# Exploring the Role of Digital Influencers in Driving Green Consumerism in Emerging Contexts

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**Abstract: The rising popularity of social media influencers has reshaped consumer decision-making, yet their role in promoting environmentally friendly behaviour in emerging economies remains underexplored. This study presents a systematic review of existing academic literature, industry reports, and case studies to examine how influencers contribute to the advancement of sustainable consumption. It focuses on understanding the influence of key factors such as influencer credibility, authenticity, and platform dynamics in shaping eco-conscious consumer attitudes. Particular attention is given to the challenges and opportunities in emerging markets, where digital adoption is accelerating but sustainability awareness is still developing. Based on consolidated evidence, the paper proposes an integrated framework for understanding influencer-driven green marketing in emerging economies. The framework offers theoretical contributions to sustainability and digital marketing research while providing practical implications for businesses and policymakers seeking to foster green consumer behaviour. The findings highlight the strategic importance of using credible and authentic influencers to promote sustainable lifestyles in rapidly transforming economies. This framework not only contributes to the theoretical understanding of influencer marketing and sustainable consumption but also provides practical insights for marketers, sustainability advocates, and policymakers seeking to promote eco-friendly behaviours through digital channels in rapidly developing economies.**

***Keywords****: Green Consumer Behaviour; Social Media Influencers; Sustainable Consumption; Emerging Economies; Influencer Credibility.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

➢ *Background*

- *Green Consumer Behaviour (GCB) in Emerging Economies:*

Green Consumer Behaviour (GCB) term denotes to the environmentally conscious choices that consumers make when purchasing and using products, including preferences for items that are recyclable, energy-efficient, or produced through sustainable methods (Carrete et al., 2012). In the context of emerging economies, GCB is shaped by a complex mix of environmental awareness, socio-economic factors, market accessibility, and cultural norms.

Although awareness about environmental issues is increasing in many developing regions, actual engagement in sustainable consumption often lags behind. This gap is attributed to several barriers, such as limited availability and accessibility of green products, relatively higher prices compared to conventional alternatives, and a lack of trustworthy, clear information to guide eco-friendly choices (Carrete et al., 2012). Additionally, green behaviour in these regions is frequently influenced by pressing economic priorities, where immediate financial concerns may outweigh long-term environmental considerations.

- *The Rise of Social Media Influencers:*

Social Media Influencers (SMIs) are individuals who enforce influence over consumer decisions through their strong online presence, perceived expertise, and relatability. Platforms such as Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook have amplified the reach and impact of SMIs, enabling them to shape opinions, promote brands, and inspire lifestyle changes among their followers (Vilkaitė-Vaitonė, 2024).

In emerging economies, this rise has been accelerated by growing internet access, widespread use of smartphones, and the digital engagement of younger generations. These influencers often fill the gap left by traditional media, acting as trusted, peer-like sources of information. Their content is usually more relatable and interactive, making them effective

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communicators of marketing messages—particularly for audiences who are highly engaged with social platforms (Rodrigo & Mendis, 2023). As a result, SMIs have become key agents in digital marketing, especially in countries where traditional advertising may not reach large segments of the population.

- *Social Media Influencers (SMIs) and Sustainable Consumption:*

The intersection of Social Media Influencers and sustainable consumption presents a promising but complex area of research and practice. Influencers have the potential to drive green consumer behaviour by showcasing eco-friendly products, sharing sustainable lifestyle practices, and encouraging environmentally responsible choices. By leveraging their credibility and personal connection with audiences, influencers can normalize and popularize sustainable consumption (Sinpoh, 2024).

However, the success of such efforts depends on multiple factors. The perceived credibility and authenticity of the influencer are especially crucial; followers are more likely to adopt sustainable practices when they believe the influencer genuinely supports environmental values rather than merely promoting green products for profit. Additionally, the platform dynamics (such as visual appeal on Instagram or educational depth on YouTube) and the cultural context within which influencers operate also influence how green messages are received (Vilkaitė-Vaitonė, 2024; Rodrigo & Mendis, 2023).

