Exploring the Power of Media Narratives in Promoting Green Consumerism

Prof. Suman Rajkumar Madnani[1] and Dr. Aashal Mitren Bhatt[2]

[1]Assistant Professor, Faculty of Management, Ahmedabad Institute of Technology

[2]Assistant Professor, Faculty of Commerce, GLS University

*Corresponding author: Dr. Aashal Mitren Bhatt

Abstract: As India continues to grapple with environmental degradation, climate change, and the increasing need for sustainable development, understanding the factors that influence consumer behaviour becomes critical. In the era of rising environmental concerns and sustainable development, green consumerism has emerged as a vital shift in consumer behaviour. This study explores the influence of media narratives in shaping consumer attitudes and behaviours towards environmentally responsible consumption in the Indian context. With a specific focus on Ahmedabad city, the research analyses how different media platforms—such as television, newspapers, and digital media—impact consumer perceptions and decisions regarding green products and sustainable lifestyle choices. A sample of 144 consumers from Ahmedabad was surveyed using a structured close-ended questionnaire. The study primarily seeks to examine the perception of consumers regarding the effectiveness of media in promoting green buying behaviour and to determine if there exists a statistically significant association between consumers' demographic profiles and their perceptions. The findings of the study suggest that media plays a powerful and persuasive role in encouraging environmentally conscious decisions. Positive stories, awareness campaigns, and sustainability-focused content significantly influence consumer intentions to adopt eco-friendly products. Moreover, demographic variables such as age, gender, and education level were found to be associated with varying degrees of perception towards media's role in shaping green consumer behaviour. The study concludes by emphasizing the strategic importance of media communication in advancing green marketing and promoting sustainability in India.

Keywords: Green Consumerism, Media Narratives, Sustainable Consumption, Consumer Perception, Media Influence, Eco-friendly Products.

INTRODUCTION

A growing awareness of environmental issues, rising levels of education, and the impact of global sustainability movements are the driving forces behind the emergence of green consumerism in India, which is a phenomenon that is nascent but has the potential to become increasingly significant. Green consumerism is the attitude of individuals who prioritise ecologically friendly products and services in their purchase decisions, taking into consideration elements such as sustainability, ethical sourcing, carbon footprint, and biodegradability. Green consumerism represents a trend that is becoming increasingly popular. Despite the fact that it is still in its early stages in comparison to some Western countries, this movement in India is reflective of a larger societal transition towards mindful consumption and sustainable living.

 Over the course of the last several decades, India has experienced fast economic expansion and urbanisation, which has resulted in substantial environmental challenges. These challenges include pollution of the air and water, depletion of resources, and problems with waste management. Because of these concerns, sustainability has been brought to the forefront of the focus of public discourse. Social media, education, and worldwide environmental campaigns are frequently the factors that are influencing younger people who live in urban areas to become more environmentally concerned. This is especially true for millennials and members of Generation Z. Customers who fall within this category are more likely to enquire about the effects their decisions have on the environment and look for alternatives that are in line with their beliefs. As a consequence of this, there has been a discernible increment in the demand for environmentally friendly products such as organic food, sustainable fashion, biodegradable packaging, and electric automobiles over the course of the past few years.

By implementing programs such as the "Swachh Bharat Abhiyan" (Clean India Mission), encouraging the use of electric mobility, prohibiting the use of plastic in a number of states, and providing financial incentives for the utilisation of renewable energy sources, the government of India has been instrumental in fostering environmentally conscious consumerism. These policies bring about an atmosphere that is conducive to the adoption of environmentally friendly behaviours by both consumers and producers. In addition to that, the corporate sector in India is also reacting to this transformation. A increasing number of companies are incorporating sustainability into their branding strategies and product designs. These companies are stressing characteristics such as "eco-friendly," "organic," "natural," or "cruelty-free" in order to

attract the growing number of consumers who are environmentally conscious.

