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Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Sustainable Consumer Behaviour

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ABSTRACT

Artificial Intelligence is changing the way people buy things and use products. Artificial Intelligence is doing this with the help of things like systems that suggest what to buy helpers that talk to us and ideas that're just for us. These things help people make choices and they also help businesses by saving them money and making their customers happy. This paper looks at what other people have said about how Artificial Intelligence affects what people buy and how they use things. It talks about how Artificial Intelligence helps people make choices how it helps people take care of the earth and what is good and bad about using Artificial Intelligence to help the earth. The things people have written say that Artificial Intelligence can help people make choices that're good, for the earth. Artificial Intelligence does this by helping people know what to buy and how to take care of the earth. Artificial Intelligence only works well if it has good information if people trust it and if it is used in a fair way. We need to know about these things so Artificial Intelligence can help make the world a better place.

1. INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) is changing how people look for information compare things they might buy get suggestions talk to companies and decide to make a purchase. Tools like recommendation systems analysis that predicts what might happen chatbots and AI that creates content can make it easier to find what you need and make information fit what you want. At the time AI is being used more and more behind the scenes to predict what people will want make sure there is the right amount of products send things where they need to go cut down on waste and make the whole supply chain work better. These abilities make it possible that using AI when buying things could help the environment. That doesn't always happen. AI can also make people buy more spread ideas watch people more closely or make it hard to understand why a certain product is suggested [1, 2, 3, 4, 5]. Studies on AI and the environment also show that it is important to think about the resources AI uses and how it is managed [6].

Sustainable choices that people make are actions that try to stop the environment from getting hurt while thinking about what happens to society and the economy. This includes buying things that're better for the planet using less fixing and using things again making less waste making ethical choices and being ready to think about what happens over the lifetime of a product. Sustainable choices depend not on whether people can get green products but also on whether they can find reliable information make decisions based on different options and turn their ideas about the environment into real actions. Work done on AI. How people behave suggests that making things personal talking to people helping with decisions and building trust are important areas of research while studies on sustainability show the need to make sure technology helps people actually change their behavior [7, 8, 9].

The current research is helpful but not connected. Some studies look at AI as a way to market and make things personal; others look at how AI helps companies be more sustainable manage their supply chains better or help reach the Sustainable Development Goals. A third group studies how much people trust AI how private their information is, how clear AI is and if it is fair. These groups are usually studied on their own making it hard to see how AI abilities become things that people use and then lead to results for the environment. This review solves that problem by bringing the research around four topics (personalisation AI in the supply chain, trust and fairness) and by adding knowledge about sustainability and learning green habits as a way to understand and use information.

The review asks four questions: (1) How do AI tools influence the choices people make that are good for the environment? (2) What ways do people use AI tools to reach results for the environment? (3) When do AI tools not help people make choices? (4) What kinds of research can make AI tools better at helping people make green choices? The goal is to create a view of the research rather than just listing what has been studied before.

The larger set of information also shows the need for this review. Basic studies of AI talk about its abilities to predict, automate and help make choices while practical work using machine learning to predict if people will buy green products shows how being a green person knowing about the environment and being aware of the environment matters [6, 10, 11, 12]. Research on tools in stores shows how important it is to mix tools with how people feel when they shop [3]. Studies on being clear about AI show why being open about how AI works can change how much people trust it and accept it and recent work, on AI personalisation shows that being relevant keeping information safe and being clear can all influence how people buy green products [4, 13]. These studies make the review focus on how things work and when they don't of assuming that AI is always a good thing.

1.1 Sustainable Consumer Behaviour and the AI Context

Sustainable consumer behaviour is shaped by environmental knowledge, personal norms, perceived value, social influence, convenience, and the perceived credibility of sustainability claims. Trudel argues that sustainable consumption is not simply a matter of awareness; consumers face behavioural trade-offs and contextual constraints [14]. Recent evidence also shows that environmental knowledge, green self-identification, and environmental consciousness can be important predictors of green purchase intention [15]. AI changes this context because it can influence what information is visible, how it is framed, and which alternatives are presented first.