In emerging economies, the influence of Social Media Influencers on Green consumer behaviour is particularly sophisticated. On one hand, they can inspire positive change by raising awareness about sustainability and making green practices more accessible and desirable. On the other hand, if their content prioritizes materialism or promotes excessive consumption—even under a "green" label—they may unintentionally reinforce unsustainable behaviours. Therefore, understanding the role of influencers in promoting sustainable consumption in these regions requires a balanced, context-sensitive analysis that considers both their potential and their limitations (Sinpoh, 2024).

➢ *Study Objective*

This study aims to conduct a systematic review of existing literatures, including academic literature, industry reports, and case studies, to examine how social media influencers (SMIs) influence green consumer behaviour (GCB) in emerging economies. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- Analyse the impact of SMI characteristics (credibility, authenticity, expertise) on eco-conscious consumer attitudes.
- Investigate the role of various social media platforms in promoting sustainable consumption.
- Identify challenges and opportunities for SMI-driven green marketing in emerging markets.
- Propose an integrated framework to synthesize insights from existing research, offering both theoretical and practical implications.

➢ *Significance of the Study*

This research contributes to the literature by filling the gap between influencer marketing and green consumer behaviour (GCB), with a particular focus on emerging economies. The findings will provide valuable insights into how SMI characteristics and platform dynamics influence sustainable consumption behaviours. From a practical standpoint, the study offers guidance for marketers, policymakers, and NGOs aiming to leverage influencer marketing to promote sustainability. By consolidating existing research, this study also identifies routes for future investigation, especially in regions where empirical studies are limited.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

➢ *Green Consumer Behaviour (GCB):*

Green Consumer Behaviour (GCB) denotes to the selections and consumption habits of individuals who consider the environmental impact of what they buy and how they live. This includes actions such as using eco-friendly products, recycling, saving energy, and supporting brands that follow sustainable practices. Early definitions described GCB as "the activities undertaken by consumers that are motivated by environmental concerns" (Peattie, 2010). More recent research expands this definition to include not only product-related decisions, but also broader lifestyle changes aimed at reducing one's ecological footprint (Joshi & Rahman, 2015).

A wide range of studies have examined what drives people to engage in GCB. Some of the key factors include concern for the environment, belief in the effectiveness of individual actions, social influences, and trust in eco-labels (Biswas & Roy, 2015; Yadav & Pathak, 2017). Research shows that consumers are more likely to behave in eco-friendly ways when they feel their actions can make a real difference (Nguyen et al., 2016). In addition, psychological factors such as environmental knowledge, personal values, and attitudes play a significant role in shaping green consumption (Haws, Winterich, & Naylor, 2014).

However, despite increasing environmental awareness, several barriers still limit GCB, especially in emerging economies. These challenges include the limited availability of green products, higher prices compared to regular alternatives, lack of reliable eco-labels, and consumer scepticism toward corporate environmental claims (Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017). Gupta and Ogden (2009) refer to this as the "green gap," where people's positive environmental attitudes do not always lead to actual green purchases. In many developing regions, additional structural problems, such as weak regulations, poor recycling systems, and low levels of consumer education—further widen this gap (Biswas & Roy, 2015).

Despite these challenges, scholars argue that emerging economies hold significant potential for GCB growth. This is

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due to the rise of the middle class, growing awareness of global sustainability efforts, and rapid digital transformation (Yadav & Pathak, 2017; Mishal et al., 2017). Young consumers, in particular, are more likely to align their values and purchasing habits with environmental and ethical concerns, suggesting that future behaviour may shift in a greener direction (Nguyen et al., 2020).

In summary, although GCB is expanding globally, its adoption in emerging economies remains uneven and is shaped by a complex mix of economic, social, and structural factors. These insights are important for understanding how external influences—especially social media influencers—might help close the gap between awareness of sustainability and actual green consumption behaviour.

➢ *Social Media Influencers (SMIs) and Consumer Behaviour:*

Social media has changed how people connect with brands, moving marketing away from traditional methods to more interactive, consumer-driven approaches. One of the biggest changes has been the rise of social media influencers (SMIs), who now play a powerful role in shaping how consumers think and what they buy. SMIs are generally defined as individuals who, because of their knowledge, credibility, or large online following, can influence their audience’s attitudes and behaviours (Freberg, Graham, McGaughey, & Freberg, 2011). Unlike traditional celebrities, influencers are often seen as more relatable and approachable, which makes their messages more persuasive (Djafarova & Trofimenko, 2019).

