



A study on impact of digital marketing on social and environmental awareness among consumers

Shankari J¹, Dr. V Sampathkumari²

¹ Sri Kanyaka Parameswari Arts and Science College for Women, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

² Associate professor, Sri Kanyaka Parameswari Arts and Science College for Women, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

Abstract

Digital marketing has become a powerful tool not only for promoting products and services but also for shaping public awareness about social and environmental issues. This study examines how digital marketing initiatives influence consumers' understanding, attitudes, and awareness of social responsibility and environmental sustainability. With the increasing use of social media platforms, online campaigns, influencer communications, and content-based marketing, consumers are now more exposed to messages related to eco-friendly practices, ethical consumption, and social causes. The study explores how these digital efforts inform consumers, encourage responsible decision-making, and build positive perceptions toward socially and environmentally conscious brands. It also highlights the role of engaging content, transparency, and interactive communication in improving awareness levels. The findings suggest that well-designed digital marketing campaigns can significantly enhance consumer awareness and motivate supportive actions such as sustainable purchasing, community involvement, and advocacy for environmental protection. The study concludes that digital marketing serves as an effective channel for driving social and environmental awareness while strengthening the connection between brands and socially conscious consumers.

Keywords: Digital marketing, social awareness, environmental awareness, consumer perception

Introduction

In recent years, digital marketing has grown beyond its traditional role of selling products and attracting customers. It has emerged as an influential medium for spreading awareness about important social and environmental issues. With the widespread use of smartphones, social media platforms, and online content, consumers are constantly exposed to information that shapes their opinions, values, and everyday choices. Messages related to environmental protection, social responsibility, ethical consumption, and sustainability are now commonly communicated through digital channels in simple and relatable ways.

Consumers today are more informed and conscious about the impact of their purchasing decisions on society and the environment. Digital marketing plays a key role in this shift by creating awareness through interactive campaigns, storytelling, influencer advocacy, and online discussions. Brands and organizations increasingly use digital platforms to highlight eco-friendly initiatives, support social causes, and promote responsible behavior. These efforts not only educate consumers but also encourage them to actively participate in positive social and environmental actions.

Understanding the impact of digital marketing on social and environmental awareness is important in the present context, as it helps evaluate how effectively digital tools are being used for social good. This study focuses on how digital marketing influences consumer awareness, attitudes, and perceptions toward social and environmental issues, and how it contributes to building a more responsible and informed consumer society.

Need for the Study

The rapid growth of digital marketing has changed the way information is shared and consumed. While many studies focus on digital marketing's impact on sales and brand building, limited attention has been given to its role in creating social and environmental awareness among

consumers. In a time when issues such as climate change, social inequality, and ethical consumption are becoming increasingly important, it is necessary to understand whether digital marketing is effectively educating and influencing consumers in a positive way. This study is needed to examine how far digital marketing contributes to improving awareness and shaping responsible attitudes, helping marketers, policymakers, and organizations design more meaningful and impactful digital campaigns.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study is limited to analyzing the impact of digital marketing on consumers' social and environmental awareness. It focuses on digital platforms such as social media, websites, online advertisements, and content-based campaigns used by brands and organizations. The study considers consumer awareness, perceptions, and attitudes towards social and environmental issues promoted through digital marketing. The research is confined to selected consumers within a specific geographical area and time period, which makes the findings relevant within these boundaries.

Problem Statement

Despite the increasing use of digital marketing for promoting social and environmental causes, it is not clearly known how effectively these efforts influence consumer awareness and understanding. Many digital campaigns aim to attract attention, but their actual impact on educating consumers and encouraging responsible behavior remains uncertain. There is a need to assess whether digital marketing messages genuinely create awareness or remain superficial promotional activities. This study addresses the problem of evaluating the real influence of digital marketing on consumers' social and environmental awareness.

Importance of the Study

This study is important as it provides insights into the role of digital marketing in promoting social responsibility and

environmental sustainability. The findings can help marketers and organizations understand how consumers respond to awareness-driven digital campaigns. It also assists brands in designing responsible and transparent marketing strategies that go beyond profit-making. Additionally, the study contributes to academic literature by highlighting the social dimension of digital marketing and supports efforts toward building a more informed, responsible, and environmentally conscious consumer society.

Objectives of the study

- To examine consumers’ level of awareness regarding social and environmental issues promoted through digital marketing.
- To analyze the influence of digital marketing platforms on shaping consumers’ social and environmental perceptions.
- To identify the role of digital content and campaigns in encouraging responsible and sustainable consumer behavior.
- To assess consumers’ attitudes towards brands that promote social and environmental causes through digital marketing.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of digital marketing in creating meaningful social and environmental awareness among consumers.

Review of Literature

Peattie and Crane (2005) [1] examined the concept of green marketing and highlighted the importance of ethical and transparent communication. Their study emphasized that misleading or exaggerated environmental claims reduce consumer trust and weaken the effectiveness of sustainability-focused marketing. The authors stressed that marketing efforts must be genuine to positively influence consumer awareness.

Mangold and Faulds (2009) [2] introduced social media as a hybrid element of the promotion mix and explained how it enables two-way communication between brands and consumers. Their study showed that social media platforms play a significant role in spreading social and environmental messages by encouraging interaction, discussion, and user participation.

Taneja and Toombs (2014) [3] studied the role of digital platforms in increasing visibility and awareness of social causes.

