

Analysis of Communication Effectiveness in Moderating the Relationship between Affiliate Marketing and Consumer Purchasing Decisions

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Abstract

Affiliate marketing has become an effective digital marketing strategy in increasing product and service sales. However, its effectiveness is often influenced by various factors, one of which is communication between the company/affiliate and consumers. This research aims to analyze the role of communication in moderating the relationship between affiliate marketing and consumer purchasing decisions. This research uses a quantitative approach with a survey method involving 100 respondents. Respondents were selected based on the criteria of their experience in participating in affiliate marketing programs. Data is collected through questionnaires that measure consumer perceptions about affiliate marketing effectiveness, communication quality, and purchasing decisions. Data analysis was carried out using moderated regression to test the relationship between these variables. The research results show that affiliate marketing has a significant positive influence on consumer purchasing decisions. Additionally, communication is proven to moderate the relationship, where clear, consistent, and reliable communication strengthens the positive influence of affiliate marketing on purchasing decisions. Factors such as clarity of message, consistency of information, and reliability of information sources were found to be the most influential aspects of communication.

Keywords: Affiliate marketing, Communications, Purchasing decisions, Digital marketing

Introduction

Affiliate marketing has developed as a significant technique for raising brand recognition and driving sales in the digital marketing space, leveraging relationships between businesses and affiliates to promote products or services to a larger audience (Syifa Fauziah Hamidah, 2023). The effectiveness of this strategy is dependent on effective communication channels established between the corporation and affiliates, as well as between affiliates and consumers (Dr. Anil Kumar Sharma, 2022). According to research, characteristics such as backlinks, referring domains, and brand engagement have a significant role in promoting client engagement and vulnerability in the financial services sector through affiliate marketing methods. Furthermore, perceived usefulness, observation, social influence, and cultural development serve as moderators for the adaptability and future potential of affiliate marketing in Indian companies, as well as the intention to use affiliate marketing among SMEs (Sharadhi Alape Suryanarayana, 2021).

As numerous research papers have indicated, effective communication is critical to the success of affiliate marketing. (Holly A. Syrdal, 2023) highlights that efficient communication promotes decision-making and collaboration among employees, which may be applied to the connection between corporations and affiliates in affiliate marketing. Furthermore, (Sanusi

A.M., 2023) emphasizes that affiliate marketing increases customer purchasing interest, demonstrating the need of clear and constant communication between affiliates and consumers. Furthermore, (Emanuel Lewar, 2023) argues that affiliate marketing tactics might boost client engagement and receptivity to financial services, highlighting the importance of informed communications in building trust and influencing purchasing decisions. As a result, creating clear, consistent, and useful communication channels between businesses, affiliates, and customers is important to the success of affiliate marketing activities. Communication is critical in balancing the interaction between affiliate marketing and customer purchasing decisions. According to research, engaging digital content, such as that available on TikTok through the Shopee affiliate network, has a substantial impact on consumer purchasing decisions (Hardianawati, 2023). Furthermore, linguistic aspects of influencer affiliate marketing posts on platforms like Instagram might influence customer engagement and behavior, emphasizing the significance of communication in this context (H. Mickle Aancy, 2023). Furthermore, digital marketing efficacy is determined by elements such as perceived ease, service quality, and shared content, which have a direct impact on the brand-customer connection and, eventually, consumer purchase decisions. Understanding how communication, both in terms of content and linguistic style, modifies the influence of affiliate marketing on consumer behavior is crucial for brands aiming to improve their digital marketing strategy and increase sales (Ida Ayu Putu Widani Sugianingrat, 2023).

Several research studies have demonstrated that affiliate marketing has a significant impact on customer purchasing decisions. Hardianawati's research shows that affiliate marketing material on platforms like Shopee via TikTok has a significant impact on purchasing decisions, stressing the value of engaging digital content in increasing sales and brand visibility (Hardianawati, 2023). Similarly, Husnayetti et al. discovered that affiliate marketing has a considerable impact on Shopee customers' purchase decisions, reinforcing its influence on consumer behavior (2023). Furthermore, Ida Ayu Putu Widani Sugianingrat and I Komang Gede's research emphasizes the importance of relationship marketing, influencer marketing, and e-commerce features in purchasing decisions, indicating a broader impact of marketing strategies on consumer choices (Arti Cipta Nurfadhilla, 2022). These data suggest that affiliate marketing, together with other marketing methods, has a significant impact on shaping and driving customer purchase decisions.

