customer's purchase through the affiliate links. The question in this part will use the 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree). The questions will be separated into six subparts due to its factor as follows:

- 1) Questionnaire about purchase intention
- 2) Questionnaire about informativeness
- 3) Questionnaire about social influence
- 4) Questionnaire about perceived risk
- 5) Questionnaire about trustworthiness
- 6) Questionnaire about ease of use

3.4 Data Collection

This study conducts the quantitative approach, collecting data via the online survey questionnaire on Google Form. The link to the online questionnaire will be sent to the respondents via the social media platforms, both Facebook and Twitter, which are where the study focuses. After 150 respondents complete the questionnaires, the data will be gathered and transferred to the SPSS program for data analysis and finding the results.

3.5 Data Analysis Method

The surveys would be collected via Google Forms, and the data will be analyzed by the SPSS program as part of the data analysis method for this study. The

analysis would generate the data to see the descriptive statistics in frequency and percentage to see the demographic of the respondents and to calculate the mean from the numerical scale of the 5-point Likert-type scale in the questionnaire. Also, the regression analysis would be used to analyze the main objective of this research, which is to find the factors that influence customers' purchase intentions to buy products directly through affiliate links on social media and the most important factor that affects customers' purchase intentions. In addition, this research will use Pearson's correlation analysis to see the correlation between each variable, both dependent and independent variables.



Questionnaire

This questionnaire is a part of the thematic paper for the postgraduate degree study, Marketing and Management, College of Management, Mahidol University.

Your participation is voluntary. I would be pleased for your participation. This survey would take time to complete approximately 5-10 minutes.

Your responses would not identify your personal information; names, email addresses, and data are solely used for academic purposes and concern about your personal securities as a priority according to Personal Data Protection Act, PDPA.

Thank you for your time and participation.

Section 1 Screening Question

1. Have you ever purchased Shopee or Lazada's products through affiliate links on Facebook or Twitter?

Yes No

2. Are you living in Thailand?

Yes No

3. Age

Under 18 18 - 22 23 - 30 31 - 40 41 - 50

51- 60 Over 60

Section 2 Personal Information

1. Gender

Male Female LGBTQIA+

2. Educational Level

High school/ Diploma or lower Bachelor's degree

Master's degree Ph.D. or above

3. Occupation

Student / Full-time student Office worker/ Private employee

Government officer Business owner

Freelance Others...

4. Average Income

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lower than 15,000 THB | <input type="checkbox"/> 15,001 - 30,000 THB |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 30,001 - 45,000 THB | <input type="checkbox"/> 45,001- 60,000 THB |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 60,001 - 100,000 THB | <input type="checkbox"/> 100,001- 200,000 THB |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 200,001- 300,000 THB | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 300,000 THB |

Section 3 The factor that most influence the customer purchase intention through the affiliate links.

Please rate a number to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree

Variables	Adopted from
Purchase Intention (PI)	
Affiliate content makes me have the intention to click the link to purchase the product.	Rubera et al. (2011)
Overall, I like to buy products through affiliate links.	
I intend to continue using affiliate links for purchasing products in the future.	Ganguly et al. (2010).
Informativeness (IF)	
The descriptions of products shown in the affiliate content are very accurate.	Rajesh (2018).
The more information shown in the content, the more I want to click through the link to buy the product.	Olbrich et al. (2019).

Variables	Adopted from
I would click to buy the product if the product image was attached to the content.	Erlangga (2021).
Social Influence (SI)	
Product reviews from influencers influence my intention to use affiliate links to shop online.	Rajesh (2018).
I would buy the product from the same affiliate links as my friends did.	
If the content has a lot of "likes" and "shares" (or retweets), I would click the affiliate link to shop for the product.	Abdelhady et al. (2020)
Perceived Risk (PR)	
I avoid buying products that are different in quality and appearance from the affiliate content provided.	Wai et al. (2019).
I feel worried that the link might be a fraud.	Ghosal et al. (2021)
I don't feel confident making the payment when shopping through the affiliate link.	
Trustworthiness (TW)	
You trust to buy the product from the link of the marketplace that you know	Erlangga (2021).

