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Green Digital Marketing and Sustainable Consumer Behavior: Integrating Environmental Communication and Green Trust in the Green Economy

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ABSTRACT

The development of the green economy has encouraged companies to integrate sustainability principles into their digital marketing strategies. This study aims to examine the evolution of green digital marketing and its relationship with sustainable consumer behavior, particularly through environmental communication and consumer trust. Using a narrative literature review approach, this study conducts a thematic synthesis of literature on green marketing, digital communication, green trust, greenwashing, and sustainable consumption behavior. The findings indicate that digital platforms expand the dissemination of environmental information and enhance consumer engagement. However, the effectiveness of green digital marketing depends on communication transparency, the credibility of environmental claims, and consumer trust. Greenwashing, product prices, quality, availability, and consumption habits may hinder behavioral change. This study develops a conceptual framework integrating green digital marketing, environmental communication, green trust, and sustainable consumer behavior. The framework contributes to understanding sustainable digital marketing and provides a foundation for more responsible marketing strategies and future empirical research supporting the transition toward a green economy.

ABSTRAK

Perkembangan ekonomi hijau mendorong perusahaan mengintegrasikan prinsip keberlanjutan dalam strategi pemasaran digital. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis perkembangan green digital marketing dan hubungannya dengan sustainable consumer behavior, khususnya melalui komunikasi lingkungan dan kepercayaan konsumen. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan narrative literature review dengan sintesis tematik terhadap literatur mengenai pemasaran hijau, komunikasi digital, green trust, greenwashing, dan perilaku konsumsi berkelanjutan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa platform digital memperluas penyampaian informasi lingkungan dan meningkatkan keterlibatan konsumen. Namun, efektivitas pemasaran digital hijau bergantung pada transparansi komunikasi, kredibilitas klaim lingkungan, dan kepercayaan konsumen. Risiko greenwashing, harga, kualitas, ketersediaan produk, serta kebiasaan konsumsi dapat menghambat perubahan perilaku. Kajian ini mengembangkan kerangka konseptual yang mengintegrasikan green digital marketing, environmental communication, green trust, dan sustainable consumer behavior. Kerangka tersebut memberikan kontribusi terhadap pemahaman pemasaran digital berkelanjutan serta menjadi dasar pengembangan strategi pemasaran yang lebih bertanggung jawab dan penelitian empiris selanjutnya dalam mendukung transformasi ekonomi hijau secara berkelanjutan.

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of the green economy has transformed how companies conduct business and establish relationships with consumers. Business competition is no longer determined solely by price, quality, and profitability, but also by how companies address the environmental consequences of their economic activities. Climate change, increasing waste generation, natural resource consumption, and broader sustainability

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challenges have created growing demands for more responsible business practices. Under these circumstances, marketing plays an important role because it connects corporate strategies with consumer purchasing decisions. Companies are no longer expected merely to offer products that provide economic benefits; they must also explain how their products are produced, used, and managed in ways that consider environmental sustainability.

These changes have occurred alongside the rapid development of digital technologies, which increasingly influence consumer behavior. Social media, e-commerce, search engines, and various digital platforms have become integral to information searches, product evaluations, and purchasing decisions. Kannan & Li (2017) explain that digital marketing enables companies to interact with consumers and create value through digital technologies. Within the green economy, these capabilities provide opportunities for companies to communicate information about environmentally friendly raw materials, energy efficiency, sustainable packaging, and environmental responsibility. However, the ease of disseminating information does not necessarily ensure that consumers understand or trust the messages they receive. Therefore, the development of digital marketing must be examined alongside issues of information credibility and changing consumer preferences for sustainable products.

The concept of green marketing provides a foundation for understanding how environmental considerations are integrated into marketing activities. Peattie & Belz (2010) explain that sustainable marketing involves developing long-term relationships with consumers and society through value creation that considers both social and environmental dimensions. This perspective suggests that green marketing cannot be achieved simply by adding leaf symbols, green colors, or environmentally friendly terminology to product packaging. Companies must ensure that their marketing claims are supported by accountable business practices. When these principles are applied through digital technologies, green digital marketing emerges as an approach that utilizes digital marketing channels and strategies to communicate environmental values and foster more sustainability-oriented relationships with consumers.

Despite its potential, implementing green digital marketing presents considerable challenges. One of the most significant is greenwashing, a communication practice that may create the impression that a product or company is more environmentally responsible than it actually is. Delmas & Burbano (2011) explain that greenwashing involves discrepancies between corporate environmental communication and actual environmental performance, potentially misleading stakeholders. In digital marketing, this risk is particularly relevant because information can spread rapidly through online advertising, social media content, and third-party promotions. Consumers may encounter claims such as eco-friendly, natural, or sustainable without receiving sufficient information to evaluate their validity. This situation indicates that the success of green digital marketing depends not only on reaching consumers but also on transparency, trust, and consistency between marketing messages and corporate environmental practices.

From the consumer perspective, growing environmental concern does not always translate into changes in purchasing behavior. Some consumers express concern about sustainability but continue to consider price, quality, convenience, product availability, and established consumption habits when making purchasing decisions. White et al. (2019) explain that encouraging sustainable consumer behavior requires an understanding of the psychological and situational factors influencing individual decisions. Their findings indicate that environmental awareness is not the sole determinant of consumption behavior. In digital environments, consumers also encounter product reviews, algorithmic recommendations, price promotions, and information from multiple sources, which may either strengthen or weaken their preferences for environmentally friendly products. Consequently, the relationship between green marketing communication and consumer behavior should be understood as a process shaped by multiple considerations.

Another important issue is the distinction between consumers' intentions to purchase environmentally friendly products and their actual purchasing behavior. Joshi & Rahman (2015) demonstrate that green purchasing decisions are influenced by interconnected individual and situational factors. Consumers may hold favorable attitudes toward sustainable products but may not necessarily choose them when less expensive or more accessible alternatives are available. In digital marketing contexts, companies may successfully increase consumer knowledge about sustainability through educational content and environmental campaigns. However, greater knowledge does not necessarily result in consistent changes in consumption behavior. This situation highlights the importance of distinguishing environmental awareness, consumer attitudes, purchase intentions, and actual consumption behavior when evaluating the effectiveness of green digital marketing strategies.

Research on digital marketing and sustainable consumer behavior has established an important foundation, but relevant discussions remain distributed across several fields of study. Digital marketing research has extensively examined technology utilization, consumer interactions, and value creation, as discussed by Kannan & Li (2017). Meanwhile, sustainable consumption research has emphasized psychological factors, habits, and contextual conditions influencing purchasing decisions, as explained by White et al. (2019). Studies on greenwashing have also highlighted the credibility of environmental claims and consumer trust (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). Although these perspectives are interconnected, they emphasize different analytical dimensions. Therefore, a literature synthesis is needed to connect green digital marketing strategies, the quality of environmental communication, consumer trust, and changes in consumption behavior within a more integrated discussion.