The knowledge-sciences implication is important. When AI tools repeatedly provide explanations, comparisons, carbon information, repair suggestions, or sustainable alternatives, they may act as learning environments. Consumers can develop sustainability literacy (the ability to understand and evaluate environmental information) and may gradually learn green norms through repeated exposure to credible cues. However, if recommendations optimise only clicks, sales, or engagement, the same learning environment can reinforce convenience-driven or high-consumption habits [7, 16].

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This review uses a structured thematic literature-review design. It synthesises peer-reviewed research on AI, consumer behaviour, sustainable consumption, green purchasing, trust, personalisation, recommender systems, and responsible AI. The approach is interpretive rather than a meta-analysis: no pooled effect size is calculated, and the purpose is to identify recurring mechanisms, conflicting findings, and conceptual gaps.

2.1 Search Strategy and Eligibility

The search strategy was developed around combinations of the terms “artificial intelligence,” “AI,” “generative AI,” “machine learning,” “recommender systems,” “sustainable consumer behaviour,” “sustainable consumption,” “green purchase,” “green purchasing,” “consumer trust,” “privacy,” “algorithmic bias,” “sustainability literacy,” and “supply chain.” Literature from 2018 to 2026 was considered, with greater attention to recent studies that directly connect AI with consumer or sustainability outcomes.

The search covered Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Emerald Insight, Taylor & Francis, Wiley Online Library, and relevant publisher databases. Priority was given to peer-reviewed English-language research, review articles, and established conceptual contributions. Duplicates and sources that did not materially address AI, consumer behaviour, or sustainability were

excluded. The final synthesis was organised by conceptual theme rather than by the sequence of research objectives.

2.2 Analytical Procedure

The analysis was done in three steps. First we looked at the AI capability, such as making things personal giving recommendations having conversations making predictions or making supply chains better. Second we figured out how consumers react, including how relevant the information's the quality of the information how much people know about sustainability how much they value it how much they trust it and how much control they have. Third we recorded the outcome for the environment. What limits it. This process helped us create the pathway shown in Figure 1. We kept the conflicting findings of averaging them out because we want to know when AI helps the environment and when it might have bad effects.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We found four themes. Personalisation mainly affects what information and choices consumers see. AI in supply chains affects how easily people can get options, how efficient they are and how credible they are. Trust determines whether people believe the information and recommendations given by AI. Fairness determines who can use, understand, question and benefit from AI tools that help the environment. Across these themes knowing about sustainability and learning about norms are important.

3.1 Theme 1: AI Personalisation and Sustainable Choice Architecture

AI can personalize information, recommendations and messages about sustainability to fit each persons preferences and situation. Earlier research showed that AI can make personalisation better and engage customers more [10, 16]. More recent reviews show that research on AI and consumer behaviour is now focused on how people interact, trust make decisions and adopt things [2]. In the context of sustainability personalisation can make green options more visible and easier to compare. It is not just that personalisation makes people buy things. A better way to look at it is: AI capability leads to people thinking the information is relevant and accessible which leads to them evaluating it and then making a choice. Recent research on AI personalisation and sustainable purchases shows that people need to understand why the information is tailored to them and they need to feel in control [14]. This helps explain why some research seems to conflict: personalisation can work when people know why they are getting information and can control it but it can be annoying when it is not clear how their data is being used. AI can also help people learn about sustainability. A conversational system can explain why a product is sustainable compare how different products affect the environment identify certifications or suggest alternatives that have less impact. When people use these systems repeatedly they can learn about things like durability, repairability, reuse and carbon footprint. However this only works if the information is quality. If an AI system makes claims that are not supported it might make people more confident but not actually more knowledgeable. So future studies should measure how much people know about sustainability directly of just looking at whether they intend to buy sustainable products.

