



## Measuring the Impact of Affiliate Marketing Strategies on Consumer Trust of College of Business and Accountancy Students at Gordon College

Ayesha Anne R. Abella<sup>1\*</sup>, Lian Ashley Alabarca<sup>2</sup>, Shawn Arichea<sup>3</sup>, Ariel Balingasa<sup>4</sup>, Renalyn D. Calimlim<sup>5</sup>, Brad Axl Cantero<sup>6</sup>, Joy Ann Ragasa<sup>7</sup>, Roger Idos<sup>8</sup>

Gordon College, Philippines

**Corresponding Author:** Ayesha Anne R. Abella, [ayeshaanneabella@gmail.com](mailto:ayeshaanneabella@gmail.com)

---

### ARTICLE INFO

*Keywords:* Affiliate Marketing, Consumer Trust, Digital Marketing, Influencer Marketing, Social Media Platforms

*Received :* 25, June

*Revised :* 22, July

*Accepted:* 20, August

©2026 Abella, Alabarca, Arichea, Balingasa, Calimlim, Cantero, Ragasa, Idos: This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).



---

### ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of social commerce and influencer-driven promotions has transformed how consumers discover and evaluate products. While affiliate marketing is widely used, limited research has examined how specific affiliate marketing practices influence consumer trust among college students in the Philippine context. This study investigated the relationship between affiliate marketing practices and consumer trust among College of Business and Accountancy students at Gordon College. Using a quantitative descriptive-correlational design, data were collected from 287 respondents through stratified random sampling. Findings showed that TikTok Shop was the dominant platform, with moderate exposure, interaction, clicking, and purchasing behaviors. Credibility, authenticity, platform characteristics, and link placement influenced trust. Consumer trust was high. Results revealed a strong positive relationship between affiliate marketing practices and consumer trust ( $r = 0.78$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), underscoring the importance of credibility and transparency in digital commerce.

---

## **INTRODUCTION**

Affiliate marketing has become one of the fastest-growing digital marketing strategies in today's online business environment. Through affiliate marketing, companies promote products and services by allowing content creators, influencers, and affiliates to share unique referral links in exchange for commissions. As social media platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, Instagram, and Shopee continue to expand, affiliate marketing has become more visible and influential in shaping consumer purchasing decisions. Many consumers, especially students and young adults, rely on affiliate recommendations, product reviews, and live-selling content before buying products online.

The increasing dependence on digital platforms for shopping and product information has raised concerns regarding consumer trust in affiliate marketing content. History has shown that social media and other platforms shape public memory and influence among young generations (Realubit et al., 2026). While affiliate marketing offers convenience and accessibility, some promotional content may appear exaggerated, misleading, or purely profit-driven, thereby eroding consumers' confidence in online recommendations. This problem was identified by the growing popularity of influencer promotions and sponsored reviews, as well as the continuous appearance of affiliate-driven advertisements across digital platforms. As consumers are exposed to large amounts of promotional content daily, it becomes necessary to determine which affiliate marketing strategies effectively build trust and which factors influence consumers' perceptions toward affiliate recommendations.

The urgency of conducting this study lies in the increasing influence of affiliate marketing on consumer behavior, particularly among students who are active users of social media and online shopping platforms. College students are among the most exposed groups to affiliate marketing because of their frequent engagement with digital content and e-commerce applications. Understanding how affiliate marketing strategies influence consumer trust is important because trust directly affects purchasing confidence, decision-making, and long-term consumer relationships. In addition, businesses, marketers, and affiliates need reliable information regarding the effectiveness of credibility, authenticity, platform usage, and affiliate link placement in strengthening consumer trust. Previous studies support the significance of this research. Sharma et al. (2022) emphasized that authentic and credible endorsements significantly increase consumer confidence in digital marketing environments. Similarly, Caballero et al. (2024) explained that affiliate credibility strengthens consumer trust and improves engagement with promotional content. Hardianawati (2023) also highlighted that TikTok-based affiliate marketing strategies enhance consumer engagement and purchasing behavior through engaging, persuasive content formats. These studies indicate that affiliate marketing has become an important component of modern digital commerce and consumer behavior.