Against this background, this study aims to examine the development of green digital marketing and its relationship with sustainable consumer behavior in the context of the green economy through a narrative literature review approach. Specifically, the review seeks to identify developments in sustainable digital marketing strategies, examine the roles of environmental communication and consumer trust, and explain factors that may facilitate or hinder changes in consumption behavior. Furthermore, the study integrates findings from previous research to understand the relationships among Green Digital Marketing, Environmental Communication, Green Trust, and Sustainable Consumer Behavior. Its expected contribution extends beyond summarizing the application of digital technologies in green marketing to explaining how digital strategies can foster environmental understanding, consumer trust, and more environmentally responsible consumption behavior. Accordingly, this review is expected to provide a conceptual foundation for developing sustainable digital marketing strategies and serve as a reference for future research on the transition toward a green economy.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

2.1 Green Digital Marketing in the Green Economy

The development of the green economy has encouraged companies to incorporate environmental considerations into their marketing activities. Marketing is no longer solely oriented toward increasing sales but also toward ensuring that products and services generate economic value without disregarding their environmental impacts. In this context, green marketing has emerged as an approach that integrates environmental considerations into product development, marketing communication, distribution, and consumer relationships. Peattie & Belz (2010) explain that sustainable marketing should emphasize long-term value creation involving the interests of consumers, companies, society, and the environment. This perspective indicates that green marketing cannot rely solely on promotional messages but must be supported by business practices consistent with sustainability principles. The advancement of digital technologies has further expanded the ways companies implement green marketing principles. Kannan & Li (2017) explain that digital marketing involves using technology to establish consumer interactions, manage communication, and create value through various digital channels. When integrated with environmental objectives, green digital marketing can be understood as a marketing strategy that utilizes digital technologies to communicate sustainability information, develop relationships with environmentally conscious consumers, and support more responsible consumption decisions. Such strategies can be implemented through social media, corporate websites, e-commerce platforms, educational content, and digital campaigns that explain the environmental characteristics of products.

However, the use of digital technologies in green marketing does not automatically make marketing activities more sustainable. Companies may use social media to promote environmentally friendly products, yet these messages do not necessarily reflect their overall operational practices. Furthermore, digital marketing activities themselves depend on technological infrastructure, energy consumption, and electronic devices that have environmental impacts. Therefore, evaluating green digital marketing requires distinguishing between communicating sustainability and ensuring the sustainability of marketing activities themselves. This distinction is important to prevent green digital marketing from being understood merely as a change in promotional content. In this review, green digital marketing is understood as a marketing approach that integrates environmental objectives into digital strategies and activities, including product information dissemination, sustainability communication, consumer interaction, and customer relationship development. Its effectiveness is evaluated not only through promotional reach or user engagement but also through companies' ability to provide trustworthy information and encourage more responsible consumption decisions.

This definition provides a foundation for understanding how green digital marketing strategies have evolved within the green economy.

2.2 Environmental Communication in Digital Marketing Strategies

Environmental communication is an essential component of green digital marketing because consumers require information to understand the sustainability characteristics of products. Such information may concern raw materials, energy consumption, production processes, packaging, waste reduction, and product management after use. In conventional marketing, this information is often communicated through labels and packaging. Digital technologies, however, enable companies to provide more comprehensive explanations through websites, social media, videos, and various forms of interactive content. These developments create opportunities for consumers to access environmental information before making purchasing decisions. Kannan & Li (2017) identify interaction and value creation as important components of digital marketing. This perspective suggests that marketing communication is not merely a one-way process from companies to consumers. Consumers can also ask questions, provide reviews, compare information, and share their experiences with other users. In green marketing, these interactions can help consumers understand the environmental benefits of products. However, broader communication also increases the possibility of incomplete information, exaggerated claims, or differing interpretations of sustainability-related terminology.

Credibility becomes increasingly important when companies incorporate environmental claims into their promotional strategies. Delmas & Burbano (2011) explain that greenwashing may occur when communication about environmental responsibility does not correspond with a company's actual environmental performance. In digital environments, such claims can spread through advertisements, social media posts, promotional content, and third-party recommendations. The use of terms such as environmentally friendly, green, or sustainable without adequate explanation may create positive impressions but does not necessarily help consumers objectively understand a product's environmental impacts. Therefore, effective environmental communication must emphasize clarity, relevance, consistency, and verifiability. Companies should explain environmental aspects that are genuinely associated with their products rather than merely using symbols or terminology to create a green image. Information regarding certifications, material usage, packaging reduction, or waste management becomes more meaningful when communicated specifically and supported by sufficient evidence. In this review, environmental communication is positioned as a process connecting green digital marketing strategies with consumers' understanding and evaluation of sustainability claims.

2.3 Green Trust and the Risk of Greenwashing

Trust is an essential element of relationships between companies and consumers, particularly when product characteristics are difficult to evaluate directly. In green marketing, consumers cannot always verify whether products are genuinely manufactured with consideration for environmental impacts. They often depend on information provided by companies, product labels, certifications, user reviews, and brand reputation. These circumstances make green trust relevant for explaining how consumers evaluate the credibility of environmental claims before making purchasing decisions. Chen (2010) explains that green trust refers to consumers' willingness to rely on a product, service, or brand based on their confidence in its environmental credibility, benefits, and claimed environmental capabilities. This perspective indicates that green trust cannot be established merely through promotional intensity. Consumers need reasons to believe that companies are committed to and capable of fulfilling their environmental promises. In digital marketing, such trust may be influenced by information consistency, corporate transparency, purchasing experiences, and the alignment between product claims and the quality consumers actually receive.

Delmas & Burbano (2011) explain that greenwashing may arise from market pressures, organizational incentives, and insufficient oversight of environmental communication. This practice presents challenges for companies genuinely committed to sustainability because consumers may struggle to distinguish credible claims from misleading ones. When numerous brands excessively use environmentally friendly terminology, consumers may become skeptical of green marketing messages in general. Consequently, greenwashing affects not only the reputation of individual companies but may also undermine confidence in sustainability communication across the market. In digital environments, green trust develops through interactions among multiple information sources. Consumers may obtain information from official corporate accounts, customer reviews, content creators, environmental organizations, and e-commerce platforms. The

diversity of these sources creates opportunities for cross-checking information but may also generate confusion when available information is contradictory. Therefore, transparency and communication consistency are essential for maintaining consumer trust. In this review, green trust is understood as a connecting concept that helps explain why certain forms of environmental communication may support sustainable consumption behavior while others fail to generate similar responses.