3.2 Theme 2: Supply-Chain AI, Availability and Resource Efficiency

AI can also help the environment in ways that are not directly related to consumers. Predictive analytics can help with forecasting demand, planning inventory, logistics, routing and production. Some researchers argue that AI has a lot of potential to help with the Sustainable Development Goals while others point out that AI can create both opportunities and challenges [2, 17]. When AI in supply chains reduces waste, overproduction or unnecessary transportation consumers might experience the benefits through product availability, price and service quality. This theme is important because people can only make choices if they have sustainable options available. If a product is not available, too expensive or not presented well people cannot choose it. So making supply chains better can help enable choices. Recent work on recommendation systems also argues that sustainability goals should be included in the objectives than being an afterthought [18, 19].

However being efficient is not the same as being sustainable. If AI makes it easier to buy things and get them delivered but increases how often people buy things the efficiency gain might be offset by people consuming too much. AI systems need to consider objectives, including environmental and social indicators alongside things, like engagement, conversion, cost or speed. This is an area where AI capability needs to be linked to explicit sustainability criteria.

3.3 Theme 3: Trust, Transparency and Consumer Autonomy

When it comes to Artificial Intelligence trust is a deal for consumers. If Artificial Intelligence systems are easy to understand and work well people are more likely to trust them and buy things based on their recommendations. So trust and transparency are really important for getting people to make choices that are good for the planet. Some people found out that if consumers think Artificial Intelligence is useful and easy to use and they trust it they are more likely to use Artificial Intelligence based services. How Artificial Intelligence explains things can also affect how much people trust and accept Artificial Intelligence. When we talk about buying things trust is more important because people cannot always check if something is really good for the environment and Artificial Intelligence may choose or rank information without saying why. There are some examples that show how important and fragile trust is. One study found that websites that use technology in a way can make people trust them more and buy green products.. Research on devices also shows that people are worried about their privacy and losing control. Artificial Intelligence powered recommendation systems also raise questions about whether people have control over their choices. Some other researchers also think that trust is really important when it comes to services. So the research says that transparency is not about giving people information. People need to understand why they are being given a recommendation what makes it a good choice for the environment how their personal data is being used and how companies may be influencing the ranking. Artificial Intelligence systems should also give people control over their decisions. Clearly explain how recommendations are made. This helps people make their choices instead of just being told what to buy. A responsible Artificial Intelligence system should help people make decisions rather than just trying to sell them things.

3.4 Theme 4: Equity, Access and Algorithmic Fairness

Equity, access and algorithmic fairness are important for making sure that Artificial Intelligence helps all consumers. Artificial Intelligence systems should give people recommendations and make sure that sustainable products and information are available to everyone no matter who they are or where they come from. The good things about Artificial Intelligence for the environment may not be shared equally by everyone. Not everyone has access to devices, the internet, digital skills and Artificial Intelligence services people with lower incomes in different parts of the world ages and educational backgrounds. This can create a problem because Artificial Intelligence is increasingly in control of the information and choices we have. Another problem is that Artificial Intelligence algorithms can be biased. Some researchers think that fairness, transparency and responsibility are really important for Artificial Intelligence to benefit society. If an Artificial Intelligence system learns from data it may favor some products, people or ways of consuming things. If sustainable products are more expensive or only available in some markets Artificial Intelligence may also make existing inequalities worse. So equity should be thought of as something that happens as a result not just a rule. Future research should look at whether Artificial Intelligence green recommendations work for all socio- groups and whether people with lower digital literacy can understand and question Artificial Intelligence outputs. Designing Artificial Intelligence systems that are inclusive explaining things in a way that people can understand, providing sustainability information in languages and giving human support can help make sure that Artificial Intelligence enabled sustainability is not just for people who are good, with technology.

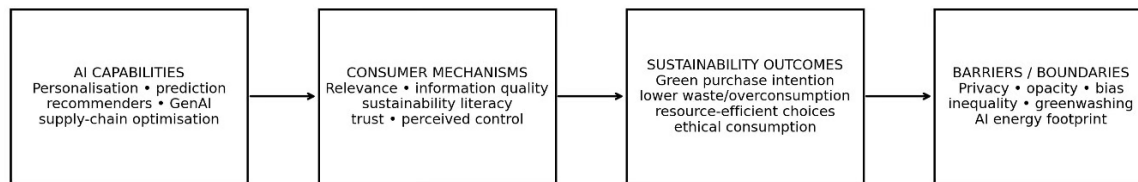
3.5 Cross-thematic Synthesis

Sustainability literacy is a useful knowledge-sciences mechanism, across the four themes. AI can provide a 24/7 information environment for consumers to understand sustainability, the truth behind the claims, and possible behaviors. The effects of personalised explanations may be greater when they are more relevant; better supply-chain data can help to make impacts more concrete; transparent systems can build trust; and equitable design can extend participation. These processes can work together to facilitate the learning of 'green norms', shared expectations that encourage making choices that are less wasteful, more resource efficient, more repair oriented, and more ethically aware.