➢ *Key Characteristics of SMIs:* -

The ability of SMIs to influence consumer behaviour depends on several key traits:

- Credibility and Trustworthiness**:** Consumers are more likely to be influenced by SMIs who appear honest, authentic, and open. This trust is especially important when influencers promote products related to health, lifestyle, or environmental issues (Lou & Yuan, 2019).
- Expertise and Knowledge**:** Influencers who are seen as experts in a particular area—such as sustainable living, fashion, or fitness—tend to be more convincing in their recommendations (Casaló, Flavián, & Ibáñez-Sánchez, 2020).
- Attractiveness and Relatability**:** Influencers who are physically attractive, lead aspirational lifestyles, or seem relatable can build stronger emotional connections with their followers. These “parasocial relationships” often make followers feel personally connected to the influencer (Ki & Kim, 2019).

➢ *SMIs and Consumer Attitudes:* -

Many studies show that influencer marketing affects how consumers feel about brands, what they intend to buy, and how loyal they are. For example, when influencers are seen as credible, it increases consumer trust in the brand and makes people more likely to purchase products (Jin, Muqaddam, & Ryu, 2019). SMIs also help reduce skepticism by presenting brand promotions as personal recommendations instead of direct advertisements (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017). This is especially important in markets where people tend to distrust traditional advertising.

➢ *SMIs in Developed vs. Emerging Markets***:** -

Although most studies on SMIs have focused on developed countries, influencers are becoming increasingly important in emerging markets because of rapid digital growth. In these regions, influencers often act as role models, especially for younger people, shaping how they live and what they buy (Trivedi & Sama, 2020). However, factors like cultural values, levels of digital literacy, and consumer awareness can affect how effective influencers are. In many emerging economies, social and family values can interact with influencer messages—sometimes supporting them, and other times weakening their impact (Lim, Radzol, Cheah, & Wong, 2017).

➢ *Risks and Limitations:* -

Despite their popularity, using SMIs also involves certain risks. One issue is over-commercialization, where too many sponsored posts can make influencers seem less genuine. Another concern is ethical behaviour, especially when influencers promote unsustainable products or make misleading claims (Boerman, Willemsen, & Van Der Aa, 2017). There's also the problem of fake influencers, who buy followers to appear more influential than they really are. This raises questions about how effective and trustworthy influencer marketing really is (Audrezet, De Kerviler, & Guidry Moulard, 2020).

In sum, the academic literature recognises SMIs as key influencers of consumer behaviour. Their impact depends on how credible and authentic they seem, and how well they fit within the cultural context of their audience. These insights provide a strong foundation for exploring how SMIs might help promote sustainable consumption, especially in emerging economies where both influencer culture and awareness of green issues are still developing.

➢ *Social Media Influencers (SMIs) and Sustainable Consumption:*

Sustainable consumption is now a key topic in both academic research and policy discussions, especially in response to climate change, environmental damage, and increasing consumer awareness of ecological issues. It is defined as the use of goods and services that meet basic human needs while also minimizing environmental harm and conserving resources (United Nations Environment Programme [UNEP], 2015). Encouraging consumers to shift toward more sustainable habits is challenging—particularly in emerging economies—where factors such as cost, cultural traditions, and low awareness often take priority over environmental concerns (Biswas & Roy, 2015).

➢ *Influencers as Agents of Green Marketing:* -

Social media influencers (SMIs) are increasingly seen as important players in promoting green marketing. They use their credibility and large audiences to influence environmentally conscious consumer behaviour. Unlike traditional advertising, influencer content usually blends

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personal stories and lifestyle habits with sustainability messages, making it feel more natural and relatable (Jin, Muqaddam, & Ryu, 2019). For example, influencers on platforms like Instagram and YouTube often promote ethical fashion, zero-waste lifestyles, or plant-based diets—encouraging their followers to make similar choices (Zhao et al., 2024).

