DIGITAL STRATEGIES FOR PROMOTING ECO-CONSCIOUS CONSUMPTION IN COIMBATORE

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Abstract
The rapid advancement of digital technologies, along with increased environmental awareness, has opened up new avenues for promoting eco-conscious consumption in expanding metropolitan settings. By combining the Theory of Consumption Values (TCV), the 4A's of marketing (Awareness, Acceptability, Affordability, and Accessibility), and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), this study investigates digital strategies that impact sustainable consumer behavior in Coimbatore, a Tier-II city in India. The study builds a framework connecting digital enablers—digital literacy and platform accessibility—to consumer perceptions of utility and usability, tempered by marketing and behavioral factors, using a conceptual research approach based on secondary data from academic publications, industry reports, and case studies. The framework addresses functional, social, and emotional values while offering insights into how eco-conscious buying intents can be strengthened through digital platforms, content localization, and user-friendly interfaces. The study makes a theoretical contribution by connecting behavioral, sustainability, and digital marketing theories. It also makes a practical contribution by providing recommendations for platform designers, marketers, and legislators on how to put digital sustainability plans into practice. In Tier-II cities like Coimbatore, this study highlights the potential of localized digital interventions to promote sustainable development, environmental preservation, and responsible consumption.

Keywords-*Eco-conscious consumption, digital marketing strategies, Coimbatore, sustainable consumption, Technology Acceptance Model, Theory of Consumption Values, 4A's of Marketing*

1. Introduction

In recent years, the urgent need to address climate change, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion has hastened the global shift toward sustainable living. Eco-conscious consumption, in which people consciously select goods and services that are socially conscious, ethically manufactured, and environmentally sustainable, has become a significant trend influencing markets all over the world. According to a global NielsenIQ poll conducted in 2023, 66% of customers are prepared to pay more for sustainable companies, and 78% of consumers think sustainability matters when making decisions about what to buy. Goal 12 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN encourages companies to include sustainability into their value propositions by highlighting responsible production and consumption.

At the national level, the rise of digital technology has caused a swift change in marketing strategies and customer behavior in India. 759 million Indians already use the internet, with more than 53% of them residing in rural areas, according to the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI, 2024). With 467 million users, social media platforms like YouTube, Instagram, and WhatsApp are effective means of influencing consumer behavior. Initiatives like the "Green India" campaign and the growth of eco-label certifications have increased customer trust in sustainable products, and digital marketing has been used more and more to promote eco-friendly brands (Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, 2023). Coimbatore, one of Tamil Nadu's most important industrial, textile, and agriculture centers, offers special chances to encourage environmentally friendly consumption through digital tactics on a regional level. With a 91.2% literacy rate (Census of India, 2011) and an increasing number of tech-savvy consumers, the city has witnessed a notable uptake of social media-driven community groups, online grocery delivery, and e-commerce platforms. Local farmers and agribusiness owners are increasingly marketing organic items, low-carbon agricultural goods, and eco-friendly produce through digital marketplaces and WhatsApp business catalogs. According to the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), farmers are using digital marketing tools at a rate of 35% per year to sell directly to customers, eschewing middlemen and guaranteeing higher price realization.

Even with these encouraging advancements, difficulties still exist. Even among consumers who care about the environment, price sensitivity still affects their purchasing decisions. Greenwashing, the practice of businesses inflating or fabricating

sustainability claims, erodes consumer confidence in environmentally friendly advertising campaigns. Furthermore, the reach of advanced online tactics is constrained by the disparities in digital literacy between rural and semi-urban groups.

By investigating how digital tactics can successfully encourage environmentally responsible consumption in Coimbatore's agricultural industry, this study aims to close these gaps. The study will evaluate the psychological and technological elements influencing green buying intentions. It is based on the Theory of Consumption Values (TCV), the 4A's of Marketing (Awareness, Acceptability, Affordability, and Accessibility), and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). In order to create effective, trustworthy, and culturally appropriate digital campaigns for sustainable consumption, the findings are intended to provide policymakers, marketers, and agriculture stakeholders with useful suggestions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 AI and Eco-Conscious Consumer Behavior

Artificial intelligence (AI) is influencing customer decisions by giving personalized recommendations, improving service quality, and increasing engagement with sustainable products. After performing a bibliometric analysis of 561 papers, Nogueira, Lopes, and Gomes (2025) put up a three-dimensional framework that emphasized the impact of AI on consumption habits. Although their study highlights the role of AI-powered technologies such as recommendation systems, chatbots, and virtual assistants in promoting environmentally conscious behavior, it also points out that the material currently in publication lacks systematic thematic mapping. Similar to this, Leonard et al. (2025) demonstrated using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) that AI-powered tools had a favorable impact on customer happiness, trust, and purchase intention. These results highlight the function of digital platforms as behavioral nudges that can influence consumers to make sustainable decisions, in addition to their use as communication channels.

