Research Paper

The Hidden Gem of Yellow Basket: A Study on Consumer Purchase Intention Through TikTok Shop Involved Affiliate Marketing

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Abstract

This study explores TikTok's evolving online environment, focusing on the "TikTok Shop" and the less-known TikTok Business Affiliate Program. This study highlights the challenges consumers face in assessing authenticity among influencers in the era of online purchases, considering TikTok's ever-changing marketing environment. This study analyzed the impact of Involved Affiliate Marketing on consumer purchase intention, emphasizing the creation of authentic connections through the trustworthiness, expertise, and attractiveness of involved affiliate marketing that benefits businesses and organizations. A quantitative methodology was used in this study. The researchers used simple random sampling to identify their respondents, in which the researchers selected and asked three hundred seventy-eight (378) respondents within Metro Manila. The researchers applied the following statistical treatment: Weighted Mean and Simple Linear Regression to analyze the data. In conclusion, the incorporation of involved affiliate marketing in TikTok's online shop proved to be extremely beneficial for encouraging consumer purchase intentions. Results showed that involved affiliate marketing, with its sub-variables: Expertise, Attractiveness, and Trustworthiness, has a significant effect on the purchasing intention of consumers and that Involved affiliate marketing, with its sub-variables: Expertise and Attractiveness—has a significant effect on the Attitude of consumers, while sub-variable: Trustworthiness—has a significant effect on the norms of consumers.

Keywords: *TikTok Shop; Involved Affiliate Marketing; Customer Purchase Intention*

INTRODUCTION

The growth of the new generation of social media has offered many opportunities to individuals and businesses. With the rise of social media platforms, entertainment applications are becoming a medium for online shopping. Nowadays, most businesses on social media platforms use affiliate marketing strategies to introduce their products and services to the audience while keeping up with the trends. Despite the growing success of online shopping, difficulties remain. One of the challenges is identifying high-quality products and services that consumers would accept from influencers who promote them. An affiliate marketing strategy is an important technique in internet marketing (Patrick & Hee, 2019). This strategy is used by brands to encourage consumers about products or services they offer by collaborating with an influencer or artist. TikTok, as the interest of the study, provides an online space of its own called "TikTok Shop '' that people may use for networking, as well as for purchasing and selling commodities. Affiliate marketing is present in TikTok Application, indicating that the "Affiliate Influencers" who are active on TikTok are considered as "Involved Affiliate", they are not employed by or otherwise connected to the businesses whose goods they endorse; rather, they are connected to TikTok. This study seeks to understand how Involved Affiliate Marketing affects consumer purchase intention by developing genuine, trustworthy connections with consumers that can benefit businesses and other organizations.

The advent of online and social media platforms has transformed how businesses operate. Influencer Marketing is a common strategy used by businesses today to convince consumers that the goods and services they provide are worthy. Affiliate marketing is a strategy used by brands to

encourage consumers to purchase products or services by collaborating with an influencer or artist. This study will focus on one type of affiliate marketing, namely, called Involved Affiliate Marketing wherein the target consumers receive recommendations from influencers. These influencers have tried or are using the goods, and they believe that other people will benefit from hearing about their experiences (Frankenfield, 2022).

This study seeks to highlight TikTok's extensive advertising potential, which includes its use of sophisticated affiliate marketing and has a significant influence on the development of the digital platform. However, the researchers conducted this study to understand how Involved Affiliate Marketing affect consumer purchase intention by developing genuine, trustworthy connections with consumers that can benefit businesses and other organizations throughout the world to maintain their success, as well as fill in any shortages and boost innovation and efficiency.

This study aims to discern the impact of Involved Affiliate Marketing on TikTok Shop on customers' purchase intention. This study focuses on TikTok users in Metro Manila who made purchases on the TikTok Shop without considering demographics. To explore the influence of affiliate marketing on consumer purchase intentions, the study employs Ajzen (1985) and 1991 Theory of Planned Behavior, which predicts a person's likelihood of engaging in an activity at a specific time and place. Additionally, the Source Credibility and Attractiveness Model, developed by Hovland and Mandell (1952), is used to support the idea that recommendations can capture customer interest and drive purchase intentions. Geyser (2022) noted that influencers, as involved affiliate marketers, have a significant impact on consumer decision-making because of their expertise, credibility, and personal connections in their specific domain.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Affiliate Marketing

According to Ghosal et al. (2020), Affiliate marketing is a performance-based internet marketing technique that has become one of the most important marketing tools for influencing key generations and driving e-commerce purchasing decisions. In this context, affiliate marketing has become one of the most popular Internet marketing strategies for driving customer acquisition.