➢ *Authenticity and Green Messaging: -*

The authenticity of influencers plays a major role in how effective their sustainability messages are. When influencers genuinely follow and support eco-friendly practices, their followers are more likely to trust them and adopt similar behaviours (Audrezet, De Kerviler, & Guidry Moulard, 2020). On the other hand, if sustainability appears to be just a marketing strategy, followers may view it as greenwashing—a practice where companies or individuals falsely promote themselves as environmentally friendly—leading to mistrust and low engagement (Delmas & Burbano, 2011). Therefore, the success of green messaging depends heavily on the influencer's credibility and alignment with sustainable values.

➢ *Psychological Mechanisms: -*

Several psychological theories help explain how influencers shape sustainable consumer behaviour:

- Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1986): Consumers often learn behaviours by observing and imitating influencers they admire.
- Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991): Influencers can shape consumers' attitudes, perceived social expectations, and sense of control—factors that guide their intentions to act sustainably.
- Parasocial Interaction (PSI) (Horton & Wohl, 1956; Labrecque, 2014): Followers often form one-sided emotional bonds with influencers, viewing them as friends. This strengthens the influence of their sustainability messages.

➢ *SMIs in Emerging Economies: -*

In emerging economies, SMIs can play a particularly important role in promoting sustainable consumption. These regions often lack strong government-led environmental campaigns or supportive institutions. Influencers can help fill this gap by acting as cultural translators, adapting global sustainability trends into messages that resonate with local audiences (Sharma & Subherwal, 2024). For instance, in India, influencers who promote sustainable fashion or zero-plastic living have gained popularity among urban youth, showing how influencer culture can encourage larger social and behavioural shifts (Sarkar & Kotler, 2018).

➢ *Challenges and Criticisms: -*

Despite their influence, the use of influencers in promoting sustainability faces several important challenges:

- Over-commercialization**:** When influencers promote too many brands or sponsored products, their messages about sustainability may lose credibility.
- Greenwashing Risks**:** Collaborating with brands that falsely claim to be eco-friendly can damage an influencer's trustworthiness.
- Audience Limitations**:** Eco-influencers tend to reach mostly urban, educated, and tech-savvy audiences, which limits their impact in rural or less connected communities (Biswas & Roy, 2015).
- Economic Constraints**:** In many emerging economies, the high cost of sustainable products remains a major barrier. Many consumers prioritize affordability, which makes green marketing messages less practical or appealing.

➢ *Emerging Economies: Digital Growth, Consumer Behaviour, and Sustainability Challenges:*

Emerging economies offer a dynamic environment where fast digital growth intersects with changing consumer habits and ongoing sustainability issues. These regions often have rapidly grown middle-class populations, increased internet access, and young, tech-savvy consumers. This creates strong potential for influencer-based marketing strategies (World Bank, 2020). At the same time, these countries face structural challenges, such as income inequality, weak support for sustainability from institutions, and gaps in waste management and recycling infrastructure (Kolk, Rivera-Santos, & Rufín, 2014). To fully understand how social media influencers (SMIs) can promote green consumer behaviour in these markets, it is important to consider both the opportunities and challenges within this dual context.

➢ *Digital Growth and Rise of Social Media: -*

Many emerging markets have experienced significant improvements in digital connectivity. According to Statista (2022), nations like India, Brazil, and Indonesia rank among the highest in social media growth, driven by low-cost smartphones and affordable internet services. This rise in digital access has allowed people from various backgrounds to create and consume content, expanding the influence of SMIs across social and economic divides (Kumar, Oberoi, & Jaitly, 2023). Influencers are now able to reach large, diverse audience, especially younger consumers who are digitally engaged and more likely to adopt new lifestyle trends.

➢ *Consumer Behaviour Patterns: -*

Consumer choices in emerging economies are often influenced by price, cultural values, and social status (Sheth, 2011). Although environmental awareness is increasing, many consumers still focus on affordability and convenience over sustainability (Biswas & Roy, 2015). However, SMIs can help shift these priorities by presenting green behaviours—such as eco-fashion or sustainable diets—as stylish and aspirational. By doing so, influencers make sustainability appear both desirable and accessible, particularly for urban consumers with modern lifestyles (Sharma & Subherwal, 2024).