Despite the growing body of research on affiliate and influencer marketing, there is still a gap in understanding how specific affiliate marketing strategies such as credibility of affiliates, authenticity of reviews, platform used, and affiliate link placement collectively influence consumer trust, particularly among

college students in the Philippine setting. Most existing studies focus on purchase intention, consumer behavior, or influencer credibility separately, and there is limited research that directly examines these factors in relation to consumer trust as the main outcome, especially among business students who are highly exposed to digital marketing content. Therefore, this study addresses this gap by analyzing the relationship between these four affiliate marketing strategies and consumer trust among third- and fourth-year College of Business and Accountancy students at Gordon College, providing a more focused and localized understanding of affiliate marketing in the Philippine college context.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The rapid advancement of e-commerce and digital technologies has significantly transformed modern marketing strategies, particularly in affiliate marketing and consumer engagement. According to Chen et al. (2021), information technology enables digital platforms to deliver highly customized services based on user data, thereby enhancing convenience and personalization. These developments have become essential in fostering consumer loyalty in an increasingly competitive digital landscape.

With the rise of social commerce, platforms such as TikTok and Shopee have emerged as powerful tools influencing consumer behavior. Hardianawati (2023) emphasized that integrating TikTok marketing with Shopee's affiliate program is crucial for shaping purchasing decisions, as engaging, strategic content increases brand visibility and sales performance. Similarly, Le (2024) observed that TikTok gained prominence during the COVID-19 pandemic as a platform for consumer interaction, prompting businesses to intensify their use of affiliate marketing to capitalize on increased user engagement. In line with this, Rosniati et al. (2023) highlighted the effectiveness of live-stream shopping strategies in driving impulse buying behavior, particularly in highly active e-commerce markets such as Indonesia.

Affiliate marketing strategies have also been widely examined in relation to consumer behavior and conversion outcomes. Caballero et al. (2024) found that affiliate marketing significantly affects buying behavior by creating authentic connections between affiliates and consumers, which help build brand trust and convert engagement into actual purchases. Rosniati et al. (2023) further explained that affiliate marketing, along with online customer reviews and live-stream shopping, positively influences impulse buying behavior by fostering consumer trust. Supporting this, Sharma et al. (2022) revealed that affiliate marketing significantly enhances consumer trust, particularly when endorsements are perceived as credible and authentic. These findings suggest that trust, authenticity, and consumer engagement are important factors in improving the effectiveness of affiliate marketing.

Moreover, the increasing reliance on influencer and affiliate marketing reflects broader shifts in consumer behavior and business strategies. Özkan and Yerezhep (2023) defined influencer marketing as a form of digital promotion carried out by individuals on social media platforms, emphasizing the substantial impact influencers have on consumer preferences and lifestyle

choices. Maulana (2024) noted that major e-commerce platforms such as Lazada use both affiliate and influencer marketing to sustain engagement and boost sales. This aligns with the findings of Natarina and Bangun (2019), who argued that the transition toward online purchasing requires businesses to continuously adapt their marketing approaches to remain competitive. These studies collectively highlight how digital transformation has redefined traditional marketing practices and consumer-brand relationships.

In the Philippine context, affiliate marketing and social media platforms have become increasingly influential in shaping consumer purchase intentions. Caballero et al. (2024) emphasized that affiliate marketing significantly affects buying behavior by fostering authentic connections between affiliates and consumers. The effectiveness of this strategy is largely driven by the affiliate's expertise and attractiveness, which help build brand trust and convert engagement into actual purchases. Supporting this, Singco et al. (2023) found that consumers are more likely to trust affiliates and influencers who provide credible, transparent, and authentic product endorsements, highlighting authenticity as a key determinant of successful digital marketing efforts. Similarly, Singco et al. (2023) stressed that expertise-based, credible influencer partnerships are essential for shaping positive brand perceptions and maintaining consumer confidence.

The effectiveness of affiliate and influencer marketing is also closely tied to the ability to adapt to evolving social media environments. Dalangin et al. (2021) noted that influencers must develop platform-specific strategies and continuously refine their skills to effectively influence consumer purchasing behavior. This is particularly relevant in platforms like TikTok, which has emerged as a dominant marketing channel in the Philippines. According to Puzon et al. (2023), TikTok has transformed how businesses promote products, especially among young professionals, by leveraging entertainment-driven content. In addition, Sibulan and Limos-Galay (2024) highlighted that the platform's high shareability and strong influencer presence enhance digital word-of-mouth, making it a powerful tool for reaching and engaging target audiences.

Moreover, the rapid digital transformation in the Philippines has created both opportunities and challenges for businesses and consumers. Guillen and Lim (2023) explained that small enterprises must adapt to the demands of a highly digitalized, post-pandemic economy to remain competitive. However, this shift also introduces new risks. Ocampo et al. (2025) noted that the growing use of artificial intelligence on e-commerce platforms has led to the proliferation of misleading promotional content, requiring consumers to become more critical and discerning. From a broader perspective, Uy-Tioco (2019) argued that understanding digital engagement in the Philippines requires examining structural factors such as social inequality and access to information, as these influence how different groups interact with digital platforms.

