

Review Article

# Beyond Intention: How Social-Media Driven Green Marketing Shapes Sustainable Consumer Behavior-A Systematic Literature Review

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**Abstract:** This study explores how social media-driven green marketing shapes sustainable consumer behavior through a systematic literature review. As concerns about sustainability intensify alongside rapid digital engagement, social media has emerged as a crucial platform for communicating environmental initiatives and influencing consumer responses. Despite this relevance, existing studies remain fragmented across theoretical, contextual, and methodological perspectives, limiting a holistic understanding of the topic. Using the PRISMA approach, this research reviews 42 empirical articles sourced from the Scopus database and analyzes them through the TCCM (Theory-Context-Characteristics-Method) framework. The findings show that most studies rely on intention-based theories, particularly the Theory of Planned Behavior, although there is a growing shift toward integrating social, psychological, and technology-oriented approaches. From a contextual standpoint, the literature is largely concentrated in Asian regions and younger demographics, which restricts broader generalization. Furthermore, results indicate that social media-driven green marketing does not directly affect sustainable behavior but works through important psychological mediators such as trust, engagement, and perceived value. These factors significantly influence how consumers interpret and respond to environmental messages online. The effectiveness of such marketing strategies is also shaped by cultural and demographic differences, making context a critical factor. Methodologically, most studies employ cross-sectional surveys and structural equation modeling, limiting the ability to capture causal and dynamic relationships. Overall, this study provides a structured synthesis, highlights research gaps, and suggests future directions, including cross-cultural analysis, stronger theoretical integration, and more rigorous research designs.

**Keywords:** Consumer Engagement; Green Marketing; Social Media Marketing; Sustainable Consumer Behavior; Systematic Literature Review.

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## 1. Introduction

The rapid expansion of social media has fundamentally reshaped how firms design and implement marketing strategies, particularly in the context of sustainability (Dwivedi et al., 2021). Social media platforms are no longer merely channels for information dissemination; they function as interactive environments where firms and consumers co-create meaning, exchange opinions, and influence each other's perceptions and behaviors (Cheung et al., 2020; Hanaysha, 2022). This transformation has given rise to the increasing use of social media marketing as a vehicle for delivering green marketing messages, positioning it as a key mechanism through which firms promote environmentally responsible products and practices (Chen et al., 2024).

In parallel, the growing global concern over environmental issues has intensified academic interest in sustainable consumer behavior, particularly behaviors related to green consumption and environmentally responsible decision-making (Gunawan et al., 2025; Ogiemwonyi, 2024). Within this context, social media-driven green marketing has emerged as a promising approach to influence consumer attitudes and behaviors. Prior studies suggest that social media can enhance awareness, foster engagement, and shape behavioral intentions toward sustainability (Nekmahmud et al., 2022; Ummar et al., 2023). However, the effectiveness of such strategies remains complex, as consumer responses are often shaped by trust, perceived credibility, and social influence, as well as increasing skepticism toward environmental claims (Anderson et al., 2025; Hendra et al., 2025).

Despite the growing body of empirical research in this area, the literature remains fragmented and lacks a coherent structure (Confetto et al., 2023). Existing studies are distributed across multiple research streams, including social media marketing, green marketing, and consumer behavior, with limited integration across these domains (Haryono et al., 2025). As a result, prior research tends to examine isolated relationships such as the impact of social media content, influencer credibility, or environmental concern without providing a comprehensive understanding of how social media driven green marketing influences sustainable consumer behavior as an integrated process (Sun et al., 2026; Yin et al., 2026).

Moreover, the fragmentation is evident across theoretical, contextual, and methodological dimensions. From a theoretical perspective, studies rely on diverse and often disconnected frameworks, ranging from intention-based models such as the Theory of Planned Behavior to more recent perspectives incorporating social, psychological, and technological factors (Ajzen, 1991; Kumar & Nayak, 2023). Contextually, research is concentrated in specific settings and consumer segments, limiting generalizability (La Ragione & Risitano, 2026). Methodologically, the dominance of cross-sectional and survey-based designs restricts the ability to capture causal and dynamic processes (Maier et al., 2023). Taken together, these issues hinder the development of a holistic understanding of the phenomenon (Riegger et al., 2021).

Given these limitations, there is a clear need for a systematic and integrative review that consolidates existing knowledge and identifies key patterns and gaps in the literature (Ali et al., 2025). While prior studies have contributed valuable insights, there is still a lack of synthesis that simultaneously considers theoretical foundations, contextual settings, key constructs, and methodological approaches (Lim, 2026). Without such integration, it remains difficult to advance theory and provide meaningful guidance for future research in the field of social media driven green marketing and sustainable consumer behavior (Hu et al., 2024).