2.4 Sustainable Consumer Behavior in the Digital Era

Sustainable consumer behavior refers to consumption decisions that consider the environmental and social consequences of products or services. Such behavior is not limited to purchasing environmentally labeled products but also includes reducing unnecessary consumption, using products more efficiently, selecting durable goods, reusing products, and managing waste. Within the green economy, consumer behavior is important because the success of sustainable business transformation depends not only on changes in corporate strategies but also on how individuals select and use products. White et al. (2019) developed the SHIFT framework to explain factors that encourage more sustainable consumer behavior. The framework comprises social influence, Habit formation, Individual self, Feelings and cognition, and Tangibility. This perspective suggests that sustainable consumption decisions are influenced by social factors, habits, individual identity, emotions, cognitive processes, and consumers' ability to understand the consequences of their actions. Therefore, providing environmental information alone may be insufficient to change behavior. Marketing strategies must consider how such information relates to consumers' needs, experiences, and established habits.

Joshi & Rahman (2015) also explain that green purchasing behavior is influenced by various individual and situational factors. Environmental concern may contribute to positive attitudes, but purchasing decisions remain influenced by price, quality, product availability, and market conditions. This helps explain why environmentally conscious consumers do not always purchase sustainable products. The distinction between attitudes, intentions, and actual behavior is particularly important because the effectiveness of green marketing cannot be inferred solely from consumers' positive responses to promotional messages.

The development of digital technologies adds further complexity to this decision-making process. Consumers can compare products, read reviews, participate in environmental campaigns, and receive recommendations through digital platforms. Conversely, price promotions, purchasing convenience, and algorithmic recommendations may encourage more frequent consumption, including purchases of products that are not genuinely needed. This situation indicates that digital technologies have the potential both to support and to challenge sustainable consumption behavior. Therefore, the success of green digital marketing should be assessed not only through increased interest in purchasing green products but also through its capacity to support more conscious and responsible consumption decisions. In this review, sustainable consumer behavior is understood as consumer behavior that considers environmental impacts throughout product selection, purchasing, use, and disposal. This understanding encompasses actual behavior rather than merely environmental awareness or purchase intentions. Such an approach enables the review to distinguish between the effectiveness of marketing communication in generating positive perceptions and its effectiveness in supporting more sustainable consumption practices.

2.5 Integrating Green Digital Marketing, Environmental Communication, Green Trust, and Sustainable Consumer Behavior

Green digital marketing, environmental communication, green trust, and sustainable consumer behavior are four interconnected concepts that perform distinct functions. Green digital marketing refers to marketing strategies that integrate environmental objectives through digital technologies. Environmental communication concerns how sustainability information is conveyed to consumers. Green trust represents consumers' confidence in the credibility and environmental commitments of products or companies. Meanwhile, sustainable consumer behavior reflects consumption decisions and actions that consider environmental impacts. Kannan & Li (2017) provide a foundation for understanding the role of technology in marketing interactions, while Delmas & Burbano (2011) emphasize the importance of credible environmental communication. Chen (2010) explains the relevance of green trust, whereas White et al. (2019) demonstrate that changes in consumption behavior are influenced by psychological and situational factors.

Based on these perspectives, this review develops a conceptual framework connecting Green Digital Marketing, Environmental Communication, Green Trust, and Sustainable Consumer Behavior. Green digital

marketing strategies are understood as approaches that enable companies to communicate sustainability values through various digital channels. Environmental communication serves as a means of explaining the environmental characteristics and benefits of products, while green trust helps explain how consumers evaluate the credibility of such information. Established trust may be associated with consumers' willingness to consider more sustainable consumption choices. However, these relationships are not assumed to occur automatically. Price, quality, product availability, consumption habits, and the risk of greenwashing may influence how consumers respond to green marketing messages.

This framework serves as the basis for integrating findings from previous studies within the narrative literature review. The review examines not only the digital platforms companies use to promote environmentally friendly products but also communication quality, trust formation, and changes in consumer behavior. Accordingly, the analysis seeks to understand why green digital marketing strategies may generate different consumer responses across various contexts. The framework represents a conceptual synthesis rather than a statistically tested causal model. Through this approach, the review is expected to provide a more integrated understanding of the development of sustainable digital marketing strategies in the green economy.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a narrative literature review approach to examine the development of green digital marketing strategies and their relationship with sustainable consumer behavior within the context of the green economy. This approach was selected because the study aims to integrate findings from previous research, identify patterns in conceptual development, and understand factors influencing sustainable consumer behavior. Rather than estimating the magnitude of relationships between variables through meta-analysis, the study seeks to develop a conceptual understanding based on similarities, differences, and gaps in existing research findings. Snyder (2019) explains that literature reviews can contribute to knowledge development by synthesizing previous studies and identifying research gaps. Green et al. (2006) emphasize the importance of preparing narrative reviews with clearly defined objectives and a well-organized discussion. Meanwhile, Baethge et al. (2019) introduced SANRA as an instrument for assessing the quality of narrative review articles, including the clarity of research objectives, the appropriateness of literature searches, and the quality of scientific evidence presentation. Based on these perspectives, this study is structured around four stages: literature identification, literature screening and selection, thematic categorization, and narrative synthesis.

3.2 Literature Search Strategy

The literature search is designed to cover scientific publications from 2015 to 2026 using Scopus and Google Scholar. This period was selected to examine the development of green marketing strategies alongside the increasing adoption of digital technologies and growing attention to sustainable consumption behavior. Foundational literature published before 2015 may still be used to establish the conceptual background but is excluded from the primary article count if it falls outside the specified selection period.

The search keywords include "green digital marketing", "green marketing", "sustainable digital marketing", "environmental communication", "green advertising", "green trust", "greenwashing", "sustainable consumer behavior", "green purchase intention", and "green purchase behavior". The search strategy uses combinations of the Boolean operators AND and OR, including "green digital marketing" AND "sustainable consumer behavior", "green marketing" AND "green trust", and ("digital marketing" OR "social media marketing") AND ("sustainability" OR "green consumption"). These keyword combinations are intended to identify studies addressing digital marketing strategies, environmental communication, consumer trust, and sustainable consumption decisions.

This study establishes 30 primary articles as the target for narrative synthesis. In addition, five benchmark/supporting articles are allocated separately to strengthen the discussion and provide comparative context. Conceptual and methodological references, such as Kannan & Li (2017), White et al. (2019), Snyder (2019), and Baethge et al. (2019), may be used as theoretical or methodological foundations. These references are counted as primary articles only if they meet all selection criteria and are actually analyzed as part of the review corpus. This distinction ensures that the primary sources used in the synthesis can be differentiated from supporting literature.

