

Digital Media Influence and Consumer Trust in Sustainable Consumption Decision-Making

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Abstract: - Digital media can be regarded as one of the main forms and sources of information used on a daily basis that influence consumer decision-making. At the same time, growing societal interest in sustainable development and environmentally responsible consumption increases the need to understand how digital media communication affects sustainable purchase intention. The aim of this study is to analyse the impact of digital media on consumer trust in digital information and its role in shaping sustainable consumption decisions. The study is based on a conceptual framework that includes digital media influence, trust and credibility of digital information, attitudes toward sustainable products, and sustainable purchase intention. The research applies a quantitative approach by analysing consumer survey data on digital media use and sustainable product choices. The results show that digital media communication is positively associated with information sharing and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), which are linked to higher consumer trust in digital information. Higher levels of trust and perceived information credibility are positively associated with consumer attitudes toward sustainable products and stronger sustainable purchase intention. The findings highlight the role of digital media in shaping consumer trust and attitudes, which are associated with sustainable purchase intention.

Key-Words: - Digital Media Influence; Consumer Trust; Information Credibility; Sustainable Purchase Intention; Sustainable Consumption; Electronic Word-of-Mouth

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1 Introduction

The search for product information no longer follows the traditional model typical of conventional media. Over the last few decades, digital technologies have shifted a large part of this activity to the digital environment and changed the way in which consumers are able to compare alternatives before making a purchase. Digital media is now the primary source of information on products, brands and consumer habits, which significantly influences consumer perceptions, [1], [2], [3]. Their role is not confined to delivering messages. Users receive information, create it, pass it on and actively respond to what others have posted. This participation places consumer-to-consumer communication directly within the consumer decision process. Reviews, comments and other forms of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) may affect attitudes, perceived product value and subsequent purchasing decisions,

[4], [5], [6]. These changes in the field of communication have coincided with growing public interest in sustainable development and environmentally friendly consumption. Sustainable consumer choices can improve the efficiency of resource use, significantly reduce negative environmental impacts and promote socially responsible business practices, [7], [8], [9], [10].

Consumers considering sustainable products often look beyond the product itself. Its origin, the production process and the company's social responsibility may all enter the evaluation, [9], [10]. Digital media make information on sustainable products, environmental initiatives and responsible consumption opportunities easier to reach, [11], [12], [13]. Access, however, does not settle the choice in practice. Decisions may still depend on how much information is available, whether it is considered reliable and how consumers view sustainable

alternatives, [10], [14], [15], [16]. Online information differs in purpose as well as quality. Some material explains sustainability claims and helps consumers understand them; other content is incomplete, promotional or difficult to verify. At this stage, when product information is being evaluated and sustainable options are being considered, trust becomes a key factor [17], [18], [19]. This contradiction is reflected in the literature, and no single conclusion is offered. Digital media and eWOM can influence consumer perceptions and decision-making, but online reports are often interpreted as biased, fragmentary or commercially driven. In such cases, consumers may question their credibility and give them less weight when forming attitudes toward sustainable products. The connection between digital communication and sustainable consumption decisions is therefore not straightforward, with trust in digital information potentially mediating this relationship. Recent studies suggest that social media communication is positively associated with consumers' sustainable purchasing intentions, especially in cases where information is perceived as trustworthy and authentic, [12], [13], [20]. Thus, consumer trust in the information source and its credibility are important factors related to whether consumers accept information distributed through digital media. User-generated content, reviews, and social media discussions further support information exchange and eWOM, shaping attitudes toward sustainable products and spreading sustainable consumption ideas in the digital environment, [4], [5], [21].

Despite the growing literature on the impact of digital media on consumer behaviour, there is still a need to better understand the mechanisms linking digital media communication, consumer confidence and attitudes towards sustainable consumption, [3], [4]. The question of how the information environment created by digital media affects the decision-making process of consumers regarding sustainable products and what factors determine the formation of these decisions in the digital environment is particularly relevant. Therefore, the aim of this study is to analyse the impact of digital media on consumer trust in digital information and its role in shaping sustainable consumption decisions. The study is based on a conceptual framework that includes digital media influence, trust and credibility of digital information, attitudes toward sustainable products, and sustainable purchase intention. This approach allows to analyse the relationship between digital media communication and consumer sustainable consumption behaviour, while explaining the mechanisms that shape consumer

attitudes and purchase intentions in the digital information environment.

2 Literature Review

The development of digital media in recent years has significantly transformed consumer information search and decision-making processes, [1], [22]. Digital platforms and social media have become an important environment where consumers obtain information about products, brands, and company activities. Research shows that digital communication is closely related to consumer behaviour, as it provides extensive opportunities for information sharing and consumer participation in decision-making processes, [2], [3]. At the same time, social media platforms allow consumers to share experiences, reviews, and recommendations, thereby influencing other consumers' perceptions of products and brands, [1], [4].