A different viewpoint is presented by Dekhili, Achabou, and Nguyen (2025), who point out that ecological rebound effects can make AI and platform convenience in second-hand fashion apps backfire. Promotions and simplicity of purchase encourage overconsumption even though low-carbon solutions increase adoption, proving that digital initiatives need to carefully combine sustainability messaging with accessibility.

The current study's implications are as follows: AI-enabled digital tools can encourage environmentally conscious behavior, but strategies need to include credibility, trust, and direction while addressing potential behavioral paradoxes.

2.2 Digital Platforms as Nudging Tools for Sustainable Consumption

Digital platforms are becoming more widely acknowledged as tools for encouraging sustainable behavior. In their evaluation of gamified applications and interactive modules in educational settings, Xu et al. (2025) discovered a noteworthy rise in pro-eco behavioral intention and environmental awareness. In a similar vein, Palmieri, Boccia, and Covino (2024) discovered that social attitudes and green ideals have a significant impact on eco-consumption in Italy, while attitudes about digital channels positively influence sustainable behavior, even though green ads by themselves were less successful.

Feroz, Zo, and Chiravuri (2021) created a taxonomy that connects environmental outcomes like waste management, pollution prevention, and urban sustainability to digital transformation (IoT, AI, and cloud). According to their research, there is a lack of strategic frameworks that link digital tools to quantifiable sustainability performance. Further demonstrating the moderating effect of digital maturity on sustainable outcomes, Bekele et al. (2024) showed that the hospitality industry's long-term digital transformation enhances environmental performance through increased CSR capability and innovation orientation.

Implications for the present research: Digital platforms can improve awareness, tolerance, and engagement with eco-products by serving as behavioral nudges as well as information channels. The infrastructure for such methods is provided by Coimbatore's expanding digital environment, but careful localization is necessary.

2.3 Digital Literacy, Access, and Regional Strategy Gaps

Digital literacy and platform accessibility are key factors in determining a consumer's readiness to participate with digital sustainability. Although there are few comparative studies on the efficacy of multichannel marketing, Qalati, Barbosa, and Deshwal (2024) investigated online versus offline marketing channels and discovered that customers are favoring digitally enabled sustainability messaging. Low awareness of the environmental impact of ICT use was noted by Elgaaied-Gambier, Bertrandias, and Bernard (2020), suggesting that educational programs are required to link digital adoption with environmentally conscientious behavior.

There are still inequalities in digital literacy between semi-urban and rural inhabitants in Coimbatore, despite the city's high literacy rate and

rising smartphone adoption. This emphasizes the necessity of digital methods that are accessible, vernacular, and culturally relevant, in line with the 4A's framework's "Awareness" and "Accessibility" components.

2.4 Ethical Green Marketing and Behavioral Complexities

Ethical procedures are necessary for green marketing through digital communication in order to preserve credibility and trust. Transparency, brand authenticity, and ethical message are essential components of digital sustainability efforts, according to Chowdhury (2024). Ibrahim et al. (2025) showed a substantial association between digital involvement and intentions to make green purchases, indicating that social media efforts play a key role in promoting eco-conscious behavior. Strong conceptual and methodological frameworks are required, as Diez-Martin, Blanco-Gonzalez, and Prado-Roman (2019) pointed out gaps in empirical evidence relating digital marketing techniques to behavioral results. The importance of demographic-specific techniques in digital marketing was highlighted by Degli Esposti, Mortara, and Roberti (2021), who demonstrated that COVID-19 changed consumer behavior toward sustainable purchasing, especially among young, educated groups.

To guarantee long-lasting results, demographic targeting, behaviorally-informed digital nudges, and ethical communication are crucial. This calls for clear user instructions, eco-claim transparency, and messaging that is culturally appropriate for Coimbatore.

2.5 Theoretical Insights and Implications for Coimbatore

Several themes show up in these studies:

- Digital platforms and AI can successfully encourage environmentally conscientious buying, but if they are not properly built, they run the risk of encouraging overconsumption.
- Accessibility and digital literacy are essential for converting awareness into practical action.
- Communication that is localized, transparent, and ethical builds trust, which is necessary for the adoption of eco-products.
- Few studies have integrated TAM, TCV, and the 4A's framework to drive digital sustainability strategy, indicating a lack of empirical evidence in Tier-II cities, especially in India.