Variables	Adopted from
(such as https://shope.ee/ , or lzd.co/)	
The affiliate content makes me trust in clicking the link to purchase the product.	
I feel confident to use my personal social media account to buy the product through the affiliate link.	Abdelhady et al. (2020)
Ease of Use (EU)	
I feel shopping through the affiliate link is easy to use in general.	
I can easily understand how to buy the product through the affiliate link.	Mitchev et al. (2022).
The affiliate link that is easily found in the content makes me want to click to buy the product.	

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDING

This chapter provides the results of the analysis and finding of the factors that influence customer purchase intention to buy products through the affiliate link on social media and which factor is the most influencing. Also, provide the relationship between factors. The questionnaires on Google Forms were sent out to the respondents through social media.

4.1 The respondents' profiles

Out of the 207 respondents, 150 were valid by passing the screening questions and completing the questionnaire. Descriptive analysis was used to find the frequency and percentage of the respondents' demographic. The respondents' demographic profiles are summarized in Figures 4.1–4.5 below.

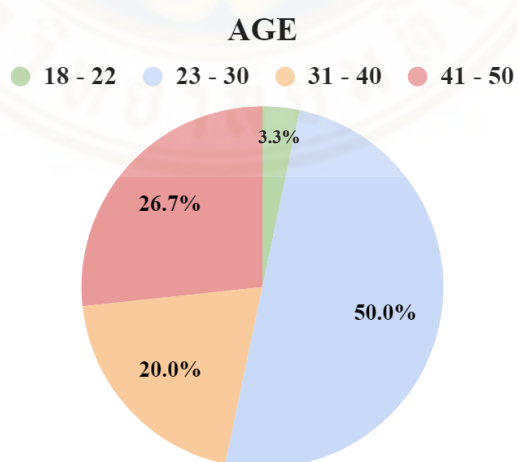


Figure 4.1 Respondents' Age

Figure 4.1 shows the respondents' age. From the 150 respondents, 75 respondents, or 50% of the total respondents, are between 23-30 years old. Followed by 26.7% (40 respondents) who are between 41-50 years old. The respondents aged between 31-40 and 18-22 are 20% and 3.3%, respectively.

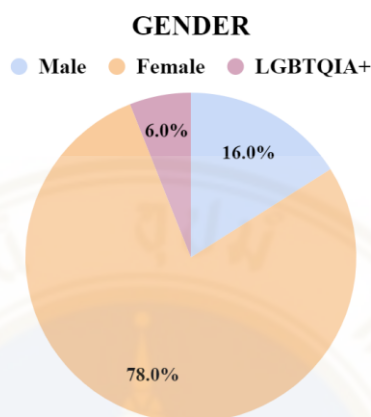


Figure 4.2 Respondents' Gender

Figure 4.2 shows the respondents' gender. There are up to 78% of total respondents are female. Male respondents are 16%, and LGBTQIA+ respondents are 6%.

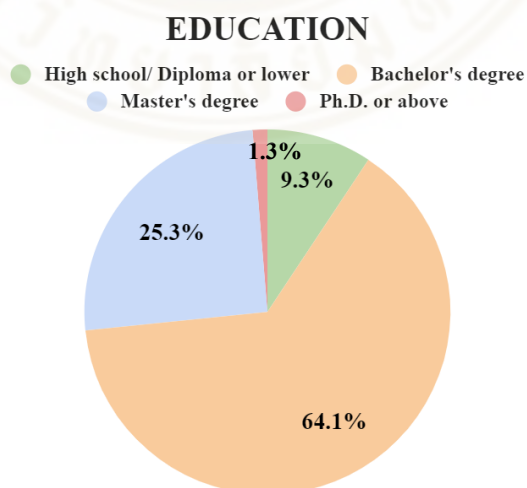


Figure 4.3 Respondents' Education

Figure 4.3 shows the respondents' education. The majority of the respondents had the highest education level with the bachelor's degree of 64.1%. Followed by the master's degree are 25.3%, high school/diploma or lower are 9.3%, and Ph.D. or above are 1.3%.

