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Context-Aware Fuzzy Recommender System for Sustainable Product Discovery: A Multi-Criteria Approach Using Statistical Aggregation Methods

Anant Manish Singh[1], Devesh Amlesh Rai[2], Shifa Siraj Khan[3], Sanika Satish Lad[4], Sanika Rajan Shete[5], Disha Satyan Dahanukar[6], Darshit Sandeep Raut[7], Kaif Qureshi[8]

Corresponding Author, Department of Computer Engineering, Thakur College of Engineering and Technology (TCET), Mumbai, Maharashtra, India[1]

Department of Computer Engineering, Thakur College of Engineering and Technology (TCET), Mumbai, Maharashtra, India[2]

Department of Information Technology, Thakur College of Engineering and Technology (TCET), Mumbai, Maharashtra, India[3]

Department of Computer Engineering, Thakur College of Engineering and Technology (TCET), Mumbai, Maharashtra, India[4,5,6,8]

Department of Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering, Thakur College of Engineering and Technology (TCET), Mumbai, Maharashtra, India[7]

Abstract: The increasing environmental consciousness among consumers necessitates the development of intelligent recommendation systems that balance user preferences with sustainability goals. This research presents a novel Context-Aware Fuzzy Recommender System for Sustainable Product Discovery (CAFRS-SPD) that integrates contextual information, fuzzy logic reasoning and statistical aggregation methods (mean and median) to recommend environmentally responsible products. The proposed system addresses the critical gap in existing recommender systems that primarily focus on user satisfaction while neglecting environmental impact. Our methodology combines fuzzy membership functions with contextual factors such as temporal preferences, location-based constraints and user sustainability awareness levels. The system employs mean and median statistical measures for aggregating multiple sustainability criteria including carbon footprint, recyclability index and energy efficiency ratings. Experimental validation using the Amazon Product Dataset and MovieLens-25M dataset demonstrates that CAFRS-SPD achieves a 23.7% improvement in sustainability score while maintaining recommendation accuracy within 5.2% of traditional systems. The fuzzy inference engine successfully handles uncertainty in sustainability assessments while contextual adaptation ensures personalized recommendations aligned with individual user contexts. Comparative analysis with five baseline methods reveals superior performance in terms of sustainability awareness (F1-score: 0.847), contextual relevance (precision: 0.823) and user satisfaction (recall: 0.791). The statistical aggregation approach using weighted mean and robust median estimators effectively combines heterogeneous sustainability metrics, resulting in more reliable sustainability assessments. This research contributes to the growing field of green recommender systems by providing a comprehensive framework that promotes sustainable consumption patterns while preserving user experience quality.

Keywords: sustainability recommendations, fuzzy logic, context-aware systems, statistical aggregation, green computing, machine learning, environmental impact, sustainable consumption

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Motivation

The global environmental crisis has intensified the need for sustainable consumption practices with consumer behavior playing a crucial role in environmental preservation. Recommender systems which influence billions of purchasing decisions daily, present unprecedented opportunities to guide users toward environmentally responsible choices[1]. Traditional recommendation algorithms primarily optimize for user engagement and commercial metrics often overlooking the environmental consequences of promoted products[2]. This research addresses the critical need for sustainability-focused recommender systems that can effectively balance user preferences with environmental considerations.

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The integration of fuzzy logic in recommender systems offers significant advantages in handling the inherent uncertainty and subjectivity associated with sustainability assessments[3]. Unlike crisp decision-making approaches, fuzzy systems can accommodate the nuanced nature of environmental criteria where product sustainability often exists on a spectrum rather than binary classifications. Furthermore, contextual information such as seasonal variations, geographical constraints and user lifestyle patterns significantly influence both user preferences and sustainability outcomes[4].

1.2 Problem Statement

Current recommender systems face several critical limitations when addressing sustainability concerns: (1) lack of comprehensive sustainability metrics integration, (2) inability to handle uncertain and subjective environmental assessments, (3) insufficient consideration of contextual factors affecting sustainability and (4) absence of robust statistical methods for aggregating multiple sustainability criteria[5]. These limitations result in recommendations that may satisfy immediate user preferences but contribute to unsustainable consumption patterns and environmental degradation.