To address this gap, this study conducts a systematic literature review guided by the PRISMA protocol and structured using the TCCM (Theory Context Characteristics Method) framework (Dhingra & Jaiswal, 2025). Specifically, this study aims to (1) examine the theoretical foundations underlying the relationship between social media marketing, green marketing, and sustainable consumer behavior, (2) identify the contexts in which this relationship has been studied, (3) analyze the key constructs and mechanisms linking these variables, and (4) evaluate the methodological approaches employed in prior research. By providing a structured and integrative synthesis, this study contributes to advancing a more coherent understanding of how social media marketing drives green marketing effectiveness and shapes sustainable consumer behavior, while also outlining directions for future research (Rosário & Dias, 2025).

## **2. Preliminaries or Related Work or Literature Review**

### **2.1 Social Media Marketing**

Social media marketing has become an important component of modern marketing strategies as digital platforms increasingly shape how companies communicate with consumers (Filipović & Šapić, 2025). Social media platforms enable firms to interact with audiences in a more direct, interactive, and personalized manner compared to traditional marketing channels (Islam & Sheikh, 2024). Through features such as content sharing, influencer collaborations, and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), social media allows information about products and brands to spread quickly among online communities. This environment encourages consumer engagement and facilitates the creation of brand relationships built on interaction and participation (Ngo et al., 2024). In the context of sustainability, social media marketing is widely used by companies to communicate

environmental initiatives and promote eco-friendly products. By sharing sustainability-related content and campaigns, brands can increase awareness of environmental issues and encourage consumers to adopt more responsible consumption behaviors (Nabivi, 2025).

## 2.2. Green Marketing

Green marketing refers to marketing strategies that emphasize environmental responsibility by promoting products, services, and business practices that are environmentally friendly (Jung & Lee, 2026). This concept emerged as companies began responding to increasing consumer concern about environmental issues such as climate change, pollution, and resource depletion (White et al., 2025). Green marketing focuses on communicating the environmental benefits of products, including aspects such as eco-friendly materials, sustainable production processes, and reduced environmental impact (Popović et al., 2023). By highlighting these attributes, companies aim to attract environmentally conscious consumers and encourage more sustainable consumption patterns. In the digital era, green marketing is increasingly integrated with social media platforms, enabling firms to communicate sustainability initiatives more effectively and engage consumers in discussions about environmental responsibility (Newase, 2025; Sohaib et al., 2025).

## 2.3. Sustainable Consumption Behavior

Sustainable consumption behavior refers to consumer actions that aim to minimize negative environmental and social impacts while meeting personal needs and maintaining quality of life (Sargin & Dursun, 2023). This concept emphasizes responsible purchasing, usage, and disposal of products in ways that support environmental protection and long-term sustainability (Zhao et al., 2025). Consumers who engage in sustainable consumption behavior tend to prefer eco-friendly products, reduce waste, and consider the environmental consequences of their purchasing decisions. Increasing environmental awareness, social responsibility, and access to sustainability information have encouraged more consumers to adopt such behaviors (Theocharis & Tsekouropoulos, 2025; Zhao et al., 2025). In the digital era, social media platforms play an important role in shaping sustainable consumption by spreading environmental information, influencing attitudes, and encouraging responsible consumption practices through online communities and social interactions (Horrich et al., 2025).

## 3. Materials and Method

### 3.1 Research Design

This study employs a systematic literature review (SLR) approach to synthesize existing research on social media-driven green marketing and its influence on sustainable consumer behavior. The review follows the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines to ensure transparency, rigor, and reproducibility in the study selection process (Page et al., 2021). To structure the analysis, this study adopts the TCCM framework (Theory-Context-Characteristics-Method) proposed by Paul and Rosado-Serrano (K.V. et al., 2026). This framework enables a comprehensive and systematic synthesis of the literature by examining theoretical foundations, contextual settings, key constructs and relationships, and methodological approaches.

### 3.2 Search Strategy

The literature search was conducted using the Scopus database, which is widely recognized as one of the most comprehensive and reliable sources of peer-reviewed academic publications. The search query was designed to capture studies related to social media marketing, green marketing, and consumer behavior. The following search string was used: (“social media” OR “social media marketing”) AND (“green marketing” OR “sustainability” OR “environmental sustainability”) AND (“consumer behavior” OR “purchase intention” OR “consumption”) This search resulted in an initial pool of 719 articles. To ensure the quality and relevance of the selected studies, several filtering criteria were applied, including: (1) document type limited to journal articles, (2) source type restricted to journals, (3) publication stage set to final, (4) language limited to English, and (5) availability of full open access. After applying these criteria, the number of articles was reduced to 255.