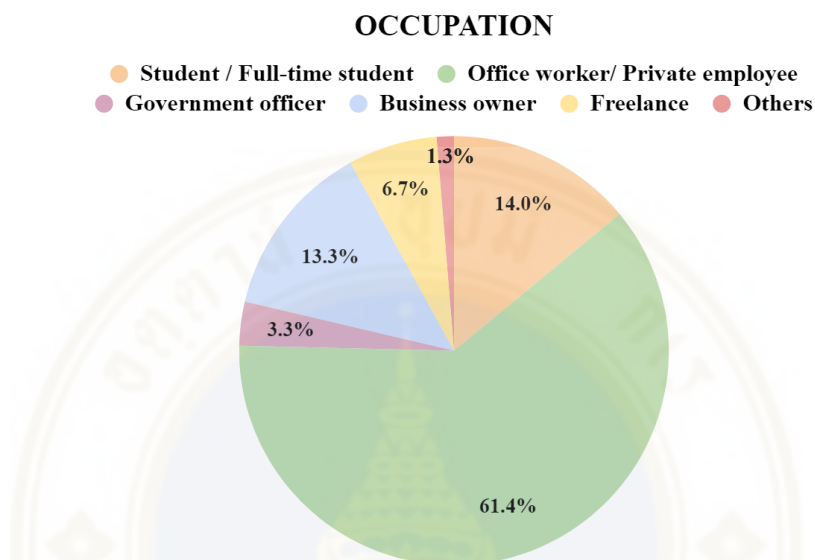


Figure 4.4 Respondents' Occupation

Figure 4.4 shows the respondents' occupations. Most of the respondents are office workers for 61.4%. The respondents who are full-time students are 14%, business owners are 13.3%, freelancers are 6.7%, and government officers are 3.3%. The others are 1.3%, which is a housewife and an NGO worker.

Table 4.1 Respondents' Income

Income		
	Frequency	Percent (%)
Lower than 15,000 THB	11	7.3
15,001 - 30,000 THB	50	33.3
30,001 - 45,000 THB	31	20.7
45,001- 60,000 THB	16	10.7
60,001 - 100,000 THB	24	16
100,001- 200,000 THB	10	6.7
200,001- 300,000 THB	2	1.3
More than 300,000 THB	6	4
Total	150	100

Table 4.1 shows the respondents' income. 33% of total respondents have incomes of around 15,001–30,000 Baht. Followed by the respondents who have incomes between 30,001–45,000 Baht (20.7%), 60,001–100,000 Baht (16%), 45,001–60,000 Baht (10.7%), lower than 15,000 Baht (7.3%), 100,001–200,000 Baht (6.7%), more than 300,000 Baht (4%), and 200,001–300,000 Baht (1.3%).

4.2 Descriptive analysis - Finding

Each variable was rated on the 5-point Likert-type scale, with '1' meaning strongly disagree, '2' meaning disagree, '3' meaning neutral, '4' meaning agree, and '5' meaning strongly agree. Using the descriptive analysis to find the mean of each variable.

The following table 4.2 to table 4.8 show descriptive analysis for mean, standard deviation, and interpretation of each factor and question with the measurement scale

Range of mean	Interpretation
4.21 - 5.00	Strongly agree
3.41 - 4.20	Agree
2.61 - 3.40	Neutral
1.81 - 2.60	Disagree
1.00 - 1.80	Strongly disagree

Table 4.2 The descriptive statistic of each variable

Descriptive Statistics			
Factor	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Purchase Intention	3.3956	0.8994	Neutral
Informativeness	4.0333	0.6884	Agree
Social Influence	3.7156	0.81776	Agree
Perceived Risk	3.8489	0.86232	Agree
Trustworthiness	3.8244	0.79117	Agree
Ease of Use	3.9267	0.80904	Agree

Table 4.2 shows that the respondents scored variables around neutral to agree, which could be ranked by the highest score rated: informativeness (mean = 4.03), ease of use (mean = 3.92), perceived risk (mean = 3.84), trustworthiness (mean = 3.82), social influence (mean = 3.71), and purchase intention (mean = 3.39).

Table 4.3 The descriptive statistic of purchase intention

Purchase Intention	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Affiliate content makes me have the intention to click the link to purchase the product.	3.75	0.948	Agree
Overall, I like to buy products through affiliate links.	3.17	1.14	Neutral

Table 4.3 The descriptive statistic of purchase intention (cont.)