3.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Literature selection is based on the relevance of articles to the research objectives, particularly their discussion of green digital marketing strategies, environmental communication, green trust, greenwashing, and sustainable consumer behavior. Empirical studies, conceptual papers, and literature reviews may be included if they were published between 2015 and 2026 and contribute to understanding the relationship between digital marketing and sustainable consumer behavior. Publications focusing exclusively on environmental technologies without connections to marketing or consumer behavior are excluded from the selection process. Similarly, articles concentrating on production sustainability without providing information on marketing communication, consumer perceptions, or consumption decisions are not prioritized. The inclusion and exclusion criteria are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Literature Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Aspect	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Publication period	Articles published between 2015 and 2026	Publications outside the specified selection period
Literature sources	Scientific publications identified through Scopus and Google Scholar	Sources that cannot be verified
Publication type	Empirical articles, conceptual papers, and literature reviews	News articles, opinion pieces, advertisements, and nonacademic sources
Research focus	Green digital marketing, green marketing, and sustainable digital marketing	Studies unrelated to green or digital marketing
Environmental communication	Environmental communication, green advertising, greenwashing, and information transparency	Studies that do not address environmental communication or claims
Consumer behavior	Green trust, green purchase intention, green purchase behavior, and sustainable consumption	Studies unrelated to consumer perceptions or behavior
Research context	Companies, brands, digital platforms, and consumers within sustainability contexts	Studies irrelevant to sustainable marketing and consumption
Information availability	Articles providing sufficient methodological, conceptual, or empirical information	Publications lacking sufficient scientific information for analysis

Note: Benchmark/supporting articles and methodological or conceptual references are treated separately from the primary synthesis corpus.

3.4 Literature Selection Process

The literature selection process consisted of four stages: identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and final inclusion. A total of 95 publications were identified through Scopus (n = 35) and Google Scholar (n = 60). After removing 15 duplicate records, 80 publications remained for title and abstract screening. During this stage, 35 publications were excluded because they did not sufficiently address the research focus. Studies discussing sustainability without clear connections to marketing, environmental communication, or consumer behavior were excluded from further assessment. The remaining 45 publications underwent full-text eligibility assessment, during which 15 publications were excluded because they did not meet the substantive inclusion criteria or lacked sufficient information for thematic synthesis. Consequently, 30 primary articles were included in the final narrative synthesis, representing 31.58% of the initially identified publications. An additional five benchmark articles, together with relevant methodological and conceptual references, were used to strengthen the theoretical discussion but were not counted among the 30 primary articles. Figure 1 presents the literature selection process, including the identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and final inclusion stages.

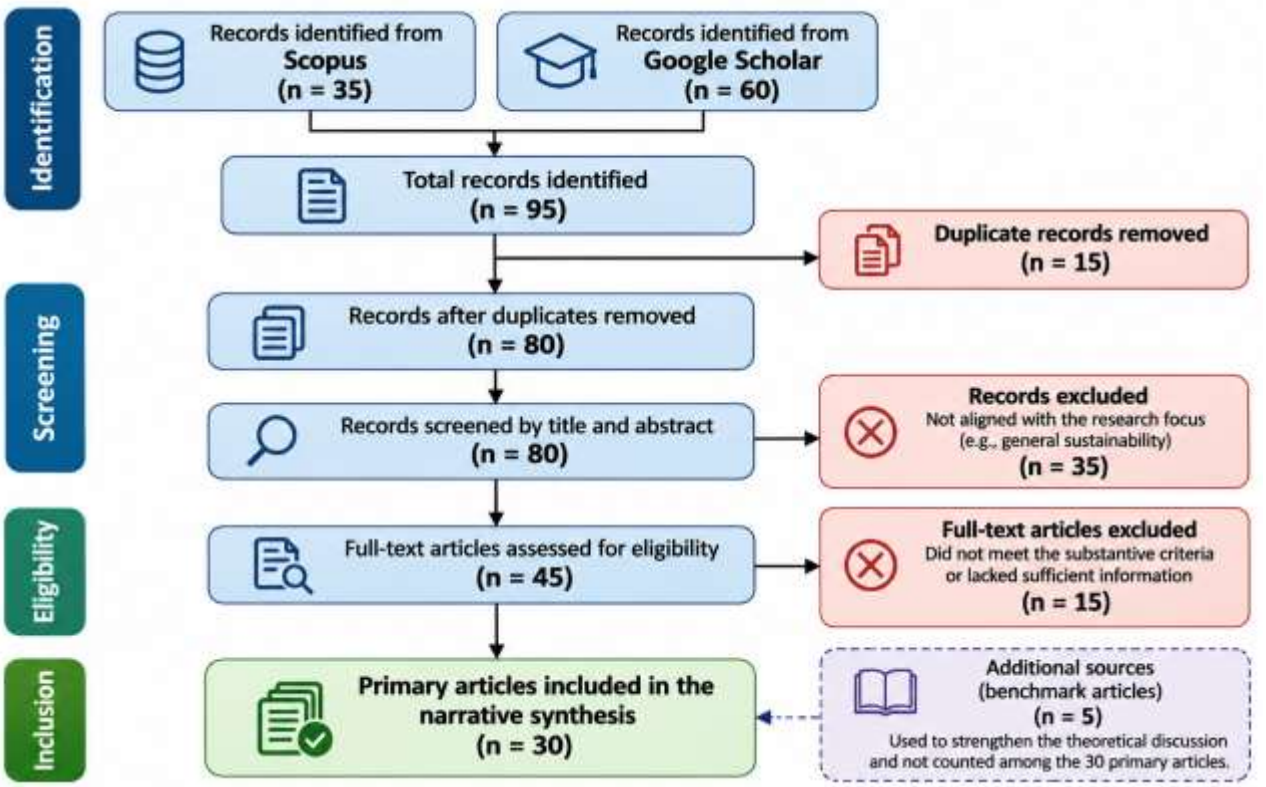


Figure 1. Literature Selection Process
Source: Author's Literature Selection (2026).

3.5 Literature Analysis and Synthesis

A total of 30 primary articles are targeted for analysis using a thematic narrative synthesis approach. Each article will be examined based on its publication details, research objectives, methodological approach, industry or consumer context, key concepts, and findings related to green digital marketing and sustainable consumption behavior. This information will then be compared to identify similarities, differences, and conditions that may explain variations in research findings. The literature synthesis is organized into five major themes. The first theme examines the development of Green Digital Marketing within the green economy. The second explores Environmental Communication and strategies for disseminating sustainability information through digital platforms. The third addresses Green Trust and the risks associated with Greenwashing. The fourth examines Sustainable Consumer Behavior, including environmental awareness, purchase intentions, and actual consumption behavior. The fifth integrates the relationships among green digital marketing strategies, environmental communication, consumer trust, and sustainable consumption behavior.