The reviewed literature indicates that affiliate marketing strategies may shape consumer trust through the credibility of affiliates, authenticity of reviews, platform used, and affiliate link placement. Caballero et al. (2024) and Singco et

al. (2023) emphasized the importance of affiliate expertise and credibility, while Reyes et al. (2023) highlighted transparency and authentic reviews in building consumer trust. Meanwhile, Dalangin et al. (2021), Puzon et al. (2023), and Sibulan et al. (2024) emphasized the role of digital platforms in influencing consumer engagement and responses to affiliate content. However, existing studies have generally focused on purchasing decisions, purchase intention, buying behavior, and engagement rather than examining these four affiliate marketing dimensions collectively in relation to consumer trust, particularly among college students in the Philippine context. Therefore, this study addresses this gap by examining the relationship between credibility of affiliates, authenticity of reviews, platform used, and affiliate link placement and consumer trust among third- and fourth-year CBA students at Gordon College

The study utilized the Independent-Dependent Variable (IV-DV) model. The independent variables include affiliate marketing strategies such as level of exposure to affiliate content, affiliate credibility, review authenticity, platform, and affiliate link placement. The dependent variable is consumer trust, measured through the influence of recommendations, confidence in purchasing, transparency, information verification, and overall trustworthiness

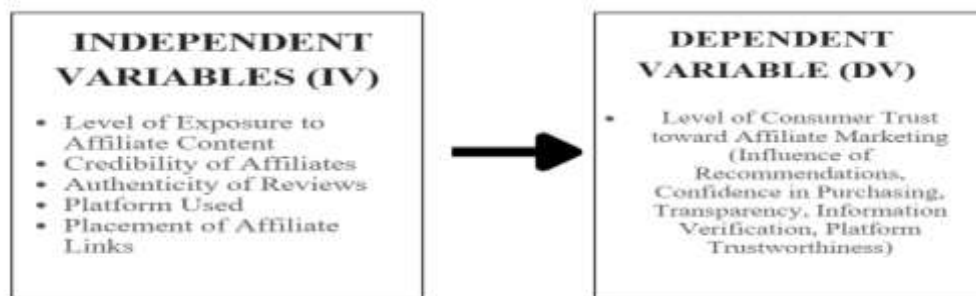


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

## METHODOLOGY

### *Research Design*

This study employed a Quantitative descriptive-correlational research design, a comprehensive approach that examines and explains the connection between two or more variables without altering them or asserting causation (Asio, 2021). It aims to measure the relationship between affiliate marketing strategies and consumer trust among Gordon College CBA students. The descriptive part of the design summarized the correlational component aimed to determine the statistical relationship between the independent variable (affiliate marketing strategies) and the dependent variable (consumer trust).

### *Participants*

The target population of this study comprises third- and fourth-year students of the College of Business and Accountancy (CBA) at Gordon College during the Academic Year 2025–2026. The total population consists of 1,011 students enrolled across five degree programs: BSBA in Financial Management, BSBA in Human Resource Management, BSBA in Marketing Management, BS in Accountancy, and BS in Customs Administration.

The sample size of the study was determined using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error. Slovin's formula is expressed as  $n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$ , where  $n$  represents the sample size,  $N$  is the total population, and  $e$  is the margin of error. Using the total population of 1,011 students and a 0.05 margin of error, the computation was carried out as follows:  $n = 1,011 / [1 + 1,011(0.05)^2]$ , which simplifies to  $n = 1,011 / [1 + 1,011(0.0025)]$ , resulting in  $n = 1,011 / 3.5275$ . The computed value is 286.73, which was rounded to 287 respondents. This indicates that a sample of 287 students is sufficient to represent the entire population while maintaining an acceptable level of precision.

To ensure proper representation of the population, the study employed stratified random sampling. The respondents were grouped according to year level to make sure that both third-year and fourth-year students were adequately represented in the sample. From the total of 287 respondents, 145 (50.52%) were third-year students and 142 (49.48%) were fourth-year students. This proportional allocation ensured balanced representation of both groups in the study.

### ***Instrument***

The study used a researcher-developed questionnaire based on relevant literature and prior studies on affiliate marketing and consumer trust. The questionnaire contained indicators measuring exposure to affiliate marketing, affiliate marketing strategies, and consumer trust. Responses were measured using a four-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

To ensure the instrument's validity, the questionnaire was reviewed and validated by a marketing expert and a research professor regarding its clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the items. After validation, the instrument was pilot-tested among students who were not included in the study's actual respondents. The results of the pilot testing were used to assess the questionnaire's reliability and determine whether the items were clear and consistent. Necessary revisions were made based on the validators' comments and the pilot testing results before the final administration of the instrument.

