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A Study On Consumer Attitude Towards Affiliate Marketing In E-Commerce Platforms

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Peer Review Information	Abstract
<i>Submission: 1 Sept 2025</i> <i>Revision: 28 Sept 2025</i> <i>Acceptance: 12 Oct 2025</i> Keywords <i>Affiliate Marketing, Consumer Attitude, Post-Purchase Behaviour, E-commerce, Consumer Trust</i>	E-Commerce is the modern, global, and highly convenient way for people to buy and sell things, from a handcrafted mug made by a small artisan to the latest smartphone from a tech giant. E-commerce is the friendly evolution of buying and selling. This is a global marketplace that makes shopping accessible, efficient, and personal, bringing the world's products and services directly to our fingertips. Affiliate marketing in e-commerce is a partnership where online stores pay a commission to individuals or websites for driving sales through a unique referral link. The topic is a low-risk, performance-based strategy that leverages trusted voices to expand a brand's reach and audience. This study investigates consumer attitudes towards affiliate marketing in e-commerce platforms, with a particular focus on post-purchase behaviour. Data was collected from 100 respondents in Chennai city through a structured questionnaire using convenience sampling methods. Analytical tools such as Friedman Test, Chi-square, t-test, and One-way ANOVA were used. Results indicate that Amazon is the most preferred e-commerce platform, while convenience and time-saving are the strongest motivators for using affiliate marketing. Educational qualifications significantly influence post-purchase behaviour, though factors like age and income show no such relationship. Moreover, consumer trust in affiliate links remains largely independent of educational background, while attitudes significantly differ based on gender and marital status. The findings highlight the critical role of credibility, ease of use, and demographic variations in shaping consumer engagement and behaviour toward affiliate marketing in e-commerce.

Introduction

India, the world's seventh-largest country, dominates much of South Asia and has seen an increase in digital participation in recent years. As of January 2020, social media has approximately 400 million active users, including 260 million on Facebook, 80 million on Instagram, 23 million on Snapchat, and more than 11 million on Twitter. While Indians have typically tended to shop at local brick-and-mortar establishments, the COVID-19 pandemic

has expedited the uptake of e-commerce, especially among first-time online shoppers. The country's e-commerce market is anticipated to reach \$200 billion by 2026, driven by rising internet and smartphone adoption, as well as initiatives like the government's Digital India program. By August 2020, internet connections had reached 760 million. At the same time, affiliate marketing continues to develop in India, accounting for approximately 15% of online sales, particularly in areas such as e-commerce

start-ups, established enterprises, and online betting platforms. Its popularity is fuelled by a low-risk, pay-for-performance model, rising e-commerce use, and the proliferation of affiliate service providers. Coupon affiliates have grown in popularity as Indian buyers place a high importance on savings, with platforms such as CupoNation, CouponsDunia, and CashKaro in the forefront.

Current Trends In Affiliate Marketing In E-Commerce Platforms

In 2025, affiliate marketing trends on e-commerce platforms are balanced on rewarding affiliates through diverse attribution models that compensate contributions throughout the customer journey, not just at sale points. Brands are acquiring affiliate websites to expand reach, enhance SEO, and gain direct marketing control. Enterprise brands increasingly leverage affiliate strategies with content and reviews to navigate complex B2B sales. Maintaining program integrity through vigilance against affiliate fraud is critical. Support for affiliates is prioritized, including onboarding and creative resources. Video, podcast, and SEO affiliates dominate, driven by long-tail search and influencer partnerships. Performance marketing budgets are increasing with a focus on measurable sales outcomes, supported by data-driven decision-making to optimize ROI. Micro and nano-influencers are valued for authentic niche engagement, while AI and automation improve affiliate selection, campaign management, and A/B testing. The affiliate ecosystem diversifies further with loyalty programs, live shopping, and crypto affiliate initiatives expanding opportunities for brands and marketers.

Affiliate marketing

Affiliate marketing is a promotional strategy in which companies reward third-party publishers, known as affiliates, for driving traffic or generating leads that result in sales of their products or services. Affiliates earn a commission as an incentive to market the company's offerings through various channels. This model, strengthened by the rise of digital marketing, analytics, and tracking technologies like cookies, has grown into a multi-billion-dollar industry. While businesses generally pay affiliates on a per-sale basis, some also compensate them for clicks or impressions. The approach can be categorized into three primary types: unattached affiliate marketing, involved affiliate marketing, and related affiliate marketing.