The growing importance of digital media is particularly relevant in the context of sustainable consumption. Digital communication channels enable companies to disseminate information about environmentally friendly products, sustainability initiatives, and corporate social responsibility activities that may influence consumer attitudes toward sustainable products, [12], [20]. However, the information available in the digital environment can be diverse and not always consistent, which may lead to concerns about information credibility. Consumers are often confronted with conflicting or incomplete information, making trust in the information source and perceived information credibility important factors influencing consumer decision-making, [14], [17].

Previous studies have also highlighted the importance of social media in disseminating information and communicating with consumers, through electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), [14], [21]. User-generated content, comments, and reviews on social media may be associated with consumer attitudes toward products and contribute to the formation of purchase intentions, [4], [5]. Despite the growing body of literature on digital media and consumer behaviour, there is still limited understanding of the mechanisms through which digital media influence consumer attitudes toward sustainable products and the formation of sustainable purchase intention.

To better understand these relationships, the following literature review analyses the key factors influencing consumer behaviour in the digital environment, with particular attention to digital media

influence, trust and credibility of digital information, and electronic word-of-mouth communication.

2.1 Digital media influence in the context of sustainable consumption

The development of digital technologies has significantly transformed consumer information search and decision-making processes, [1], [23]. Digital media, including social media platforms and online communities, provide consumers with access to a wide range of information about products, brands, and consumption habits, [2], [3]. These platforms expand consumers' opportunities to obtain information about product characteristics, quality, and sustainability attributes that may influence consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions. Unlike traditional media, digital media facilitate interactive communication and the dissemination of user-generated content. On social media platforms, consumers not only consume information but also actively participate in its creation and distribution, creating a dynamic environment for information exchange, [1], [4]. Such interactions enable communication among consumers and create conditions in which user-generated content, comments, and reviews can influence other consumers' perceptions of products and their decision-making processes.

Within digital marketing, social media content and consumer engagement now occupy a prominent place, [22], [24]. Discussions, feedback and other user-generated contributions circulate information across digital platforms and encourage consumers to take an active part in digital communication, [5], [20], [25]. Such participation may alter attitudes toward brands and strengthen interest in sustainable products. The same channels are used to promote sustainable consumption.

Companies use digital platforms to present information on environmentally friendly products, corporate social responsibility initiatives and green marketing activities, [12], [23]. When consumers encounter such information, it may raise awareness of sustainable options and support more favourable evaluations of environmentally friendly products. Beyond direct company communication, the digital environment also provides space for the wider circulation of sustainability-related information.

Social media and online platforms enable the rapid sharing of information about environmental issues and sustainable consumption initiatives, thereby increasing consumer awareness of the importance of sustainable consumption, [6], [26].

2.2 Trust, credibility and electronic word-of-mouth

In the digital environment, consumer trust in information is one of the most important factors determining the influence of information on consumer behaviour, [12], [27]. Trust is closely related to the perceived credibility of digital information and the reputation of its source. When consumers perceive information as reliable and trustworthy, they are more likely to accept the recommendations or opinions presented and use this information in their decision-making processes, [14], [17]. In digital communication, the credibility of digital information is often evaluated based on the reliability of the information source, the content of the message, and the experiences shared by other users.

Credibility matters when consumers decide whether digital information can be trusted. Information perceived as credible can support trust in digital communication and shape attitudes toward products and brands, [12], [27].

Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) gives this process a social dimension. In online settings, consumers exchange comments, reviews, recommendations, experiences and opinions about products, [1], [4], [21]. These contributions form a stream of information that may influence product perceptions and consumer decisions.

Research suggests that eWOM is often more influential than traditional advertising because it is based on consumer experiences and perceived as more authentic and credible than company-generated content, [4], [5].

Thus, information exchange on social media can contribute to the development of trust among users and simultaneously influence consumer attitudes toward products. When consumers perceive the information available in the digital environment as credible, this can foster more positive attitudes toward products and increase consumers' willingness to use such information in their purchase decisions.

2.3 Attitudes toward sustainable consumption

Sustainable consumption has become an important research direction in consumer behaviour studies in recent years. The concept of sustainable consumption refers to consumer choices that reduce negative environmental impacts and promote the responsible use of resources, [7], [9]. Growing public concern about environmental issues and sustainable development has also increased academic and practical interest in consumer attitudes toward environmentally friendly products, [25], [28].

Consumer attitudes toward sustainable products are considered one of the key factors influencing

consumers' willingness to choose environmentally friendly products. In consumer behaviour theories, attitudes are often viewed as an essential element shaping behavioural intentions and decision-making processes, [24], [29], [30]. A positive attitude toward sustainable products can therefore increase consumers' willingness to select products that reduce negative environmental impacts and support more sustainable consumption patterns, [25], [28].

Digital media can play an important role in this context, as they provide platforms for disseminating information about sustainable products, environmental issues, and responsible consumption practices, [1], [5]. Through social media platforms, consumers can access various sources of information, including other users' experiences, reviews, and discussions about sustainable products. When consumers perceive such information as reliable and trustworthy, it can contribute to the development of more positive attitudes toward sustainable products, [14], [21].

Thus, the information available in the digital environment and the communication among consumers can influence not only consumer knowledge about sustainable products but also their attitudes toward sustainable products.