### 3.3 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To ensure the relevance and quality of the selected studies, inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied during the screening process.

Inclusion criteria:

- (1) studies examining social media marketing in relation to sustainability or green marketing,
- (2) studies focusing on consumer behavior or behavioral outcomes,
- (3) empirical research articles, and
- (4) studies published in peer-reviewed journals.

Exclusion criteria:

- (1) studies not directly related to social media or green marketing,
- (2) conceptual or non-empirical studies,
- (3) studies not focusing on consumer behavior, and
- (4) articles with insufficient methodological information.

### 3.4 Study Selection Process

The study selection process followed the PRISMA flow. After the initial filtering, 255 records were screened based on titles and abstracts, resulting in the exclusion of 206 articles due to irrelevance to the research topic. A total of 49 articles were then assessed for full-text eligibility. Of these, 5 articles could not be retrieved due to access limitations. The remaining 44 articles were evaluated in detail, leading to the exclusion of 2 articles that did not meet the research criteria. Finally, 42 articles were included in the systematic literature review. The selection process is illustrated in the PRISMA flow diagram.

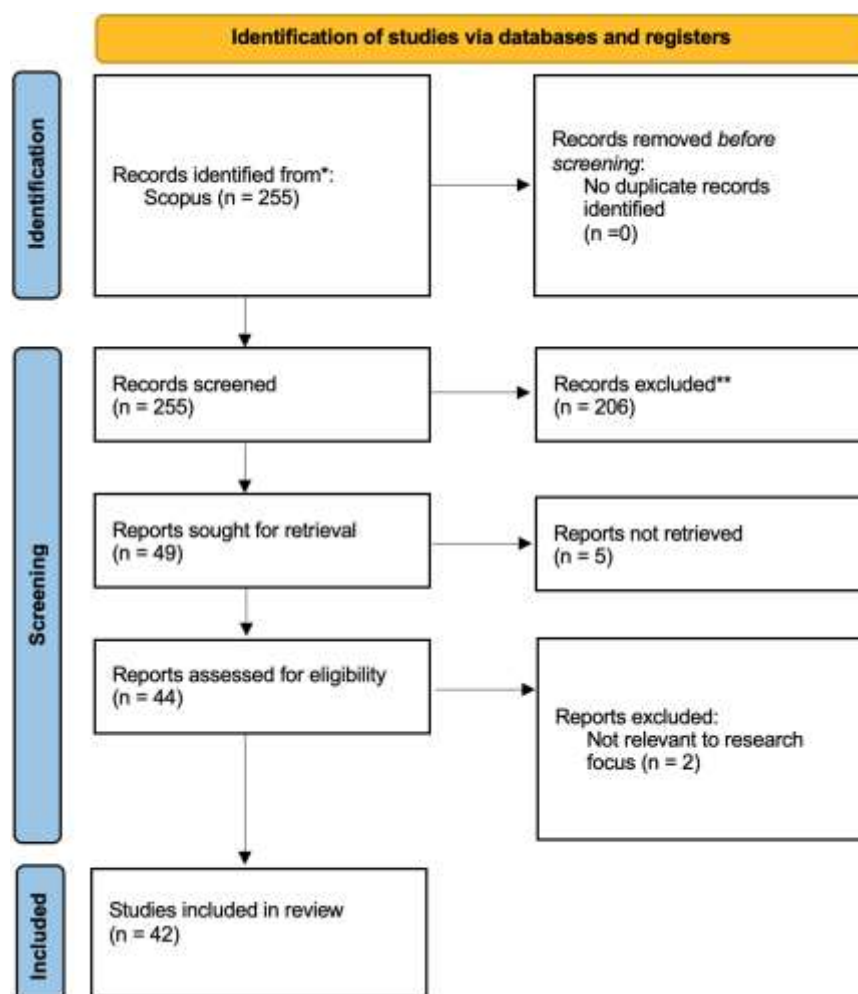


Figure 1. PRISMA Framework.

