
“INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS ON CONSUMER ADOPTION OF GREEN MARKETING INITIATIVES”

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Article Received: 05 March 2026

Article Revised: 25 March 2026

Published on: 15 April 2026

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DOI: <https://doi-doi.org/101555/ijrpa.2039>

ABSTRACT

This research paper examines the influence of social media platforms on consumer adoption of green marketing initiatives, addressing a critical gap in understanding how digital environments facilitate the translation of environmental attitudes into actual purchasing behavior. Despite growing consumer awareness of sustainability issues, a persistent attitude-behavior gap continues to challenge green marketing effectiveness. Social media platforms offer unique affordances—visibility, interactivity and social validation—that may bridge this divide.

The rapid proliferation of social media platforms has significantly transformed the landscape of marketing communication, particularly in the context of sustainability and environmentally responsible consumption. This study examines the influence of social media platforms on consumer adoption of green marketing initiatives, with a focus on how digital engagement, content credibility and peer influence shape pro-environmental purchasing behavior. Drawing upon theories of planned behavior, social influence and digital consumer engagement, the research develops a conceptual framework linking social media exposure to consumer awareness, attitudes, trust and ultimately adoption of green products and practices.

The study employs a mixed-method approach, integrating quantitative survey data with qualitative content analysis of leading social media platforms. Empirical findings indicate that interactive and user-generated content significantly enhances consumer awareness and positively influences attitudes toward green products. Additionally, factors such as influencer credibility, electronic word-of-mouth (e WOM) and perceived authenticity of brand communication play a critical role in reducing skepticism associated with green washing. The

results further reveal that social media platforms act not only as information dissemination channels but also as participatory ecosystems that foster community-driven sustainability advocacy.

KEYWORDS: Green marketing, social media platforms, consumer engagement, sustainability communication, attitude-behavior gap, influencer marketing, Theory of Planned Behavior.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the growing urgency of environmental challenges such as climate change, resource depletion and pollution has intensified the need for sustainable business practices and responsible consumption. Within this context, green marketing has emerged as a strategic approach through which organizations promote environmentally friendly products, services and practices to influence consumer behavior. Green marketing not only reflects corporate social responsibility but also serves as a competitive tool for firms seeking to align with the increasing environmental consciousness of consumers.

Simultaneously, the rapid expansion of digital technologies has transformed the way businesses communicate with their target audiences. Social media platforms, in particular, have become powerful tools for marketing, enabling real-time interaction, user-generated content and widespread information dissemination. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter (X) and YouTube facilitate dynamic engagement between brands and consumers, thereby reshaping traditional marketing paradigms. These platforms allow organizations to promote green initiatives more effectively by leveraging visual storytelling, influencer endorsements and community-driven advocacy.

The intersection of social media and green marketing presents significant opportunities for promoting sustainable consumption. Social media platforms not only increase awareness of environmental issues but also shape consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions through mechanisms such as electronic word-of-mouth (e WOM), peer influence and perceived brand authenticity. Consumers today are more likely to rely on online reviews, influencer opinions and digital content when evaluating the environmental credibility of products. However, the effectiveness of these platforms in driving actual adoption of green products remains a subject of ongoing academic inquiry.

Despite the growing body of research on digital marketing and sustainability, there exists a gap in understanding the specific mechanisms through which social media influences

consumer adoption of green marketing initiatives. Issues such as information overload, skepticism toward green claims (often referred to as green washing) and varying levels of digital literacy can affect consumer trust and decision-making processes. Therefore, it is essential to examine how different dimensions of social media—such as content quality, interactivity and credibility—impact consumer perceptions and behaviors toward green products.

This study aims to explore the influence of social media platforms on consumer adoption of green marketing initiatives by developing a comprehensive framework that integrates elements of consumer behavior, digital engagement and sustainability. By analyzing the role of social media in shaping awareness, attitudes and trust, the research seeks to provide both theoretical and practical insights. The findings are expected to contribute to academic literature while offering actionable recommendations for marketers and policymakers to design more effective and transparent green marketing strategies in the digital era.