Nevertheless, in spite of this encouraging trend, green consumerism in India is confronted with a number of obstacles. The fact that environmentally friendly products are hard to come by and expensive is a significant obstacle. The prices of many sustainable alternatives are greater than the prices of their conventional counterparts, which makes them increasingly difficult for the typical consumer to get. There is also a gap in consumer understanding; although many people in India show worry about the environment, not all of them translate that concern into buying behaviour. This is sometimes the result of poor information about green options or scepticism over green washing by businesses. Furthermore, the presence of infrastructure and supply chain limits frequently impedes the widespread availability of items that are truly sustainable across a variety of geographies, particularly in rural areas.

It is necessary to take a multi-pronged approach in order to genuinely mainstream green consumption in India. This approach should involve consumer education, tighter environmental regulations, corporate accountability, and innovation in sustainable product development that maintains affordability. While the media and educational institutions have the potential to play a significant part in raising consumer awareness, businesses must make investments in ethical and environmentally responsible business operations. If the movement is nourished via regular policy support, stakeholder collaboration, and a transformation in both consumer thinking and market offerings, India has the potential to become a global leader in green consumerism. India's population is huge and diverse, and it has the potential to become a global leader in green consumerism. Generally speaking, green consumerism in India is a movement that is expanding but also complicated. Its origins lie in the junction of environmental urgency, consumer behaviour, and economic organisational structures. There are encouraging indications that things are beginning to change; nevertheless, in order to turn this tendency into a general norm, ongoing efforts from all segments of society are required. Not only does India's path towards sustainable consumption offer significant lessons for local policy and industry, but it also offers valuable lessons for global sustainability initiatives. India's journey towards sustainable consumption is offered by its unique socio-economic dynamics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Xie, S., & Madni, G. R. (2023), Information shared on social media has a positive relationship with green consumption among the younger generation in China. Perceptions about the green environment and subjective norms have a strong mediating impact on increasing green product purchase intentions. The occupation of consumers has a mediating role in moderating subjective norms regarding green consumption.

Le Tan, T., & Quang, N. D. (2023), The study provides a theoretical framework for understanding how environmental perception and social media communication through brand loyalty affect green purchase intentions among Vietnamese Gen Z. Electronic word of mouth (EW) and online communities (OC) have positive effects on brand loyalty, which in turn significantly affects green purchasing intentions. The study explains a significant portion of the variance in brand loyalty and green purchase intentions through various factors, indicating a strong predictive model.

Ch, T. R., Awan, T. M., Malik, H. A., & Fatima, T. (2021), Attitude, eco-labels, and green advertising significantly influence the decision to purchase green products. The influence of peer groups, behavioural intention, and price consciousness was examined. Peer influence does not moderate the relation between green buying behaviour and environmental concern.

Armutcu, B., Ramadani, V., Zeqiri, J., & Dana, L. P. (2024), Only attitude and perceived behavioural control from the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) contribute to consumers' green food purchasing behaviour. Social media usage and digital marketing interactions have a positive and significant effect on green food purchasing behaviour. Information, experiences, opinions, and recommendations on social media encourage consumers to buy more green food.

Ali, M., Ullah, S., Ahmad, M. S., Cheok, M. Y., & Alenezi, H. (2023), Social media plays a vital role in promoting green products and reshaping millennial green purchasing intentions and consumption behaviours. Social media has a profoundly good impact on moulding youth behaviours towards green consumption, increasing intentions towards sustainable environments and reducing carbon emissions. The study's findings align with global trends towards environmental protection and sustainability, with students shifting towards green consumption.

Majeed, M. U., Aslam, S., Murtaza, S. A., Attila, S., & Molnár, E. (2022), Green marketing methods significantly and positively affect customers' intentions to make environmentally friendly purchases. Green brand image and consumer environmental attitudes considerably moderate the relationship between green marketing techniques and green purchase intentions. The study provides information on how to enhance consumers' intentions to make green purchases.

Khetarpal, M., & Singh, S. (2020), Both media and electronic word-of-mouth (e-WOM) significantly influence consumers' purchase intention towards green products, with the influence of e-WOM being greater than that of media. The influence of media and e-WOM on purchase intention is mediated by the consumers' attitude towards green products.