### ***Data Analysis Methods***

The data-gathering process was carried out systematically to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the results. First, the researchers obtained approval from their research adviser and the Dean of the College of Business and Accountancy (CBA) at Gordon College to conduct the study. Upon approval, the validated questionnaires were distributed to selected CBA students through online and printed formats.

After the distribution, the researchers retrieved the completed questionnaires and verified their completeness and consistency. The collected data were then encoded and organized in a spreadsheet for analysis. Finally, the researchers interpreted the results based on the computed statistical results to address the study's objectives. Using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 23, the collected data were subjected to descriptive and inferential analyses.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

Table 1. Platform Exposure of Respondents to Affiliate Marketing Content

| Platform     | Frequency  | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| TikTok Shop  | 267        | 83.44      |
| Shopee Live  | 32         | 10.00      |
| Facebook     | 18         | 5.63       |
| Instagram    | 3          | 0.94       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>320</b> | <b>100</b> |

*Note: \*multiple responses*

As shown in Table 1, the highest affiliate marketing exposure among respondents was through TikTok Shop, accounting for 83.44% of the total responses. Meanwhile, the lowest exposure was recorded on Instagram at 0.94%. This indicates that TikTok Shop is the most dominant platform for affiliate marketing exposure among CBA students, while Instagram is the least encountered platform.

Table 2. Daily Time Exposure of Respondents to Affiliate Marketing Content

| Time Exposure                  | Frequency  | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Low Exposure (<10 mins)        | 60         | 20.91      |
| Moderate Exposure (10–30 mins) | 115        | 40.07      |
| High Exposure (31–60 mins)     | 70         | 24.39      |
| Very High Exposure (>1 hour)   | 42         | 14.63      |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>287</b> | <b>100</b> |

As shown in Table 2, the highest daily exposure to affiliate marketing content was moderate, with 40.07% of respondents spending 10–30 minutes daily. Meanwhile, the lowest was very high exposure, with only 14.63% spending more than one hour daily. This suggests that most respondents encounter affiliate marketing content at a moderate level.

Table 3. Level of Respondents' Interaction with Affiliate Marketing Content

| Response           | Frequency  | Percentage |
|--------------------|------------|------------|
| Very High Exposure | 40         | 13.94      |
| High Exposure      | 85         | 29.62      |
| Moderate Exposure  | 115        | 40.07      |
| Low Exposure       | 47         | 16.38      |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>287</b> | <b>100</b> |

As shown in Table 3, the highest level of interaction with affiliate marketing content was moderate, with 40.07% of respondents. Meanwhile, the lowest was very high interaction, with only 13.94%. This suggests that most students interact with affiliate-related content at a moderate level.

Table 4. Level of Respondents' Clicking of Affiliate Links

| Response     | Frequency  | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| Moderate     | 115        | 40.07      |
| Low          | 52         | 18.12      |
| High         | 70         | 24.39      |
| Very High    | 50         | 17.42      |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>287</b> | <b>100</b> |

As presented in Table 4, the highest level of clicking affiliate links was moderate, with 40.07% of respondents. Meanwhile, the lowest was very high click-through rate, at only 17.42%. This suggests that most students click affiliate links at a moderate level.

Table 5. Level of Purchasing Through Affiliate Links

| Response     | Frequency  | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| Very High    | 30         | 10.45      |
| High         | 70         | 24.39      |
| Moderate     | 110        | 38.33      |
| Low          | 77         | 26.83      |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>287</b> | <b>100</b> |

As shown in Table 5, the highest level of purchasing behavior via affiliate links was moderate, with 38.33% of respondents. Meanwhile, the lowest was very high purchasing behavior, with only 10.45%. This suggests that most students purchase through affiliate links at a moderate level.

Table 6. Affiliate marketing strategies in terms of the credibility of Affiliates

| Item                                                         | Mean        | SD          | Interpretation |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1. Affiliates have expert knowledge of promoted products     | 3.24        | 0.86        | Agree          |
| 2. Information provided by affiliates is honest and reliable | 3.26        | 0.86        | Strongly Agree |
| 3. Affiliates provide clear explanations                     | 3.25        | 0.88        | Strongly Agree |
| 4. A larger following means higher credibility               | 3.17        | 0.91        | Agree          |
| 5. Affiliate reputation influences trust                     | 3.27        | 0.86        | Strongly Agree |
| <b>Overall Mean</b>                                          | <b>3.24</b> | <b>0.87</b> | <b>Agree</b>   |

*Note. Likert Scale Range: 3.25–4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50–3.24 = Agree; 1.75–2.49 = Disagree; 1.00–1.74 = Strongly Disagree.*

As presented in Table 6, the highest-rated indicator for affiliate credibility was “Affiliate reputation influences trust” with a weighted mean of 3.27. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicator was “A larger following means higher credibility” with a weighted mean of 3.17. This suggests that respondents value an affiliate’s reputation more than follower count when assessing credibility.