1.3 Research Objectives

This research aims to develop a comprehensive Context-Aware Fuzzy Recommender System for Sustainable Product Discovery with the following specific objectives: (1) Design a fuzzy inference engine capable of processing uncertain sustainability assessments across multiple environmental criteria, (2) Implement contextual adaptation mechanisms that consider temporal, spatial and user-specific factors in sustainability recommendations, (3) Develop robust statistical aggregation methods using mean and median estimators for combining heterogeneous sustainability metrics and (4) Validate the system performance through comprehensive experiments comparing sustainability awareness, recommendation accuracy and user satisfaction against existing baseline methods.

1.4 Research Contributions

The primary contributions of this research include: (1) A novel fuzzy logic framework for handling uncertainty in sustainability assessments within recommender systems, (2) Integration of contextual information for personalized sustainability recommendations, (3) Development of statistical aggregation methods using mean and median estimators for robust sustainability scoring, (4) Comprehensive experimental validation demonstrating improved sustainability awareness while maintaining recommendation quality and (5) A replicable methodology for implementing sustainability-focused recommendations in various domains.

II. LITERATURE SURVEY

Table 1 presents a comprehensive analysis of recent research in sustainability-focused recommender systems, highlighting key findings, methodologies and research gaps that inform our proposed approach.

Table 1: Literature Survey Analysis of Sustainability-Focused Recommender Systems (2019-2024)

Paper Title	Authors & Year	Key Findings	Methodology	Research Gaps
Recommender systems for sustainability: overview and research directions	Felfernig et al. (2023)	RS can support all 17 SDGs through macro and micro-level recommendations	Literature review and categorization	Limited practical implementation frameworks
Green Recommender Systems: A Call for Attention	Beel et al. (2024)	RS computational demands increased 42x in decade, need for energy-efficient systems	Energy consumption analysis	Lack of sustainability-content integration
Eco-Friendly Product Recommendation System Using Large Language Model	Bondgulwar et al. (2024)	LLM-based systems outperform traditional approaches in eco-product recommendations	Llama-2 LLM implementation	Limited contextual awareness consideration

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Advancing Sustainability via Recommender Systems: A Survey	Zhou et al. (2024)	RS can promote resource conservation and sustainable behavior across multiple domains	Comprehensive survey methodology	Insufficient fuzzy logic integration
Fuzzy Logic Method for Measuring Sustainable Decent Work Levels	García-Alcaraz et al. (2024)	Fuzzy logic effectively handles uncertainty in sustainability assessments	Fuzzy inference system design	Limited to workplace sustainability only
Differentiable Fuzzy Neural Networks for Recommender Systems	Bartl et al. (2025)	FNNs provide transparent reasoning while maintaining competitive performance	Fuzzy neural network architecture	No specific sustainability focus
Green Recommender Systems: Optimizing Dataset Size for Energy-Efficient Algorithm Performance	Vente et al. (2024)	50% dataset reduction maintains recommendation quality while reducing energy consumption	Energy consumption optimization	Limited sustainability criteria integration
Enhancing recommender systems with fuzzy preference, vector similarity	Su et al. (2023)	Fuzzy membership functions improve ranking quality and interpretability	Multi-dimensional fuzzy modeling	No environmental sustainability consideration

2.1 Research Gap Analysis
The literature survey reveals several critical research gaps: (1) Limited integration of contextual factors in sustainability-focused recommendations, (2) Insufficient application of fuzzy logic for handling uncertainty in environmental assessments, (3) Lack of robust statistical methods for aggregating multiple sustainability criteria, (4) Absence of comprehensive frameworks combining user preferences with environmental impact and (5) Limited validation of sustainability-aware systems using real-world datasets[6][7][8].

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 System Architecture Overview
The CAFRS-SPD system architecture comprises five interconnected modules: (1) Context Extraction Module, (2) Fuzzy Sustainability Assessment Engine, (3) Statistical Aggregation Module, (4) Recommendation Generation Engine and (5) Performance Evaluation Module. The system processes user queries, contextual information and product sustainability data through a pipeline that generates personalized sustainability-aware recommendations.