➢ *Gaps in Awareness and Institutional Support: -*

One major barrier to green consumer behaviour in emerging economies is the general lack of awareness about sustainability and the weak institutional support for such practices. Inadequate enforcement of environmental laws, poorly developed eco-label systems, and limited recycling facilities make it harder for consumers to make sustainable

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choices (Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017). In this context, SMIs can play a valuable role as informal educators—raising awareness and translating global sustainability ideas into messages that fit local cultures. However, this role also comes with risks. If influencers lack authenticity or partner with unethical brands, their messages may be seen as insincere or misleading, contributing to public distrust and greenwashing concerns.

➢ *Socio-Cultural and Economic Influences: -*

Cultural and economic factors heavily influence how sustainability messages from influencers are received. In collectivist cultures like India and China, consumers are often influenced not only by individual preferences but also by family and community norms (Clark, Haytko, Hermans, & Simmers, 2019). These social dynamics can either reinforce or weaken the impact of sustainability campaigns. Additionally, economic inequalities mean that influencer-led green messages may only reach a small segment of society—mainly urban, educated, and wealthier individuals. Those in rural areas or from lower-income groups may lack the financial means or digital access to participate fully in sustainable consumption trends (Sarkar & Kotler, 2018).

➢ *Opportunities and Challenges: -*

Emerging economies present both strong opportunities and serious challenges for influencer-led sustainability efforts.

- *Opportunities:*

✓ High Digital Penetration and Reach**:** - With growing internet access and smartphone adoption, influencers can reach large audiences even in semi-urban and peri-urban areas. Digital platforms lower the barrier to entry for content creators and allow sustainability messages to spread beyond traditional media channels (Joshi, Lim, Jagani, et al., 2023).

✓ Appeal to Younger, Aspirational Segments**:** - Many emerging markets have youthful populations that are more open to adopting new lifestyles and influenced by trends. Influencers can frame green consumption (ethical fashion, plant-based diets, zero-waste habits) as modern, stylish, and aspirational—thus making sustainability part of social identity. The systematic review on influencer impact highlights the potential of tying identity and values to sustainable practices (Munaro et al.,2024).

✓ Cultural Adaptation and Localization: - Influencers can adapt global sustainability discourses to local norms, languages, and contexts. This makes green behaviour more relatable and actionable in local settings rather than abstract. For example, eco-influencers may connect with local communities by promoting locally sourced sustainable alternatives or traditional practices that align with green values. The review in Sustainable Production and Consumption notes that influencer messages are more effective when tailored to the cultural and contextual realities of audiences (Munaro et al.,2024).

✓ Catalyst for Market and Institutional Change**:** - By creating demand for sustainable products, influencers can put pressure on brands, supply chains, and institutions to adopt greener practices. In doing so, they can act as intermediaries bridging public, private, and consumer spheres. The review argues that influencers don't just affect individuals but also can reshape markets and norms around sustainable consumption (Munaro et al.,2024).

✓ Trust and Relatability Advantage**:** - Influencers are often seen as more relatable and closer to consumers than traditional advertising channels. This closeness can help overcome scepticism toward conventional green messaging, especially in markets where institutional trust is low. Their "peer-like" voice can make sustainable messages more persuasive. The influencer marketing foundations article discusses credibility, trust, and relatability as key drivers (Joshi et al,.2025).

- *Challenges:*

✓ Price Sensitivity and Economic Constraints**:** - Many consumers in emerging economies still prioritize cost, immediate utility, and basic needs over environmental considerations. Even if an influencer persuades someone, high costs of green products or lack of affordability may limit actual adoption. This "intention-action gap" is well documented in sustainability literature.

✓ Infrastructure and Institutional Weaknesses**:** - Weak recycling systems, poor waste management, lack of effective eco-labeling, and inconsistent regulation reduce the feasibility of sustainable behaviour. Without the necessary infrastructure, even motivated consumers may find it hard to act sustainably. The systematic review warns that contextual constraints can undercut influencer effects in such settings (Munaro et al.,2024).

✓ Risk of Greenwashing and Credibility Damage**:** - Influencers who partner with brands without strong sustainability credentials risk being perceived as greenwashing, which damages their and the campaign's credibility. The literature warns that misleading claims or superficial environmental messaging can backfire, eroding trust (Joshi et al,.2025).