## 4. Results

This study systematically reviewed 42 articles examining the role of social media–driven green marketing in shaping sustainable consumer behavior. The growing volume of publications in recent years reflects the increasing importance of sustainability and digital engagement in contemporary marketing research. The reviewed studies are predominantly quantitative, with most employing survey-based designs and structural equation modeling (SEM). In terms of context, the literature is heavily concentrated in emerging economies, particularly in Asia, and largely focuses on younger consumer segments, especially Gen Z. While this reflects the relevance of digital-native consumers in social media environments, it also suggests that current knowledge may be contextually bounded, highlighting the importance of examining broader populations and settings.

### 4.1 Publication Trends

**Table 1.** Distribution of Publication Trends.

Year	Number of Articles
2021	1
2022	2
2023	9
2024	6
2025	22
2026	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>

Table 1 presents the distribution of publications on social media–driven green marketing and sustainable consumer behavior from 2021 to 2026, revealing a clear upward trend in scholarly attention. The number of studies was relatively limited in the early years, with only one publication in 2021 and two in 2022, indicating that the topic was still emerging. A noticeable increase occurred in 2023 with nine articles, followed by a slight decline in 2024 (six articles). However, the most significant growth is observed in 2025, which accounts for 22 publications more than half of the total sample reflecting a surge in research interest driven by the growing importance of sustainability and digital marketing practices. The presence of two articles in 2026 further suggests that this topic continues to gain relevance, indicating a rapidly evolving and expanding research area.

### 4.2. Theoretical Foundations and Evolution (RQ1)

**Table 2.** Distribution of Theoretical Frameworks.

Theoretical Framework	N	%	Category	Interpretation
TPB	16	38.1%	Behavioral	Dominant but intention-focused
Social Identity Theory	6	14.3%	Social	Explains peer influence
TAM	5	11.9%	Technology	Reflects digital adoption
S-O-R	4	9.5%	Psychological	Captures emotional processes
Signaling Theory	3	7.1%	Marketing	Explains trust formation
TRA	3	7.1%	Behavioral	Early-stage theory
Others	5	11.9%	Various	Indicates fragmentation

As presented in Table 2, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) remains the dominant theoretical lens, accounting for 38.1% of the reviewed studies. This indicates that the literature continues to rely heavily on intention-based explanations of consumer behavior. However, the increasing adoption of Social Identity Theory, TAM, and S-O-R signals a shift toward more socially embedded, technologically informed, and psychologically driven perspectives. This evolution reflects the growing recognition that consumer behavior in social media environments is shaped not only by rational evaluation but also by identity, interaction, and emotional processes. Despite this progression, the literature remains theoretically fragmented, with limited integration across these perspectives, suggesting the need for a more comprehensive and unified framework.

### 4.3. Contextual Distribution and Influence (RQ2)

**Table 3.** Context Distribution.

Context	Category	N	%	Interpretation
Region	Asia	26	61.9%	Dominant focus
	Europe	6	14.3%	Limited
	America	5	11.9%	Underrepresented

Context	Category	N	%	Interpretation
Sample	Gen Z / Students	28	66.7%	Digital-native focus
	General consumers	14	33.3%	Limited diversity
	General social media	25	59.5%	Treated as homogeneous
Platform	Instagram	9	21.4%	Moderate
	TikTok	5	11.9%	Emerging

Table 3 highlights a strong contextual concentration in Asian markets (61.9%), indicating that much of the existing evidence is derived from emerging economies. This raises concerns regarding the global generalizability of findings. The dominance of Gen Z and student samples (66.7%) further suggests that current insights are largely shaped by digitally engaged populations, potentially overlooking other consumer segments. In addition, the majority of studies treat social media as a uniform platform, with limited differentiation across platforms. This simplification may obscure important differences in user behavior and engagement mechanisms. Overall, these findings suggest that the effectiveness of social media-driven green marketing is context-sensitive, influenced by cultural, demographic, and technological factors.

#### 4.4. Key Constructs and Relationships (RQ3)

Table 4. Key Variables.

Category	Variable	Frequency
Antecedents	Social media marketing activities	30
	Content quality	18
	Influencer credibility	15
	Interactivity	12
	Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM)	9
Mediators	Trust	22
	Engagement	17
	Perceived value	14
	Brand authenticity	10
	Consumer engagement	8
Moderators	Attitude	5
	Environmental concern	13
	Culture	9
	Gender/Generation	8
Outcomes	Green purchase intention	28
	Sustainable consumption	16
	Loyalty	10
	Consumer engagement	6

The findings reveal that the relationship between social media driven green marketing and sustainable consumer behavior is predominantly mediated by psychological mechanisms, particularly trust, perceived value, and consumer engagement. Direct effects are less consistently supported, indicating that consumer responses are largely shaped through cognitive, emotional, and social processes. Furthermore, the literature suggests a multi-pathway mechanism, where different mediators operate simultaneously rather than independently. However, the findings remain inconsistent across studies, largely due to contextual and methodological variations, highlighting the absence of a unified conceptual model.

