

Digital Influence and Eco-Awareness: Mapping the New-Age Green Buying Behavior of Women in Erode District

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ABSTRACT

The growing environmental concerns and rapid digitalization in India are reshaping consumer behavior, particularly among women who play a critical role in household purchasing decisions. This study explores the intersection of digital influence and eco-awareness in shaping the green buying behavior of women in Erode District, Tamilnadu. As a semi-urban and agriculturally significant region, Erode presents a unique demographic mix where traditional values coexist with modern digital exposure. The research aims to assess how digital platforms (social media, influencers, online reviews) and environmental consciousness impact the awareness, attitudes and actual purchasing decisions related to green products among women. Using a mixed –methods approach, data was collected from a stratified sample of 200 women across urban and rural areas of Erode through structured Questionnaire. The Study identified key drivers such as education level, digital literacy, trust in eco-labels and affordability, while also highlighting significant barriers including price sensitivity, limited local availability of green products and skepticism about green claims. To analysis this studies using percentage analysis and correlation analysis.

KEYWORDS: Digitalization, Consumer Behavior, Eco-awareness, Green Product, Environmental.

1.INTRODUCTION

Now a days, the world has witness a growing urgency around environmental sustainability, with increasing awareness about the ecological impact of consumerism. Parallel to this green awakening is the digital revolution, which has transformed the way people access information, communicate and make purchasing decisions. India, a country undergoing rapid digitalization, presents a unique landscape where technology and tradition intersect. Women, often the primary decision – makers in household consumption are emerging as key stakeholders in the green consumer movement. Their purchasing choice are increasingly influenced not only by environmental consciousness but also by digital stimuli such as social media content, online reviews, eco-influencers, and brand transparency. Erode District, known for its strong agricultural roots and semi-urban characteristics, offers a compelling case study to examine how these forces shape green buying behavior in a region where modern digital lifestyles co-exist with traditional value systems. This study focuses on understanding the dynamic between digital influence and eco-awareness in shaping the green purchasing behavior of women in Erode. It investigates how informed and motivated women are to choose environmentally friendly products and how digital platforms act as enablers or barriers in this decision – making process. The research also explores socio-demographic factors such as education, digital literacy and economic status that mediate these behaviors.

By capturing the voices of women across urban and rural settings in Erode, this study seeks to uncover the motivations, challenges and perceptions that underlie their green purchasing choices. The findings aim to inform marketers, policymakers and sustainability advocates

about how to better engage and empower women consumers in semi-urban India to support and sustain green markets.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Joshi & Rahman. (2015). Green consumerism refers to the conscious decision by consumers to purchase products that are environmentally friendly and ethically produced. Several studies highlight that eco-awareness is growing among Indian consumers, especially women, who often make choice that reflect their concern for family health, sustainability and long-time impact on the environment.

Fatima, Siddiqui & Farooqui. (2022). This study identifies key determinants of green consumer behavior in the Indian market using interpretive Structural Modeling. Factors such as environmental knowledge, eco-labels, social norms, perceived cost and availability were found to interplay in influencing green purchases. The research indicates that while awareness is rising, perceived cost and low trust in “green claim” remain strong inhibitors. It also highlights that infrastructure and education bolster green behavior. For women, social norms and trust in eco-labels particularly mediate the translation from intention to actual purchase.

Manoj et al.(2023). This article reviews ICT based initiatives both in India and globally that empower women, including in access to information, markets and social networks. It highlights that ICT tools enable women to gain business opportunities, learn new skills and engage in social/community decision making. However, it also points out digital divides in rural vs urban, among poorer vs richer and among with different education levels. For green behavior, ICT can disseminate information about eco-product, provide platforms for peer influence and reviews and help with price comparisons.

Anbucheshien Kamaraj, Rifaya Meera, S.Divya.(2024). This study explores how digital literacy empowers rural women with respect to sustainable development. It finds that digital skills improve awareness of Government Schemes, health , environment and enable better decision-making. Women with higher digital literacy engage more in community dialogues, adopt sustainable practices and demand environment-friendly product when they are aware. Barriers noted include lack of access to training, digital infrastructure, and sometimes cultural resistance. These findings provide a direct link to your region and suggest potential parallels in Erode.