This mechanism also explains why different results are likely to be found. AI can contribute to sustainability improvements by enhancing the quality, availability and significance of environmental information without removing the consumer's choice. It could be have low or net negative effects if it is used simply to make things easier without teaching anything, be used to excessive consumption, mask business incentives, or raise privacy and fairness issues. This more conditional reading is supported by recent research on younger consumers, which also indicates that personalisation, social influence and

sustainability promotion influence behavior, but that instances of trust, privacy, information quality, and user characteristics are also significant [20, 21, 22].

The research question thus moves from the question of ‘good or bad’ AI for sustainable consumer behaviour to the more precise question of which AI capacities lead to which mechanisms for consumers, for whom, under what conditions, and with which sustainability outcomes? This is what is shown in Figure 1.



Integrative pathway: AI capability → consumer mechanism → sustainability outcome, conditioned by barriers

Figure 1. Integrative model between AI capability, consumer mechanism, sustainability outcome, barriers.

Table 1. Sustainable consumer behaviour: themed synthesis of AI-enabled consumer behaviour.

Theme	AI Capability	Consumer Mechanism	Sustainability Outcome / Barrier
Persona lisation	Recommendations, predictive models, GenAI	Relevance, information accessibility, sustainability literacy	Green choice and informed comparison; privacy, manipulation, over-personalisation
Supply- Chain AI	Demand forecasting, inventory, logistics optimisation	Availability, convenience, price and service quality	Less waste and resource use; rebound effects and overconsumption
Trust	Explainability, transparency, conversational AI	Trust, perceived control, credibility, autonomy	Acceptance of sustainability information; opacity, misinformation, privacy concerns
Equity	Fairness-aware models, accessible interfaces	Digital literacy, inclusion, ability to understand and contest outputs	Broader access to sustainable options; algorithmic bias and digital inequality

3.6 Application of findings of the research and suggestions for future work

The review also recommends that the development of AI to support sustainability should prioritize the provision of clear, evidence-based recommendations, rather than simply conversion. Companies can share their green recommendations on the basis of their calculation, customers can control their personalization settings, they provide credible proof of sustainability and they can integrate environmental and social indicators into the optimization of their supply chain. Where a decision requires a consequential trade-off or conflicting sustainability arguments, there is a particular need for the human review to be the final.

The focus for policy makers must now be on putting in place measures to increase transparency, privacy, fairness and accountability, and to make sustainability information understandable for consumers, a governance challenge that also arises when algorithmic agents confront justice and the future of work [23]. One thing that deserves attention is the relevance of policies addressing misleading environmental claims; there is the possibility of scaling-up sustainability communication with proper and inappropriate aspects which are all the more relevant in the context of AI. For consumers, AI tools can serve as decision-making aids but it is crucial to verify the claims with independence, particularly in health, finance, environmental, and ethical sourcing contexts.

The theoretical contribution is a knowledge-sciences perspective of sustainable consumer behaviour. The focus of the review is on positioning sustainability literacy and green-norm learning as a link between AI-supported information environments and behavior. In addition to marketing approaches and technology acceptance perspectives, this contribution asks the question of not only what content consumers learn from AI, but also how this learning influences norms and decision rules and what impact it has on their lastingness.