The analysis compares findings that support the effectiveness of green marketing with those highlighting its limitations. Particular attention is given to factors that may influence relationships among the concepts, including product prices, quality, information transparency, consumer habits, brand credibility, and perceptions of environmental claims. This approach enables the review to explain why green digital marketing strategies may generate different consumer responses across various contexts. The synthesis findings are subsequently integrated into a framework comprising Green Digital Marketing, Environmental Communication, Green Trust, and Sustainable Consumer Behavior. This framework is used to connect findings from previous studies and identify research gaps requiring further empirical investigation. Relationships among the components are understood as an analytical framework developed from the literature rather than a causal model established through statistical testing. Accordingly, the review is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the development of sustainable digital marketing strategies in supporting consumer behavior within the green economy.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Overview of Literature Development

The development of research on green digital marketing and sustainable consumer behavior reflects a shift in how green marketing is understood. Initially, research focused primarily on the characteristics of environmentally friendly products, green marketing strategies, and consumers' willingness to purchase products perceived as more environmentally responsible. However, advances in digital technologies have broadened these discussions. Social media, digital advertising, e-commerce platforms, and online communities have become important spaces for companies to communicate their environmental commitments while building relationships with consumers. Dangelico & Vocalelli (2017) explain that green marketing encompasses marketing strategies and instruments extending beyond promotional activities. Meanwhile, Kannan & Li (2017) emphasize that digital technologies have transformed interaction and value creation processes in marketing.

This development is particularly evident in research on green advertising through social media. Through a systematic review of 81 articles, Ktisti et al. (2022) found that research on green advertising has developed across several themes, particularly environmental message content, greenwashing, consumer skepticism, influencer marketing, and social media strategies. These findings indicate that green marketing research no longer focuses solely on whether consumers prefer environmentally friendly products but also examines how information is communicated and why consumers trust or question such information. This shift is important because successful digital communication does not necessarily translate into more sustainable consumption behavior.

More recent studies reinforce this direction. Nekmahmud et al. (2022) demonstrated a positive relationship between social media marketing and green purchase intention in a study involving 785 respondents. Wu & Long (2024a) highlighted the importance of consumers' acceptance of green communication, while Wu & Long (2024b) positioned green trust and perceived information usefulness as mechanisms explaining the relationship between social media marketing and environmentally friendly purchase intentions. Hu et al. (2024) further extended the discussion by examining brand engagement and repurchase intention. Together, these studies suggest that green digital marketing research has shifted from message dissemination toward understanding psychological responses and long-term consumer relationships.

More recent research also emphasizes the importance of social contexts and actual behavior. Confetto et al. (2023) linked social media content to Generation Z's sustainability-related behavior, while Horrich et al. (2025) examined the role of social media in shaping sustainable consumer behavior through a qualitative approach. Siahaan et al. (2026) identified that the relationship between social media-based green marketing and sustainable behavior is frequently explained through trust, engagement, and perceived value. These developments suggest that the effectiveness of green digital marketing cannot be adequately understood through platform usage intensity alone. Research must also consider how consumers interpret environmental messages and translate them into consumption decisions.

Based on this mapping, 30 relevant publications were identified as sources for developing the conceptual synthesis and are presented in Table 2. These publications include empirical articles, literature reviews, and studies addressing green marketing strategies, environmental communication, trust, greenwashing, and consumer behavior. The publications are grouped according to their primary contributions. However, because individual studies may address several concepts simultaneously, the thematic categories are not intended to be mutually exclusive.

Table 2. Thematic Mapping of 30 Studies on Green Digital Marketing and Sustainable Consumer Behavior

No.	Authors and Year	Primary Focus	Theme
1	Dangelico & Vocalelli (2017)	Green marketing strategies and instruments	Green Digital Marketing
2	Kannan & Li (2017)	Digital marketing framework	Green Digital Marketing
3	Ktisti et al. (2022)	Green advertising on social media	Green Digital Marketing
4	Nekmahmud et al. (2022)	Social media and green purchase intention	Green Digital Marketing
5	Gupta & Syed (2022)	Marketing green products through social media	Green Digital Marketing
6	Hu et al. (2024)	Social media marketing and repurchase intention	Green Digital Marketing
7	Nabivi (2025)	The role of social media in green marketing	Green Digital Marketing
8	Confetto et al. (2023)	Social media content and sustainability behavior	Environmental Communication

9	Wu & Long (2024a)	Green communication and consumption intention	Environmental Communication
10	Wu & Long (2024b)	Information usefulness and green trust	Environmental Communication
11	Li et al. (2024)	Social media and green lifestyle adoption	Environmental Communication
12	Filipović & Šapić (2025)	Social media activities and green products	Environmental Communication
13	Nguyen et al. (2019)	Greenwashing and consumer skepticism	Green Trust and Greenwashing
14	Chen & Chang (2013)	Greenwashing and green trust	Green Trust and Greenwashing
15	Parguel et al. (2015)	Misleading environmental imagery	Green Trust and Greenwashing
16	Schmuck et al. (2018)	Greenwashing effects in advertising	Green Trust and Greenwashing
17	de Sio et al. (2022)	Advertising skepticism and green trust	Green Trust and Greenwashing
18	Promalessya & Handriana (2024)	Greenwashing and word of mouth	Green Trust and Greenwashing
19	Fang (2024)	Greenwashing and communication authenticity	Green Trust and Greenwashing
20	Joshi & Rahman (2015)	Factors influencing green purchasing behavior	Sustainable Consumer Behavior
21	White et al. (2019)	SHIFT behavioral change framework	Sustainable Consumer Behavior
22	ElHaffar et al. (2020)	Attitude–intention–behavior gap	Sustainable Consumer Behavior
23	Ahmad et al. (2022)	Trust and green purchasing behavior	Sustainable Consumer Behavior
24	Sharma et al. (2023)	Determinants of green purchase behavior	Sustainable Consumer Behavior
25	Tawde et al. (2023)	Intention–actual purchase behavior gap	Sustainable Consumer Behavior
26	Ogiemwonyi (2024)	Determinants of green behavior	Sustainable Consumer Behavior
27	Haryono et al. (2025)	Pro-environmental purchasing behavior in Indonesia	Sustainable Consumer Behavior
28	Horrich et al. (2025)	Social media and sustainable behavior	Conceptual Integration
29	Siahaan et al. (2026)	Green marketing and sustainable behavior	Conceptual Integration
30	La Ragione & Risitano (2026)	Consumer behavior in green digital marketing	Conceptual Integration

Source: Compiled by the authors from the identified literature (2026).