Purchase Intention	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
I intend to continue using affiliate links for purchasing products in the future.	3.26	1.058	Neutral
Overall of Purchase Intention	3.3956	0.8994	Neutral

Table 4.3 shows the overall level of purchase intention is at the neutral level (mean = 3.39, std. deviation = 0.89). The respondents gave the highest score of agree in that "Affiliate content makes me have the intention to click the link to purchase the product." (mean = 3.75, std. deviation = 0.94). While other questions got neutral scores for "I intend to continue using affiliate links for purchasing products in the future." (mean = 3.26, std. deviation = 1.05), and "Overall, I like to buy products through affiliate links." (mean = 3.17, std. deviation = 1.14), respectively.

Table 4.4 The descriptive statistic of informativeness

Informativeness	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
The descriptions of products shown in the affiliate content are very accurate.	3.52	0.96	Agree
The more information shown in the content, the more I want to click through the link to buy the product.	4.14	0.875	Agree
I would click to buy the product if the product image was attached to the content.	4.44	0.764	Strongly Agree
Overall of Informativeness	4.0333	0.6884	Agree

Table 4.4 shows the overall level of informativeness is at the agree level (mean = 4.03, std. deviation = 0.68). The respondents strongly agreed with the question, "I would click to buy the product if the product image was attached to the

content." (mean = 4.44, std. deviation = 0.76). Followed by the agree level in "The more information shown in the content, the more I want to click through the link to buy the product." (mean = 4.14, std. deviation = 0.87), and "The descriptions of products shown in the affiliate content are very accurate." (mean = 3.52, std. deviation = 0.96), respectively.

Table 4.5 The descriptive statistic of social influence

Social Influence	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Product reviews from influencers influence my intention to use affiliate links to shop online.	3.87	1.001	Agree
I would buy the product from the same affiliate links as my friends did.	3.69	1.063	Agree
If the content has a lot of "likes" and "shares" (or retweets), I would click the affiliate link to shop for the product.	3.59	1.056	Agree
Overall of Social Influence	3.7156	0.81776	Agree

Table 4.5 shows the overall level of social influence is at the agree level (mean = 3.71, std. deviation = 0.81). The respondents agreed that "Product reviews from influencers influence my intention to use affiliate links to shop online." (mean = 3.87, std. deviation = 1.00), followed by "I would buy the product from the same affiliate links as my friends did." (mean = 3.69, std. deviation = 1.06), and "If the content has a lot of "likes" and "shares" (or retweets), I would click the affiliate link to shop for the product." (mean = 3.59, std. deviation = 1.05), respectively.

Table 4.6 The descriptive statistic of perceived risk

Perceived Risk	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
I avoid buying products that are different in quality and appearance from the affiliate content provided.	4.19	1.015	Agree

Table 4.6 The descriptive statistic of perceived risk (cont.)

Perceived Risk	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
I feel worried that the link might be a fraud.	3.93	1.109	Agree
I don't feel confident making the payment when shopping through the affiliate link.	3.42	1.244	Agree
Overall of Perceived Risk	3.8489	0.86232	Agree

Table 4.6 shows the overall level of perceived risk is at the agree level (mean = 3.84, std. deviation = 0.86). The respondents agreed that "I avoid buying products that are different in quality and appearance from the affiliate content provided." (mean = 4.19, std. deviation = 1.01), followed by "I feel worried that the link might be a fraud." (mean = 3.93, std. deviation = 1.10), and "I don't feel confident making the payment when shopping through the affiliate link." (mean = 3.42, std. deviation = 1.24), respectively.

Table 4.7 The descriptive statistic of trustworthiness

Trustworthiness	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
You trust to buy the product from the link of the marketplace that you know (such as https://shope.ee/ , or lzd.co/)	4.21	0.924	Strongly Agree
The affiliate content makes me trust in clicking the link to purchase the product.	3.79	0.985	Agree
I feel confident to use my personal social media account to buy the product through the affiliate link.	3.47	1.121	Agree
Overall of Trustworthiness	3.8244	0.79117	Agree

Table 4.7 shows the overall level of trustworthiness is at the agree level (mean 3.82, std. deviation = 0.79). The respondents strongly agreed with the question, "You trust to buy the product from the link of the marketplace that you know (such as <https://shope.ee/>, or lzd.co/)" (mean = 4.21, std. deviation = 0.92). Followed by the agree level in "The affiliate content makes me trust in clicking the link to purchase the product." (mean = 3.79, std. deviation = 0.98), and "I feel confident to use my personal social media account to buy the product through the affiliate link." (mean = 3.47, std. deviation = 1.12), respectively.