2.4 Sustainable purchase intention

Sustainable purchase intention is defined as the consumer's willingness to choose and purchase products that comply with the principles of sustainable development. Such products are typically associated with environmentally friendly production, efficient use of resources, and a lower negative impact on the environment, [31], [32]. In consumer behaviour research, purchase intention is often considered one of the most important indicators predicting actual consumer behaviour, as it reflects consumers' readiness to make a specific product choice, [24], [33].

In consumer behaviour theories, purchase intention is commonly viewed as an intermediate stage between consumer attitudes and actual behaviour, [18], [30], [33]. A positive attitude toward products or brands usually increases consumers' willingness to choose these products in real purchasing situations, [25], [29]. In the context of sustainable consumption, this means that consumers with more positive attitudes toward environmentally friendly products are more likely to express an intention to purchase products that reduce negative environmental impacts, [11], [28].

Previous studies indicate that positive attitudes toward sustainable products significantly increase consumers' readiness to choose environmentally

friendly alternatives. However, the formation of purchase intention can also be influenced by other factors, such as information availability, social influence, and consumer trust in information sources, [11], [21]. In the digital environment, social media may play an important role in shaping such attitudes and purchase intentions, [4], [18].

On social media platforms, consumers can access various sources of information, including reviews, experiences, and recommendations shared by other users about sustainable products. Such information exchange can contribute to social influence and strengthen consumer confidence in sustainable product choices, [5], [21]. Thus, digital media communication, information credibility, and consumer attitudes toward sustainable products may represent important factors influencing consumers' sustainable purchase intentions. Understanding these interrelationships is essential for analysing how the digital media environment can contribute to the development of sustainable consumption.

Based on the literature analysis, the study identifies four key variables that explain the influence of digital media on consumers' sustainable consumption decision-making. The variables and definitions were developed for this study through a synthesis of previous research. These variables and their definitions are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Key variables of the conceptual framework

Variable	Definition in the study	Key sources
Digital media influence	Digital media communication, social media content, and user-generated information that influence consumer information search, perception, and decision-making.	[1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6], [23].
Trust and credibility of digital information	Consumer trust in digital information and its perceived credibility, influencing how consumers interpret product information and make decisions.	[11], [14], [15], [16], [17], [21], [27].
Attitudes toward sustainable products	Consumers' positive or negative evaluations of environmentally friendly products and sustainable consumption that influence behavioural intentions.	[7], [8], [24], [25], [28], [29].

Sustainable purchase intention	Consumer willingness to choose and purchase products that meet sustainability principles and reduce environmental impact.	[9], [10], [28], [24], [31], [32].
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Source: created by the authors.

Based on the literature analysis, this study proposes that there is a relationship between digital media communication, consumer trust in digital information, and consumer attitudes toward sustainable products.

2.5 Research hypotheses and conceptual model

Digital media provide an environment in which consumers can access different sources of information, share experiences, and exchange information through social media platforms, [1], [4].

Such information exchange may contribute to the development of trust in digital information and influence consumers' perceptions of products, [14], [17]. Consumer trust in information and its perceived credibility can, in turn, contribute to the formation of more positive attitudes toward sustainable products, [14], [21]. A favourable attitude toward sustainable products is considered an important factor influencing consumers' willingness to choose environmentally friendly products, [25], [28].

Thus, consumer attitudes can function as an intermediate mechanism linking the perception of digital information with consumers' purchase intentions.

Based on this theoretical approach, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H1. Digital media influence contributes to consumer trust in digital information and facilitates information exchange on social media, including electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM).

H2. Consumer trust in digital information and its perceived credibility positively influence attitudes toward sustainable products.

H3. A favourable consumer attitude toward sustainable products increases sustainable purchase intention.

Based on the literature review and the formulated hypotheses, a conceptual framework is proposed. To provide a more structured analytical basis for the conceptual model, the hypothesised relationships were specified as a regression-based path structure.

In this structure, digital media influence is treated as an antecedent of trust and credibility of digital information, trust and credibility of digital information is treated as an antecedent of attitude

toward sustainable products, and attitude toward sustainable products is treated as an antecedent of sustainable purchase intention.

This specification provides the basis for the empirical testing of the direct relationships presented in the conceptual model (see Figure 1).

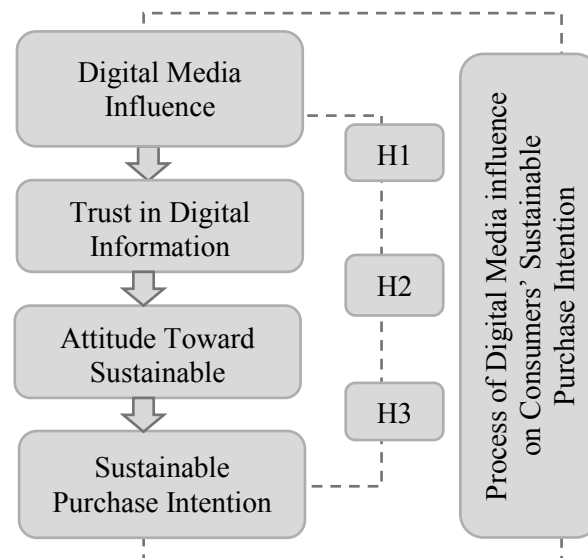


Fig. 1: Conceptual model of digital media influence on sustainable purchase intention

Source: created by the authors.