4.2 Development of Green Digital Marketing Strategies in the Green Economy

The synthesis findings indicate that green digital marketing has evolved into an approach that combines digital marketing strategies with the communication of sustainability values. Companies no longer use environmental attributes merely to differentiate their products but increasingly utilize digital platforms to explain their environmental commitments, encourage consumer engagement, and strengthen brand relationships. Dangelico & Vocalelli (2017) explain that green marketing encompasses the development of marketing strategies and marketing mixes that consider environmental impacts. When applied in digital environments, this approach provides companies with opportunities to disseminate product information more widely and establish interactions that were previously difficult to achieve through conventional media. This development is reflected in the use of social media as a channel for green marketing communication. Gupta & Syed (2022) discuss the contribution of social media activities to green product marketing, while Nekmahmud et al. (2022) demonstrate relationships among social media marketing, attitudes, subjective norms, and green purchase intentions. The study by Nekmahmud et al. involved 785 responses analyzed using PLS-SEM. Its findings indicate that social media marketing is positively associated with green purchase intention. These findings suggest that digital platforms can help generate consumer awareness and interest in products with

sustainability attributes. However, the development of green digital marketing is not limited to the ability to reach consumers. Ktisti et al. (2022) demonstrate that advertising message content, communication formats, and information credibility are important aspects of research on green advertising through social media. This means that the effectiveness of green marketing cannot be determined solely by the number of impressions, followers, or digital interactions. Companies must also consider whether their messages help consumers accurately understand environmental benefits. Digital campaigns that attract considerable attention do not necessarily improve consumer understanding when sustainability information is communicated only through symbols or general claims.

Hu et al. (2024) provide an additional perspective on long-term consumer relationships. Based on 438 valid responses from green product social media groups in Taiwan, their study indicates that social media marketing activities are associated with green value, environmental concern, brand image, and consumer engagement. Brand engagement subsequently helps explain repurchase intention. These findings suggest that green digital marketing can be directed toward developing sustainable consumer relationships rather than merely encouraging initial transactions. Nabivi (2025) also identifies social media as an important component in the development of green marketing. However, the presence of digital platforms must be distinguished from the success of environmental strategies. Technology can improve communication efficiency and expand access to information, but it does not automatically guarantee that the promoted products or business processes are genuinely sustainable. Therefore, green digital marketing should be understood as a strategic approach connecting digital communication with corporate environmental practices. Companies communicating sustainability messages must demonstrate consistency between published information and their actual actions. Accordingly, the development of green digital marketing within the green economy reveals two major trends. First, digital technologies expand opportunities for communication and consumer engagement. Second, increasing communication intensity requires companies to strengthen information transparency and credibility. These trends demonstrate that the success of green digital marketing depends not only on technology utilization but also on the quality of environmental values communicated to consumers.

4.3 Environmental Communication in Shaping Consumer Understanding and Responses

Environmental communication plays an important role in connecting digital marketing strategies with consumer responses. Companies can communicate information about raw materials, production processes, energy efficiency, waste reduction, and more environmentally responsible packaging. However, communicating such information does not necessarily produce the same level of understanding among consumers. Consumers differ in their environmental knowledge, experiences, and concerns. Therefore, messages considered attractive by some consumers may not necessarily be understood or trusted by others. Confetto et al. (2023) demonstrate the relevance of social media content in shaping sustainability-related behavior among Generation Z consumers. Their research suggests that digital communication functions not only as a promotional channel but also as a space for developing environmental values and awareness. However, the ability of digital content to attract attention does not automatically ensure behavioral change. Consumers need to understand why environmental information is relevant to their needs and decisions. In this context, message quality becomes essential because overly general communication may generate attention without providing sufficient knowledge.

Wu & Long (2024a) examined the relationship between green communication and consumption intentions among social media users. Their study distinguished among green thinking, social media marketing, and acceptance of green communication. The findings indicate that consumers' acceptance of green communication is an important factor in shaping attitudes and consumption intentions. These findings suggest that companies cannot rely solely on repeatedly delivering environmental messages. Consumers must perceive the information as relevant, reasonable, and consistent with their considerations. Wu & Long (2024b) provide further explanations through a stimulus-organism-response approach. Their findings indicate that social media marketing is positively associated with environmentally friendly purchase intentions, while green trust and perceived information usefulness serve as mediators. These findings suggest that environmental information becomes valuable when consumers can use it to evaluate products. Information about certifications, material usage, or waste reduction can help consumers make comparisons, but these benefits depend on message clarity and credibility.

Li et al. (2024) discuss the use of social media in adopting green lifestyles. Meanwhile, Filipović &

Šapić (2025) examine the relationship between social media marketing activities and consumer behavior toward green products among local and global companies. Both studies broaden the understanding that environmental communication occurs across different social and market contexts. Consumers may respond to sustainability messages based on corporate reputation, previous experiences, personal values, and information obtained from digital communities. Consequently, communication strategies that are effective for one consumer group may not generate similar responses among others. Based on the synthesis findings, environmental communication should be understood as a process of transmitting and receiving environmental information that influences consumer evaluations. Effective communication not only attracts attention but also helps consumers understand the benefits and limitations of sustainability claims. Companies should avoid overly general statements and provide verifiable information. In this way, environmental communication can serve as a connecting mechanism between green digital marketing strategies and the development of consumer trust.

4.4 Green Trust, Greenwashing, and the Credibility of Sustainable Digital Marketing

Green trust has emerged as an important theme because consumers do not always have the ability to verify all the environmental characteristics of a product. In many purchasing decisions, consumers rely on corporate information, labels, certifications, user reviews, and brand reputation. This situation makes green trust relevant for explaining why consumers are willing to consider products claimed to be more environmentally friendly. Trust is developed not only through appealing communication but also through consistency between marketing messages and consumer experiences.

Chen & Chang (2013) demonstrate that greenwashing is associated with reduced green trust through consumer confusion and perceived green risk. Their findings indicate that unclear environmental claims can create uncertainty during decision-making. Consumers may be attracted to products promoted as environmentally friendly but become hesitant when they cannot obtain sufficient information. In digital environments, this issue becomes increasingly relevant because various sustainability claims can be rapidly disseminated through advertisements, social media, and promotional content. Parguel et al. (2015) demonstrate that visual elements evoking natural environments can mislead consumers' evaluations of a product's environmental characteristics. This finding is particularly important because digital marketing relies heavily on images, videos, colors, and visual design. An advertisement may create an environmentally friendly impression through visual presentation even when information about the product's environmental performance is not clearly communicated. Therefore, the use of nature-related symbols cannot be treated as evidence of sustainability.

Schmuck et al. (2018) further reinforce this concern through two experimental studies conducted in the United States and Germany, involving 486 and 300 respondents, respectively. Their findings indicate that false environmental claims can increase perceptions of greenwashing and negatively affect consumer evaluations of advertisements and brands. These findings provide evidence that misleading environmental communication has consequences for marketing credibility. Companies that excessively use environmental claims risk losing consumer trust, even when their promotional messages successfully attract attention. Nguyen et al. (2019) also found that greenwashing is negatively associated with green purchase intention, with consumer skepticism serving as a connecting mechanism. Their study involved 419 Vietnamese consumers with experience purchasing green vegetables. The findings indicate that consumer information and knowledge also influence the relationship between greenwashing and purchase intention. These findings suggest that consumers do not always passively accept environmental messages. When equipped with sufficient knowledge, consumers may question corporate claims and make more critical evaluations.