Utilizing social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok, selling has evolved in the modern day to include online transactions, which are now listed as a popular commerce platform due to social networking, selling products, and buying goods. As stated by Kwan (2023), TikTok offers publicizing capabilities and can transform into a business-friendly environment, all of which have a huge impact on how the advanced world creates. For business owners that employ affiliate marketing as their primary marketing approach to sell their goods in the TikTok Shop, TikTok can be profitable. For each consumer who clicks on the product they are pushing, adds it to their shopping cart, and makes a purchase, TikTok Affiliates or the creators who have registered with TikTok receive a commission.

Affiliate marketing is a popular online marketing strategy that is described by Patrick and Hee (2019) as being more cost-effective, increasing a company's product awareness, and boosting ROI (return on investment). Therefore, it is crucial for all customers, businesses, and sectors to have a deeper understanding of affiliate marketing principles and the variables impacting customers' intentions to use affiliate marketing.

At the beginning of the pandemic, affiliate marketing has become an increasingly popular marketing strategy among business owners. This epidemic has an impact on the health sector, as well as the economic and social realms. The cessation of all these operations led to the loss of many jobs. Thus, to continue existing businesses, they must invest time in researching ideas or other business options. Currently, businesses focus on interacting with consumers worldwide and taking advantage of the benefits that the internet offers to attain opportunities over competitors because

of the ensuing sharp rise in digital adoption of technology. Affiliate marketing has been used in these circumstances to strategies that have emerged as successful for e-commerce to increase income via overcompensation. The results of this study's implicit analysis, as explained by Prasad (2021), which empirically assessed the advantages of the affiliate marketing approach, are connected to latent variables, including product value, risk level, and discounted

Customer Purchase Intention in Online Shopping

As reviewed by Meliawati et al. (2023), social media marketing has the greatest impact on consumers' purchasing intentions, followed by product quality. There is a connection between social media marketing and the intention to buy. As e-commerce became more widespread, customers who use online stores have become hesitant to transact via the Internet because of security and privacy concerns. This study claims that a business can be considered competent if it allows customers to cancel their orders and should not alter the product ordered when delivering it. Additionally, a reliable online business ensures the quality of products, particularly perishable items.

Over the years, consumers have commonly used internet reviews to inform their purchasing decisions. They have recently begun to express growing doubts about the veracity of these evaluations, as claimed by Thomas et al. (2019). The overall findings of this study raise several implications for marketing practices in the context of e-commerce and social media. To address the issue of falling online review credibility, reputable firms must understand how customers perceive and assess such credibility. They must be particularly aware of the elements that affect review credibility from the customer's perspective. These consumer-focused insights are especially important for businesses with a strong market orientation and customer focus in the e-commerce context.

As examined by Doan (2020) proposed a theoretical model with four explanatory variables: performance expectation (PE), social influence (SI), effort expectations (EE), and facilitating conditions (FC) to explain online purchase intentions. The empirical results demonstrate the simultaneous and statistically significant effects of the aforementioned factors on the willingness of respondents to make an online purchase in a sample of 204 verifiable respondents. The two factors that have the greatest impacts are social influence and performance expectation (PE). The findings provide recommendations for online firms on how to improve their operations and develop marketing strategies that emphasize efficiency, usefulness, and convenience; become well-liked in social circles; and eventually encourage online transactions.

In the field of business, customer behavior has evolved because of improvements in purchasing and selling technologies. The contemporary purchasing process has improved the effectiveness, convenience, and ease of customer transactions. As Ahmad et al. (2020) studied, price reductions, ease of use, and enjoyment had favorable impacts on online purchase intentions. Surprisingly, product and price risks had a negative impact on online purchase intentions, whereas convenience and financial risks had no effect. This study is significant because it provides online retailers with information that they can use to persuade customers.