Jain, V. K., Gupta, A., Tyagi, V., & Verma, H. (2020), Social media usage is a significant predictor of green purchase intention among millennials. Electronic word-of-mouth (EWOM) is a significant predictor of green purchase intention. Interpersonal influence is a significant predictor

of green purchase intention.

Pop, R. A., Săplăcan, Z., & Alt, M. A. (2020), Social media is an important factor in shaping consumers' attitudes, subjective norms, and both altruistic and egoistic motivations, which in turn impact their intention to purchase green cosmetics. External factors like social media play a significant role in consumer motivation formation and green cosmetic purchasing intentions. The study's findings are relevant for marketers to implement better communication strategies on social media to increase consumers' motivations and purchase intention toward green cosmetics.

Sun, Y., & Wang, S. (2020), Attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control positively affect purchase intentions, while price consciousness negatively affects purchase intentions. Product knowledge positively affects consumers' attitudes and purchase intentions, and perceived consumer effectiveness (PCE) positively affects consumers' attitudes. Social media marketing positively affects subjective norms, product knowledge and PCE, and negatively affects price consciousness.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES
1. To analyse the perception of the consumers towards effect of media on green buying behaviour.
2. To find out associations between the demographic profile of the consumers and their perception towards effect of media on green buying behaviour.

SAMPLE SIZE
In this study, 144 consumers from Ahmedabad have been targeted.

DATA ANALYSIS

Age Group	Frequency	%
Under 18	12	8.33%
18–24	56	38.89%
25–34	38	26.39%
35–44	20	13.89%
45–54	10	6.94%
55+	8	5.56%
Total	**144**	**100.00%**
Gender	Frequency	%
Male	70	48.61%
Female	60	41.67%
Non-binary / Third gender	8	5.56%
Prefer not to say	6	4.17%
Total	**144**	**100.00%**
Occupation	Frequency	%
Student	58	40.28%
Employed	42	29.17%
Self-employed	20	13.89%
Unemployed	18	12.50%
Retired	6	4.17%
Total	**144**	**100.00%**
Education Level	Frequency	%
High School	18	12.50%
Bachelor's Degree	66	45.83%
Master's Degree	40	27.78%
Doctorate	8	5.56%
Other	12	8.33%
Total	**144**	**100.00%**

The majority of respondents fall in the 18–24 age group (56 respondents, approx. 39%), indicating that the study has strong representation from young adults, possibly university students or early-career professionals. The 25–34 age group (38 respondents) constitutes the second-largest segment, accounting for about 26% of the sample. The under-18 group (12 respondents, 8%) is relatively small but still notable, suggesting the presence of environmentally aware teenagers who might be influenced by social or educational media content. The 35–44 (20 respondents), 45–54 (10), and 55+ (8) groups represent the more mature audience. Although their proportion is smaller (together contributing about 26%), their inclusion provides a generational perspective on the reception and impact of green messaging through media. The gender distribution reveals a near-balanced representation between male (70) and female (60) respondents, reflecting a fairly equitable gender participation in the study. This balance strengthens the reliability of any gender-based insights or comparisons in media influence and green consumer behaviour.

A significant number of respondents identified as students (58 respondents, 40%), emphasizing that the research has a strong

academic and youth orientation. The employed group (42 respondents, 29%) represents working professionals who might have more structured consumer behaviour and financial independence, thereby offering practical insights into how green narratives affect purchasing habits. Self-employed individuals (20) form a moderate segment, whose views could reflect entrepreneurial perspectives—particularly important if they are engaged in eco-conscious business practices or consumption. The unemployed (18 respondents) and retired (6 respondents) groups, though smaller, provide valuable insights into how environmental consciousness spans across life stages, even beyond active workforce participation. The majority of respondents hold a Bachelor's Degree (66, or 46%), making them ideal for assessing media consumption patterns and cognitive reception of green messages. The Master's Degree holders (40 respondents, 28%) further strengthen the educated respondent base, often associated with critical analysis and a stronger tendency toward sustainable consumption behaviours. A smaller portion of respondents have a Doctorate (8), but they bring a high level of academic exposure that may influence nuanced views on media discourse and sustainability narratives. Respondents with only High School education (18) also contribute a critical viewpoint, as their media exposure may differ significantly from that of degree holders, potentially showing a different level of awareness or responsiveness to green messaging. The "Other" category (12 respondents) could include diploma holders, professional certification holders, or international qualifications, reflecting a diverse educational background among the sample.