3 Methodology and Research Results

3.1 Research design and methodology

Building on the theoretical framework and hypotheses developed in the previous chapter, this study employs a quantitative research approach to analyse the influence of digital media on consumer trust in digital information, attitudes toward sustainable products, and sustainable purchase intention. A quantitative approach allows for a systematic assessment of the relationships between the variables analysed in the study and enables empirical testing of the hypotheses proposed in the conceptual framework. The conceptual framework of the study includes four key variables: digital media influence, trust and credibility of digital information including eWOM, attitude toward sustainable products and sustainable purchase intention. These variables were identified based on the literature analysis on digital media communication, consumer trust in information, and sustainable consumption behaviour. Empirical data were collected using a structured online survey. The questionnaire was distributed in the digital environment through social media platforms and other electronic communication channels in order to reach respondents who regularly use digital media to obtain

information about products and services. Respondents were selected using a convenience sampling method, which is commonly applied in consumer behaviour research in digital environments. In the survey, respondents were asked to evaluate a series of statements related to the use of digital media, trust in digital information, attitudes toward sustainable products, and their purchase intentions. As a result of the data collection process, 651 valid questionnaires were obtained, providing a sufficient empirical basis for analysing the relationships between the variables included in the study and for testing the proposed hypotheses. The dataset used in this study was collected for the purposes of this research. Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous, ensuring the confidentiality of respondents.

The variables used in the study were measured using multi-item scales based on measurement approaches applied in previous studies on digital marketing, consumer behaviour, and sustainable consumption. Respondents evaluated the statements using a five-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree; 5-strongly agree). The variables analysed in the study include:

1. Digital media influence - the role of digital media in providing information about products and sustainable initiatives.
2. Trust and credibility of digital information - consumer trust in digital information and its perceived credibility.
3. Attitude toward sustainable products - consumer attitudes toward environmentally friendly and sustainable products.
4. Sustainable purchase intention - the intention of consumers to choose and purchase products that comply with the principles of sustainable consumption.

Data analysis was conducted using statistical analysis methods. First, descriptive statistics were applied to characterise the respondents and the distribution of the study variables. Pearson correlation analysis was used to examine the strength and direction of relationships between the main constructs. The hypothesised relationships were then tested using a regression-based path analysis approach, in which each direct path in the conceptual model was examined through a separate simple linear regression model with standardized coefficients. This enabled the study to assess whether the proposed relationships between digital media influence, trust and credibility, attitude toward sustainable products, and sustainable purchase intention were positive and statistically significant.

3.2 Research results

When describing the characteristics of the respondents, it should be noted that the study involved individuals who actively use digital media to obtain information about products and services. The survey collected information on respondents' demographic characteristics, including gender, age, and digital media usage habits. The study included 651 respondents who regularly use digital media to search for information about products and services. The gender distribution showed that 63% of respondents were women and 37% were men. This distribution provides a relatively balanced sample structure and allows for the analysis of digital media influence on consumer behaviour across different demographic groups.

The analysis of the age structure indicates that most respondents (91%) were in the 18-35 age group, which corresponds to the most active users of digital media. In addition, most respondents reported that they regularly use social media and other digital platforms to obtain information about products, brands, and consumption opportunities. These results indicate that the respondents included in the study are active users of digital information sources. This provides a suitable basis for analysing the influence of digital media on consumer attitudes and purchasing decisions in the context of sustainable consumption.

3.2.1 Digital media influence in the context of sustainable consumption

The influence of digital media was analysed by assessing respondents' use of digital platforms to obtain information about products and sustainable initiatives. For respondents in this study, digital media were among the main sources consulted before a purchase decision. Most respondents regularly used social media and other online platforms to gather information about products and brands and explore available choices. The range of information available on these platforms enables comparisons between alternatives and may support more informed consumer decisions. The responses also reveal a social dimension to this search process. Respondents often consulted reviews, comments and accounts of other users' experiences shared on social media. Together, these exchanges constitute electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). As a source of product-related information, eWOM may shape perceptions of products and brands. On digital platforms, user-generated content (UGC) contributes to the dissemination of information and may affect consumers' decision-making processes.