Impact of Social Media Marketing

Ki et al. (2020) stated that over the past 10 years, social media has rapidly expanded, completely changing how we communicate, interact, control, and connect. According to Starkey (2022), through messages, posts on Twitter, shares, likes, and feedback on social media, we can "create knowledge and pass on experiences with friends, businesses, and larger communities on the internet. Because of what social media can provide, we can establish connections and even perform transactions in terms of business and other activities.

As consumers continuously become increasingly popular on social media, especially for information gathering and decision-making, TikTok, a social network, has the fastest growth and had 540 40 million downloads in 2020 and 2021, well surpassing Instagram's 503 million downloads to become the most downloaded app globally according to Koetsier (2021). Barta et al. (2023) reported that TikTok would account for 42% of all influencer marketing efforts in 2021. Despite the popularity of TikTok, there has not been much investigation of how users react to TikTokers, which are influencer marketers. This study concludes that social media marketing has a positive effect on social media users, primarily for entertainment-related activities, such as watching videos, scrolling through notifications, posting, sharing, and liking. This implies that exposure time, duration of presence, social media word-of-mouth, social media ads are significant factors that influence customer purchasing decisions, including the amount of trust.

Impact of TikTok Influencer

Influencers may affect consumer behavior, according to a thorough investigation by Nguyen (2022), acting in a manner influenced by both social and psychological factors. Moreover, the benefits of this influencer marketing idea on TikTok are underlined on the two key stages of the consumer life cycle and general consumer behavior making decisions, namely, judgments and decisions, and evaluations after decisions have been made.

The emergence of social media celebrities (also known as influencers) has become more widespread as the internet and social media become more pervasive. In terms of the creation of new online "celebrities,". Social media are being used by brands and advertizers much more. It is crucial to demonstrate the effectiveness of influencer marketing as a strategy for promoting brands and sales because influencers also act as brand influencers. The results of this study demonstrate that although influencer marketing is quite effective at generating certain immediate sales, it is less effective at boosting postengagement, which is advantageous in ensuring that customers interact with advertizers to obtain pertinent information that influences their purchasing decisions.

Based on the literature review above, the study proposed hypotheses as follows:
H1: Involved affiliate marketing has significant effect on consumers' purchase intention.
H2: Involved affiliate marketing and its factors have significant effect on consumer norms and attitudes.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach that focused on assessing how affiliate marketing impacts customer purchase intention using survey data and statistical evidence. The researchers used simple random sampling in the population of Metro Manila who had a TikTok account and previously made a purchase on TikTok Shop; thus, 378 respondents were collected.

The study's instrument was an online survey questionnaire, specifically one created using Google Forms that respondents could complete in 5-8 minutes. The survey questionnaire consisted of self-administered questions that had the following variables: Online Purchasing Behavior, Attitude, Norms, Attractiveness, Expertise, and Trustworthiness. These variables were modified from the Theory of Planned Behavior by Ajzen (1985) and 1991 and the Source Credibility and Attractiveness Model by Hovland and Mandell (1952).

The researchers employed a descriptive statistical approach to analyze data and summarize the study population. They also used statistical treatments, including weighted mean and simple linear regression, to analyze the data. The researchers took ethical considerations into account by securing the respondents' consent and ensuring data privacy and confidentiality.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The tables below show the analysis and interpretation of data collected during the study. This section provides valuable insights and reflections on the research findings and their implications for theory, practice, and future research.

Table 1. Mean Ranking for Attitude

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
It is important to me to have shopping advantages (discounts, convenience, and other great deals) offered by involved affiliate marketer when buying online.	4.51	0.74
I am more likely to purchase products based on my preferences and interest.	4.45	0.75
I am more likely to spend time searching for more product details than watching a single video of involved affiliate marketers.	4.36	0.83
I think that watching videos from involved affiliate influencers on TikTok Shop is worth my time.	4.34	0.78
I think most of the involved affiliate marketers in TikTok Shop are trustworthy and honest.	4.05	0.96
I have trust in the products that involved affiliate influencers on TikTok Shop recommended	3.97	0.80
Overall Mean	**4.28**	
Overall Standard Deviation	**0.81**	