✓ Digital Divide and Audience Exclusion**:** - While digital access is growing, disparities remain. Rural areas, low-income groups, or regions with poor connectivity may not receive influencer messages. This means influencer campaigns may disproportionately reach already privileged segments, reinforcing inequalities. Studies on digital inequality and digital capital note that social strata moderate digital access and engagement (Swapnil et al,.2022).

✓ Message Saturation and Overcommercialization**:** - If influencer content becomes too commercial or overly sponsored, audiences may become fatigued or sceptical. Over time, sustainability messages may lose authenticity. The influencer marketing literature points out that excessive sponsored content weakens trust and diminishes message impact (Joshi et al,.2025).

## III. RESEARCH GAP AND OBJECTIVES

➢ *Research Gap*

The review of existing research shows that although social media influencers (SMIs) are now widely recognized for shaping consumer behaviour, their role in encouraging

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sustainable consumption is still not fully understood. Several important gaps can be identified:

- Geographic Bias in Existing Studies**:** Most research on influencer-driven sustainability comes from developed countries like the United States and those in Western Europe (De Veirman, Cauberghe, & Hudders, 2017; Jin, Muqaddam, & Ryu, 2019). In comparison, there is limited research from emerging economies, where internet use is growing rapidly, but awareness and infrastructure related to sustainability are still developing.
- Limited Understanding of How Green Marketing Works Through Influencers**:** Many studies either focus on influencer marketing in general or on green consumer behaviour separately (Biswas & Roy, 2015; Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017). There is a lack of research that connects the specific features of influencers—like their credibility and authenticity—with how different social media platforms influence eco-friendly behaviours.
- Lack of Theoretical Integration: Much of the research relies on individual theories such as the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) or Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1986). However, there has been little effort to combine these ideas into one complete model that explains how influencers promote sustainable lifestyles, especially in countries where resources and access are limited.
- Gaps in Practical Understanding: While more brands are using influencers for sustainability campaigns, there is not enough research on how things like audience characteristics, cultural values, and economic challenges in emerging economies affect the success of these campaigns (Gupta & Singh, 2020).

➢ *Research Objectives*

Based on the gaps identified above, this study aims to achieve the following goals:

- To bring together and summarize what current academic and industry research says about the role of social media influencers in supporting sustainable consumption.
- To explore key elements such as the credibility and authenticity of influencers, along with how different platforms influence consumer decisions related to sustainability.
- To place special focus on emerging economies, showing both the unique opportunities and the specific challenges these regions face compared to more developed countries.
- To build a comprehensive model that connects different theories and explains how influencers help shape green consumer behaviour in emerging economies.
- To give practical guidance to businesses, marketers, and policymakers on how influencers can be used effectively to promote sustainable lifestyles.

## IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

➢ *Research Design*

This study uses a systematic review method, which is well-recognized for combining evidence from many academic and industry sources (Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003). Unlike simpler narrative reviews, a systematic review follows clear, repeatable steps. This ensures the process is transparent, reliable, and academically strong. Given the goal of gathering and organizing what is already known about how social media influencers (SMIs) shape green consumer behaviour in emerging economies, this design is appropriate.

➢ *Data Sources*

The review draws on secondary materials from several different kinds of sources, to get both academic depth and real-world relevance. These include:

- Peer-reviewed journal articles found in databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, JSTOR, and Google Scholar.
- Industry reports and white papers from organizations like Deloitte, McKinsey, and Nielsen, which give up-to-date insights into influencer marketing and sustainability.
- Case studies and practitioner observations from credible business magazines, reliable blogs, and reports by institutions such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank.

➢ *Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria*

To keep the review focused and high-quality, we used the following criteria:

- *Inclusion Criteria:*

✓ Studies that examine SMIs and their effects on consumer behaviour.
✓ Works that address sustainability, green marketing, or eco-friendly consumption.
✓ Research set in emerging economies (for example, India, Brazil, Indonesia, South Africa) or offering findings that could apply there.
✓ Peer-reviewed articles, industry reports, or credible case studies.