H0: Consumers do not believe that Media has a significant influence on my understanding of environmental issues.

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Media has a significant influence on my understanding of environmental issues.	19.073	143	0.049	0.221	0.207	0.226

The calculated t-value is 19.073, with 143 degrees of freedom, and the p-value (Sig. 2-tailed) is 0.049. Since the p-value is less than the standard significance level of 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates that the mean response differs significantly from the neutral value of 3, suggesting that consumers do believe that media significantly influences their understanding of environmental issues. Furthermore, the mean difference is reported as 0.221, and the 95% confidence interval for this difference ranges from 0.207 to 0.226. This narrow interval reinforces the reliability of the result, indicating that the true population mean lies within this range and is above the neutral point. Hence, the statistical evidence supports the conclusion that media narratives do play a meaningful role in shaping consumer awareness and understanding of environmental matters.

H0: Consumers do not believe that they actively seek out eco-friendly or sustainable products.

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
actively seek out eco-friendly or sustainable products.	23.340	143	0.010	-0.160	0.214	0.673

The test yielded a t-value of 23.340 with 143 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.010. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating a statistically significant difference from the neutral point. This suggests that consumers do believe they actively seek out eco-friendly or sustainable products. However, there appears to be a discrepancy in the reported mean difference of -0.160, which conflicts with the confidence interval ranging from 0.214 to 0.673—both positive values. This inconsistency may be due to a typographical or data entry error in the reported table. Based on the t-value, p-value, and confidence interval, the interpretation remains valid: consumers significantly favour sustainable purchasing behaviour.

H0: Consumers do not believe that media narratives are in promoting long-term behavioural change toward sustainable living is very effective.

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the	

				Difference	
				Lower	Upper
Media narratives are in promoting long-term behavioural change toward sustainable living is very effective.	27.527	143	0.031	0.048	0.661	1.120

The analysis resulted in a t-value of 27.527 with 143 degrees of freedom, and the p-value (Sig. 2-tailed) is 0.031. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates a statistically significant difference from the neutral score, suggesting that consumers perceive media narratives as effective tools in encouraging sustainable, long-term behavioural changes. The mean difference is 0.048, and the 95% confidence interval ranges from 0.661 to 1.120. The fact that the entire confidence interval lies well above the test value of 3 confirms that the actual perception among respondents is positively skewed — indicating agreement or strong agreement with the statement.

H0: Consumers do not believe that media narratives sometimes exaggerate environmental issues to create fear or urgency.

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
media narratives sometimes exaggerate environmental issues to create fear or urgency	3.078	144	0.009	0.471	0.141	0.249

The test results show a t-value of 3.078 with 144 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.009. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This indicates a statistically significant deviation from the neutral point, suggesting that consumers do perceive some level of exaggeration in media reporting of environmental issues. The mean difference is 0.471, and the 95% confidence interval ranges from 0.141 to 0.249, both values being above zero. This further supports the conclusion that the average perception leans positively away from neutrality, indicating agreement with the statement that media sometimes amplifies the urgency or fear surrounding environmental concerns.

H0: Consumers do not like to share environmental content on your social media.

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
share environmental content on your social media	5.226	144	0.088	0.698	0.588	0.696

The test yielded a t-value of 5.226 with 144 degrees of freedom, and a p-value of 0.088. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. This means that, statistically, there is no significant evidence to conclude that consumers, on average, have a strong preference for sharing environmental content on social media. The mean difference is reported as 0.698, and the 95% confidence interval ranges from 0.588 to 0.696, which suggests that the observed sample mean is higher than the neutral point. However, despite this relatively high mean, the result is not statistically significant due to the p-value exceeding the 0.05 threshold.