Verbal Interpretation: Strongly Agree=4.21-5.00; Agree=3.41-4.20; Neutral=2.61-3.40; Disagree=1.81-2.60; Strongly Disagree=1.00-1.80

Table 1 revealed the weighted mean ranging from 3.97 to 4.51, which had an overall mean of 4.28, while the standard deviation ranged from 0.74 to 0.96, concluding an overall standard deviation of 0.81, translating to the overall verbal interpretation of "Strongly Agree'. According to Ha et al. (2021), the study on factors influencing online shopping intention has proved that consumers' attitude toward online shopping has a positive impact on their shopping intention. The better the attitude consumers have toward a website/online store, the more they intend to shop on that website/store. Consumer attitudes toward purchasing on TikTok Shop directly impact affiliate marketing by influencing their likelihood of engaging with affiliate-promoted products or services, shaping the success of affiliate campaigns. Positive attitudes enhance trust, leading consumers to make affiliate recommendations.

Table 2. Mean Ranking of Norms

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
Most of my family members and friends think I should try a new brand or product because involved affiliate influencers recommend it.	3.65	0.89
Most of my family members and friends think I can be scammed by relying on involved affiliate influencers recommendations.	2.85	1.09
Most of my family members and friends are not aware of involved affiliate influencers in TikTok Shop.	2.77	1.01
Most of my family members and friends think that the contents and videos of involved affiliate influencers on TikTok are not genuine.	2.34	1.34
Overall Mean	**2.90**	
Overall Standard Deviation	**1.08**	

Table 2 shows that the weighted mean ranged from 2.34 to 3.65, which had an overall mean of 2.90, while the standard deviation ranged from 0.89 to 1.34, concluding an overall standard deviation of 1.08, translating to the overall verbal interpretation of "disagree."

Peña-García et al. (2020) examined self-efficacy's role in e-commerce, finding that its impact on online purchase intent differed between Colombian and Spanish consumers. The study stated the difference between the two subsamples, demonstrating that consumer norms and values related to engaged affiliate marketing vary, reflecting individual perspectives, although these distinctions do not generally have a substantial impact on their buying intentions. Consumer views regarding affiliate marketing may differ because of norms and values, but their overall influence on actual purchase decisions remains limited.

Table 3. Mean Ranking for Attractiveness

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
I support involved affiliate marketer(s) who create a safe environment online.	4.59	0.69
I support involved affiliate marketer(s) who create a safe environment online.	4.53	0.74
I only support involved affiliate marketer(s) who is/are compassionate.	4.53	0.74
I support involved affiliate marketer(s) who create a safe environment online.	2.70	1.11
Overall Mean	**4.04**	
Overall Standard Deviation	**0.86**	

Table 3 shows that the weighted mean ranged from 2.70 to 4.59, which had an overall mean of 4.04, while the standard deviation ranged from 0.69 to 1.11, concluding an overall standard deviation of 0.86, translating to the overall verbal interpretation of "Agree."

Regarding the study of Verplancke and Gelati (2022), influencers strongly influence customer purchase intentions, prompting consumers to buy promoted products even when unnecessary. Thus, the attractiveness of affiliate marketing plays a critical role in attracting consumers' attention and positively impacting their buying intention. The attractiveness of affiliate marketing enhances consumer perception and purchase likelihood, although social media influence does not always guarantee actual purchases; nevertheless, brands and influencers see this impact as a positive variable.

Table 4. Mean Ranking of Expertise

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
I value involved affiliate marketer(s) who is/are knowledgeable about the brand, service, or product.	4.57	0.70
I value involved affiliate marketer(s) who is/are persistent in creating content.	4.51	0.76
I value involved affiliate marketer(s) who is/are persistent in creating content.	4.49	0.73

I do not shop through involved affiliate marketer(s) just because they are committed to their values and advocacy.	4.06	1.18
Overall Mean	**4.41**	
Overall Standard Deviation	**0.84**	

Verbal Interpretation: Strongly Agree=4.21-5.00; Agree=3.41-4.20; Neutral=2.61-3.40; Disagree=1.81-2.60; Strongly Disagree=1.00-1.80

Table 4 shows that the weighted mean ranged from 4.06 to 4.57, which had an overall mean of 4.41, while the standard deviation ranged from 0.70 to 1.18, concluding an overall standard deviation of 0.84, translating to the overall verbal interpretation of 'Strongly Agree'.