When assessing the influence of digital media on sustainable consumption, the analysis shows that

digital media can also contribute to raising consumer awareness of sustainability issues. Respondents who use digital media more actively for information search more often report paying attention to information about environmentally friendly and sustainable products. Digital media do more than provide information. They may also help consumers recognise and understand sustainable consumption options. Three dimensions were apparent in the responses: wider access to information, stronger social influence and greater awareness of sustainable choices. Together, these functions give digital media a role in both informing and educating consumers during decision-making. The analysis then shifted from the descriptive observations to the relationships proposed in the conceptual framework. Correlation analysis included four variables: digital media influence, trust in digital information, attitudes toward sustainable products and sustainable purchase intention. Correlation analysis makes it possible to assess the strength of relationships between variables and determine whether statistically significant associations exist. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Correlation matrix of research variables

No.	Variable	1	2	3	4
1	Digital media influence	1.00	0.54	0.47	0.42
2	Trust and credibility of digital information	0.54	1.00	0.61	0.55
3	Attitude toward sustainable products	0.47	0.61	1.00	0.68
4	Sustainable purchase intention	0.42	0.55	0.68	1.00
Note: Pearson correlation coefficients between the variables.					

Source: created by the authors.

The results reveal positive correlations between all variables analysed in the study. The strongest relationship was observed between attitudes toward sustainable products and sustainable purchase intention ($r=0.68$), indicating that consumers with more positive attitudes toward sustainable products are more likely to purchase environmentally friendly products. A significant relationship was also found between trust in digital information and attitudes toward sustainable products ($r=0.61$), suggesting that credible digital information can foster more positive attitudes toward sustainable products. In addition, a moderately strong correlation was identified between digital media influence and trust in digital information ($r=0.54$), indicating that more active use of digital

media may contribute to the development of trust in information available in the digital environment.

Taken together, these findings back up the relationships put forward in the conceptual framework, underscoring how significantly digital media shapes both consumer attitudes and sustainable purchase intentions.

3.2.2 Trust and credibility of digital information

The analysis shows that respondents' trust in digital information is generally moderate to relatively high and depends strongly on the information source. The information source mattered. Respondents placed more trust in other consumers' experiences, reviews and comments than in traditional advertising or company-generated content. In the digital consumer environment, this preference gives eWOM particular weight. It also points to two source qualities that may foster trust: perceived authenticity and independence. A similar pattern appeared for credibility. Consumers were more likely to consider information during product evaluation and decision-making when they regarded it as reliable, authentic and grounded in real user experience. This indicates that credible digital information not only supports evaluation processes but also reduces uncertainty and contributes to the formation of more positive attitudes and purchase intentions, shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of trust and credibility indicators

No.	Indicator	Mean	SD
1	I trust information about products shared in social media	3.60	0.88
2	User reviews and comments are credible sources of information	3.90	0.84
3	I rely on other consumers' experiences when evaluating products	4.00	0.80
4	Information shared by influencers is trustworthy	3.40	0.93
5	Digital information helps me evaluate product sustainability	3.70	0.86

Source: created by the authors.

The values presented in the table represent the mean responses measured on a five-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree; 5-strongly agree). SD indicates the standard deviation. The results show that the highest mean score was observed for the indicator "reliance on other consumers' experience when evaluating a product" ($M=4.00$), confirming the importance of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) in the digital information environment. A similarly high value was recorded for the indicator "user reviews as

a credible source of information” ($M=3.90$). This suggests that consumers often perceive the experiences of other users as more reliable sources of information than traditional marketing communication channels. A comparatively lower mean value was found for the indicator “trust in influencer information” ($M=3.40$), indicating that respondents do not always perceive influencer content as fully objective. Overall, the results demonstrate that consumers tend to trust user-generated content and the experiences of other consumers, which significantly influence the perception of information in the digital environment. Before testing the relationships proposed in the conceptual model, the reliability and validity of the measurement constructs were assessed. To assess internal consistency, the study relied on Cronbach's alpha alongside composite reliability. Convergent validity, meanwhile, was established through the average variance extracted (AVE). Together, these measures helped confirm that the items within each construct were capturing a shared underlying concept, and that the constructs themselves held up well enough to proceed with further statistical testing. The results of this assessment are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Reliability and validity of the measurement constructs

Construct	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Digital media influence	5	0.84	0.88	0.59
Trust and credibility of digital information	5	0.82	0.86	0.56
Attitude toward sustainable products	5	0.86	0.90	0.64
Sustainable purchase intention	5	0.85	0.89	0.62

Source: created by the authors.

As shown in Table 4, all measurement constructs demonstrated acceptable internal consistency and convergent validity. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.82 to 0.86, exceeding the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70. Composite reliability values ranged from 0.86 to 0.90, also indicating sufficient construct reliability. In addition, AVE values ranged from 0.56 to 0.64, exceeding the recommended threshold of

0.50. These results confirm that the measurement data are reliable and valid and can therefore be used for further analysis of hypothesis-driven relationships.

3.2.3 Attitudes toward sustainable products

Respondents generally viewed sustainable products and environmentally friendly consumption favourably. Their strongest agreement concerned the contribution of sustainable products to environmental protection. Readiness to change established consumption habits received somewhat lower ratings. The contrast matters. It shows broad acceptance of sustainability as an idea, but less certainty when that idea requires changes in everyday choices. Favourable attitudes therefore appear to extend beyond simple endorsement of environmental values; respondents also considered whether sustainable products could be incorporated into their usual patterns of consumption. The movement from approval to stated readiness for action was not automatic, pointing to a practical dimension in how sustainable products are assessed in everyday life. The analysis further shows that more positive attitudes are more common among respondents who perceive digital information as reliable, clear, and authentic. In this study, attitudes toward sustainable products function as an intermediate mechanism between the perception of digital information and sustainable purchase intention, as digital media can shape favourable attitudes that subsequently influence purchase intentions. These results place attitudes within the decision process rather than treating them as a passive expression of values. Credible information encountered online may expand consumers' knowledge and make sustainable options appear reasonable, desirable and supported by others. The reverse may also occur. Content viewed as commercial, fragmented or inauthentic is less persuasive.