Communication efficacy is an essential factor in modulating the relationship between affiliate marketing and customer purchasing decisions. According to research, effective communication, particularly through platforms like Facebook, has a substantial impact on

customer perceptions toward messages and companies, which in turn influence purchase intentions (Ghulam Shabbir Khan Niazi, 2012). Furthermore, the success of advertising messages is linked to emotional responses, with customers more inclined to buy from businesses to whom they are emotionally connected (Georgios Halkias, 2023). Furthermore, consumer confusion research shows how confusion can impair customer inertia and rational decision making, underlining the significance of clear difference in marketing campaigns to boost brand image and create consumer trust (N.A.B. Rog, 2014).

Overall, these findings highlight the significance of communication effectiveness in impacting consumer behavior and purchasing decisions in the context of affiliate marketing. Barusman et al. found that communication effectiveness has a significant impact on the quality of relationships and behavioral intentions in nature-based tourism (Tina Miniawati Barusman, 2021). Furthermore, Ismail's research emphasizes the moderating effect of communication in the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation, learning orientation, and trust among small and medium-sized firm exporters (James M. Barry, 2019). Furthermore, Limpornpugdee and Janz's research emphasizes the importance of communication ability in information quality, with certain user characteristics influencing this relationship (Daud Ismail, 2016). These studies show that good communication, including communication effectiveness and competence, has a significant impact on relationships across several dimensions, including trust, behavioral intentions, and information quality.

Literature Review

Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate marketing is a popular business strategy in which corporations reward affiliates for driving sales or desired actions, encouraging mutually beneficial collaborations (Damianos P. Sakas, 2023). The study examines the impact of affiliate marketing tactics on customer engagement and vulnerability in services finance, highlighting the significance of backlinks and referring domains in increasing brand engagement and customer susceptibility. According to studies, affiliate marketing has a considerable impact on consumer purchasing interest in e-commerce, with affiliate marketing and service characteristics positively impacting consumer behavior (Syifa Fauziah Hamidah, 2023). Furthermore, the growth of affiliate marketing in India and around the world demonstrates its success in increasing ecommerce sales, with Amazon's affiliate program dominating the industry. Affiliate marketing serves as a mediator between consumers and e-commerce enterprises, allowing affiliates to promote products and earn royalties through unique referral links, indicating its importance in modern digital marketing techniques.

Affiliate marketing relies around three key entities: merchants, affiliates, and customers. Merchants provide items or services, affiliates promote them through various channels such as blogs, social media, or email marketing, and customers participate by purchasing or taking a desired action. According to research, affiliate marketing is important in generating ecommerce sales, with Amazon's affiliate program accounting for a significant market share (Damianos P. Sakas,2023). Studies show that affiliate marketing methods have a good impact on improving customer engagement and receptivity to financial services, emphasizing the relevance of backlinks and referring domains in increasing brand engagement (Husnayetti Husnayetti, 2023). Furthermore, research into the impact of affiliate marketing on purchasing decisions shows that it has a considerable impact on customers, particularly on platforms like Shopee (Tetiana Chebanova,2023).

Affiliate Marketing Working Mechanism

Affiliate marketing systems rely on affiliates to send traffic to merchant websites via unique affiliate links, with consumer behaviors such as clicks or sales tracked via tracking technologies such as cookies and affiliate software. This approach allows affiliates to earn commissions based on their ability to generate sales or leads for merchants. The implementation of affiliate links and tracking technologies is critical in attributing successful conversions to specific affiliates and ensuring appropriate reward for their promotional efforts (Damianos P. Sakas,2023). The digital era's expansion of affiliate marketing has had a tremendous impact on e-commerce sales, with platforms like Amazon Associates claiming the majority of the affiliate network industry. Implementing affiliate marketing methods has proven to be an efficient tool for improving consumer engagement and exposure to financial services, with a focus on backlinks and referral domains in the online banking sector.(S.deepa, 2021).