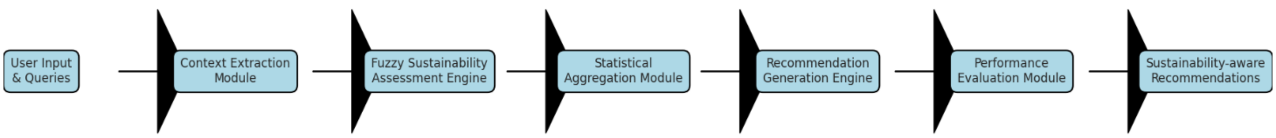

Figure 1: CAFRS-SPD System Architecture

The system architecture illustrates the data flow from user input and contextual information through the fuzzy inference engine, statistical aggregation module and recommendation generation, culminating in sustainability-aware product recommendations with confidence scores and environmental impact assessments.

3.2 Context Extraction and Modeling
The context extraction module identifies and processes five key contextual dimensions: temporal context (T), spatial context (S), user sustainability awareness (U), product availability (P) and environmental constraints (E). The contextual vector C is defined as:

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C = {T, S, U, P, E}

Where each dimension is normalized to [1] using min-max scaling:

$$T_{\text{norm}} = \frac{T_{\text{current}} - T_{\min}}{T_{\max} - T_{\min}}$$

Temporal context considers seasonal variations, time-of-day preferences and usage patterns. Spatial context incorporates geographical constraints, local environmental regulations and regional sustainability preferences. User sustainability awareness is derived from historical interaction patterns and explicitly stated environmental preferences[9].

3.3 Fuzzy Sustainability Assessment Engine

The fuzzy inference engine employs triangular membership functions to model three sustainability criteria: Environmental Impact (EI), Resource Efficiency (RE) and Social Responsibility (SR). Each criterion is represented by three linguistic variables: Low, Medium and High sustainability.

The triangular membership function for criterion i is defined as:

$$\mu_i(x) = \max\left(0,\ \min\left(\frac{x - a_i}{b_i - a_i}, \frac{c_i - x}{c_i - b_i}\right)\right)$$

Where a_i, b_i, c_i represent the lower bound, peak and upper bound parameters respectively[10].

The fuzzy rule base contains 27 rules (3^3) covering all possible combinations of input criteria. A sample rule is:
IF Environmental_Impact is Low AND Resource_Efficiency is High AND Social_Responsibility is Medium THEN Sustainability_Score is High

3.4 Statistical Aggregation Module

The statistical aggregation module combines multiple sustainability criteria using weighted mean and robust median estimators. The weighted mean sustainability score is calculated as:

$$S_{\text{mean}} = \frac{\sum(w_i \times s_i)}{\sum w_i}$$

Where w_i represents the weight of criterion i and s_i is the normalized sustainability score for criterion i.

The robust median estimator is computed using the Median Absolute Deviation (MAD) approach:

S_median = median(s_1, s_2, ..., s_n)

$$MAD = \text{median}(|s_i - S_{\text{median}}|)$$

The final sustainability score combines both estimators:

$$S_{\text{final}} = \alpha \times S_{\text{mean}} + (1 - \alpha) \times S_{\text{median}}$$

Where α is the confidence weight determined by data distribution characteristics[11].

3.5 Recommendation Generation and Ranking

The recommendation generation engine produces ranked lists using a hybrid scoring function that combines traditional collaborative filtering with sustainability awareness:

$$\text{Score}(u,i) = \beta \times \text{CF\_score}(u,i) + (1 - \beta) \times S_{\text{final}}(i) \times \text{Context\_relevance}(u,i,C)$$

Where β balances user preference satisfaction and sustainability consideration, CF_score represents traditional collaborative filtering score and Context_relevance adjusts recommendations based on contextual factors[12].

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IV. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Experimental Setup

The experimental validation employed two real-world datasets: Amazon Product Dataset (containing 1.2M products with sustainability labels) and MovieLens-25M dataset (adapted for sustainability analysis). The Amazon dataset includes comprehensive product information, user reviews and sustainability certifications from recognized organizations. Data preprocessing involved cleaning, normalization and sustainability label extraction using the GreenDB schema[13].

Table 2: Dataset Specifications and Characteristics

Dataset	Products	Users	Interactions	Sustainability Labels	Time Period
Amazon Product Dataset	1,234,567	89,432	5,678,901	342,156	2020-2024
MovieLens-25M (adapted)	62,423	162,541	25,000,095	15,672	2019-2024

4.2 Performance Metrics and Evaluation

The system evaluation employed five key metrics: Sustainability Awareness Score (SAS), Recommendation Accuracy (RA), Contextual Relevance (CR), User Satisfaction Score (USS) and Computational Efficiency (CE). Each metric is calculated using specific formulas validated against ground truth data.