Table 5. captures the attitudinal dimension of this process through product evaluation, perceived responsibility and respondents stated readiness to change their consumption habits

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of attitude toward sustainable products indicators

No.	Indicator	Mean	SD
1	I believe that sustainable products help reduce environmental impact	4.30	0.74
2	Buying sustainable products is a responsible consumer choice	4.15	0.79
3	I have a positive attitude toward environmentally friendly products	4.05	0.82

4	Sustainability is an important criterion in my product evaluation	3.85	0.88
5	I am willing to change my consumption habits in favor of sustainable products	3.70	0.93

Source: created by the authors.

The data in Table 5 show that the highest mean value was observed for the indicator “sustainable products help reduce environmental impact” ($M=4.30$), indicating that respondents have a strong awareness of the link between sustainable products and environmental protection. This reflects a relatively high level of cognitive understanding of sustainable consumption. A similarly high value was found for the indicator “buying sustainable products is a responsible consumer choice” ($M=4.15$), suggesting that respondents associate sustainability not only with environmental concerns but also with personal responsibility. Thus, sustainability is perceived not only as an external requirement but also as a standard of individual behaviour.

In contrast, the lowest mean value was observed for the indicator “willingness to change consumption habits in favour of sustainable products” ($M=3.70$). This finding highlights a gap between positive attitudes and actual behavioural readiness. Although respondents support sustainability at a conceptual level, they are not always equally willing to implement these attitudes in their daily consumption.

Several factors may account for this gap. A positive attitude towards sustainable products does not always provide sufficient motivation to change established consumption habits. Practical constraints may arise where sustainable alternatives may be more expensive, less readily available or require complex comparisons. Moving from a positive attitude to stated readiness to act may therefore depend on trust in information, social influence and perceived product accessibility.

Attitudes toward sustainable products are formed within a wider information setting. Earlier results show that respondents place greater trust in digital information based on user experiences and reviews, particularly when the content appears authentic. Credible communication in digital channels may thus do more than raise awareness; it may reinforce favourable attitudes toward sustainable products.

Furthermore, the results indicate that attitudes toward sustainable products are more closely related to sustainable purchase intention than digital media influence or trust in information alone. This implies that while digital media enhance information access and trust, the transition to sustainable purchase

intention occurs primarily when attitudes become personally relevant and normatively supported.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that consumer attitudes toward sustainability are positive but multi-dimensional. They reflect awareness of environmental issues, a sense of personal responsibility, and, at the behavioural level, a more moderate readiness to act. Therefore, analysing attitudes toward sustainable products is essential for understanding how the digital environment shapes not only knowledge and trust but also consumers’ willingness to make sustainable decisions.

3.2.4 Sustainable purchase intention

Respondents reported a generally high intention to choose environmentally friendly products, although the strength of that intention varied. Both psychological considerations and the information available during product evaluation were relevant to this pattern. Access to reliable information about a product’s environmental impact, quality and longer-term value was associated with greater willingness to consider a sustainable option. In this sample, purchase intention therefore appears conditional rather than automatic. It reflects how respondents evaluate sustainable products under the information and practical conditions available to them.

Environmental awareness alone did not fully account for the responses. The setting in which consumers encountered product information also mattered. Digital media, social media platforms and user-generated content allow consumers to learn about sustainable products, compare other users’ experiences and assess whether product claims appear credible. Electronic word-of-mouth was particularly relevant here. Positive reviews, recommendations and accounts shared online were associated with a stronger willingness to select sustainable products. Other users did more than add information; their experiences also offered social validation that could support a purchase decision.

A positive view of sustainable products, however, was not always accompanied by an equally definite intention to buy them. Some respondents acknowledged the importance of such products yet expressed less certainty about choosing them in practice. This pattern is consistent with the attitude–behaviour gap discussed in sustainable consumption research. Several practical constraints may contribute to it, including higher prices, limited availability, uncertainty about product quality and vague or incomplete information about the actual environmental benefits of a product.

The interpretation is not that attitudes are unimportant. Rather, favourable attitudes alone do not

fully explain sustainable purchase intention. Product price, availability, perceived quality and the credibility of digital information may also enter the purchase decision.

Table 6. summarises the descriptive results for the indicators used to measure this intention

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of sustainable purchase intention indicators

No.	Indicator	Mean	SD
1	I intend to purchase environmentally friendly products when possible	4.05	0.83
2	I am willing to choose sustainable products over conventional alternatives	3.95	0.86
3	I consider environmental impact when making purchasing decisions	3.88	0.89
4	I would recommend sustainable products to others	3.92	0.87
5	I prefer brands that promote sustainability	3.97	0.85

Source: created by the authors.