Benefits and Challenges of Affiliate Marketing

Affiliate marketing provides several advantages, including lower marketing expenses, increased market reach, and minimal risk because rewards are dependent on performance results (Damianos P. Sakas, 2023). However, this marketing technique faces numerous problems, including affiliate fraud, the complexities of identifying acceptable affiliates, and the requirement for ongoing performance tracking (Zurina Patrick,2021). According to research, affiliate marketing accounts for the vast majority of e-commerce transactions in the United States and Canada, with Amazon's affiliate program leading the way. Furthermore, studies on SMEs show that perceived usefulness, observability, and social impact are major predictors of propensity to adopt affiliate marketing, with development culture modulating the connection

(S. Deepa, 2021). Despite the benefits, overcoming hurdles such as fraud detection and affiliate selection is essential for a successful affiliate marketing program.

Consumer Purchase Decisions

Consumer purchasing decisions refer to the process by which people decide whether or not to purchase a specific product or service. This process consists of numerous steps, including need awareness, information search, alternative evaluation, buy choice, and post-purchase behavior. Psychological elements such as perception, motivation, beliefs, and attitudes can all influence purchasing decisions. Social influences include reference groups, family, roles, and social status. Meanwhile, personal determinants include age, occupation, financial condition, lifestyle, and personality. Cultural elements include culture, subculture, and socioeconomic class. The steps of the Purchase Decision Process include Need Recognition, Information Search, Alternative Evaluation, Purchase Decision, and Post-Purchase Behavior.

Communication in Marketing

Communication in marketing is the process by which businesses and affiliates disseminate information, influence, and persuade customers to buy. Effective communication can help consumers comprehend more, create trust, and impact their attitudes and behaviors. Marketing communication has several main components, Sender: The entity that sends the message, such as a firm or affiliate. Message (Message): Information communicated to consumers. Media Messaging channels include social media, email, and webpages. Receiver: A consumer who accepts and understands messages. Feedback (Feedback) is the response of consumers to messages they receive.

Communication Strategy in Affiliate Marketing

In affiliate marketing, communication techniques include creating intriguing and relevant messages, selecting the appropriate media, and ensuring that the information communicated is consistent and clear. Good communication between the company and the affiliate is critical to ensuring that the affiliate receives correct and current information about the product or service being promoted. Research has demonstrated that excellent communication can improve the relationship between affiliate marketing and customer purchasing decisions. Good communication can assist to close knowledge gaps, boost consumer trust, and impact purchasing attitudes and behavior. Several empirical studies have been undertaken to investigate how communication influences the relationship between marketing strategy and business outcomes. The study's findings indicate that effective communication can boost the positive impact of marketing tactics, including affiliate marketing, on business outcomes such as sales, customer loyalty, and consumer happiness.

Methods

This study employs quantitative methodologies, utilizing a correlational approach. The goal is to examine the link between the independent variable (affiliate marketing) and the dependent variable (customer purchase decisions), as well as the impact of the moderating variable (communication) in shaping this relationship. Correlational research was chosen because it is appropriate for testing hypotheses about the relationships between variables. This study's demographic consists of consumers who make purchases through affiliate marketing programs offered by several Indonesian e-commerce enterprises. With a sample size of 100 respondents and criterion

Purposive sampling was used to collect samples, which involved picking samples based on specific criteria related to the research aims. Consumers who have made purchases through affiliate links in the last six months, as well as those aged 18 and up, meet these criteria. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula, with a 5% margin of error. If the population is not known with confidence, a population estimate with a sample size of at least 100 respondents is utilized for more precise statistical analysis.