- *Exclusion Criteria:*

✓ Publications not related to sustainability or consumer behaviour.
✓ Articles not in English.
✓ Opinion pieces, blogs, or sources without academic or credible practical backing.

➢ *Limitations of the Methodology*

While this study uses a systematic review approach to ensure academic rigor and objectivity, several limitations should be acknowledged**:**

- First, because the study relies only on secondary data, the results depend on the quality, scope, and availability of existing research. Any gaps or biases in earlier studies may affect the conclusions drawn in this review.
- Second, even though the focus is on emerging economies, much of the published research on influencer marketing and sustainability still comes from developed countries. This could limit how well the findings apply to emerging market contexts.

- Third, the review only includes studies published in English. As a result, research written in regional or local languages—especially from countries within emerging markets—may have been missed, even if it offers valuable insights.
- Fourth, publication bias is another concern. Academic journals and industry reports often give preference to studies with strong or positive results. This means studies showing weak, inconclusive, or even negative impacts of influencers on sustainable consumption might be underrepresented.
- Finally, the fast-changing nature of social media platforms and online consumer behaviour poses a challenge. Some older studies included in the review may not fully reflect the latest trends, platform dynamics, or influencer strategies being used today.

## V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

➢ *Findings*

The review shows that credibility and authenticity are central to how effective social media influencers (SMIs) are in promoting sustainable consumer behaviour. In emerging economies, consumers are more likely to respond positively to eco-friendly messages when influencers are seen as trustworthy and sincere. However, when influencers promote too many paid or sponsored products, their influence can weaken. In contrast, when influencers show that sustainability is a natural part of their own lifestyle, their message becomes more relatable and persuasive, especially to younger audiences.

The social media platforms influencers use also matter. Platforms like Instagram and YouTube support visual storytelling, making green practices more engaging and easier to understand. Newer platforms like TikTok are good for reaching younger users, but because their algorithms favour entertainment content, sustainability messages need to be creative and trend-driven to gain visibility and impact.

➢ *Discussion*

In the context of emerging markets, rapid digital growth and high youth engagement create strong opportunities for influencers to promote sustainability. However, challenges such as cost concerns, low awareness, and cultural habits still limit the widespread adoption of eco-friendly behaviours. Influencers need to balance aspirational messages with accessibility so that their content resonates with broader audiences across different income levels.

In summary, the review finds that successful green marketing by influencers in emerging economies depends on the interaction between credibility, authenticity, and platform strategy, influenced by the social, economic, and cultural context of the target audience. The study proposes an integrated framework that helps explain these dynamics and provides useful guidance for businesses, marketers, and policymakers seeking to encourage sustainable consumption.

## VI. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

➢ *Conclusion*

This study explored how social media influencers (SMIs) influence green consumer behaviour in emerging economies by conducting a systematic review of academic research, industry reports, and real-world examples. The findings show that influencers can be powerful agents of change. However, their success depends on three connected elements: credibility, authenticity, and the way they use digital platforms. When influencers are seen as trustworthy, genuinely committed to sustainability, and skilled at using engaging social media formats, they are more likely to encourage eco-friendly attitudes and behaviours in their audiences.

The study also points out that emerging economies offer a unique environment. While fast digital growth provides new chances to promote sustainability, challenges such as low awareness, economic constraints, and cultural consumption habits remain. Overcoming these issues will require cooperation among influencers, brands, and policymakers to present sustainable living as both desirable and achievable for a wider population.

➢ *This Study Offers three Main Implications:*

Theoretical contribution: It adds to research on green marketing and digital communication by introducing an integrated framework that explains how influencer-driven sustainability works, especially in emerging markets.

Practical application: It gives useful advice to businesses and marketers on how to create more impactful campaigns by choosing authentic, credible influencers and tailoring messages to fit each social media platform's strength.

Policy relevance: It encourages policymakers to support digital and sustainability-focused policies that guide responsible influencer practices and help educate consumers about eco-friendly choices.

In summary, social media influencers can play a key role in promoting sustainable consumption in fast-changing economies. However, their true impact will only be realised if authenticity, trustworthiness, and the real-world social and economic context are fully considered in green marketing strategies.

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