Research Objectives

Primary Objective

- To examine the influence of social media platforms on consumer adoption of green marketing initiatives.

Specific Objectives

1. To analyze the role of social media platforms in creating awareness about green marketing initiatives.
2. To evaluate the impact of social media content (e.g., posts, videos, advertisements) on consumer attitudes toward eco-friendly products.
3. To assess the influence of electronic word-of-mouth (e WOM) and online reviews on consumer decision-making regarding green products.
4. To examine the role of influencer marketing in shaping consumer trust and adoption of green marketing initiatives.
5. To investigate the effect of perceived credibility and authenticity of green claims on social media platforms.
6. To identify the relationship between social media engagement (likes, shares, comments) and sustainable consumer behavior.
7. To analyze the challenges associated with green marketing on social media, including consumer skepticism and green washing.

8. To provide strategic recommendations for marketers to effectively use social media platforms for promoting sustainable products and practices.

Literature Review:

1 **Singh, A. K., & Mahanta, P. (Eds.). (2022). “Green Marketing and Sustainable Development. New Delhi: Mittal Publications”** This edited volume brings together contributions examining the intersection of green marketing practices and sustainable development goals, with particular emphasis on the Indian market context. The editors—Dr. Amit Kumar Singh, Professor in the Department of Rural Management at Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University Lucknow and Priyanka Mahanta, Assistant Professor at the University of Science and Technology Meghalaya—have assembled research that addresses the evolving phase of green marketing in India. The book aims to develop conceptual and practical understanding of environmental marketing, green branding, green washing, consumer behavior, electronic banking, green advertising, green consumerism, green marketing risk management and—critically for this review—social media sustainability. The volume emphasizes that green marketing is still in the evolving phase in India, with significant opportunities for marketers to utilize these practices efficiently. The editors note that the dynamic shift toward sustainability and environmental protection by Indian consumers has led to major changes in marketing strategies, with marketers focusing on developing green products and promoting them through sustainable practices. This book is particularly valuable for researchers examining how social media platforms can be leveraged for green marketing in the Indian context, as it includes dedicated sections on digital and social media sustainability. The volume is intended to be helpful for researchers, scholars, corporate executives, government officers, NGOs and activists conducting research and creating awareness about green marketing and sustainable development in India

2 **Dua, S., Dua, S., & Kaur, P. (Eds.). (2025). Green Marketing Perspectives: Effective Messaging for Sustainable Practices. Bingley, UK: Emerald Publishing Limited.** This recently published edited volume from Emerald Publishing addresses the profound impact of the green concept's emergence on marketing strategies, with significant attention to social media as a channel for green messaging. The editors—Sonu Dua (Associate Professor, Lyallpur Khalsa College Technical Campus, IK Gujral Punjab Technical University), Sakshi Dua (Associate Professor, Lovely Professional University) and Pawanpreet Kaur (Associate Professor & Head, Lyallpur Khalsa College Technical Campus)—bring together Indian academic perspectives on how companies are altering their

marketing strategies to leverage green and sustainable messaging. The book covers subjects including green messaging via traditional and social media, green marketing campaigns, innovative marketing and customer value marketing. It also highlights the ubiquitous issue of green washing in its various forms. With cases drawn from around the world, including substantial Indian content, this volume provides valuable insights for students, researchers and industry experts. For doctoral students researching social media's influence on green marketing adoption, the chapters examining digital messaging strategies and consumer responses to social media-based green campaigns are particularly relevant. The 2025 publication date ensures contemporary relevance, addressing recent developments in social media platforms and consumer behavior patterns.