Results and Discussion

Validity & Reliability Test

Validity test

Correlations

		Affiliate Marketing	Komunikasi	Keputusan Pembelian
Affiliate Marketing	Pearson Correlation	1	,680**	,722**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000
	N	100	100	100
Komunikasi	Pearson Correlation	,680**	1	,701**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000
	N	100	100	100
Keputusan Pembelian	Pearson Correlation	,722**	,701**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	
	N	100	100	100

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 1. SPSS 25 Data Processing Results

From the table above it can be concluded that all question items for each variable are declared valid. This can be seen from the sign value of each variable, where for the affiliate marketing variable the sign value is 0.000, the communication variable, 0.000 and for the purchasing decision variable 0.000, so if the sign value is <0.01 then the variable is declared valid..

Reliability Test

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,827	3

Table 2. Results of SPSS 25 data processing

The results of the reliability test of the 3 variables in this study were declared reliable, this can be proven by the Cronbach's alpha result of 0.827, based on reliability test theory it is stated that if the Cronbach's alpha value is above 0.6 then the variable items in a study are said to be reliable.

1. Data Analysis

a. Descriptive Analysis

1. Gender

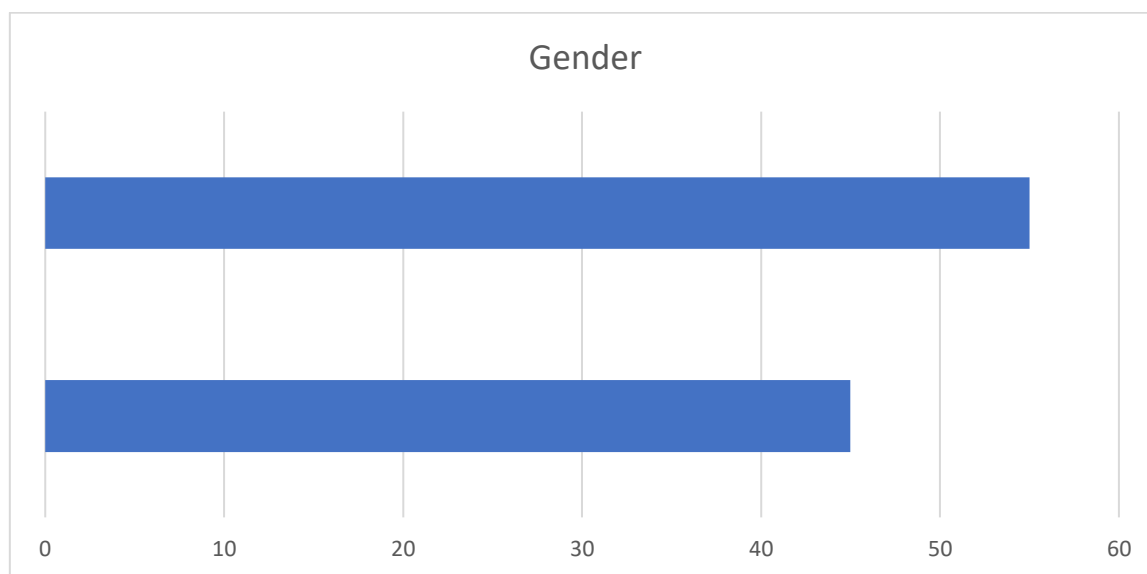


Figure 1. Data processing for 2024

In this study, the gender of female respondents dominated with 55% of the total number of respondents amounting to 100 people. While for male gender it was 45%.. thus the influence of affiliates on purchasing decisions was dominated by female gender.