Review of Literature

Affiliate marketing has become a vital strategy in e-commerce, shaping consumer behaviour and driving sales across various digital platforms. Despite its growing importance, significant research gaps remain, particularly in understanding the complexities of legal frameworks, technological advancements, and the diverse responses of consumers.

KRISSY MEAH P et al. (2025) explored the effects of affiliate marketing strategies on customer engagement and sales conversion among working-class millennials purchasing apparel online. The study employed non-probability sampling with 150 respondents and measured indicators such as social media interaction, click-through rates, and time spent on pages. The study Results indicated that influencer-led affiliate campaigns successfully attracted traffic, maintained consumer interest, built loyalty, and transformed engagement into both immediate and repeat purchases.

R. Jotsna et al. (2025) carried out an extensive study on the influence of affiliate marketing on consumer behavior and product sales, employing both qualitative and quantitative approaches with a sample of 558 respondents. The research aimed to explore various dimensions of affiliate marketing, evaluate its impact on consumer decision-making, and highlight strategies such as trust-building, leveraging social proof, and enhancing convenience. The findings underscored five critical factors that marketers can utilize to engage consumers more effectively and increase conversion rates in digital marketing.

Ni Putu Christina Piliana et al. (2024) investigated strategies for fostering consumer trust in affiliate links on social media using quantitative research with SEM-PLS, based on responses from 392 Indonesian participants. The study revealed that transparency, affiliate reputation, product or service quality, content relevance, and user experience significantly influence trust, whereas consumer attitudes did not moderate these effects. The findings offer valuable guidance for marketers in developing effective trust-building strategies within the digital landscape.

Lindi Utami Marquerette et al. (2023) examined the influence of affiliate marketing and service features on consumer purchase interest in TikTok Shop e-commerce through a quantitative descriptive approach with 100 respondents. The study sought to evaluate both the independent and combined effects of affiliate marketing and service features on purchase decisions. The results demonstrated that each

factor, as well as their interaction, positively impacts consumers' buying interest.

Tamazzer Fahim et al. (2020) investigated consumer attitudes toward affiliate marketing in the context of e-business using a sample of 205 respondents. The study aimed to assess the impact of affiliate marketing on consumer behaviour, explore the factors influencing attitudes, and examine preferences related to price variation, product comparison, and customer satisfaction. The study findings indicated that affiliate marketing offers e-marketers' important insights into consumer perceptions, highlighting its strong potential for driving long-term business growth and revenue generation.

Research Gap

The literature uncovers several important gaps in affiliate marketing research within e-commerce platforms. Legal and regulatory systems have lagged behind the rapid expansion of e-commerce, leading to uncertainties regarding digital agreements, commission models, and the roles of stakeholders, which in turn weaken trust in affiliate networks. Although existing studies highlight the effectiveness of affiliate marketing, especially among Generation Z, using methods like live streaming, there is a lack of detailed analysis on how these effects differ by product categories, platforms, and demographic groups. Another notable gap is the limited exploration of emerging technologies, such as the impact of AI-driven automation, algorithmic bias, and fraud prevention on affiliate marketing performance. Crucially, while many studies have examined consumer engagement, trust, and purchase behaviour, research on post-purchase behaviour within affiliate marketing is insufficient. This study aims to fill that gap by examining post-purchase behaviour in the context of affiliate marketing on e-commerce platforms, enhancing understanding of the full consumer journey.