The highest mean value was observed for the indicator “intention to purchase environmentally friendly products, if possible” ($M=4.05$), indicating that respondents are generally willing to choose sustainable products when they are accessible and meet practical needs.

The qualifier “when possible” deserves attention. It presents purchase intention as conditional rather than absolute. Even respondents who viewed sustainable products favourably may weigh price, availability, perceived quality and the trustworthiness of sustainability information before expressing a firm intention to buy.

Two other indicators were close to the highest mean. Choosing sustainable products over conventional alternatives reached $M=3.95$, while preference for brands that promote sustainability reached $M=3.97$. Sustainability thus appears among the criteria respondents use in product choice. Willingness to recommend sustainable products was also relatively high ($M=3.92$), adding a social dimension. Such recommendations may circulate through digital networks and interpersonal communication.

The relationship with attitudes was also clear. Respondents who evaluated sustainable products more favourably reported stronger purchase intentions. This pattern accords with the theoretical proposition that attitudes are closely associated with behavioural intentions.

Viewed together, the results are consistent with a possible indirect link between digital media and sustainable purchase intention. Information encountered online may support favourable attitudes and increase awareness of sustainable consumption, which may in turn strengthen willingness to choose sustainable products.

3.2.5 Integrated evaluation of the research model

To assess the validity of the study’s conceptual framework, the relationships between four key variables were analysed: digital media influence, trust in digital information, attitudes toward sustainable products, and sustainable purchase intention. The results indicate an interrelated structure among these variables, which is consistent with the proposed theoretical framework and the formulated hypotheses. The findings indicate that digital media are strongly associated with both the availability of information and the exchange of information among consumers.

On digital platforms, product information does not come from companies alone. Users post reviews, describe their experiences and recommend products to others. In this way, this exchange of information constitutes electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM). Trust appears stronger when the content is clear, seems authentic and is grounded in real user experiences. This pattern corresponds to the earlier descriptive results, in which respondents gave more credibility to user-generated content than to company-generated information.

The next relationship in the model concerns attitudes. Greater trust in digital information was associated with more favourable views of sustainable products. Respondents who considered digital information credible also evaluated environmentally friendly products and sustainable consumption more positively. Reliable content may therefore do more than increase product knowledge. It can support the assessment of sustainable alternatives and provide a firmer basis for informed decisions.

Attitudes, in turn, were among the factors most closely related to sustainable purchase intention. Respondents with more favourable views of sustainable products reported stronger intentions to choose them in future purchases. Within the proposed model, this result supports the interpretation of attitudes as an intermediate link between information perception and behavioural intention.

Overall, the results suggest that digital media do not directly generate sustainable purchase intention but rather shape an information environment in which trust and positive attitudes are developed, ultimately influencing consumer decision-making.

To strengthen the empirical testing of the conceptual model, regression-based path analysis was applied in addition to descriptive statistics and correlation analysis. This analysis was used to examine the direct relationships proposed in the hypotheses and to assess whether the relationships among the constructs were statistically significant. The results are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Regression-based path analysis results based on simple linear regression models

H*	Relationship	β	p-value	Result
H1	Digital media influence and Trust and credibility	0.54	$p < 0.001$	Supported
H2	Trust and credibility and Attitude toward sustainable products	0.61	$p < 0.001$	Supported
H3	Attitude toward sustainable products and Sustainable purchase intention	0.68	$p < 0.001$	Supported
*H-Hypothesis				

Source: created by the authors.

As shown in Table 7, all hypothesised direct relationships were positive and statistically significant. Digital media influence was positively associated with trust and credibility of digital information, supporting H1. Trust and credibility of digital information were positively associated with attitude toward sustainable products, supporting H2. In turn, attitude toward sustainable products showed the strongest positive association with sustainable purchase intention, supporting H3. These results provide stronger empirical support for the proposed conceptual framework than correlation analysis alone. Based on the empirical results, the hypotheses proposed in the study were evaluated.

H1: Digital media influence is positively associated with consumer trust in digital information and facilitates information exchange, including electronic word-of-mouth. The findings show that the use of digital media is closely related to information exchange on social media and consumer interaction. Respondents frequently use digital platforms to obtain product information, evaluate other users' experiences, and compare opinions. The regression-based path analysis indicated that digital media influence positively and significantly predicts trust and credibility of digital information ($\beta=0.54$, $p<0.001$). Therefore, H1 is supported.

H2: Consumer trust in digital information and its perceived credibility is positively associated with

attitudes toward sustainable products. The regression-based path analysis showed a positive and statistically significant association between trust and credibility of digital information on attitude toward sustainable products ($\beta=0.61$, $p<0.001$). Respondents who considered digital information credible also reported more favourable attitudes toward sustainable products. H2 was supported.