#### 4.5. Methodological Trends (RQ4)

Table 5. Method Distribution.

Method	N	%
Quantitative	37	88.1%
Mixed-method	3	7.1%
Qualitative	2	4.8%

Table 5 shows that the literature is dominated by quantitative approaches (88.1%), which are effective for testing relationships but limited in establishing causality. The reliance on cross-sectional and self-reported data raises concerns regarding bias, highlighting the need for more diverse and rigorous methodologies.

### **Social Media as an Interpretive Layer of Green Marketing**

The findings of this review suggest that social media does not merely amplify green marketing messages, but fundamentally reshapes how such messages are interpreted (Liu et al., 2025). Across the reviewed studies, social media marketing activities particularly content quality, interactivity, and influencer communication consistently function as the primary entry point of green marketing exposure. However, these activities rarely produce direct behavioral outcomes (Gupta & Syed, 2022). Instead, the evidence indicates that social media operates as an interpretive layer, where green marketing messages are continuously evaluated, validated, and reinterpreted by consumers (Nabivi, 2025). This shifts the role of social media from a passive communication channel to an active environment that determines whether sustainability claims are accepted or questioned. As a result, the effectiveness of green marketing is contingent not only on what firms communicate, but on how those messages survive consumer scrutiny within social media ecosystems (Tiwari et al., 2025).

### **Trust, Engagement, and the Credibility Problem of Green Marketing**

A consistent pattern across the reviewed studies is the dominance of indirect effects, with trust emerging as the most frequently identified mediator, appearing in more than half of the studies, followed by engagement and perceived value (Jesus et al., 2025; Kothari et al., 2025; Utami et al., 2025). This pattern highlights a central issue in green marketing: the credibility problem (Seyfi et al., 2025). The prominence of trust reflects the fact that consumers do not automatically accept environmental claims, particularly in digital environments where information is abundant and easily contested. In this context, social media plays a dual role. On the one hand, it enables firms to communicate sustainability messages more effectively. On the other hand, it exposes these messages to public evaluation, increasing the risk of skepticism and accusations of greenwashing (Salimi et al., 2026). Engagement further complicates this relationship. While higher engagement can strengthen message diffusion and emotional connection, it also increases exposure to critical discourse (Milli et al., 2025). This suggests that social media-driven green marketing operates within a paradox, where the same mechanisms that enhance visibility may also amplify scrutiny.

### **Challenging the Dominance of Intention-Based Models**

The findings of this review challenge the continued dominance of intention-based frameworks, particularly the Theory of Planned Behavior, which accounts for a substantial proportion of the studies (Nurtanto et al., 2025). While these models assume that behavior follows from rational evaluation and intention, the evidence presented in this review suggests otherwise. The consistent importance of mediators such as trust and engagement indicates that behavior in social media environments is shaped through process-based mechanisms, rather than direct intention behavior links (Mattathil et al., 2026). In particular, the findings highlight a disconnect between intention and actual behavior, suggesting that intention alone is insufficient to explain sustainable consumption in digital contexts. Furthermore, the fragmented use of multiple theoretical perspectives ranging from S-O-R to signaling theory suggests that the field lacks theoretical consolidation. This fragmentation is not merely a diversity of perspectives, but reflects a deeper issue: existing theories capture partial dimensions of the phenomenon but fail to explain it holistically. This review therefore advances the argument that future research should move toward integrated theoretical frameworks that combine cognitive, emotional, and social processes (Shahid et al., 2024).

### **Contextual Contingency and Platform-Specific Dynamics**

The findings also reveal that the effectiveness of social media-driven green marketing is highly contingent on context (Hanaysha & Alhyasat, 2025). A significant proportion of studies are concentrated in specific geographical regions, indicating that current knowledge may be contextually bounded. Moreover, the role of moderators such as environmental concern suggests that consumer responses vary substantially across individuals and settings (Hu et al., 2024). More importantly, this review identifies a critical limitation in the literature: the tendency to treat social media as a homogeneous environment. In reality, platforms differ in terms of content format, interaction patterns, and user behavior (Japutra et al., 2025). By overlooking these differences, existing studies risk oversimplifying the mechanisms through which green marketing operates. This suggests that future research should move beyond platform-agnostic approaches and examine how platform-specific dynamics shape the effectiveness of green marketing communication (Alnasser, 2025).