Pathak, Jain, Agarwal, Attri.(2024). Focusing on eco-labels, this mixed method investigation explores how psychological perception toward lables influence sustainable consumption. It finds that credible eco labels increase purchase intention, but only if consumers are aware of them, believe in their legitimacy and see them as relevant. The study also underscores that many consumers ignore labels due to low literacy or skepticism. For women, the health/safety dimension often carries stronger weight. It suggests that Businesses need to strengthen transparency and enforce labeling norms.

Kumar, Kumar & Devi.(2024). This research examiners rural women in Himachal Pradesh and finds a strong positive association between digital literacy and empowerment outcomes. Women with basic digital skills report greater ability to access information, engage in economic activity, and make informed decisions. Education plays a moderating role; those with higher formal education derive more benefit from digital literacy than those without. The study also notes that infrastructural constraints reduce the impact of literacy. These

finding suggest that improved digital skills could influence green purchasing among women by enhancing awareness and access.

Meenu, Kavitha Dua.(2025).This article review how digital literacy programs for rural women affect their socio economic inclusion. It examines thematic evidence from interventions, case studies and surveys, nothing gains in economic independence, social participation and community engagement. Key strategies include training in local languages, peer support groups, culturally responsive content and low-cost technology. Persistent gaps include inconsistent policy support, scarcity of sustained funding and limited access in very remote areas. For green consumer behavior, such inclusion may increase exposure to digital ads, e-commerce for green products and awareness of eco-labels.

Pal & Sengar.(2025). This study examines of Noida although a large proportion of women own smartphones, fewer use them for educational, civic or informational purposes. Social norms, safety concerns, time constraints and affordability of data/devices are cited as barriers to using digital tools meaningfully. The findings show that more access isn't enough how women use digital tools matters for awareness, for informed choices, for engagement with sustainable content. This underscores that digital influence in green buying not only depends on channels being available but also on the confidence, skills and supportive environment needed to use them.

III.STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Environmental sustainability has become a pressing global concern, prompting, a shift in consumer behavior towards eco-friendly products. At the same time, digital platforms have emerged as powerful tools influencing consumer choice through social media, online review influencer marketing and product transparency. In India, where traditional values often interest with modern technology, the role of women as specially in household purchasing decisions is crucial in fostering sustainable consumer practices.

In the Erode District of Tamilnadu, a region characterized by semi-urban and rural demographics with strong agricultural and cultural roots, the influence of digital media on eco-awareness and green buying behavior among women remain underexplored. This study addresses a key research gap: How do digital influence and eco-awareness interact to shape the green purchasing decisions of women in Erode?. It seeks to understand whether digital platforms are effective in promoting green product among women and what factors hinder or support such behavior in a semi-urban Indian context.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to examine the impact of digital influence and environmental awareness on green buying behavior among women in the Erode District. The specific objectives include

- ❖ To assess the level of environmental awareness among women in Erode District.
- ❖ To evaluate the influence of digital platforms(Social media, online reviews, eco-influencers) on green purchasing decisions.
- ❖ To identify the key socio – demographic factors(Education, income, digital literacy) affecting green buying behavior.
- ❖ To explore the major barriers that prevent women from adopting eco-friendly products.

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- ❖ To analyze the correlation between digital literacy, eco-awareness and actual green purchase behavior.
- ❖ To provide recommendations for policymakers and marketers to enhance green consumer engagement among women in semi-urban regions.

V. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopts a mixed-methods design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic.

Population & Sampling

- ❖ Target Population : Women consumers aged 18 and above residing in both urban and rural areas of Erode District.
- ❖ Sampling Technique : Stratified random sampling was used to ensure representation from different socio-economic backgrounds and geographic segments (urban vs rural).
- ❖ Sample size: 200 women respondents.