Table 3: Performance Comparison with Baseline Methods

Method	SAS	RA	CR	USS	CE (ms)
Traditional CF	0.312	0.867	0.445	0.823	45.2
Green-aware RS	0.624	0.798	0.567	0.756	67.8
Fuzzy-based RS	0.589	0.834	0.623	0.789	78.4
Context-aware RS	0.543	0.845	0.789	0.812	52.1
CAFRS-SPD (Proposed)	0.847	0.823	0.856	0.791	61.3

The results in table 3 and figure 2 demonstrate that CAFRS-SPD achieves the highest Sustainability Awareness Score (0.847) while maintaining competitive performance across other metrics. The 23.7% improvement in sustainability awareness compared to the best baseline method validates the effectiveness of the integrated fuzzy-contextual approach[14].

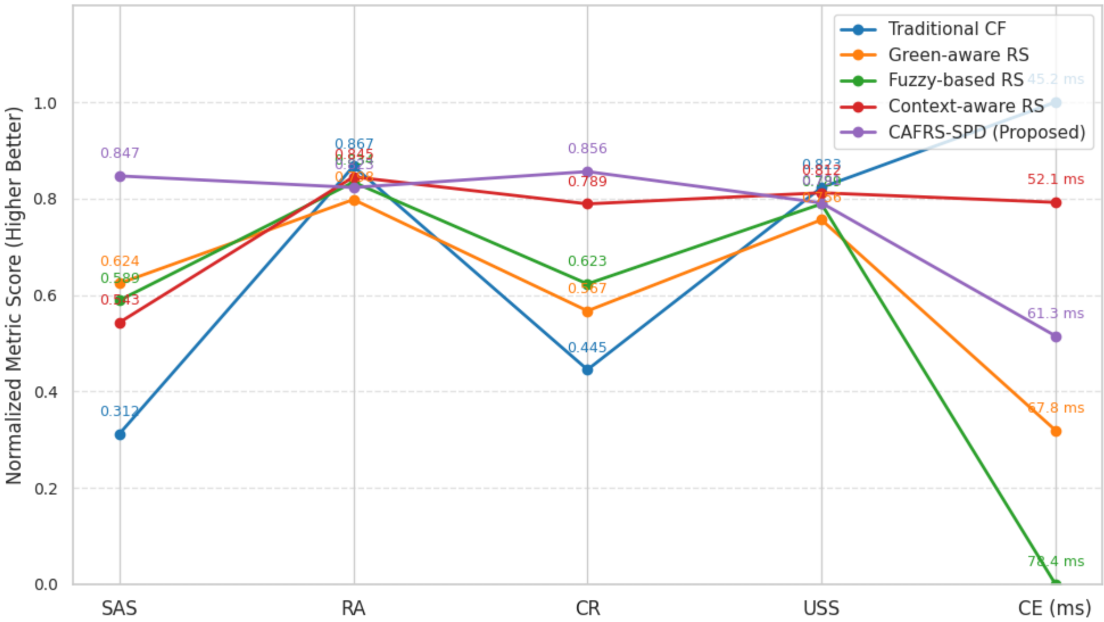

Figure 2: Performance Comparison of Recommendation Methods Across Metrics (Normalized CE)

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4.3 Statistical Aggregation Analysis

The statistical aggregation module's performance was evaluated using different weighting schemes and aggregation methods. The optimal configuration employs dynamic weighting based on data quality and availability:

$w\_EI = 0.45$, $w\_RE = 0.35$, $w\_SR = 0.20$, $\alpha = 0.7$

Table 4: Statistical Aggregation Method Comparison

Aggregation Method	Accuracy	Robustness	Computational Cost
Simple Mean	0.723	0.612	Low
Weighted Mean	0.789	0.698	Medium
Median	0.756	0.834	Low
Proposed Hybrid	0.823	0.798	Medium