H3 proposed a positive association between attitudes toward sustainable products and sustainable purchase intention. In the regression-based path analysis, attitude toward sustainable products showed the strongest association with sustainable purchase intention. The coefficient was positive and statistically significant ($\beta=0.68$, $p<0.001$). Respondents who evaluated sustainable products more favourably reported firmer intentions to select them in future purchases. H3 was supported.

The model describes a sequence rather than a single influence. On digital platforms, product information appears alongside reviews, recommendations and accounts of other users' experiences. This material becomes part of how consumers judge the credibility of online information. Greater trust in that information coincided with more favourable attitudes toward sustainable products; those attitudes were then associated with stronger purchase intentions. Digital media form part of the decision process through these connected relationships. This sequence is consistent with the proposed conceptual framework and clarifies how digital media relate to sustainable consumer behaviour. Rather than indicating a single direct influence, the findings point to a mainly indirect relationship with purchase intention, developing through trust in digital information and the subsequent formation of favourable attitudes toward sustainable products.

4 Discussion

Taken together, the regression-based path analysis gives the conceptual model a clearer empirical basis: each proposed relationship was positive and statistically significant. Rather than relying on descriptive measures and pairwise correlations alone, the analysis directly tests the hypothesised links. Digital media also emerged as a source of information on products, brands and sustainability initiatives, a pattern consistent with earlier studies of social media and consumer behaviour. One result is especially relevant here. Respondents placed greater trust in reviews and accounts of other consumers' experiences than in conventional advertising or content produced by companies. This preference underlines the

importance of electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) and user-generated information in consumers' assessment of products and their sustainability attributes. This indicates that user-generated content plays a critical role in shaping consumer perceptions of products and their sustainability attributes. The findings further indicate that trust and credibility of digital information are positively associated with attitude toward sustainable products. The credibility of sustainability-related information matters when consumers assess sustainable products. Content viewed as authentic is associated with more favourable product evaluations. Even so, positive attitudes do not automatically translate into purchase intention. The observed attitude-behaviour gap suggests that practical considerations price, availability, perceived quality and access to dependable sustainability information may continue to shape consumers' intentions. Theoretically, attitudes serve as the intermediate mechanism connecting perceptions of digital information with sustainable purchase intention. Considered together, the reliability and validity assessment and the regression-based path analysis provide a firmer empirical basis for this interpretation. The practical implication is direct. Sustainability communication on digital platforms should therefore be clear, credible and authentic, while users should be encouraged to engage with the content. Across the model, digital media are linked to consumer trust, attitudes and sustainable purchase intention. The analytical approach indicates that this relationship is expressed mainly through trust in digital information and favourable attitudes toward sustainable products. The pattern is particularly apparent when online content is considered credible, authentic and supported by the experiences of other users.

5 Conclusions

The aim of this study was to analyse the impact of digital media on consumer trust in digital information and its role in shaping sustainable consumption decisions. Based on the proposed conceptual framework, the study examined the relationships between four key variables: digital media influence, trust in digital information and its credibility, attitudes toward sustainable products, and sustainable purchase intention. Digital media were regularly consulted when respondents considered a purchase. On social media and other online platforms, consumers could access product information, share their own experiences and compare feedback from other

users before reaching a decision. These exchanges generated electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), which consumers used as another source when forming perceptions of products. The regression-based path analysis showed that trust and credibility of digital information are positively and significantly associated with attitude toward sustainable products, while attitude toward sustainable products is positively associated with sustainable purchase intention. Consumers who perceive digital information as credible and authentic are more likely to develop positive attitudes toward environmentally friendly products. These findings suggest that the relationship between digital media and the intention to make sustainable purchases is primarily indirect and is linked to trust in digital information and its credibility, as well as favourable attitudes toward sustainable products. From a theoretical perspective, the study enhances understanding of how digital communication is related to consumer behaviour in sustainable consumption, showing that its relationship with purchase intentions operates through trust in information and attitudes toward sustainable products. The four measurement constructs met the criteria used in the study. Internal consistency was acceptable, while the AVE values supported convergent validity. This has a practical implication: sustainability information placed on digital platforms should be clear and credible, and users should have opportunities to contribute their own experiences to the digital discussion. User-generated content plays a major role here, and it has the potential to foster greater trust and lead to better informed consumer decisions. The results also need to be read with two constraints in mind. Survey responses record participants' own perceptions, and self-report bias cannot be excluded. Nor does the sample support unrestricted generalisation, because younger digital media users account for a large share of participants. Future studies can add price sensitivity, product availability, perceived greenwashing and social norms to the model. The present analysis is part of a wider research programme. Later stages will investigate these relationships in more detail and clarify the role of digital media in sustainable consumption decisions. The current evidence links digital

media to this decision process through the observed relationships with consumer trust and attitudes. The digital communication environment may therefore serve as an important context for supporting more informed and responsible consumer behaviour.

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1. Daina Vasilevska was the lead author and was responsible for the preparation of the original draft and information compilation.
2. Inta Ozola was responsible for the conceptualisation, design, and implementation of the theoretical and empirical research.
3. Una Libkovska was responsible for data processing and statistical analysis.
4. Karlis Kreslins was responsible for the synthesis of results and alignment of the literature sources.

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