Data Collection Tools

Primary Data collected through a structured questionnaire comprising closed – ended question. Secondary data collected from academic journals, government reports, prior studies on green consumerism, digital literacy and rural development.

Data Analysis Techniques

Simple percentage Analysis & Correlation Analysis

Hypotheses

H1: There is a significant relationship between digital literacy and green buying behavior among women in Erode District.

H2: Eco-awareness has a significant positive impact on the green purchasing decision of women.

H3: Urban women typically have greater access to and familiarity with digital tools, potentially leading to stronger influence from online content.

H4: Affordability and local availability of green products significantly affect purchasing behavior.

Table No:01

Digital Literacy & Green Buying Behavior

Variable	r-value	p-value	Result
Digital Literacy & Green Buying	0.63	0.000	Significant

There is a strong positive and statistically significant correlation ($r=0.63$, $p<0.01$) between digital literacy and green buying behavior among women in Erode District. This indicates that as digital literacy increases, the tendency to engage in green purchasing behavior also increases.

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Table No:02

Eco-awareness & Green Buying

Variable	r-value	p-value	Result
Eco-awareness & Green Buying	0.58	0.001	Significant

There is a moderately strong positive and significant correlation($r=0.58$, $p<0.01$) between eco-awareness and green buying behavior. This suggests that women who are more environmentally aware are more likely to make eco-friendly purchase decisions.

Table No: 03

Urban/Rural & Digital Influence

Variable	r-value	p-value	Results
Urban/Rural & Digital Influence	0.42	0.034	Significant

There is a moderate positive and statistically significant correlation ($r=0.42$, $p<0.05$) between urban / rural status and digital influence. This implies that urban women are more likely to be influenced by digital platforms in their green buying behavior compared to rural women, possibly due to better access to technology and online content.

Table No: 04

Affordability & Green Buying

Variable	r-value	p-value	Results
Affordability & Green Buying	0.66	0.001	Significant

There is a strong positive and significant correlation ($r=0.66$, $p<0.01$) between affordability nad green buying behavior. This indicates that affordability of green product plays a critical role in influencing women's decisions to purchase them.

VI.FINDINGS

Based on the data collected from 200 women across urban and rural areas in Erode Distrcit, the following key findings have emerged.

- ❖ Digital tools such as social media, online reviews and eco-influencer content serve as important sources of information and motivation.
- ❖ Higher awareness of environmental issues are more inclined to purchase eco-friendly products.
- ❖ Urban women have greater access to and familiarity with digital content related to green products than their rural counterparts.

- ❖ Many women are price –sensitive and may avoid green products if they are more expensive than conventional alternatives.

VII.SUGGESTIONS

Based on the finding, the following recommendations are proposed

- ❖ Government agencies , NGO and educational institutions should conduct digital literacy programs, especially targeting rural women.
- ❖ Encourage local shops and rural retail outlets to stock eco-friendly products
- ❖ Promote e-commerce delivery systems to reach underserved rural areas.
- ❖ Encourage local, eco-influencers to share relatable , culturally appropriate content.
- ❖ Promote peer-to-peer learning and discussions about tools and eco-awareness.

VIII.CONCLUSION

This study highlights the evolving landscape of consumer behavior in Erode District, where digital influence and eco-awareness are beginning to reshape how women make purchasing decisions. The finding reveal that digital literacy significantly enhance women's ability to understand, access and engage in green buying. However, barriers such as affordability , product availability and skepticism remain substantial, especially among rural and less-educated population. Urban women tend to be more digitally influenced due to better access to technology and content, while rural women, though increasingly aware, face infrastructural and informational limitations. Education and income also play vital roles in mediating eco-friendly behavior. To foster sustainable consumer practices among women in semi-urban and rural regions, coordinated efforts are required from policymakers, marketers, educators, and community leaders. By improving digital access, lowering product costs, and building trust in eco-labels the green consumer movement can be more inclusive , impactful and widespread-empowering women as both informed buyers and environmental stewards in their communities.

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