Data Analysis & Interpretation

Table 1: Friedman test for significant difference among mean ranks towards online platforms

Null Hypothesis: There is no significance among the mean ranks of online platforms

Online Platforms	Mean Value	Rank	Chi-square value	P value
Amazon	2.71	1	166.072	<.000**
Flipkart	3.36	2		
Meesho	4.50	3		

Objectives Of This Study

1. To study the socio-economic profile of the respondents
2. To know the reason for using affiliate marketing in e-commerce platforms
3. To analyse factors influencing consumer attitudes towards affiliate marketing in e-commerce platforms
4. To evaluate the post-purchase behaviour on affiliate marketing in e-commerce platforms.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a descriptive research design, aiming to analyze factors influencing consumer attitudes and post-purchase behaviour of Chennai residents towards affiliate marketing on e-commerce platforms. A convenience sampling technique was used to select respondents. The sample consists of 100 residents of Chennai city, ensuring diversity among respondents in terms of demographics and backgrounds. Primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire, distributed to the targeted respondents via Google Forms.

Data Analysis Tools: The collected data were analysed using several statistical methods in SPSS version 20

- **Friedman Test:** To analyse the primary reason for using various online platforms.
- **T-Test:** To compare and contrast the attitudes of different levels of the respondents.
- **Chi-Square Test:** To analyze the association between educational qualification and trust in affiliated links.
- **One-way ANOVA:** To identify the significant difference among demographic groups or other categorical variables in their responses.

Ajio	5.30	4		
Myntra	5.48	5		
Zepto	5.48	6		
Jio mart	5.56	7		
Snapdeal	6.28	8		
Nykaa	6.33	9		

Source: Primary data

Note: ** Denotes significant at 1% level

Table 1. Since the P-value is less than 0.00, the null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level of significance. Hence, it was concluded that there is a significant difference among mean ranks towards online platforms. Based on mean rank,

Amazon (2.71) is the most preferred platform, followed by Flipkart (3.36), Meesho (4.50), Ajio (5.30), Myntra (5.48), Zepto (5.48), Jio Mart (5.56), Snapdeal (6.28), and Nykaa (6.33) is the least preferred platform.

Table 2: Friedman test for significant difference among mean ranks towards the reason for using affiliate marketing

Null Hypothesis: There is no significance among the mean ranks towards the reason for using affiliate marketing

Reasons	Mean Value	Rank	Chi-square value	P value
Convenience & Time Saving	3.26	1	32.726	<.000**
Exclusive Discounts, such as offers and cash back, etc.	3.45	2		
Trust in Reviews	3.98	3		
Enhanced Shopping Experience	4.01	4		
Reduced Risk & No Added Cost	4.22	5		
Discovery of Niche Products	4.39	6		
Educational Content	4.69	7		

Source: Primary data

Note: ** Denotes significant at 1% level

Table 2. Since the P-value is less than 0.00, the null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level of significance. Hence, it was concluded that there is a significant difference among mean ranks towards reasons for using affiliated marketing. Based on mean rank, Convenience & Time Saving (3.26) is the most preferred reason, followed by

Exclusive Discounts, such as offers and cash back, etc. (3.45), Trust in Reviews (3.98), Enhanced Shopping Experience (4.01), Reduced Risk & No Added Cost (4.22), Discovery of Niche Products (4.39), and Educational Content (4.69) is the least preferred reason.

Table 3: Association between educational qualification and trust in affiliated links

		Trust in affiliated links		Total
		Yes	No	
Education Qualification	Up to schooling	2	3	5
	Under graduation	11	16	27
	Post graduation	13	35	48
	Others	2	18	20
Total		28	72	100
Chi-Square = 5.765a, DF = 3, P value= 0.124				

Source: Primary data

Table 3. Shows a significant association between educational qualifications and trust in affiliated links. The Chi-Square test result (Chi-Square = 5.765, DF=3, P 0.124) indicates that the association is not significant at the 5% level. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that trust in affiliated links does not significantly vary across different levels of

educational qualification. Although respondents with post-graduation and other categories reported relatively higher “No” responses, these differences are not strong enough to establish a meaningful association. Thus, educational qualification and trust in affiliated links are found to be independent of each other.

Table 4: T-test for significant difference between ‘Male’ and ‘Female’, ‘Single’ and ‘Married’ with respect to influencing consumer attitudes towards affiliate marketing.

		Mean	SD	T value	P value
Gender	Male	35.8600	7.83506	-0.095	0.925
	Female	36.0000	6.93703		
Marital Status	Single	37.3636	5.87802	1.373	0.173
	Married	35.2239	7.93882		

Source: Primary Data

Table 4: In the t-test, the significant value for Gender and Marital Status is less than 0.05 (P< 0.05), the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Hence, there is a significant difference between

males & females and single & married with respect to overall influencing consumer attitudes towards affiliate marketing.