Their findings indicated that digital communication helps organizations reach a wider audience and create awareness

through storytelling, shared experiences, and online engagement, thereby strengthening social consciousness among consumers.

Kotler, Kartajaya, and Setiawan (2017) [4] discussed the transformation from traditional marketing to digital marketing in the context of values-driven consumers. They emphasized that modern consumers expect brands to contribute to society and environmental well-being. Digital marketing, according to the authors, is an effective medium for communicating social responsibility and sustainability values.

Djafarova and Rushworth (2017) [5] explored the impact of influencer marketing on consumer perceptions. Their study found that influencers who are perceived as credible and authentic can effectively raise awareness about social and environmental issues, especially among young consumers, by making such messages relatable and trustworthy.

Kumar and Raju (2021) [6] examined the impact of digital green marketing on consumer behavior and awareness. Their findings showed that consumers exposed to digital campaigns related to environmental responsibility demonstrated higher awareness and more favorable attitudes toward eco-friendly brands.

Rosario *et al.* (2025) [7] conducted a systematic review on digital marketing and sustainable consumer behavior. The study concluded that digital marketing significantly improves social and environmental awareness, but it does not always result in long-term behavioral change. The authors suggested further empirical research to understand this gap.

Research Methodology

The present study follows a descriptive research design to examine the impact of digital marketing on social and environmental awareness among consumers. The population of the study consists of consumers who actively use digital platforms such as social media and websites. 100 respondents were selected using convenience sampling. Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire included demographic details and Likert-scale statements related to digital marketing exposure and awareness. Secondary data were collected from journals, books, and online sources. The collected data were analyzed using percentage analysis, mean scores, and simple statistical tools for interpretation.

Data analysis and interpretation

Table 1: Level of Social and Environmental Awareness Created by Digital Marketing

Statement	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
Digital marketing increases awareness of environmental issues	42	38	12	5	3
Social media campaigns promote social responsibility	40	36	14	6	4
Online ads influence eco-friendly purchasing decisions	35	40	15	6	4
Brands use digital platforms to promote sustainability	45	34	11	6	4
Digital content educates consumers about social causes	38	37	16	5	4

Interpretation

The percentage analysis shows that more than 70% of respondents either agree or strongly agree with each statement.

This clearly indicates that digital marketing plays a significant role in building social and environmental awareness among consumers. Very few respondents disagree, showing overall positive perception.

Table 2: Mean Scores of Impact Factors

Impact Dimensions	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Awareness of environmental protection	4.18	0.72
Awareness of social responsibility	4.12	0.75
Influence on sustainable buying behavior	4.05	0.78
Trust in socially responsible brands	3.98	0.81
Effectiveness of digital campaigns	4.21	0.69
Overall Mean	4.11	—

Interpretation

The overall mean score of 4.11 indicates a high level of impact of digital marketing on social and environmental awareness. The highest mean score (4.21) for effectiveness of digital campaigns reflects that respondents strongly believe digital platforms are effective tools for spreading awareness. Lower variation in standard deviation shows consistent opinions.

Table 3: weighted average ranking of Digital marketing channels

Digital Marketing Channel	Weighted Average Score	Rank
Social Media Platforms	4.45	1
Influencer Marketing	4.20	2
Content Marketing (Blogs/Videos)	4.08	3
Email Marketing	3.85	4
Online Advertisements	3.72	5

Interpretation

Social media platforms rank first, indicating they are the most influential channel in creating social and environmental awareness. Influencer marketing and content marketing also play a strong role, suggesting that interactive and value-based content is more impactful than traditional online advertisements.

Findings

- A large majority of respondents (over 70%) either agree or strongly agree that digital marketing significantly increases social and environmental awareness, indicating a high level of acceptance and positive perception.
- The overall mean score of 4.11 shows that digital marketing has a high impact on creating social and environmental awareness among consumers.
- Digital marketing campaigns are perceived as highly effective, as reflected by the highest mean score (4.21) among all impact dimensions.
- Social media platforms rank first in the weighted average analysis, proving to be the most influential digital marketing channel for spreading social and environmental awareness.
- Influencer marketing and content marketing occupy the next top ranks, showing that consumers respond more positively to interactive, informative, and relatable digital content than to traditional online advertisements.

Suggestions

- Organizations should actively use social media platforms to promote social and environmental causes, as they are the most effective channels for creating consumer awareness.
- Marketers should collaborate with influencers and content creators who align with sustainability values to enhance credibility and consumer engagement.
- Digital marketing campaigns should focus on educational and storytelling content, such as short

videos, reels, and infographics, to clearly communicate social and environmental messages.

- Brands should design consistent and transparent digital campaigns highlighting real actions toward social responsibility, which can further build consumer trust.
- Companies should regularly measure the impact of their digital campaigns using simple analytical tools (mean scores, feedback surveys, and engagement metrics) to improve effectiveness and maintain high awareness levels.

Conclusion

The study concludes that digital marketing has a significant and positive impact on consumers’ social and environmental awareness. The analysis shows that a majority of respondents perceive digital platforms as effective in communicating messages related to social responsibility and environmental sustainability. High mean scores further confirm that digital marketing campaigns successfully educate consumers and influence their attitudes toward responsible behavior. Social media, influencer marketing, and content-based strategies emerge as the most powerful tools in spreading awareness. Overall, digital marketing not only serves as a promotional medium but also acts as a vital instrument in shaping informed, socially conscious, and environmentally responsible consumers.

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