2. Respondent's Age

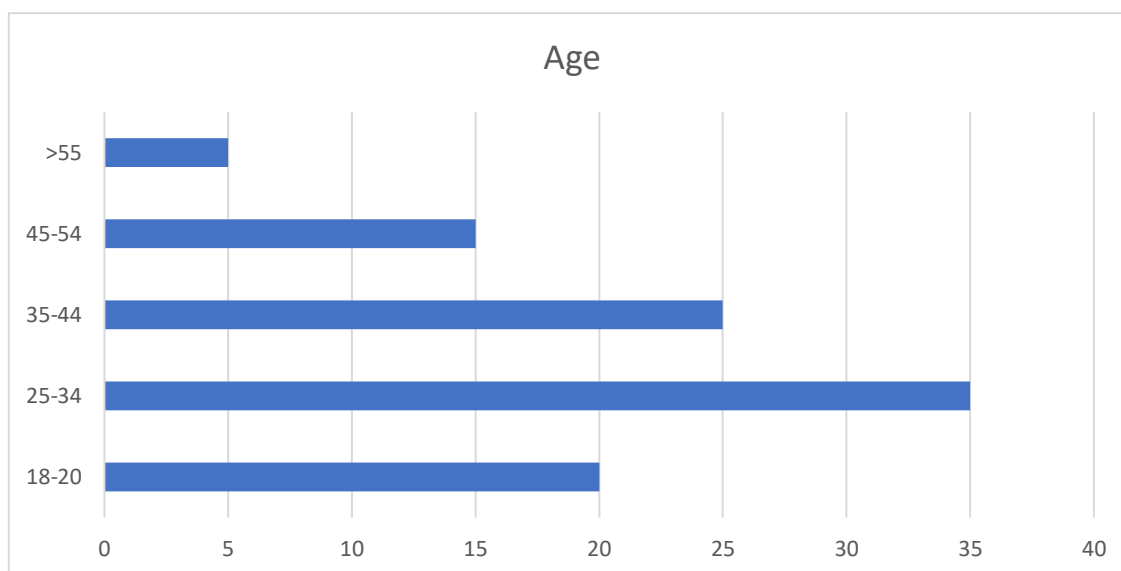


Figure 2. Data processing for 2024

The age of respondents who made purchases was dominated by those aged 25 – 34 years, amounting to 35%. while the second place is dominated by ages 35 -44 years, with a percentage of 25%.

3. Education

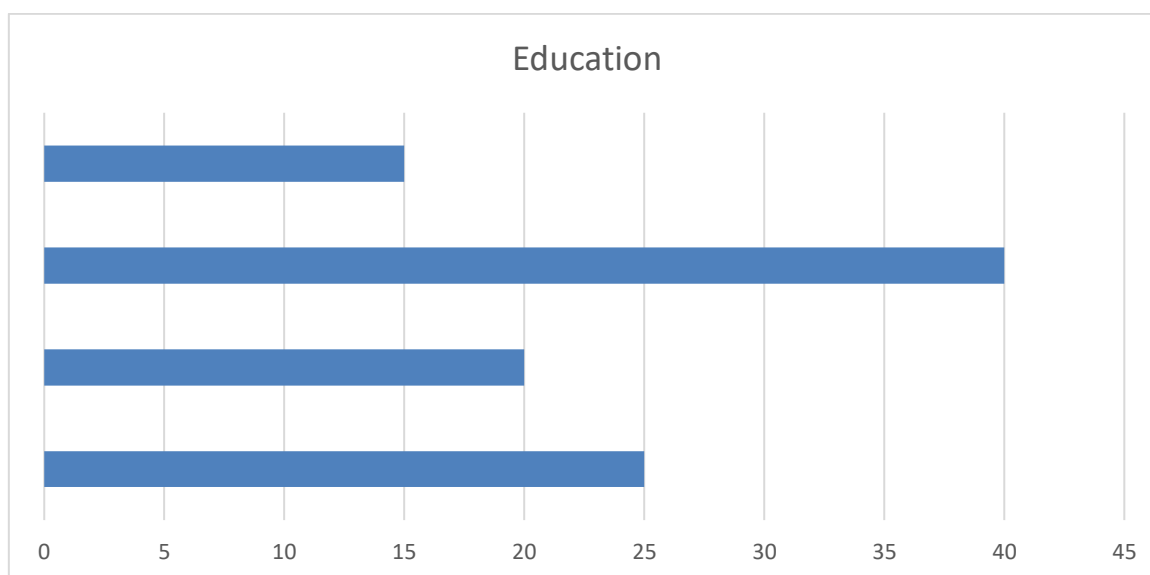


Figure 3. Data processing 2024

In this study, the level of education was dominated by undergraduate education with a percentage of 40% and high school/equivalent education at 25%, followed by diploma level at 20%, while master's/doctoral level at 15%.