These observations support the necessity of a contextually relevant conceptual framework that tackles Coimbatore's technology adoption, consumer values, and regional marketing strategies—a requirement that this study specifically addresses.

3. Research Gap

Despite expanding research on digital marketing, AI-enabled tools, and eco-conscious consumer behavior, numerous significant gaps persist, particularly in Tier-II Indian cities like Coimbatore.

- Limited Contextual Studies in Tier-II Cities: The majority of research on sustainable consumption and digital strategies concentrates on global or urban settings (Xu et al., 2025; Palmieri et al., 2024; Leonard et al., 2025). Research on the effects of digital technologies on environmentally conscious behavior in smaller urban areas, where infrastructure, computer literacy, and cultural factors vary greatly, is lacking.
- **Integration of Theoretical Frameworks:** Previous studies frequently look at consumption values (TCV), marketing tactics (4A's), or digital adoption (TAM) separately. Few research combines these frameworks to explain how and why eco-conscious buying intentions are influenced by digital methods (Chowdhury, 2024; Ibrahim et al., 2025).
- **Considerations for Digital Literacy and Accessibility:** Although digital platforms are frequently used as nudging methods, user accessibility, vernacular preferences, and technological literacy variations are rarely taken into consideration in studies (Qalati et al., 2024; Elgaaied-Gambier et al., 2020). In semi-urban places like Coimbatore, where fair access to digital tools affects the efficacy of sustainability efforts, these considerations are especially important.
- **Behavioral Paradoxes and Ethical Marketing:** Research shows that cost and ease of use may inadvertently promote excessive consumption, hence undercutting environmentally conscious goals (Dekhili et al., 2025). Research on how ethical digital marketing strategies may balance affordability, sustainability, and accessibility in emerging areas is lacking.
- **Empirical Data on Useful Digital Techniques:** The majority of the material is still conceptual or restricted to surveys conducted in developed markets. Few studies offer a thorough, practical framework to help social entrepreneurs, marketers, and legislators create digital sustainability campaigns that are suited to local consumer values, infrastructure realities, and demography (Diez-Martin et al., 2019; Bekele et al., 2024).

The potential of digital tactics to promote environmentally conscious consumption is highlighted in the literature now in publication, but

it lacks theoretically integrated, locally relevant, and empirically supported insights for Tier-II cities in India. This disparity supports the current study's emphasis on Coimbatore and its goal of creating a conceptual framework that integrates the Theory of Consumption Values (TCV), the 4A's of Marketing, and TAM in order to create successful digital tactics for encouraging sustainable behavior.

4. Research Objectives

- To examine the ways in which AI-enabled platforms and digital marketing tools promote environmentally conscious customer behavior in Coimbatore.
- To assess how localized information, platform accessibility, and digital literacy influence consumers' intentions to make sustainable purchases.
- To develop a conceptual framework for successful digital sustainability initiatives that combines the Theory of Consumption Values (TCV), the 4A's of Marketing, and TAM.

5. Conceptual Framework

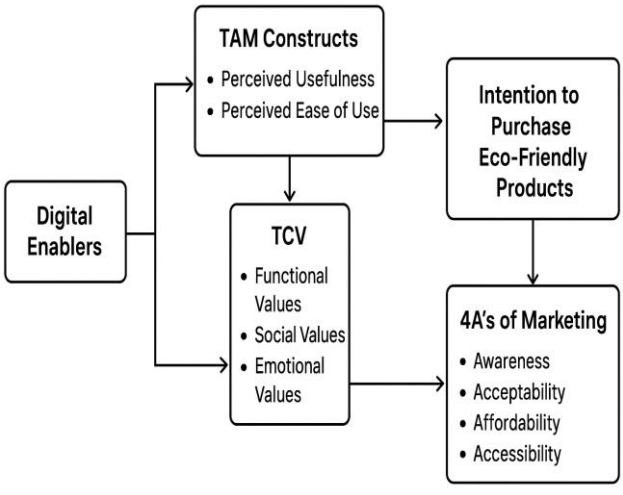
The proposed conceptual framework examines how digital methods influence eco-conscious consumption in Coimbatore by integrating the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the 4A's of Marketing (Awareness, Acceptability, Affordability, and Accessibility), and the Theory of Consumption Values (TCV). This paradigm highlights how consumer perceptions, marketing moderators, and digital facilitators influence consumers' intentions to buy environmentally friendly items.