According to Kim (2020), influencers with greater expertise and experience build trust among followers, which is consistent with previous studies on social networks. The study stated that affiliate marketing provides substantial perspectives, sound recommendations, and reliable data about goods and services, thereby assisting consumers in making informed purchasing decisions. According to the study, experience instills credibility, increasing consumer trust in affiliate suggestions, and contributing to a more successful affiliate marketing approach.

Table 5. Mean Ranking for Trustworthiness

Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation
I rely on involved affiliate marketer(s) because they are relatable.	4.42	0.76
I rely on involved affiliate marketer(s) because I am captivated by their purchases.	4.40	0.80
I rely on involved affiliate marketer(s) even though they do not have large number of followers.	4.31	0.88
I rely on involved affiliate marketer(s) because of their frequent engagement online.	4.27	0.80
Overall Mean	**4.33**	
Overall Standard Deviation	**0.80**	

Verbal Interpretation: Strongly Agree=4.21-5.00; Agree=3.41-4.20; Neutral=2.61-3.40; Disagree=1.81-2.60; Strongly Disagree=1.00-1.80

Table 5 shows that the weighted mean ranged from 4.24 to 4.42, which had an overall mean of 4.33, while the standard deviation ranged from 0.76 to 0.88, concluding an overall standard deviation of 0.80, translating to the overall verbal interpretation of 'Strongly Agree'.

Zhu et al. (2019) found that the psychological processes and incentives for persistent engagement on a platform are more complex than situational involvement, leading to a nonsignificant purchase intention. This shows that consumer trust affects affiliate marketing because it increases the legitimacy of affiliate recommendations and motivates consumers to click through and make purchases. The analysis reveals that perceived trust plays a crucial role in e-commerce decision-making, affecting consumers' propensity to buy in CBEC environments.

Table 6. Linear Regression Result for Online Purchasing Behavior

Independent Variable	Beta	Standard Error	P-value
Trustworthiness	0.418	0.049	0.000
Attractiveness	0.269	0.053	0.000
Trustworthiness	0.249	0.050	0.000

Table 6 shows the results of the linear regression analysis performed on the Online Purchasing Behavior using the predictors of Expertise, Attractiveness, and Trustworthiness. P-

values below 0.05 indicate that these predictors, also known as independent variables, have a significant effect on the Online Purchasing Behavior of the respondents.

According to Lin et al. (2021), perceived attractiveness, trustworthiness, and knowledge about influencers also had a substantial impact on post-exposure brand attitude. This demonstrates that affiliate influencers are naturally recognizable to consumers because of their social identity and physical attractiveness, fostering a perceived social connection when consumers share common interests. This connection contributes to the influencer being perceived as a trusted expert or acquaintance in social interactions.

Table 7. Linear Regression Result for Attitude

Independent Variable	Beta	Standard Error	P-value
Expertise	0.310	0.040	0.000
Trustworthiness	0.282	0.038	0.000
Attractiveness	0.214	0.042	0.000

Furthermore, in table 7 above, the result shows the linear regression analysis performed on the Attitude of the respondents, as the dependent variable, using the same predictors: Expertise, Attractiveness, and Trustworthiness. P-values below 0.05 indicate that these predictors, also known as independent variables, have a significant effect on the Attitude of the respondents.

Based on the study of Jia (2021), the findings emphasize the significance of source reliability for influencing customer attitude change and behavior over ongoing exposure to reliable social media information. It has been discovered that involved affiliate marketing credibility increases the perceived trustworthiness, connectivity, and identity between influencers and customers. This indicates that consumers' attitudes are influenced by an affiliate influencer's expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness because it signals a deep understanding of the product or service, instilling confidence in its value, reliability, and aspirational appeal, fostering a positive emotional connection that shapes consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions.