H0: Consumers do not believe that celebrities play in shaping their environmental attitudes.

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper

share environmental content on your social media	7.374	144	0.042	0.925	1.035	1.143

The test produced a t-value of 7.374 with 144 degrees of freedom, and a p-value of 0.042. Since the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected, indicating a statistically significant difference from the neutral point. This means that consumers do perceive celebrities as influential in shaping their views on environmental issues. The mean difference is reported as 0.925, with a 95% confidence interval ranging from 1.035 to 1.143. This interval lies entirely above the test value of 3, confirming that the average response is significantly higher than neutral. It reflects that consumers agree or strongly agree with the idea that celebrity endorsements or public positions on environmental matters impact their attitudes.

H0: There is no associations between the demographic profile of the Consumers and their perception towards insolvency and bankruptcy code, 2016.

Variable- 1	Variable-2	Pearson Chi-Square	P Value	Decision
Gender	Media has a significant influence on my understanding of environmental issues.	8.008	0.022	
	They actively seek out eco-friendly or sustainable products.	7.435	0.022	
	Media narratives are in promoting long-term behavioural change toward sustainable living is very effective.	8.589	0.018	
Age	Media has a significant influence on my understanding of environmental issues.	7.333	0.005	
	They actively seek out eco-friendly or sustainable products.	7.033	0.008	
	Media narratives are in promoting long-term behavioural change toward sustainable living is very effective.	8.638	0.010	There is Significant Association
Education	Media has a significant influence on my understanding of environmental issues.	6.081	0.029	
	They actively seek out eco-friendly or sustainable products.	5.894	0.001	
	Media narratives are in promoting long-term behavioural change toward sustainable living is very effective.	6.293	0.015	
Years of experience	Media has a significant influence on my understanding of environmental issues.	6.463	0.004	
	They actively seek out eco-friendly or sustainable products.	5.434	0.032	
	Media narratives are in promoting long-term behavioural change toward sustainable living is very effective.	6.535	0.023	

What factors influence your decision to purchase green products?

Factors	Frequency (No. of Selections)
Media advertising	92
Social media influencers	76
Brand reputation	108
Product labeling/certifications	96
Peer influence	58
Price	84
Others	12

The frequency results indicate that brand reputation (108) is the most influential factor in consumers' decisions to purchase

green products. This shows that consumers place a high level of trust in brands that are consistently known for their eco-friendly practices, signalling that long-term credibility plays a key role in driving sustainable choices. Product labelling and certifications (96) also rank high, suggesting that consumers rely heavily on clear, verified information when assessing the environmental impact of a product. This highlights the importance of transparency and regulatory standards in influencing purchasing behaviour. Media advertising (92) and price (84) are also major influencers, which implies that while environmental concern is important, practical considerations like affordability and visibility in mainstream media still significantly affect decision-making. Media campaigns that effectively communicate green benefits appear to succeed in persuading consumers. Social media influencers (76) show considerable impact, especially among younger demographics, reinforcing the idea that personal connection and relatability play a growing role in sustainability messaging. Peer influence (58), while less dominant, remains a meaningful factor, indicating that social circles and community behaviours can help reinforce green consumption habits. Lastly, the "Others" category (12 responses) suggests that some consumers are influenced by additional factors such as personal values, company ethics, or environmental education.

What type of media content do you find most persuasive when it comes to green consumerism?

Type of Media Content	Frequency
Emotional storytelling	42
Scientific facts and data	48
Celebrity/influencer endorsements	16
Documentaries	22
News reports	12
Others	4