Sustainable consumer behavior is greatly aided by digital enablers, particularly digital literacy and platform accessibility. The ability of customers to successfully navigate digital platforms, comprehend eco-information, and make well-informed decisions is known as digital literacy (Qalati et al., 2024). According to Elgaaied-Gambier et al. (2020), platform accessibility refers to how simple it is to access digital tools, applications, and content pertaining to sustainability. This is especially crucial in Tier-II cities where there are technical and infrastructure inequalities.Through the TAM dimensions of Perceived Usefulness (PU) and Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU), these facilitators affect the perceptions of consumers. While perceived ease of use shows how simple it is to interact with green digital information, perceived utility shows how much consumers think utilizing digital platforms helps them make eco-conscious decisions (Leonard et al., 2025; Palmieri et al., 2024).

The 4A's of marketing are also included in the framework as moderating elements that influence how TAM perceptions and purchase intention are related. Customers' awareness of eco-friendly products and digital campaigns is referred to as awareness; their level of trust and acceptance of green products is reflected in acceptability; their perceived value in relation to price is indicated by affordability; and their ease of access to eco-products through digital channels is captured by accessibility (Chowdhury, 2024; Ibrahim et al., 2025). These elements guarantee that digital strategies are consumer-centric and contextually effective by managing the relationship between TAM and behavior.

The final behavioral lens is the Theory of Consumption Values (TCV), which emphasizes how social, emotional, and functional values influence eco-conscious consumer decisions (Degli Esposti et al., 2021; Dekhili et al., 2025). Emotional values include affective reactions to sustainable consumption, social value is concerned with peer influence and societal norms, and functional value is related to product performance and utility. The influence of digital initiatives is amplified by these consumption ideals, which guarantee that consumer engagement is significant and in line with individual and social sustainability objectives.

In conclusion, the framework suggests that TAM perceptions are influenced by digital enablers, and that these perceptions in turn promote eco-conscious purchasing intentions. The 4A's of marketing and consumption values, on the other hand, moderate and reinforce these interactions.The development of successful digital initiatives that promote sustainable consumption in Coimbatore is made possible by this theory-driven, locally relevant approach.



Proposed Conceptual Framework Digital Methods and Eco-Conscious Consumption

Source : Figure 1 shows the proposed conceptual framework for the study, which was developed by the researcher and based on TAM, the 4A's of marketing, and TCV. It was modified from publications by Qalati et al. (2024), Elgaaied-Gambier et al. (2020), Leonard et al. (2025), Palmieri et al. (2024), Chowdhury (2024), Ibrahim et al. (2025), Degli Esposti et al. (2021), and Dekhili et al. (2025).

6. Proposed Methodology

6.1 Research Design

This study examines digital solutions for encouraging eco-conscious consumption in Coimbatore using a conceptual, theory-driven approach. The design combines the Theory of Consumption Values (TCV), the 4A's of Marketing, and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to investigate how consumer perceptions, marketing moderators, and digital enablers all work together to affect consumers' intentions to buy environmentally friendly items. The study creates a structured knowledge of the relationship among digital literacy, platform accessibility, and consumer behavioral factors in a Tier-II city setting by integrating these frameworks.

6.2 Data Sources

The study depends on secondary data to create the conceptual framework. At the international, national, and regional levels, these comprise academic papers, industry reports, and case studies that concentrate on digital marketing, AI-enabled technologies, sustainable consumption, and environmentally conscious consumer behavior (e.g., Xu et al., 2025; Palmieri et al., 2024; Qalati et al., 2024). These resources guarantee that the framework is thorough and pertinent to Coimbatore's context by offering insights into best practices, new trends, and gaps in digital sustainability plans.

6.3 Conceptual Framework Development

Based on the reviewed literature, the study creates a comprehensive framework that connects digital enablers—specifically, digital literacy and platform accessibility—to TAM constructs, such as perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use, which influence the intention to buy eco-friendly products. In order to illustrate how consumer-centric marketing methods can either improve or weaken these interactions, the 4A's of marketing—awareness, acceptability, affordability, and accessibility—are included as moderating considerations. Furthermore, a behavioral lens to comprehend why consumers make eco-conscious decisions is offered by the Theory of Consumption Values (functional, social, and emotional values).