The study by de Sio et al. (2022) positions green trust as a mediator in the relationship between green advertising skepticism, environmental knowledge, and green food purchase intention. Promalessya & Handriana (2024) subsequently examine the relationship among greenwashing, skepticism, and negative word of mouth in Indonesia's fast fashion industry. Fang (2024) also emphasizes the importance of distinguishing greenwashing from authentic green communication in social media environments. Together, these studies indicate that credibility issues can influence consumer responses through several pathways, including trust, skepticism, brand evaluations, and interpersonal communication.

The synthesis findings indicate that green trust does not necessarily play the same role across all studies. In some models, trust functions as a mediator explaining the relationship between marketing communication and purchase intention. However, Wu & Long (2024a) found that green trust demonstrated only

a weak moderating role in the relationship between social media marketing and green consumption intention. These differences indicate that trust is an important concept, but its relationship with consumer behavior is influenced by research contexts and study designs. Therefore, green trust should be developed through transparent communication supported by accountable environmental practices. Companies cannot rely solely on environmentally friendly terminology or natural imagery in digital promotions. Sustainability claims must be explained specifically and consistently while allowing consumers to verify the information. This is important because trust established through credible information may be more sustainable than interest generated solely through promotional appearances.

4.5 Sustainable Consumer Behavior and the Gap Between Intention and Actual Behavior

Sustainable consumer behavior extends beyond consumers' willingness to purchase environmentally friendly products. Consumers may express environmental concern and intentions to purchase green products but still choose alternatives when faced with differences in price, quality, convenience, or availability. Joshi & Rahman (2015) explain that green purchasing behavior is influenced by interconnected individual and situational factors. Their findings indicate that environmental awareness alone is not always sufficient to produce corresponding purchasing decisions.

White et al. (2019) developed the SHIFT framework, which encompasses social influence, habit formation, individual identity, feelings and cognition, and the tangibility of environmental consequences. This framework demonstrates that changes in consumption behavior require approaches that consider how consumers think and act in everyday life. In digital marketing, sustainability messages may become more meaningful when connected to benefits consumers can understand and realistic choices they can make. However, behavioral change also requires conditions that enable consumers to implement these decisions consistently. ElHaffar et al. (2020) discuss the gap between attitudes, intentions, and green consumption behavior through a narrative review. Their study highlights the importance of understanding why positive environmental attitudes do not always translate into action. Ahmad et al. (2022) examine the roles of environmental quality awareness, green trust, green self-efficacy, and environmental attitudes in green purchasing behavior. Using 321 valid responses analyzed through PLS-SEM, their study demonstrates that purchasing behavior is associated with psychological factors extending beyond environmental knowledge alone.

Through a systematic review of 151 empirical studies, Sharma et al. (2023) identified various factors influencing green purchase intentions and behavior. Their findings reinforce the perspective that sustainable consumer behavior results from interactions among personal values, market conditions, and product characteristics. Tawde et al. (2023) also examine the gap between green purchase intention and actual purchasing behavior, emphasizing the importance of implementation intentions and self-efficacy. In other words, consumers who intend to purchase environmentally friendly products still require the ability and opportunity to act on those intentions. Ogiemwonyi (2024) extends the discussion of green behavior determinants, while Haryono et al. (2025) examine green marketing strategies and pro-environmental purchasing behavior in Indonesia. Both studies are relevant because consumer behavior cannot be separated from social and economic contexts. Consumers across different regions may face differences in purchasing power, product accessibility, knowledge levels, and market choices. Therefore, the success of green digital marketing strategies among one consumer group cannot necessarily be directly generalized to another.

The synthesis findings highlight the importance of distinguishing environmental awareness, attitudes, purchase intentions, and actual behavior. Some green digital marketing studies use green purchase intention as their primary indicator. However, purchase intention does not establish that a transaction has actually occurred or that consumption patterns have become more sustainable. Consumers interested in green products do not necessarily purchase them. Similarly, consumers who purchase environmentally friendly products do not necessarily reduce excessive consumption or improve their waste management practices. Within the green economy, sustainable consumer behavior should be understood through broader decisions, including product selection, efficient use, reuse, repair, and waste reduction. Therefore, future research should employ behavioral measures that more closely reflect actual actions. Purchasing data, usage habits, and product management practices can complement measures of attitudes and intentions. This would enable a more comprehensive evaluation of the contribution of green digital marketing to sustainability.

4.6 Integrating Green Digital Marketing, Environmental Communication, Green Trust, and Sustainable Consumer Behavior

The synthesis findings indicate that green digital marketing, environmental communication, green trust, and sustainable consumer behavior are four interconnected concepts with distinct functions. Green digital marketing refers to marketing strategies that use digital technologies to communicate sustainability values and build consumer relationships. Environmental communication concerns the quality and process of communicating environmental information. Green trust relates to consumers' confidence in the credibility of corporate claims and commitments. Meanwhile, sustainable consumer behavior reflects consumption decisions that consider environmental consequences. These four concepts can be used to understand how green digital marketing strategies relate to changes in consumer behavior. The studies by Wu & Long (2024a, 2024b) demonstrate the importance of environmental communication acceptance, perceived information usefulness, and trust in shaping green purchase intentions. Hu et al. (2024) further indicate that brand engagement can help explain the relationship between social media marketing and repurchase intention. Meanwhile, Horrich et al. (2025) extend the discussion by examining how social media shapes sustainable consumer behavior. Siahaan et al. (2026) also emphasize the roles of psychological factors and consumer engagement in the relationship between social media-based green marketing and sustainable behavior. These findings suggest that digital technologies provide communication spaces, but consumer responses develop through more complex evaluation processes.

Credibility is an essential element of this integration. Chen & Chang (2013), Nguyen et al. (2019), and Fang (2024) demonstrate that greenwashing may be associated with skepticism, uncertainty, and declining consumer trust. This means that environmental communication does not always generate positive responses. Messages that are unclear or inconsistent with corporate practices may hinder trust formation. Conversely, specific and verifiable information can help consumers evaluate sustainability claims more objectively. Therefore, environmental communication quality should be positioned as an important component in the relationship between digital marketing strategies and consumer responses. La Ragione & Risitano (2026) revisit consumer behavior within the green digital marketing landscape. Their perspective reinforces the relevance of integrating developments in marketing technologies with green consumer behavior. However, this review does not assume that relationships among the components are always linear. Consumers may develop trust through previous purchasing experiences, brand reputation, certifications, or recommendations from others. Furthermore, price, quality, product availability, consumption habits, and environmental knowledge may directly influence purchasing decisions. Thus, green digital marketing strategies should be understood as one component of the behavioral change process rather than its sole determinant.