Table 7. Affiliate marketing strategies in terms of the authenticity of Reviews

| Item                                                             | Mean        | SD          | Interpretation |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|----------------|
| 1. Reviews appear genuine and unscripted                         | 3.28        | 0.87        | Strongly Agree |
| 2. Trust increases when an affiliate uses the product personally | 3.33        | 0.84        | Strongly Agree |
| 3. Reviews match actual product performance                      | 3.21        | 0.89        | Agree          |
| 4. Real product demonstrations increase trust                    | 3.31        | 0.85        | Strongly Agree |
| 5. Can distinguish paid vs authentic reviews                     | 3.07        | 0.92        | Agree          |
| Overall Mean                                                     | <b>3.24</b> | <b>0.87</b> | <b>Agree</b>   |

*Note. Likert Scale Range: 3.25–4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50–3.24 = Agree; 1.75–2.49 = Disagree; 1.00–1.74 = Strongly Disagree.*

As presented in Table 7, the highest-rated indicator was “Trust increases when an affiliate uses the product personally” with a weighted mean of 3.33. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicator was “Can distinguish paid versus authentic reviews” with a weighted mean of 3.07. This suggests that respondents trust affiliate content more when it is based on genuine personal experience with the product.

Table 8. Affiliate marketing strategies in terms of the platform used

| Item                                                                                  | Mean        | SD          | Interpretation        |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| 1. My level of trust depends on which platform I see the recommendation on.           | 3.24        | 0.88        | Agree                 |
| 2. I trust affiliate promotions more during live streams than pre-recorded videos.    | 3.26        | 0.90        | Strongly Agree        |
| 3. Short-form videos are more effective in encouraging me to click an affiliate link. | 3.31        | 0.85        | Strongly Agree        |
| 4. In-app shopping makes me more likely to purchase.                                  | 3.31        | 0.89        | Strongly Agree        |
| 5. Certain platforms are more reliable for product recommendations.                   | 3.26        | 0.89        | Strongly Agree        |
| Overall Mean                                                                          | <b>3.28</b> | <b>0.88</b> | <b>Strongly Agree</b> |

*Note. Likert Scale Range: 3.25–4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50–3.24 = Agree; 1.75–2.49 = Disagree; 1.00–1.74 = Strongly Disagree.*

As presented in Table 8, the highest-rated indicators were “Short-form videos are more effective in encouraging me to click an affiliate link” and “In-app shopping makes me more likely to purchase,” both with a weighted mean of 3.31. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicator was “My level of trust depends on which platform I see the recommendation on,” with a weighted mean of 3.24. This suggests that short-form videos and in-app shopping features have the strongest influence on respondents’ trust and engagement.

Table 9. Affiliate marketing strategies in terms of Affiliate Links Placement

| Item                                                                               | Mean        | SD          | Interpretation        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| 1. I am inclined to click a link during live demonstrations.                       | 3.29        | 0.87        | Strongly Agree        |
| 2. Links in captions/comments are easy to access.                                  | 3.27        | 0.85        | Strongly Agree        |
| 3. I am more likely to purchase if the link is provided when the product is shown. | 3.30        | 0.89        | Strongly Agree        |
| 4. Link visibility directly affects buying decisions.                              | 3.30        | 0.89        | Strongly Agree        |
| 5. Clear and visible link placement builds purchasing confidence.                  | 3.28        | 0.86        | Strongly Agree        |
| Overall Mean                                                                       | <b>3.29</b> | <b>0.87</b> | <b>Strongly Agree</b> |

Note. Likert Scale Range: 3.25–4.00 = Strongly Agree; 2.50–3.24 = Agree; 1.75–2.49 = Disagree; 1.00–1.74 = Strongly Disagree.

As presented in Table 9, the highest-rated indicators were “I am more likely to purchase if the link is provided when the product is shown” and “Link visibility directly affects buying decisions,” both with a weighted mean of 3.30. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicator was “Links in captions/comments are easy to access” with a weighted mean of 3.27. This suggests that visible, timely placement of affiliate links influences respondents’ purchasing behavior.