3 Ranison, A. (2023). *I'm a Climate Optimist*. New Delhi: Penguin Random House India (Ebury Press). This important work by Indian climate activist, social entrepreneur and digital content creator Aakash Ranison provides a unique perspective on climate communication through social media. Ranison, listed under Forbes India's Top 100 Digital Stars 2022 and awarded Climate Warrior of the Year 2022 and 2023 by Cosmopolitan Magazine, has leveraged his social media presence (over 45,000 followers on Instagram, plus thousands on Twitter and YouTube) to create impactful awareness about climate change. The book is specifically designed keeping day-to-day Indian life and sustainable alternatives as solutions, featuring more than 100 Indian businesses working in the sustainable alternative space and insights from 45 experts including Piyush Pandey (Ogilvy), Dia Mirza (UNEP), Nithin Kamath (Zerodha) and Rahul Mishra (fashion designer). In an interview with Forbes India, Ranison directly addresses the role of social media in climate awareness, noting that while he was initially disappointed with social media in India due to misinformation, he has observed positive developments with more knowledgeable voices now communicating facts about climate change and actionable personal solutions. The book covers industries including Food & Beverages, Textiles & Clothing, Transportation, Tourism/Hospitality, Digital/Technology, Home & Households, Beauty & Cosmetics and Plastic & Packaging—all sectors where green marketing initiatives are prevalent. Ranison's perspective as a digital creator who has successfully used social media to communicate sustainability messages provides valuable insights for researchers examining how social media platforms can influence consumer adoption of green practices. Notably, the book is printed using vegetable ink and 100% of the author's royalties are donated to his climate charity, Greener Earth Foundation, to offset carbon footprints, making it India's first carbon-neutral book.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a systematic and empirical approach to examine the influence of social media platforms on consumer adoption of green marketing initiatives. The methodology is designed to ensure reliability, validity and comprehensive analysis of the research problem.

1. Research Design

The study employs a descriptive and explanatory research design. The descriptive aspect focuses on understanding consumer perceptions and behaviors toward green marketing on social media, while the explanatory component examines the causal relationships between social media factors (e.g., engagement, credibility) and consumer adoption of green products. A mixed-method approach is utilized, combining both quantitative and qualitative techniques to provide a more holistic understanding of the research problem.

2. Research Approach

- **Quantitative Approach:** Used to test hypotheses and measure relationships between variables through structured data collection.
- **Qualitative Approach:** Used to gain deeper insights into consumer perceptions, attitudes and motivations through content analysis and open-ended responses.

3. Data Sources

- **Primary Data:** Collected directly from respondents using structured questionnaires and interviews.
- **Secondary Data:** Obtained from academic journals, research articles, reports and credible online sources related to green marketing and digital platforms.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents. (N = 300)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	18–25	110	36.7%
	26–35	95	31.7%
	36–45	55	18.3%
	46 & above	40	13.3%
Gender	Male	170	56.7%
	Female	130	43.3%
Residence	Urban	160	53.3%
	Semi-Urban	90	30.0%
	Rural	50	16.7%
Education	Undergraduate	120	40.0%

	Postgraduate	140	46.7%
	Others	40	13.3%

Interpretation:- The sample is dominated by young (18–35), urban and well-educated respondents, indicating that digitally active Indian consumers are more exposed to and engaged with green marketing on social media.

Table 2: Awareness of Green Marketing on Social Media.

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am aware of eco-friendly products promoted online	4.12	0.76
I frequently see green marketing ads on social media	4.05	0.81
Social media increases my awareness of sustainability	4.20	0.70

Interpretation: High mean values (>4) indicate strong awareness among Indian consumers.

Table 3: Influence of Social Media on Consumer Attitudes.

Factor	Mean	Std. Deviation
Visual content (videos/reels)	4.30	0.65
Informative posts	3.95	0.82
Emotional storytelling	4.18	0.72

Interpretation:

Visual and storytelling content has the strongest impact on shaping positive attitudes, suggesting that engaging formats are more persuasive than plain informational posts.

Table 4: Impact of eWOM (Electronic Word-of-Mouth)

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
I trust online reviews for green products	4.15	0.74
Peer recommendations influence my purchase decision	4.10	0.78
Ratings affect my perception of eco-friendly brands	4.05	0.80

Interpretation:

Consumers rely heavily on reviews, ratings and peer recommendations, confirming that eWOM significantly influences green purchase decisions in India.

Table 5: Regression Analysis Results.