Table 4.8 The descriptive statistic of ease of use

Ease of Use	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
I feel shopping through the affiliate link is easy to use in general.	3.91	0.882	Agree
I can easily understand how to buy the product through the affiliate link.	4.05	0.877	Agree
The affiliate link that is easily found in the content makes me want to click to buy the product.	3.82	1.01	Agree
Overall of Ease of Use	3.9267	0.80904	Agree

Table 4.8 shows the overall level of ease of use is at the agree level (mean = 3.92, std. deviation = 0.80). The respondents agreed that "I can easily understand how to buy the product through the affiliate link." (mean = 4.05, std. deviation = 0.87), followed by "I feel shopping through the affiliate link is easy to use in general." (mean = 3.91, std. deviation = 0.88), and "I can easily understand how to buy the product through the affiliate link." (mean = 3.82, std. deviation = 1.01), respectively.

4.3 The relationship between the independent variables and purchase intention.

In this part, Pearson's correlation was used to analyze the correlation between each factor, including purchase intention, informativeness, social influence, perceived risk, trustworthiness, and ease of use. The value of +1 means the positive correlation between both factors, -1 means the negative correlation between both factors, and 0 means there is no linear correlation.

Table 4.9 Pearson's correlation

		Correlations					
		Purchase Intention	Informativeness	Social Influence	Perceived Risk	Trustworthiness	Ease of Use
Purchase Intention	Pearson Correlation	1	.557**	.508**	.150	.508**	.574**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001	0.067	<.001	<.001
Informativeness	Pearson Correlation	.557**	1	.491**	.148	.552**	.543**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001	0.071	<.001	<.001
Social Influence	Pearson Correlation	.508**	.491**	1	.307**	.338**	.445**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001		<.001	<.001	<.001
Perceived Risk	Pearson Correlation	.150	.148	.307**	1	-0.047	.192*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.067	0.071	<.001		0.570	0.018

Table 4.9 Pearson's correlation (cont.)

Correlations							
		Purchase Intention	Informativeness	Social Influence	Perceived Risk	Trustworthiness	Ease of Use
Trustworthiness	Pearson Correlation	.508**	.552**	.338**	-0.047	1	.590**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	0.570		<.001
Ease of Use	Pearson Correlation	.574**	.543**	.445**	.192*	.590**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	0.018	<.001	
N		150	150	150	150	150	150
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).							
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).							

Table 4.9 shows the result of the correlation between factors, starting with the dependent variable 'purchase intention', which has the most positive correlation with the ease of use factor (Sig. = 0.574). Apart from the dependent variable, seeing the correlation between each independent variable, informativeness has the most positive correlation with trustworthiness (Sig. = 0.552). Social influence has the most positive correlation with informativeness (Sig. = 0.491), and ease of use has the most positive correlation with trustworthiness (Sig. = 0.59).

The negative correlations show in perceived risk and trustworthiness factors (Sig. = -0.047). Perceived risk has the most positive correlation with social influence (Sig. = 0.307), and trustworthiness has the most positive correlation with ease of use (Sig. = 0.59).

4.4 The factors that influence customer purchase intention to buy products directly through affiliate links on social media.

Regression analysis was used to analyze the relationship between purchase intention and the independent variables of informativeness, social influence, perceived risk, trustworthiness, and ease of use.

Table 4.10 Regression analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-0.52	0.407		-1.276	0.204
	Informativeness	0.279	0.106	0.213	2.623	0.01
	Social Influence	0.255	0.082	0.232	3.121	0.002
	Perceived Risk	0.004	0.069	0.004	0.062	0.951
	Trustworthiness	0.18	0.094	0.158	1.913	0.058
	Ease of Use	0.29	0.092	0.261	3.148	0.002
a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention						

Table 4.10 shows the analysis of the factors that influence the customer purchase intention. The results show that informativeness, social influence, and ease of use have a positive relationship with purchase intention, as indicated by the Sig. value of less than 0.05. While the factors of perceived risk and trustworthiness have no relationship with the purchase intention, refer to the Sig. of '0.951' and '0.058' respectively.