Table 10. Level of Consumer Trust

| Item                                                | Mean        | SD          | Interpretation    |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------|
| 1. Affiliate recommendations increase product trust | 3.29        | 0.86        | High Level        |
| 2. Confidence in buying recommended products        | 3.27        | 0.87        | High Level        |
| 3. Transparency increases trust                     | 3.27        | 0.88        | High Level        |
| 4. Verification before purchase                     | 3.22        | 0.90        | Moderate Level    |
| 5. Affiliate marketing is trustworthy overall       | 3.22        | 0.88        | Moderate Level    |
| Overall Mean                                        | <b>3.25</b> | <b>0.88</b> | <b>High Level</b> |

Note. Likert Scale Range: 3.25–4.00 = High Level; 2.50–3.24 = Moderate Level; 1.75–2.49 = Low Level; 1.00–1.74 = Very Low Level.

As presented in Table 10, the highest-rated indicator was “Affiliate recommendations increase product trust” with a weighted mean of 3.29. Meanwhile, the lowest-rated indicators were “Verification before purchase” and “Affiliate marketing is trustworthy overall,” both with a weighted mean of 3.22. This suggests that respondents generally trust affiliate recommendations but still verify products before purchasing.

Table 11. Relationship Between Affiliate Marketing Strategies and Consumer Trust

| Variables                                                 | r-value | p-value | Interpretation                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|------------------------------------------|
| Credibility of Affiliates and Consumer Trust              | 0.71*   | 0.000   | Strong Positive Significant Relationship |
| Authenticity of Reviews and Consumer Trust                | 0.74*   | 0.000   | Strong Positive Significant Relationship |
| Platform Used and Consumer Trust                          | 0.69*   | 0.000   | Strong Positive Significant Relationship |
| Affiliate Link Placement and Consumer Trust               | 0.77*   | 0.000   | Strong Positive Significant Relationship |
| Overall Affiliate Marketing Strategies and Consumer Trust | 0.78*   | 0.000   | Strong Positive Significant Relationship |

Note: \* $p < .05$

As shown in Table 11, all dimensions of affiliate marketing strategies exhibited strong, positive, and significant relationships with consumer trust, as indicated by the computed Pearson correlation coefficients and p-values. Among the variables, Affiliate Link Placement demonstrated the strongest relationship with consumer trust ( $r = 0.77$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), followed by Authenticity of Reviews ( $r = 0.74$ ), Credibility of Affiliates ( $r = 0.71$ ), and Platform Used ( $r = 0.69$ ). Overall, affiliate marketing strategies obtained a strong positive significant relationship with consumer trust ( $r = 0.78$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). This suggests that more credible, authentic, strategically delivered, and platform-appropriate affiliate marketing practices significantly increase consumer trust.

Table 12. Predictive Influence of Affiliate Marketing Strategies on Consumer Trust

| Predictor Variable        | Beta Coefficient | t-value | p-value | Interpretation        |
|---------------------------|------------------|---------|---------|-----------------------|
| Credibility of Affiliates | 0.32             | 6.45    | 0.000   | Significant Predictor |
| Authenticity of Reviews   | 0.28             | 5.98    | 0.000   | Significant Predictor |
| Platform Used             | 0.21             | 4.87    | 0.000   | Significant Predictor |
| Affiliate Link Placement  | 0.19             | 4.35    | 0.000   | Significant Predictor |

Note:  $R = .78$ ,  $R^2 = .61$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .60$ ,  $p < .001$

## DISCUSSION

The results of this study show that affiliate marketing has become a significant component of the digital experiences of Gordon College College of Business and Accountancy students. This is reflected in the high level of exposure to affiliate marketing content, particularly through TikTok Shop, which emerged

as the dominant platform among respondents. The preference for TikTok Shop indicates the growing influence of short-form, interactive, and algorithm-driven social commerce platforms in shaping students' online engagement and purchasing behavior. Similar findings were reported by Le (2024), who emphasized that TikTok significantly influences digital purchasing behavior through its highly engaging, personalized content delivery system. Likewise, Sibulan and Limos-Galay (2024) explained that TikTok affiliate marketing strongly affects consumer interactions and purchase intentions among young consumers.

The findings further revealed that respondents generally experienced moderate levels of daily exposure, interaction, clicking of affiliate links, and purchasing behavior. Although affiliate marketing content forms part of students' regular online activities, engagement remains controlled rather than excessive. This suggests that exposure alone does not automatically translate into consumer action. Similar observations were reported by Natarina and Bangun (2019), who noted that online consumers frequently encounter affiliate marketing content but engage selectively based on product relevance and personal evaluation. Chen et al. (2021) further emphasized that personalized digital environments continuously expose users to promotional content while allowing consumers to remain selective in their engagement and purchasing decisions.