### **Methodological Rigidity and Its Consequences**

From a methodological perspective, the literature is dominated by cross-sectional, survey-based studies, with a strong reliance on structural equation modeling. While these approaches allow for the testing of complex relationships, they impose a static view of

consumer behavior that may not reflect the dynamic nature of social media environments (Zhou & Ahmad, 2024). This methodological rigidity contributes to the continued emphasis on linear and intention-based models, limiting the ability to capture feedback loops, temporal changes, and real-time interactions (Setyadi et al., 2025). As a result, the current body of research may underestimate the complexity of social media-driven green marketing processes (Li et al., 2024). Addressing this limitation requires a shift toward more dynamic and experimental research designs, which can better capture how consumer perceptions and behaviors evolve over time.

### **Toward a Process-Based and Integrated Explanation**

Taken together, the findings of this review suggest that social media-driven green marketing should be understood as a process-based system, rather than a set of direct relationships (Zhang & Cham, 2025). In this system, social media marketing activities shape the presentation of green messages, consumers interpret these messages through mechanisms such as trust and engagement, and behavioral outcomes emerge as a result of this interpretive process (Wibawa et al., 2022). This perspective extends prior literature by shifting the focus from whether social media influences behavior to how and under what conditions this influence occurs. More importantly, it highlights that the effectiveness of green marketing is not determined solely by message design, but by the interaction between message characteristics, consumer perceptions, and social media dynamics (Huang et al., 2024). By integrating these elements, this review provides a more comprehensive explanation of how social media marketing drives green marketing effectiveness and shapes sustainable consumer behavior (La Ragione & Risitano, 2026).

## **5. Comparison**

Compared with prior studies, this review provides a more integrated understanding of how social media-driven green marketing influences sustainable consumer behavior. While earlier research has largely focused on isolated relationships such as the role of environmental concern, influencer credibility, or engagement this study highlights that these factors operate within a multi-layered and interconnected process. In line with previous research, the findings confirm that social media marketing plays a significant role in shaping consumer attitudes and behavioral intentions. However, this review extends prior work by demonstrating that such effects are rarely direct. Instead, they are primarily mediated by psychological mechanisms, particularly trust and engagement, which consistently emerge as dominant pathways across the reviewed studies. Moreover, unlike intention-based models that assume a direct relationship between attitudes and behavior, this study shows that such relationships are often indirect and context-dependent. This finding challenges the dominance of traditional frameworks and suggests that consumer behavior in digital sustainability contexts is better explained through process-based mechanisms. In addition, prior studies often treat social media as a homogeneous platform, whereas this review highlights the importance of platform-specific dynamics and contextual variations. Overall, this study not only confirms key insights from previous research but also extends the literature by offering a more integrative and critical perspective.

## **6. Conclusion**

This study systematically reviewed the literature on social media-driven green marketing and its influence on sustainable consumer behavior. The findings show that social media marketing does not directly lead to sustainable behavior, but operates through intermediate mechanisms, particularly trust, engagement, and perceived value. These mechanisms play a critical role in shaping how consumers interpret and respond to green marketing messages in digital environments. By synthesizing the findings across studies, this review demonstrates that the relationship between social media marketing and sustainable consumer behavior is multi-layered and process-based, rather than linear. Social media acts as an interpretive space in which green marketing messages are evaluated and validated, highlighting the importance of credibility and interaction in determining marketing effectiveness. These findings directly support the research objective of developing a more integrated understanding of how social media marketing drives green marketing outcomes and influences consumer behavior. The study contributes to the literature by providing a structured and integrative synthesis that connects fragmented research across theoretical, contextual, and methodological dimensions. It also extends existing knowledge by emphasizing the role of psychological and social mechanisms, moving beyond traditional intention-based explanations. From a practical

perspective, the findings highlight the importance of building trust, ensuring message authenticity, and fostering engagement in implementing effective green marketing strategies through social media. Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations. The review is limited to articles indexed in the Scopus database and focuses on published empirical studies, which may introduce selection bias. In addition, the dominance of cross-sectional studies in the reviewed literature limits the ability to capture dynamic behavioral processes. Future research is therefore encouraged to explore more diverse contexts, apply longitudinal and experimental designs, and develop integrated theoretical frameworks that better explain the complexity of social media-driven green marketing and sustainable consumer behavior.

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