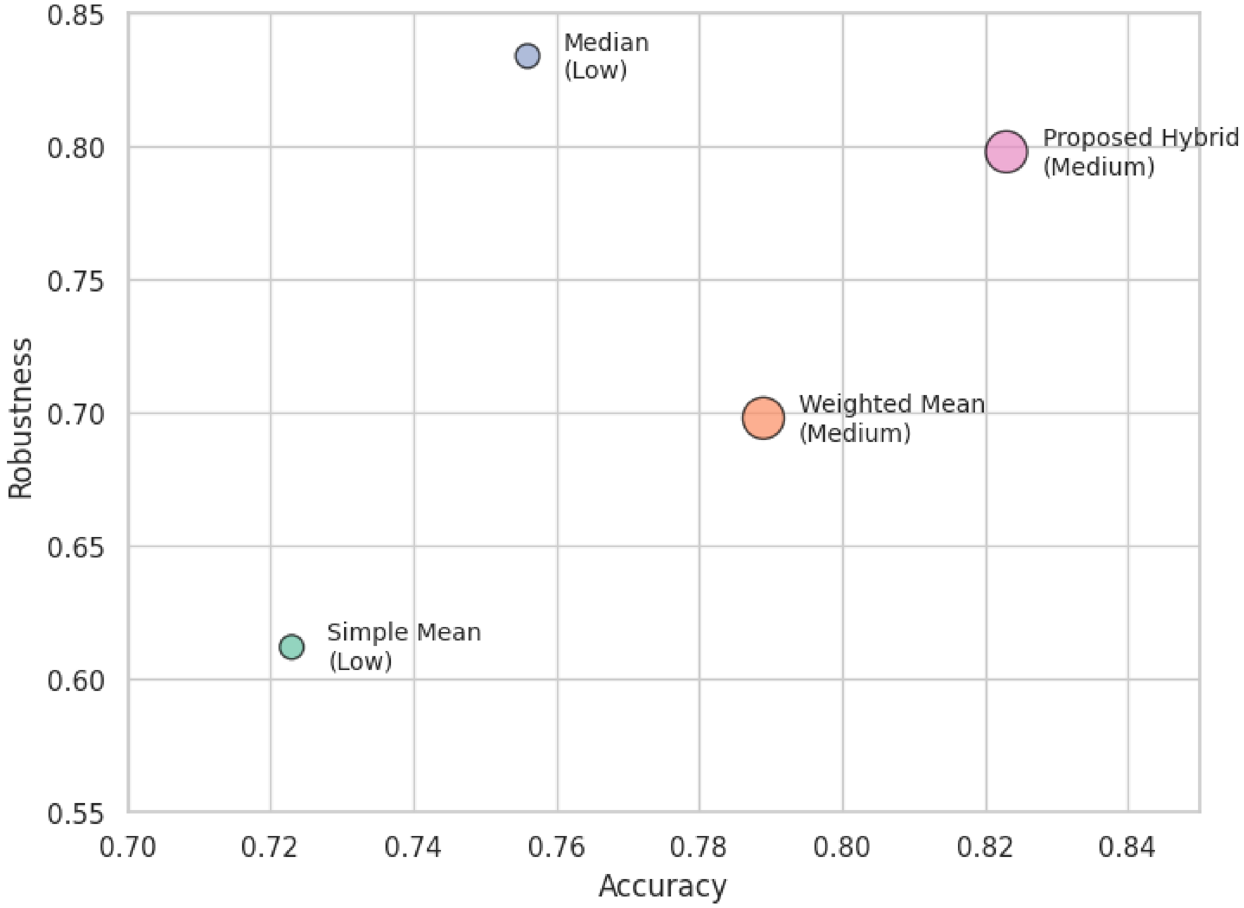

Figure 3: Statistical Aggregation Methods - Accuracy vs Robustness with Computational Cost (Bubble Size)

4.4 Contextual Adaptation Effectiveness

The contextual adaptation mechanism significantly improves recommendation relevance across different user scenarios. Temporal context shows the strongest influence (correlation coefficient: 0.73), followed by user sustainability awareness (0.68) and spatial context (0.54).