The study also revealed that credibility, authenticity, platform used, and affiliate link placement are important factors influencing students' responses toward affiliate marketing content. Among these strategies, affiliate link placement obtained the highest overall mean, suggesting that visibility, accessibility, and timing significantly influence consumer engagement and purchasing confidence. This supports Rosniati et al. (2023), who emphasized that visible and accessible affiliate links during live selling and product demonstrations enhance consumer engagement and purchase intentions.

The platform's high ratings and the placement of the affiliate link indicate that convenience and frictionless commerce serve as trust-building mechanisms. Respondents strongly agreed that short-form videos, live-streaming features, and in-app shopping systems encourage engagement and purchasing behavior. These findings support Hardianawati (2023), who explained that TikTok-based affiliate marketing enhances consumer participation and purchasing performance through interactive, convenient shopping features. Chen et al. (2021) also noted that digital platforms with personalized, integrated purchasing systems improve marketing effectiveness and consumer confidence.

Authenticity and credibility likewise emerged as essential drivers of consumer trust. Respondents expressed stronger trust toward affiliates who provide honest reviews, real product demonstrations, and transparent communication. Indicators associated with personal product use and affiliate reputation received higher ratings than popularity or follower count alone. This supports Sharma et al. (2022), who emphasized that authentic endorsements significantly improve consumer trust and purchasing confidence. Likewise, Singco et al. (2023) found that expertise, credibility, and sincerity strengthen consumers' attitudes toward influencer and affiliate marketing. These findings

suggest that trust-building in affiliate marketing is largely a qualitative process where reliability and honesty are valued more than social popularity.

The strong, positive, and significant relationship between affiliate marketing strategies and consumer trust further underscores the importance of strategic and ethical affiliate marketing practices. Pearson correlation analysis revealed a strong relationship between the variables, while regression analysis showed that affiliate marketing strategies significantly predict consumer trust. These findings are consistent with Singco et al. (2023), who highlighted that credibility and trust are among the strongest determinants of influencer and affiliate marketing effectiveness. De Veirman et al. (2017) likewise explained that credibility and transparency directly influence consumer trust and purchase intention in digital environments.

Overall, the findings affirm that affiliate marketing serves not only as a promotional strategy but also as a mechanism for building consumer trust. Effective affiliate marketing depends not merely on exposure and visibility but on credibility, authenticity, strategic delivery, and platform effectiveness. While respondents generally trust affiliate marketing content, they continue to evaluate and verify information before purchasing, demonstrating informed and responsible consumer behavior among Gordon College CBA students.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

This study highlights the impact of affiliate marketing strategies on consumer trust among Gordon College College of Business and Accountancy students. The findings revealed that students are highly exposed to affiliate marketing content, especially through TikTok Shop and other social commerce platforms. Their moderate levels of interaction, clicking behavior, and purchasing activity show that affiliate marketing is part of their digital experience, but they remain selective and critical consumers.

The results also showed that the credibility of affiliates, the authenticity of reviews, the platform used, and the placement of affiliate links significantly influence consumer trust. Among these, credibility and authenticity play a major role in strengthening consumers' confidence, while effective platforms and clear link placement improve convenience and accessibility. Overall, affiliate marketing strategies were found to have a strong positive relationship with consumer trust and significantly predict students' trust toward affiliate marketing content.

Based on the findings, affiliate marketers and businesses are encouraged to prioritize credibility, transparency, authentic reviews, and real product experiences. They should also maximize interactive platforms and ensure that affiliate links are visible and easy to access. Students and consumers are advised to continue verifying affiliate content before purchasing, while future researchers may explore broader populations and additional factors that affect consumer trust in affiliate marketing.

## ADVANCED RESEARCH

This study confirms that affiliate marketing strategies significantly influence consumer trust, particularly through affiliate credibility, review authenticity, platform effectiveness, and affiliate link visibility. The findings suggest that trust in social commerce environments is shaped not only by promotional exposure but also by consumers' critical evaluation of information quality and transparency. Therefore, future advanced research should examine broader demographic groups and integrate additional variables such as digital literacy, perceived risk, influencer-consumer relationships, and long-term purchasing behavior to develop a more comprehensive model of consumer trust in affiliate marketing ecosystems.