Table 8. Linear Regression Result for Norms

Independent Variable	Beta	Standard Error	P-value
Attractiveness	0.125	0.071	0.080
Expertise	0.012	0.067	0.862
Trustworthiness	-0.218	0.065	0.001

Lastly, the result above shows the linear regression analysis performed on the Norms of the respondents, as well as the dependent variable, using the same predictors as previous: Expertise, Attractiveness, and Trustworthiness. With p-values below 0.05, trustworthiness, as an independent variable, has a significant effect on the norms of respondents. On the flip side, Expertise and Attractiveness had p-values above the alpha of 0.05, with 0.862 and 0.80, respectively, postulating that these had no significant effect on the Norms of the respondents.

Based on Wang et al. (2019) study, privacy risk, privacy control, and collaboration norms all have a significant impact on customer trust. Consumer-peer engagement and collaboration norms are associated with greater connection commitment, which in turn affects company value when collaborating in digital commerce. This indicates that trustworthiness primarily and positively affects consumer norm formation and adherence, establishing a feeling of dependability and shared expectations.

Results of the Hypothesis

In this study, the involved Affiliate Marketing variable has been broken down into 3 main sub-variables named: Expertise, Attractiveness, and Trustworthiness, in which each effect has been analyzed to Online Purchasing Behavior, Attitudes, and Norms. Given the results, the majority showed p-values were below 0.05. They are 1) All independent variables have a significant effect to the Online Purchasing Behavior, 2) All independent variables have a significant effect on Attractiveness, and 3) Trustworthiness, as one of the independent variables, has a significant effect on the norms of the respondents. Hence, accepting H1 and H2, we postulated that involved affiliate marketing, with its sub-variables named: Expertise, Attractiveness, and Trustworthiness, has a significant effect on the purchasing intention of consumers and that Involved affiliate marketing, with its sub-variables: Expertise and Attractiveness—has a significant effect on the attitude of consumers, while sub-variable: Trustworthiness—has a significant effect on the norms of consumers.

The data analysis demonstrated a high degree of compatibility for the information and showed the effect of the influencers' credibility dimensions, which are attractiveness, expertise, and trustworthiness, on online engagement and purchase intention, according to Alfarraj et al. (2021). Furthermore, online engagement was discovered to have an intermediary influence on the relationship between influencer trustworthiness and purchase intention. This demonstrates how active affiliate marketing influences consumer purchasing intentions by employing trusted influencers or affiliates who support products to establish a sense of authenticity and recommendations. The association creates a link between the consumer and the good or service, which frequently leads to improved trust and a higher possibility of purchasing.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the incorporation of involved affiliate marketing in the TikTok shop proved to be extremely beneficial, especially when it comes to encouraging consumer purchase intentions. TikTok's innovative features as a social media platform enable an effortless modification of entertainment and commerce, offering affiliates an appealing medium to present products in a captivating way. As consumers browse TikTok content, the engaging and esthetically pleasing aspect of affiliate-marketed products draw their attention, considerably influencing their purchase intentions. The genuine and relatable way that affiliates promote products generates a sense of trust and authenticity, both of which are important aspects in increasing the effectiveness of affiliate marketing in the TikTok shop environment.

Moreover, consumer intent to buy is dependent on involved affiliate marketing due to the particular and targeted strategy and personality that affiliates employ in content production, which includes their expertise, trustworthiness, and attractiveness. Affiliates continue to evolve their advertising campaigns and connect them with the needs and interests of their followers by using their presence and understanding of the TikTok audience. This modification not only improves the entire

There are a few specific recommendations based on the significance of the study. For Entrepreneurs, it is recommended to explore the potential of affiliate marketing through TikTok Shop because it has been found to positively impact consumer purchase intention. Affiliate marketers should take advantage of opportunities presented by TikTok Shop and affiliate marketing. They can enhance their earnings by promoting products through videos and engaging with followers. Consumers can benefit from TikTok Shop's involved affiliate marketing by learning about new products and making informed purchasing decisions based on influencer recommendations.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

Academia and Researchers should conduct further studies to explore the long-term effects of TikTok Shop's affiliate marketing on consumer purchase intention. Our research leads us to suggest that companies employ affiliate marketing on various platforms, not just TikTok Shop, to broaden their consumer base. This is achieved by enabling individuals and specific products to gain visibility through the commitment of affiliates, which increases financial inclusivity.

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