This is the conditional perspective that is supported by recent evidence. Consumer behaviour research relating to AI is found in four primary areas: trust, interaction, decision making and adoption, and a recent

study ties generative AI to green purchasing, ChatGPT to shopping-information seeking and Sustainable shopping practices to AI-driven personalisation and social influence among the younger generation [3, 9, 11, 24]. Other research in the field of recommender systems that aims at sustainability also holds that environmental and social aspects need to be taken into account when formulating the recommendation goal [18, 19]. These consumer level mechanisms can be understood by building on foundational research on aspects of AI capabilities, such as artificial intelligence and marketing and AI sustainability and ethical governance [6, 8, 13, 17, 20, 21, 25].

3.7 Validity and Limitations

Reflects validity of the review using multiple academic databases, explicit thematic search terms, peer-reviewed sources and transparent conceptual coding logic. It also doesn't make a blind eye to both positive and negative impacts but keeps track that AI is not inherently good for sustainability. The synthesis is supported by the well-developed AI research and consumer behaviour literature, and recent research was incorporated to minimise reliance on earlier conceptual work.

Several limitations remain. Firstly, the review is based on published secondary research – no original survey, experimental or behavioural data. Second, the reviewed literature was diverse in terms of AI technologies, the population of consumers, the country examined, and the outcome measures that were included, making it difficult to make direct comparisons. Third, because the generative-AI landscape is constantly evolving, some outcomes may be fast obsolete. Fourth, restrictions in the publication and language may stop relevant evidence from reaching the court. Lastly, a conceptual synthesis for the proposed sustainability-literacy and green-norm mechanism was conducted, which still needs to be tested empirically.

3.8 Research Gaps and Future Research Agenda

The review finds five things that need to be done. First people who do research should check if the ideas they have really work by using measures of how well people understand sustainability how relevant things are to them how much they trust things how free they are to make choices and what they actually do, rather than just looking at if they plan to buy something. Second we need to do studies over a time to see if AI suggestions really change how people buy things for a long time or just for a little while. Third we should compare types of AI like the kind that generates things the kind that recommends things the kind that talks to people and the kind that helps with getting things from one place to another and see how they work in different industries and countries. Fourth we should look at how different groups of people're affected, like people with different incomes people who are good with technology people of different ages and people who have access to different technologies to make sure everything is fair. Fifth we should come up with ways to judge things based on criteria like how much people value things how they affect the environment how fair they are, how private they are and how much they use AI.

We also need to look at why some things do not agree with each other. For example making things personal can make them more relevant. Can also make people worry about their privacy. Making supply chains more efficient can reduce waste. Can also make people buy more. AI can help people learn about sustainability. Can also make it seem like companies are just pretending to care.. Automation can help some people but can also leave others out. We should look at these things as normal. Try to understand them instead of ignoring them. We can also test if AI that explains itself gives users control and provides information about sustainability can help people make better choices.

4. CONCLUSION

This review shows that AI and sustainable consumer behaviour are connected in a way, not a simple one. AI can help with sustainability by giving people information, smart suggestions, help with conversations, predictions of demand and optimisation of logistics, which can make sustainable choices more available and relevant. However the effect of AI on sustainability depends on what people experience and learn from these systems. Making things personal can increase relevance. AI can improve how resources are used. Trust and transparency can make information about sustainability.. Design that is fair can help more people. Across these themes understanding sustainability and learning about norms can help explain how AI can influence behaviour over time. The review also shows that just having the technology is not enough. Worries about privacy, algorithms that are not clear suggestions that are biased inequality in the world pretending to care about the environment losing control as a consumer and the environmental impact of AI itself can weaken or reverse the good effects of AI on sustainability. So the model we propose connects AI

ability to how consumers think and the outcomes of sustainability and treats the barriers as conditions. This synthesis responds to the fact that the existing literature is fragmented and provides a basis for future work.

For people who practice AI should be designed to help people make sustainable choices, not just to get them to engage or buy things. Companies should use environmental evidence explain how their suggestions work, protect consumer data preserve user control and include sustainability criteria in their goals. Policymakers should make things more transparent fair accessible and accountable. Future research should test the model, in cultures and industries measure real behaviour over time and see if AI can really help people learn about sustainability and make better choices that last. In this way the important thing AI can do for sustainability is not to persuade people to buy differently one time but to help people learn how to make better decisions on their own again and again.

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