## REFERENCES

- Asio, J.M. (2021). Research Designs in the New Normal: A Brief Overview. *Academia Letters*, Article 2596. <https://doi.org/10.20935/AL2596>.
- Caballero, M., Calvadores, N. A. D. L., & García, K. (2024). The hidden gem of Yellow Basket: A study on consumer purchase intention through TikTok Shop-involved affiliate marketing. *Inclusive Society and Sustainability Studies*, 4(2), 40–50. <https://doi.org/10.31098/issues.v4i2.2905>
- Chen, X., Sun, J., & Liu, H. (2021). Balancing web personalization and consumer privacy concerns: Consumer trust and reactance mechanisms. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 21(3), 572–582. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cb.1947>
- Dalangin, J. J. G., McArthur, J. M., Salvador, J. B. M., & Bismonte, A. B. (2021). The impact of social media influencers on purchase intention in the Philippines. *Jurnal Studi Komunikasi*, 5(3), 551–568. <https://ejournal.unitomo.ac.id/index.php/jsk/article/view/4399>
- De Veirman, M., Cauberghe, V., & Hudders, L. (2017). Marketing through Instagram influencers: The impact of number of followers and product divergence on brand attitude. *International Journal of Advertising*, 36(5), 798–828. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2017.1348035>
- Guillen, N., & Lim, C. T. (2023). Unlocking growth opportunities for Philippine micro, small, and medium enterprises through Facebook advertising and growth hacking strategies in the post-pandemic era. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary Applied Business and Education Research*, 4(8), 2884–2893. <https://doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.04.08.26>
- Hardianawati, N. (2023). Affiliate marketing content in Shopee through TikTok media on purchase decisions. *Revista de Gestão Social e Ambiental*, 17(4), e03473. <https://doi.org/10.24857/rgsa.v17n>
- Le, M. T. (2024). Enhancing the effectiveness of affiliate marketing on TikTok for young people. *International Journal of Technology Marketing*, 18(2), 162–184. <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJTMKT.2024.13766>

- Maulana, I. (2024). *Pengaruh influencer marketing dan affiliate marketing terhadap minat beli pada konsumen Lazada* (Bachelor's thesis, IAIN Syekh Nurjati). IAIN Syekh Nurjati Repository. <https://repository.syekhnurjati.ac.id/13778/>
- Natarina, R. A. E., & Bangun, C. R. A. (2019). The use of affiliate marketing to improve Pegipegi sales. *Journal of the Messenger*, 11(2), 157–165. <https://doi.org/10.26623/themessenger.v11i2.1210>
- Ocampo, N. L. V. G. (2025). Examining the correlation between consumer experiences with deceptive advertising and perceived platform credibility and purchase intention in online shopping: The case of the Philippines. *Journal of Information Systems Engineering & Management*, 10(4), 498–507. <https://doi.org/10.52783/jisem.v10i4.9604>
- Özkan, B., & Yerezhep, A. (2023). Influencerlara yönelik tutumun satın alma niyetine etkisi: Markaya güvenin aracı rolü. *Turkish Journal of Marketing*, 8(2), 37–50. <https://doi.org/10.30685/tujom.v8i2.182>
- Puzon, J. A., Dayrit, J. S., Pulili, F. B., Tulabut, L. J., & Zarate, J. G. (2023). An analysis of the impact of TikTok affiliate videos on Gen Z's consumer behavior and purchase intention. *PREO Journal of Business and Management*, 4(2). <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/377373072>
- Realubit, J. L., Suero, A. N., & Asio, J. M. R. (2026). History in the Age of Misinformation: Teaching the Past in a Digital World. In *Teaching Controversial Topics at the Intersection of History and Politics* (pp. 95-136). IGI Global Scientific Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3373-3601-5.ch005>
- Rosniati, R., Heriyadi, H., Afifah, N., Pebrianti, W., & Setiawan, H. (2023). The influence of live streaming shopping, online customer reviews, and affiliate marketing on impulse buying through customer trust in e-commerce. *International Journal of Applied Finance and Business Studies*, 11(3). <https://doi.org/10.35335/ijafibs.v11i3.171>
- Sharma, A., Harsora, H., & Sharma, M. (2022). Prospects for the Indian affiliate marketing industry: Growth of affiliate programs and channels. *Indian Journal of Management and Language*, 2(2), 9–11. <https://doi.org/10.54105/ijml.d2047.102222>
- Sibulan, F. C. T., & Limos-Galay, J. A. (2024). TikTok affiliate marketing: Factors influencing purchase intention of young professional consumers in Santa Cruz, Occidental Mindoro. *International Journal of Research Studies in Management*, 12(3), 47–66. <https://doi.org/10.5861/ijrsm.2024.105>
- Singco, M. Y. A., Lopez, I. D. A., & Cabauatan, R. R. (2023). The effect of influencer marketing on purchase intentions and brand attitude of consumers in the Philippines. *International Journal of Research in*

*Engineering, Science and Management*, 6(12), 50–62.  
<https://journal.ijresm.com/index.php/ijresm/article/view/2881>

Uy-Tioco, C. S. (2019). “Good enough” access: Digital inclusion, social stratification, and the reinforcement of class in the Philippines. *Communication Research and Practice*, 5(2), 156–171.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/22041451.2019.1601492>