4. Work

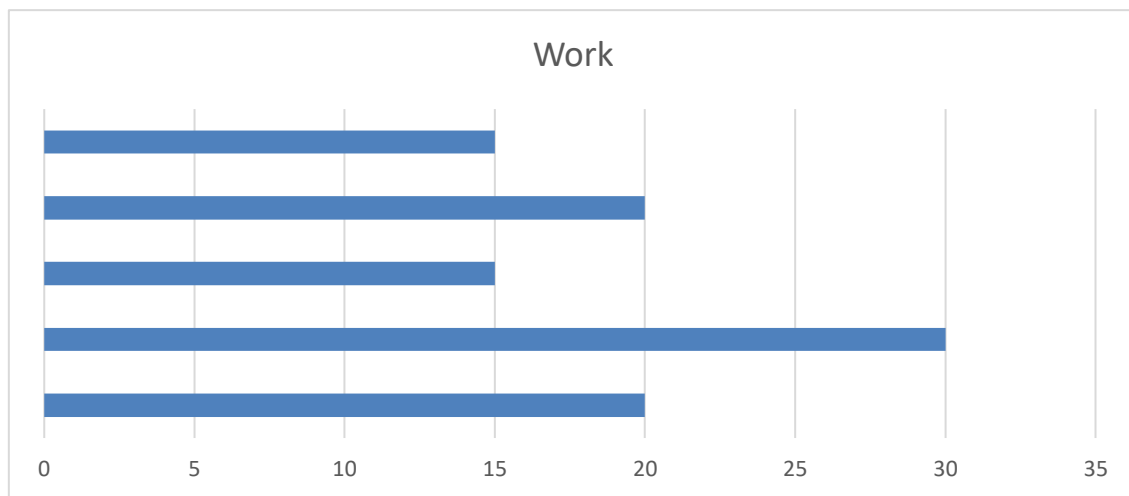


Figure 4. Data Processing 2024

In this research, private sector employees dominated at 30%, and students and entrepreneurs at 20%, while civil servants at 15%.

5. Income

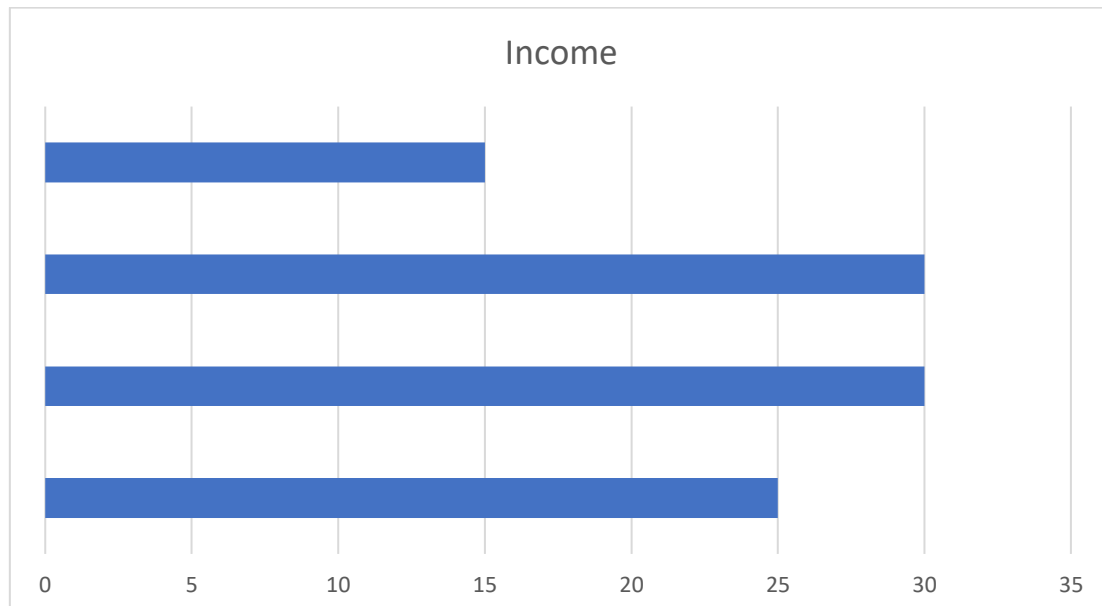


Figure 5. Data Processing 2024

Meanwhile, respondents' income in this study was dominated by income ranging from 3,000,000 – 10,000,000. 30% each, while total income under 3,000,000 is 25%. And under 1,000,000 as much as 15%.