6.4 Justification of Methodology

A purely conceptual technique is suited for this study because it addresses current research gaps in digital sustainability initiatives, particularly in Tier II cities like Coimbatore, where empirical studies are scarce. By integrating different theoretical frameworks into a localized, context-driven model, the technique provides a stable, academically sound foundation. It is extremely pertinent for real-world implementation since it provides marketers, legislators, and social entrepreneurs with useful information for creating and executing successful digital sustainability plans.

7. Discussion and Implications

In Coimbatore, a Tier-II city in India with a growing number of digital users, the suggested conceptual framework offers a specific knowledge of how digital methods might promote eco-conscious consumerism. Through the integration of the Theory of Consumption Values (TCV), the 4A's of Marketing, and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the study demonstrates how digital enablers like digital literacy and platform accessibility affect consumers' perceptions of the utility and usability of green digital platforms, which in turn shapes their intention to buy eco-friendly products. According to this approach, consumer-centric design that raises awareness, acceptability, affordability, and accessibility—all of which are in line with behavioral and marketing viewpoints—is just as important for successful digital tactics as technological availability.

By connecting TAM and the 4A's of marketing with consumer ideals in a sustainable setting, this study theoretically expands on previous research. This approach combines these aspects to provide a more comprehensive understanding of consumer decision-making in developing urban contexts, as previous research has mostly concentrated on either eco-conscious behavior or digital transformation separately. The approach highlights the intricate interactions between personal attitudes, social norms, and digital touchpoints by integrating functional, social, and emotional consumption values to explain why consumers interact with sustainable products.

In practical terms, the results offer precise recommendations for digital platform designers, legislators, and marketers. Marketers can utilize the framework to create intuitive digital platforms that convey the advantages of products for the environment, offer eco-certifications, and present customized sustainability content. To encourage the broad adoption of environmentally friendly

practices, particularly among populations that are underserved by digital technology, policymakers might support digital literacy programs and improve platform accessibility. Vernacular content, gamified features, and trust-building techniques are all tools that platform designers can use to increase user engagement and lower obstacles to environmentally conscious consumption.

Because of its high literacy rate, rising smartphone adoption, and active involvement in regional sustainability projects, Coimbatore provides a distinctive backdrop on a regional scale. To optimize impact, the framework recommends that digital advertising be customized to local demographics, cultural values, and language preferences. Partnerships with nearby NGOs, start-ups, and academic institutions can increase outreach and maintain long-term behavior change. Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in industries including organic food, textiles, and personal care can also use the framework to enhance their digital engagement and green branding, resulting in a more sustainable regional supply chain.

Overall, the study emphasizes that digital initiatives are strategic tools for influencing environmentally conscious customer behavior rather than just technology interventions. The framework offers practical insights for creating successful digital sustainability programs by highlighting the complementary roles of digital literacy, platform accessibility, TAM structures, the 4A's of marketing, and consumption ideals. This paradigm could be empirically tested in Coimbatore and other Tier-II cities in the future to confirm the connections and improve eco-friendly consumption promotion tactics.

8. Conclusion

The expanding significance of digital tactics in encouraging environmentally responsible consumption is shown by this study, especially in developing metropolitan settings like Coimbatore. The suggested conceptual framework offers a comprehensive understanding of how digital enablers, like digital literacy and platform accessibility, interact with consumer perceptions and marketing moderators to shape eco-friendly purchase intentions by combining the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the 4A's of Marketing, and the Theory of Consumption Values (TCV). In addition to addressing the functional, social, and emotional drivers of sustainable behavior, the framework emphasizes the necessity of localized, consumer-centric digital tactics that improve awareness, acceptance, affordability, and accessibility.

By connecting behavioral, sustainability, and digital marketing theories, the study adds to the body of literature from a theoretical standpoint and provides a well-organized framework for further empirical investigation. In practice, it helps SMEs, platform designers, marketers, and legislators develop focused interventions to promote environmentally responsible behavior. The distinctive digital infrastructure, literacy rates, and environmental activities of Coimbatore offer a viable regional setting for implementing and evaluating these tactics.

Finally, promoting eco-conscious consumption through digital tactics is critical for sustainable development, environmental preservation, and responsible consumerism. To further improve the efficacy of digital sustainability programs, future research may investigate cutting-edge technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and augmented reality, or it may empirically evaluate the framework across additional Tier-II cities in India. Businesses and regulators may promote significant environmental change and foster an eco-conscious consumption culture by coordinating digital marketing strategies with behavioral insights and local context.

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