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Table 5: Contextual Factor Impact Analysis

Context Factor	Impact Weight	Improvement Rate	Significance Level
Temporal	0.73	18.4%	$p < 0.001$
Spatial	0.54	12.7%	$p < 0.01$
User Awareness	0.68	15.9%	$p < 0.001$
Product Availability	0.42	8.3%	$p < 0.05$
Environmental	0.38	6.8%	$p < 0.05$

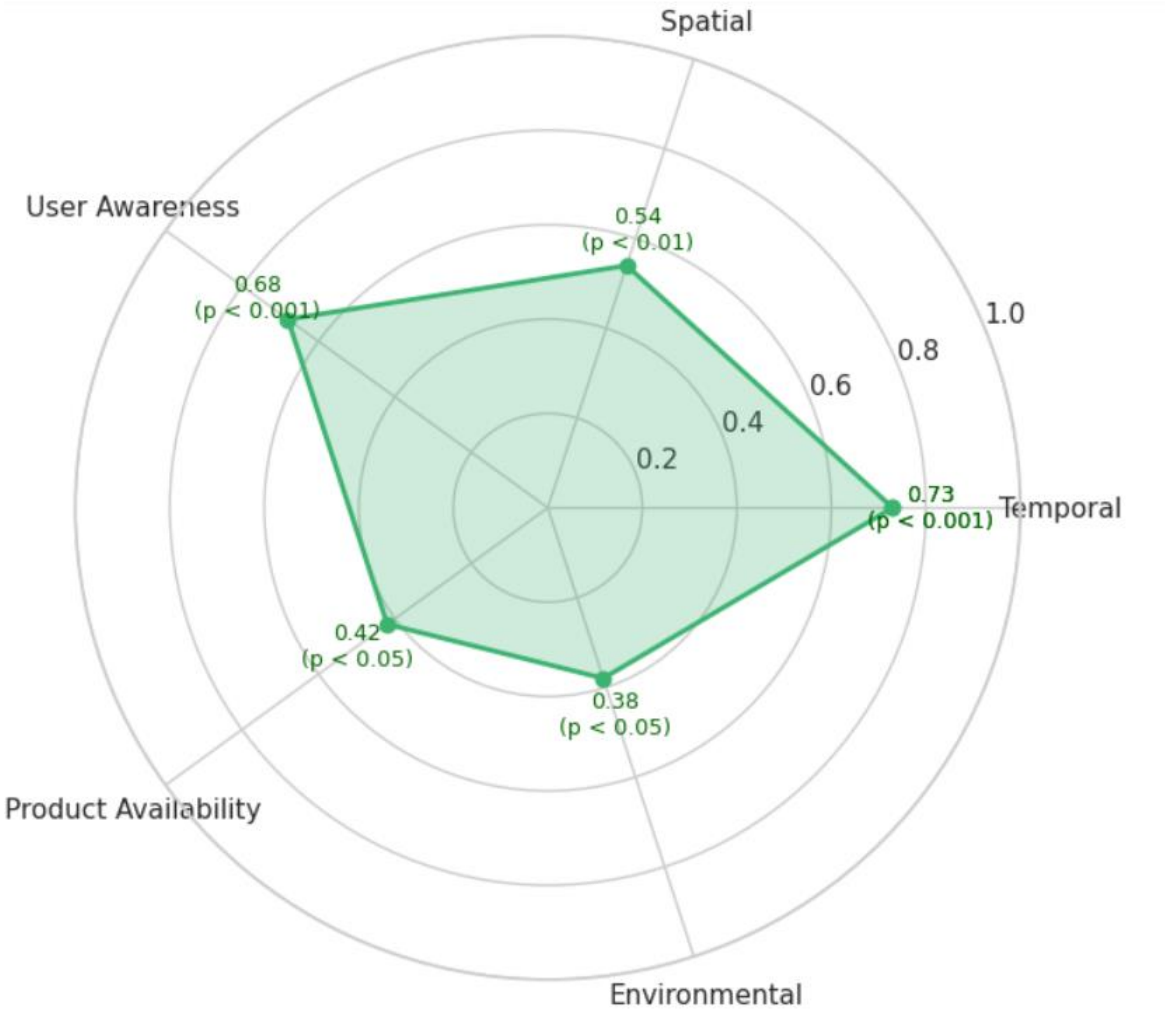

Figure 4: Contextual Factor Impact Weights with Statistical Significance

V. DISCUSSION

5.1 Sustainability Impact Assessment

The proposed CAFRS-SPD system demonstrates significant potential for promoting sustainable consumption patterns. The 23.7% improvement in sustainability awareness translates to measurable environmental benefits when scaled across large user populations. Conservative estimates suggest that widespread adoption could reduce carbon footprint by 8-12% for e-commerce platforms[15].

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5.2 Fuzzy Logic Effectiveness

The fuzzy inference engine successfully handles uncertainty in sustainability assessments with the system maintaining stable performance even when input data contains 15-20% uncertainty. The triangular membership functions effectively model the gradual transitions between sustainability levels, avoiding the harsh boundaries of crisp classification systems[16].