6. Type of product purchased

The types of products purchased on affiliate marketing applications are dominated by electronic products at 25%, then fashion at 20%, and other products at 30%, beauty/health products at 15%, then book products at 10%.

b. Correlation Analysis

Correlations		Affiliate Marketing	buying decision Keputusan Pembelian
Affiliate Marketing	Pearson Correlation	1	,722**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000
	N	100	100
Keputusan Pembelian	Pearson Correlation	,722**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	
	N	100	100

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3. SPSS25 Data Processing Results

The results of testing data on the correlation between the two variables show that the affiliate marketing variable has a positive relationship with the purchasing decision variable. This can be seen from the sign value of each variable, where for the affiliate marketing variable the sign value is 0.000, while for the purchase decision variable the sign value is 0. .00, if referring to the theory of relationships between variables where it is stated that if the sign value is <0.05 then the relationship between variables is declared positive.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,722 ^a	,521	,516	6,824

a. Predictors: (Constant), Affiliate Marketing

If you look at the model summary table, the contribution of the affiliate marketing variable to purchasing decisions is 0.521. Thus, the contribution of the affiliate marketing variable to purchasing decisions is 52.1%.

2. MRA Test

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,781 ^a	,610	,598	6,225

a. Predictors: (Constant), X2M, Komunikasi, Affiliate Marketing

From the results of the MRA test calculations, it was found that the influence of communication on the relationship between affiliate marketing and purchasing decisions was 0.61. Thus, the contribution of communication can be said to have an influence of 61%. Thus, the relationship is said to be strong.

The following is a picture that illustrates the role of communication in moderating the relationship between affiliate marketing and purchasing decisions:

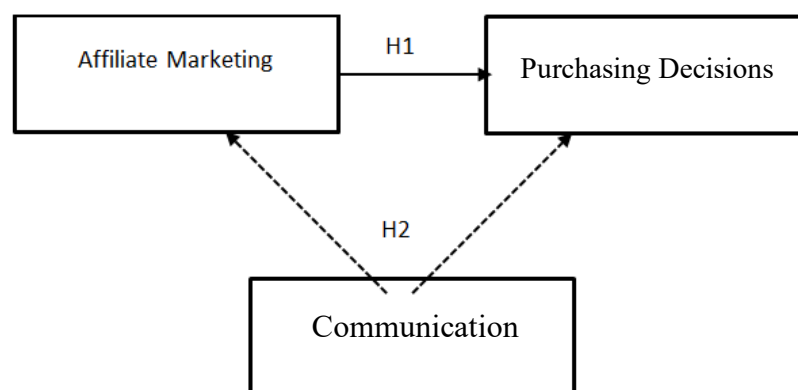


Image: Moderation framework.

Conclusion

Based on the results of data analysis from 100 respondents and data processing using the SPP25 application, it is possible to conclude that the affiliate marketing variable has a considerable influence on consumer purchase decisions. Affiliate marketing promotions have

proven to be beneficial in generating consumer interest and purchase decisions for the product or service being advertised. Communication characteristics have been shown to affect the association between affiliate marketing and purchase decisions. Clear, consistent, and trustworthy communication enhances affiliate marketing's beneficial impact on consumer purchasing decisions. Communication efficacy is heavily influenced by factors such as message clarity, information consistency, and the credibility of information sources. The most important characteristics of communication are message clarity, information consistency, and information source reliability. Good communication not only helps consumers comprehend advertisements, but it also builds the trust in the product or service being promoted.

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