Based on this integration, the review develops a conceptual framework positioning Green Digital Marketing as the strategic context, Environmental Communication as the information dissemination process, Green Trust as the credibility evaluation component, and Sustainable Consumer Behavior as the focus of behavioral change. The framework also considers greenwashing as a communication risk, while price, quality, product accessibility, and consumption habits are treated as contextual factors. Its primary contribution lies in connecting digital marketing, environmental communication, and consumer behavior perspectives within a more integrated explanation. Relationships among the components are understood as conceptual propositions requiring further investigation rather than causal relationships established through empirical testing in this study. Accordingly, the development of sustainable digital marketing strategies in the green economy cannot be evaluated solely through increased campaign reach, social media interactions, or intentions to purchase environmentally friendly products. Companies must also consider whether their environmental communication is trustworthy and whether consumers have opportunities to translate information into action. The success of green marketing strategies depends on consistency between corporate messages and practices, information quality, consumer trust, and conditions that enable behavioral change. The integration of Green Digital Marketing, Environmental Communication, Green Trust, and Sustainable Consumer Behavior is presented in Figure 2 as a conceptual framework summarizing the literature synthesis and providing a foundation for future empirical research.

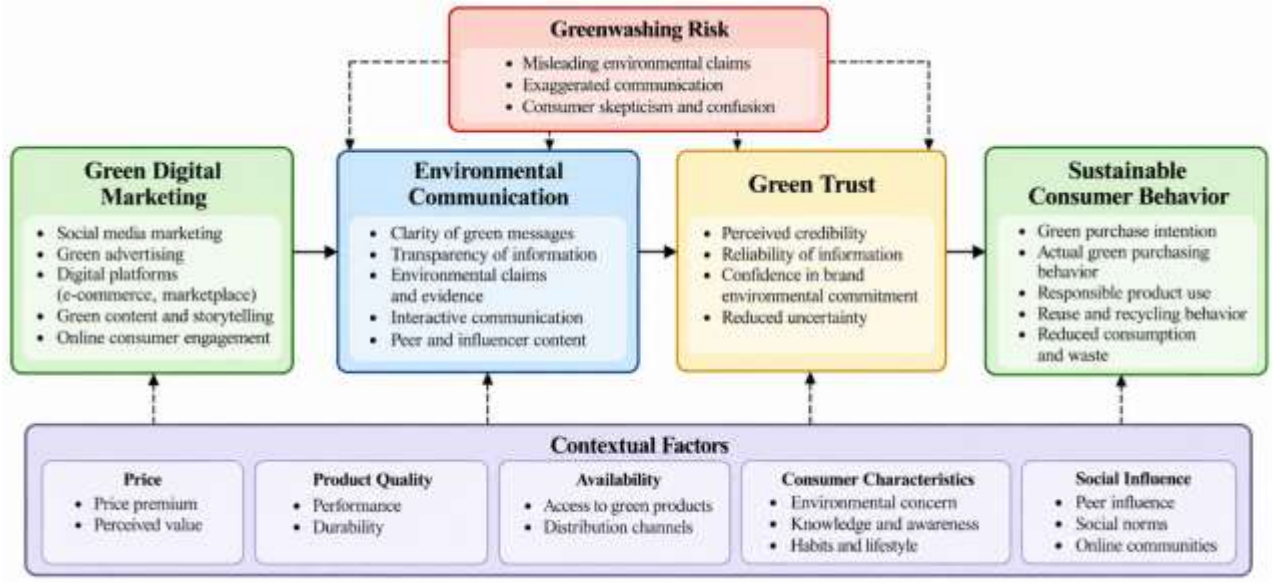


Figure 2. Integrated Framework of Green Digital Marketing and Sustainable Consumer Behavior

5. CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, SUGGESTION, AND LIMITATIONS

This review demonstrates that the development of green digital marketing in the green economy involves not only the use of digital technologies to promote environmentally friendly products but also companies' ability to establish credible environmental communication and encourage sustainable consumption behavior. The literature synthesis indicates that social media, digital advertising, and e-commerce platforms can expand the reach of sustainability information and enhance consumer engagement. However, the effectiveness of these strategies depends on information clarity, transparency of environmental claims, and consumer trust. The risk of greenwashing may generate skepticism and undermine corporate credibility, while price, quality, product availability, and consumption habits may constrain behavioral change. Based on these findings, this review integrates four key components, namely Green Digital Marketing, Environmental Communication, Green Trust, and Sustainable Consumer Behavior, into a conceptual framework for understanding the relationship between digital marketing strategies and sustainable consumption. Therefore, the success of green digital marketing should not be evaluated solely through increased consumer attention or purchase intentions but should also consider actual changes in consumer behavior that contribute to environmental sustainability.

This review provides theoretical and practical implications for the development of sustainable digital marketing. Theoretically, integrating green digital marketing, environmental communication, green trust, and sustainable consumer behavior broadens the understanding of the relationship between digital marketing strategies and environmentally responsible consumption decisions. The framework positions communication quality and trust as essential elements in understanding consumer responses while recognizing that sustainable behavior is influenced by psychological and situational conditions. From a practical perspective, companies should develop digital marketing strategies that are not only visually appealing but also communicate environmental information that is clear, specific, and verifiable. The use of social media, educational content, and digital interactions should be supported by business practices consistent with sustainability claims. For governments and other stakeholders, the findings emphasize the importance of consumer education, improved environmental literacy, and oversight of green marketing claims to ensure that the transition toward a green economy is supported by responsible communication.

This review has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting its findings. First, the study employs a narrative literature review approach, meaning that its synthesis is interpretative and does not provide statistical effect estimates comparable to those generated through meta-analysis. Second, the literature scope focuses on publications from 2015 to 2026 identified through Scopus and Google Scholar. Consequently, relevant studies indexed in other databases or published outside this period may not be comprehensively represented. Third, the reviewed studies differ in industry contexts, respondent characteristics, methodological approaches, and measures of consumer behavior, limiting the direct generalizability of the

findings across consumer populations. Furthermore, several studies emphasize green purchase intention rather than actual purchasing behavior, resulting in limited evidence regarding changes in sustainable consumption practices. The proposed integrative framework is also conceptual and has not been empirically tested using primary data. Therefore, the relationships among its components should be interpreted as a synthesis of existing literature rather than empirically established causal relationships.

Future research is recommended to empirically examine the relationships among green digital marketing, environmental communication, green trust, and sustainable consumer behavior using quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods approaches. Quantitative studies may employ Structural Equation Modeling to investigate the mediating roles of environmental communication and green trust while considering greenwashing as a factor that may undermine consumer trust. Future studies should also account for product prices, quality, availability, environmental literacy, and consumption habits as contextual factors. Beyond measuring purchase intentions, subsequent research should incorporate indicators of actual behavior, including environmentally friendly product purchases, product reuse, reduced excessive consumption, and waste management practices. Empirical research involving Indonesian consumers is particularly important because differences in purchasing power, access to green products, and environmental literacy may generate varying responses to sustainable digital marketing strategies. Accordingly, future studies are expected to strengthen the empirical evidence and provide more contextually relevant recommendations for companies seeking to support the transition toward a green economy.

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