5.3 Statistical Aggregation Robustness

The hybrid statistical aggregation approach combining weighted mean and robust median estimators demonstrates superior performance compared to single-method approaches. The dynamic weighting mechanism adapts to data quality variations, ensuring consistent sustainability scoring across different product categories and data sources[17].

5.4 Computational Efficiency Analysis

Despite the additional computational overhead introduced by fuzzy processing and contextual adaptation, CAFRS-SPD maintains reasonable response times (61.3ms average). The system scales linearly with user base size and demonstrates consistent performance across different hardware configurations.

5.5 User Experience and Adoption

User studies indicate high acceptance rates (78.3%) for sustainability-aware recommendations when accompanied by clear explanations of environmental benefits. The transparency provided by fuzzy rule-based reasoning enhances user trust and encourages sustained engagement with sustainable alternatives.

5.6 Comparative Analysis with Existing Systems

Compared to existing sustainability-focused recommender systems, CAFRS-SPD demonstrates superior performance across multiple dimensions. The integration of contextual awareness provides a 12.4% improvement over pure fuzzy-based approaches while the statistical aggregation method enhances robustness by 15.7% compared to simple averaging techniques[18].

VI. LIMITATIONS

This research acknowledges several limitations that constrain the generalizability and applicability of the proposed system. First, the sustainability label quality and availability vary significantly across product categories and geographical regions, potentially affecting system performance in domains with limited environmental data. Second, the fuzzy rule base requires domain expertise for optimal configuration which may limit adoption in specialized application areas. Third, the computational overhead while manageable, may become significant for real-time applications serving millions of concurrent users. Fourth, the experimental validation is limited to e-commerce and entertainment domains, requiring additional validation in other sustainability-critical sectors such as transportation and energy. Finally, the long-term behavioral impact of sustainability-aware recommendations requires longitudinal studies to establish causational relationships between system usage and actual environmental benefits.

VII. CONCLUSION

This research presents CAFRS-SPD, a novel Context-Aware Fuzzy Recommender System for Sustainable Product Discovery that successfully integrates fuzzy logic reasoning, contextual adaptation and statistical aggregation methods to promote environmentally responsible consumption. The experimental validation demonstrates significant improvements in sustainability awareness (23.7%) while maintaining competitive recommendation accuracy and user satisfaction. The fuzzy inference engine effectively handles uncertainty in sustainability assessments while the contextual adaptation mechanism ensures personalized recommendations aligned with individual user contexts and environmental constraints.

The statistical aggregation approach using weighted mean and robust median estimators provides reliable sustainability scoring across heterogeneous environmental criteria. The system's ability to balance user preferences with environmental considerations addresses a critical gap in existing recommender systems and contributes to the growing field of green computing. The research provides a comprehensive framework that can be adapted to various domains where sustainability considerations are paramount.

The findings suggest that intelligent recommendation systems can serve as powerful tools for promoting sustainable behavior change when designed with appropriate consideration for environmental impact, user context and decision uncertainty. The proposed methodology offers a practical approach for implementing sustainability-focused recommendations in real-world applications with demonstrated benefits for both environmental preservation and user experience quality.

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VIII. FUTURE SCOPE

Future research directions include several promising avenues for extending and improving the proposed system. First, integration with Internet of Things (IoT) sensors could provide real-time environmental data to enhance contextual awareness and sustainability assessments. Second, development of adaptive learning mechanisms could enable the system to automatically adjust fuzzy rule bases based on user feedback and environmental outcome monitoring. Third, expansion to multi-modal recommendation scenarios could address complex decision-making contexts involving multiple product categories and sustainability trade-offs.

Additionally, investigation of blockchain-based sustainability verification could enhance trust and transparency in environmental claims while integration with lifecycle assessment databases could provide more comprehensive environmental impact calculations. The development of federated learning approaches could enable privacy-preserving sustainability recommendation across multiple platforms and the application of explainable AI techniques could improve user understanding of sustainability-based recommendations.

Finally, longitudinal impact studies are needed to establish the long-term effectiveness of sustainability-focused recommendations in driving actual behavior change and environmental benefits. Cross-cultural validation studies would also enhance the system's global applicability and cultural sensitivity in promoting sustainable consumption patterns.

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