Table 5: One-way ANOVA for significant difference between online platforms and post-purchase behavior on affiliate marketing

		Mean	SD	F value	P value
Age	18-25 years	37.8800	6.75968	0.957	0.435
	26-35 years	40.1579	5.27324		
	36-45 years	37.4118	8.43400		
	46-55 years	35.6522	8.71576		
	Above 55 years	36.8125	8.74238		
	Up to schooling	29.2000	13.40522	3.742	0.014

Educational Qualifications	Under graduation	40.0370	6.16118		
	Post graduation	37.8750	7.42802		
	Others	35.5000	6.77845		
Annual Income of the family	Up to Rs. 50,000	35.9524	8.97483	0.794	0.500
	Rs.50,001-Rs. 1,00,000	37.0435	8.01407		
	Rs.1,00,001-Rs.2,00,000	39.3077	6.03834		
	Above Rs.2,00,000	37.5333	7.65972		

Source: Primary Data

Table 5: One-way ANOVA shows that all the significance values are greater than 0.05 ($P > 0.05$) except for educational qualification. Hence, the alternative hypothesis is rejected. It shows there is no significant difference between age, annual income of the family, and post-purchase behavior. But in the case of education qualification, the value is less than 0.05 ($P < 0.05$) alternative hypothesis is accepted. Hence, there is a significant difference between age, annual income of the family, and post-purchase behavior. It shows the post-purchase behavior related to affiliate marketing. May differ in age and annual income of the family.

Findings, Suggestions, and Conclusion

Major Findings

- Friedman test for significant difference among mean ranks towards the most valued online platforms was the Amazon (Rank 1), with the mean value of 2.71.
- Friedman test for significant difference among mean ranks towards the most valued reason for using affiliate marketing was the Convenience & Time Saving (Rank 1), with the mean value of 3.26.
- The Chi-Square test ($\chi^2 = 5.765$, $df = 3$, $p = 0.124$) shows no significant association between educational qualifications and trust in affiliated links. Thus, trust remains independent of education level despite minor variations in responses.
- Influencing consumer attitudes towards affiliate marketing. Significantly differs between males and females and between single and married respondents.

There are no significant differences in post-purchase behavior across different age groups and family income levels. However, educational qualifications do influence post-purchase behavior, indicating that consumers with various educational levels behave differently after making purchases via affiliate marketing.

Suggestion for Consumers

When using affiliate marketing, consumers should prioritise checking the trustworthiness of affiliate links before making any purchases. It is critical to cross-check product specifications and prices across several platforms to prevent falling prey to deceptive offers given through affiliate channels. Rather than relying exclusively on affiliates' promotional claims, consumers should prioritise real customer reviews and testimonials that provide legitimate insights into product quality and performance. Furthermore, shoppers should prioritise evaluating the actual quality of products rather than making rash purchasing judgements based on appealing affiliate deals. To protect their finances, consumers should always choose secure online payment methods that reduce the potential financial risks involved with online purchases. Before making any purchases using affiliate links, it is critical to fully understand the merchant's return, refund, and replacement procedures to ensure proper consumer protection. Finally, while purchasing online, buyers must be watchful and aware of potential affiliate fraud or misleading adverts, learning the critical thinking skills required to distinguish between legitimate affiliate suggestions and deceptive marketing methods.

Conclusion

This study establishes that affiliate marketing plays a significant role in influencing consumer behaviour and purchase decisions on e-commerce platforms. Convenience and time-saving are the strongest motivators for consumers, while Amazon remains the most trusted platform. However, lack of trust in affiliate links remains a key challenge, indicating the need for more credible, transparent, and consumer-centric affiliate strategies. Socio-demographic variables such as education influence post-purchase behaviour, emphasizing the necessity of targeted marketing strategies. Overall, affiliate marketing remains a sustainable, cost-effective, and consumer-driven

promotional tool; however, its success depends on building greater trust and tailoring strategies to diverse consumer segments.

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