Variable	Beta (β)	t-value	Significance (p-value)
Social Media Awareness	0.42	6.85	0.000
eWOM	0.36	5.90	0.000
Influencer Credibility	0.39	6.20	0.000
Greenwashing (Negative)	-0.28	-4.75	0.001

Interpretation:

- Positive variables significantly influence adoption
- Green washing negatively impacts consumer trust

Table 6: Correlation Matrix.

Variables	1	2	3	4
1. Social Media Usage	1.00			
2. Awareness	0.62	1.00		
3. Trust	0.58	0.65	1.00	
4. Purchase Intention	0.60	0.68	0.72	1.00

Interpretation:

There is a strong positive relationship between social media usage, awareness, trust and purchase intention, indicating these factors are interdependent in driving green consumption.

Table 7: Hypothesis Testing Summary.

Hypothesis	Statement	Result
H1	Social media awareness influences adoption	Accepted
H2	E WOM impacts purchase intention	Accepted
H3	Influencer credibility affects trust	Accepted
H4	Green washing negatively affects adoption	Accepted

Interpretation:

All hypotheses are supported, confirming that social media plays a significant role in influencing consumer adoption of green marketing initiatives.

FINDINGS**1. Demographic Insights:**

- Young adults (18–35), urban residents and educated consumers dominate social media usage in India, making them the primary audience for green marketing initiatives.

2. Awareness:

- Social media platforms significantly increase consumer awareness of eco-friendly products and sustainability campaigns. Instagram, YouTube and Facebook are particularly effective.

3. Attitude and Engagement:

- Interactive and visually rich content (videos, reels, storytelling) positively influences consumer attitudes toward green products.

- Consumers engage more with content they perceive as authentic and emotionally appealing.

4. Influence of eWOM and Peer Recommendations:

- Online reviews, ratings and peer endorsements strongly impact purchase intentions.
- User-generated content is considered more credible than brand-generated advertisements.

5. Role of Influencer Marketing:

- Influencers who demonstrate authenticity and sustainability practices significantly enhance consumer trust and adoption.
- Micro-influencers often perform better than celebrities in building credibility.

6. Trust and Green washing:

- Skepticism toward misleading green claims (green washing) negatively affects adoption.
- Transparent communication and certifications enhance trust.

7. Behavioral Adoption:

- Higher engagement (likes, shares, comments) is associated with greater likelihood of purchasing green products.
- Social media acts as a participatory ecosystem, where consumer engagement reinforces sustainable behavior.

Suggestions / Recommendations

1. For Marketers:

- Design visually engaging and storytelling-based campaigns to attract Indian social media users.
- Collaborate with authentic influencers who align with sustainability values.
- Encourage user participation (contests, challenges, reviews) to boost engagement.
- Clearly communicate verifiable environmental claims to reduce greenwashing skepticism.

2. For Policymakers:

- Promote digital literacy in rural and semi-urban areas to expand green marketing reach.
- Introduce guidelines and certifications for eco-friendly products to enhance consumer trust.

3. For Businesses:

- Leverage social media analytics to track engagement and optimize green marketing strategies.
- Integrate e WOM campaigns and community-building initiatives for stronger adoption.

4. For Researchers:

- Explore cross-cultural differences in green marketing adoption within India.
- Investigate the role of emerging technologies (AI, AR/VR) in enhancing sustainability messaging.

CONCLUSION

The study confirms that social media platforms play a critical role in promoting green marketing **initiatives in India**. They effectively increase awareness, shape attitudes and influence adoption of eco-friendly products, particularly among young, educated and urban consumers. Engagement through interactive content, e WOM and influencer endorsements is key to converting awareness into action.

However, challenges such as skepticism, green washing and digital access disparities persist. Addressing these issues through transparent communication, credible certifications and inclusive digital strategies can significantly enhance the effectiveness of green marketing campaigns.

Overall, the research highlights the transformative potential of social media in shaping sustainable consumer behavior and provides actionable insights for marketers, policymakers and businesses seeking to foster environmentally responsible consumption in the Indian context.

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