Furthermore, the ease of use factor is the most influential factor towards the purchase intention, with a beta of 0.261, followed by the social influence factor (a beta of 0.232) and the informativeness factor (a beta of 0.213).

4.5 Discussion

According to the literature review, the factors that influence customer purchase intention to buy products directly through affiliate links on social media are informativeness, social influence, perceived risk, trustworthiness, and ease of use. Ease of use is the most influential factor in the purchase intention through affiliate links on social media. The results show from both Pearson's correlation analysis and the regression analysis that this factor has the most significant value among other factors. It is consistent with the study by Mitchev et al. (2022) that the ease of use was positively and significantly correlated with online purchase intention.

The next factor that influences the purchase intention is informativeness. The respondents strongly agreed that they would like to buy the products if there is an image attached to the affiliate content. Also, they agreed that the more information describe in the affiliate content, the more they have the intention to click to purchase the products, which supports Olbrich et al.'s study (2019). Social influence is also another factor that influences purchase intention. Abdelhady et al.(2020) studied that electronic word of mouth had a positive effect on the tourism industry. In this study, respondents also agreed that they would be more likely to purchase a product through affiliate links if the affiliate content was posted by influencers or received a lot of 'like' and 'share', or if a friend had purchased the products from that affiliate content.

However, the study found that perceived risk and trustworthiness have no significant influence on purchase intention. The results of the regression analysis showed that the perceived risk and the trustworthiness variables were measured as not statistically significant, which means that it was not able to draw the conclusion that these two variables have an impact on the purchase intention variable. This could imply that the data does not support the hypotheses that perceived risk and trustworthiness influence purchase intention.

Additionally, the findings from the descriptive analysis of perceived risk and trustworthiness contrast one another and reveal that while the respondents acknowledged that they might experience fraud from an affiliate link, lacked the confidence to make payments, and avoided purchasing products that didn't match the description, they continued to have trust in the links from Shopee and Lazada, trusted to purchase products from the affiliate links, and trusted to use their personal

information. The results of the correlation analysis demonstrate a negative correlation or inverse relationship between perceived risk and trustworthiness factors.

Even though the results from the data analysis don't support the relationships between perceived risk and trustworthiness for purchase intention, it needs to be regarded that it may be a consequence of the survey that scoped only the sample who purchased from Shopee and Lazada, which are the 2 major online marketplaces in Thailand, so most of the consumers trust in the brand of the marketplace and buy the products without consideration of trust or risk. If the study opens up to other applications that the respondents aren't familiar with, the result might change as well, and it could be concluded that perceived risk and trustworthiness have no relationship to the purchase intention or that there is a weak or strong correlation. This will be a consideration for future research.

To summarize, this study found that the factors that influence customer purchase intention through affiliate links on social media are ease of use, informativeness, and social influence. Trustworthiness and perceived risk factors, however, could not be related to the purchase intention due to a lack of supporting data.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1 Conclusion

This study aimed to find the factors that influence customer purchase intention to buy products directly through affiliate links on social media and also to find which factor is the most important factor that affects customer purchase intention. Moreover, the study also helps to understand the relationship between the independent variables and purchase intention.

From the sample of people aged 18–50 who have experienced purchasing Shopee or Lazada products from the affiliate link on Facebook or Twitter, there were 150 respondents. The majority of the respondents (50%) were between 23 and 30 years old, and 78% of the respondents were female. The highest education of the respondents was a majority bachelor's degree (64.1%), and the most common occupation was office worker (61.4%).