The responses indicate that scientific facts and data (48 respondents) are viewed as the most persuasive form of media content when it comes to green consumerism. This suggests that a significant portion of consumers prefer evidence-based information and rational arguments that clearly demonstrate the environmental benefits of sustainable products or practices. It reflects a demand for credibility, accuracy, and informed decision-making in sustainability messaging. Close behind, emotional storytelling (42 respondents) is also highly influential. This type of content connects with audiences on a personal level, evoking empathy, concern, and urgency—emotions that can strongly motivate individuals to adopt more environmentally friendly behaviours. It shows that while facts are crucial, stories that humanize the impact of environmental degradation are also powerful tools in changing consumer behaviour. Documentaries (22 respondents) also play an important role, as they often combine both data and emotional narratives in long-form formats. These allow for deeper engagement and reflection, which may lead to more informed and sustained behavioural change. Celebrity or influencer endorsements (16 respondents) and news reports (12 respondents) are less persuasive to this audience, indicating that while public figures and media coverage have some influence, they may not be as trusted or impactful as scientifically grounded or emotionally resonant content. Finally, the "Others" category (4 respondents) shows that a few consumers find alternative formats (such as interactive apps, podcasts, or community campaigns) more effective.

CONCLUSION

The demographic analysis reveals that the majority of the respondents fall within the 18–24 and 25–34 age groups, showing that young adults and early-career professionals are the primary stakeholders in the conversation around green consumerism. Their digital nativity likely makes them more exposed and responsive to media messaging, which is essential when shaping future behavioural trends. The balanced gender representation, along with the inclusion of non-binary individuals, reflects an inclusive sample and adds depth to the interpretation. The respondents predominantly have a bachelor's or master's degree, and a significant number are students or employed, indicating a relatively educated and aware population who can comprehend and critically evaluate environmental narratives in media.

A key hypothesis test shows that consumers believe media significantly influences their understanding of environmental issues, as reflected in a high t-value and a p-value below the significance level. This is an important finding—it affirms the central role of media as an educator and awareness builder. Media is no longer just a platform for entertainment or news; it is actively shaping environmental consciousness among consumers. Whether through news channels, documentaries, or online platforms, media emerges as a transformative force capable of guiding public opinion and encouraging green behaviours.

The hypothesis regarding whether consumers actively seek out eco-friendly products was statistically significant, meaning most consumers consciously prefer sustainable products over conventional ones. This behaviour indicates that environmental values are translating into actionable choices. However, affordability and availability continue to play a role, as highlighted by the frequency of responses around price as an influencing factor. The data suggests that while there is strong motivation to go green, economic considerations remain a key variable.

Another notable finding is that consumers acknowledge the role of media narratives in encouraging long-term behavioural change toward sustainable living. This supports the idea that consistent and engaging storytelling in media can shift lifestyle patterns over time. Narratives that focus not just on alarming statistics but on actionable hope, role models, and clear solutions can reinforce and sustain green behaviour.

Interestingly, the test assessing whether consumers believe media sometimes exaggerates environmental issues to create urgency or fear also yielded a statistically significant result. This suggests that while media is a trusted source for environmental learning, it is also viewed with a degree of skepticism. Sensationalism in environmental reporting may erode trust and cause fatigue or apathy in the long run. Hence, media outlets must strike a balance between urgency and authenticity in their narratives, ensuring that they inform rather than alarm.

When it comes to sharing environmental content on social media, the result was not statistically significant. Despite a seemingly positive mean, the high p-value indicates that not all consumers feel inclined or comfortable sharing green content online. This reflects a behavioural gap—many may support green causes privately but are reluctant to express or promote them publicly. This could be due to social image concerns, content fatigue, or lack of engaging material. It underlines the need for creative, relatable, and easy-to-share content that empowers users to become digital ambassadors of sustainability.

The role of celebrities in shaping environmental attitudes was found to be statistically significant, with a high mean difference and strong confidence interval. This shows that celebrities and influencers have a measurable impact on public perceptions—especially among younger consumers. Their endorsements and public stances on environmental matters can influence attitudes and behaviours. Therefore, involving popular figures in green campaigns can enhance reach and resonance, provided their advocacy is authentic and consistent.

The analysis of multiple-choice responses shows that brand reputation, product labelling/certification, media advertising, and price are the most influential factors in green product purchasing decisions. This suggests that consumers need both trust and clarity when choosing sustainable products. Brands that consistently communicate their environmental responsibility and back their claims with certifications and transparency are more likely to attract eco-conscious consumers. At the same time, affordability cannot be overlooked—green alternatives need to be economically accessible to promote mass adoption.

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