From the descriptive statistics about each factor, informativeness was the factor that got the highest mean score from the respondents at 4.03; most of them agreed that the information and photos about the products provided in the affiliate content influenced their purchase intention to click through the affiliate links. The results from Pearson's correlation analysis and regression analysis showed that the factors that influence customer purchase intention through affiliate links on social media are informativeness, social influence, and ease of use. According to the analysis results, ease of use is the factor most influential on purchase intention, followed by informativeness and social influence, respectively. For the perceived risk factor and the trustworthiness factor, the regression analysis resulted that they have no relationship to the purchase intention due to the unsupported data. The conclusion of the hypothesis is shown in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1 Result of hypothesis

Hypotheses	Results
H1: Informativeness has a positive influence on purchase intention through affiliate links on social media.	Supported
H2: Social influence has a positive influence on purchase intention through affiliate links on social media.	Supported
H3: Perceived risk has a negative influence on purchase intention through affiliate links on social media.	Not Supported
H4: Trustworthiness has a positive influence on purchase intention through affiliate links on social media.	Not Supported
H5: Ease of use has a positive influence on purchase intention through affiliate links on social media.	Supported

5.2 Recommendations

This study has shown the factors that influence customer purchase intention through affiliate links on social media. Therefore, the affiliates and the marketplace applications could consider these factors to improve their affiliate content and affiliate programs in order to increase the customers' purchase intentions.

5.2.1 Recommendation for the affiliates and content providers

1. Ease of Use: As the results show that ease of use has the most influence on the purchase intention to click the affiliate links on social media, this could be the guideline for the affiliates or content providers to place the links in an easy-to-see spot in their posts, especially on the top of the post, so the customer can find the link to click to buy instantly without scrolling down to the bottom of the post.

2. Informativeness: The affiliates and the content providers must remind themselves that customers will buy the products only when the products in the links look like what is described in the affiliate post; if they find that the products are different from the given information, they will drop their intention to purchase that

product. The affiliates and content providers should provide accurate information about the products and also attach photos and videos of the products in their posts to attract customers.

3. **Social Influence:** The content that gets a high number of engagements (such as 'like' and 'share') has more ability to attract the customer's intention to purchase. The affiliates and content providers should find a suitable place to post content that is related to the target customers, such as posting about the kitchenware in the Facebook group "home decoration" or tweeting about the clothing on Twitter with the hashtag #reviewLazada, so the customers who are looking for the products they want will click like or share on the products that they are interested in and also buy the product from that link. Moreover, if the content is posted or gets reviews from influencers, it will increase customer intentions to purchase the products. For the affiliates and content providers who are not the influencers, they can also capture the photos or videos of other influencers that review the same products they want to present on their affiliate content as well. (Note that the used photos and videos must be allowed to be used by the owner of that media.)

5.2.2 Recommendation for the marketplace applications

1. **Ease of Use:** The marketplace applications should develop their applications to have easy steps to purchase the products, such as developing their user experience (UX) and user interface (UI) to make the shopping and check-out processes easy to understand for the customer, which will lead the customer to successfully buy the products through the affiliate links.

2. **Informativeness:** The marketplace applications should have the team filter the information that has been shared with the affiliate content to be accurate for the products, reducing the possibility that customers will leave the check-out process if the products are different from the given information. Also, the marketplace applications should provide a grading system for the affiliates. so the customers would see that the affiliates had a history of sharing products with accurate information, making them feel confident to purchase products from the links.

3. **Social Influence:** The marketplace applications should diversify their affiliate types, spreading the affiliate program to many types of people,

from influencers to normal people, so the products would be shared with niche audiences that match the target customers of each product and make the affiliate program increase the complete purchase rate.

5.3 Limitation

The research has been conducted only with the quantitative method in a small sample due to the limited time. The questionnaire was conducted via the online platform and also shared with respondents via social media, so it wasn't able to be shared with a wide range of demographic respondents. The result might be different if it was answered by more varied groups of people. Also, the data collection is not enough to support some hypotheses; the study should conduct the qualitative method to interview the respondents to get the in-depth reasons for the customer's purchase intention through the affiliate links on social media.

5.4 Future Research

In order to gain a better understanding of customers' purchase intentions through the affiliate link on social media, the study should conduct both quantitative and qualitative methods. The survey should ask more questions for each variable, and the interview should ask for more in-depth information about why the respondents purchase the products through the affiliate links. Also, ask more about the categories of the products they purchased from the affiliate links and the price to compare the results and see if their purchase intentions are similar or different if they buy the product in different categories, at a different price, or on different marketplaces.

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