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The Impact of Social Media on Raising Environmental Awareness throughout the Country

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ABSTRACT :

The use of social media has grown ingrained in modern life. Numerous environmental problems are occurring both locally and worldwide as a result of the advancements in globalization, science, technology, and industry. Social media can be used as a method to raise awareness of a variety of contemporary environmental issues considerably more quickly and in a lot smaller amount of time. People are using social media these days to support environmental campaigns and to connect people locally and globally on minor to major environmental issues. This highlights the importance of environmental education in determining the value of social media through interactions between environmental educators and students or ordinary people. Additionally, it gives regular people the opportunity to monitor the quality of the air, water, and climate around them and then share this information with others. This chapter will highlight some of the benefits of social media in raising environmental awareness and fostering human connectivity with a few instances.

Social media has completely changed how young people connect with environmental concerns by providing an easily available and dynamic platform for advocacy, education, and conversation. This study investigates how youth understanding, attitudes, and behaviors about sustainability are influenced by platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter. The study looks at how social media affects environmental awareness, encourages sustainable practices, and supports youth-led initiatives by analyzing case studies, polls, and effective online campaigns.

This study emphasizes how interactive material, viral challenges, and influencers can encourage young viewers to become more environmentally conscious. It also discusses the possible drawbacks, such false information. In spite of these issues, social media is still a formidable instrument for raising awareness, motivating people to take action, and enlisting youth in the battle against climate change. In order to optimize the beneficial effects of social media on environmental consciousness, this study highlights the necessity of media literacy and ethical digital activity.

Keywords : Social Media, Environmental Awareness , Youth Engagement, Sustainability, Online Campaigns, Global Connectivity.

INTRODUCTION

Social networking has ingrained itself into everyday life in the digital age, especially for young people. Social media sites like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok give users the chance to interact with people across the world, communicate, and share information. These platforms are not only tools for social interaction but also for raising awareness of global issues, including environmental challenges. As a result of industrialization, globalization, and technological advancements, environmental problems like pollution, deforestation, and climate change have gotten worse. Addressing these issues requires active participation and a great deal of awareness, especially among young people, who are crucial to creating a sustainable future. Social media can help close this gap by efficiently and rapidly disseminating information about environmental issues to a large number of people. Human activity is largely to blame for global environmental issues like the greenhouse effect, water scarcity, air pollution, and species extinction. The environment is essential to all living things because they depend on it for everything. It is crucial that we preserve our natural habitat because only then will life on Earth be possible.

The environment, which includes everything around us, is steadily becoming into a significant issue. We therefore require worldwide concern and understanding regarding the matter. Educating people and raising their awareness of environmental issues are the most significant and successful strategies to deal with the crisis. Environmental education primarily begins in childhood and continues throughout a person's elementary and secondary school.

However, as everyone's social life has a significant impact on their life these days, environmental education cannot be restricted to educational institutions alone. As a result, new media has become increasingly important and effective in promoting environmental education. Yet, social media, or what we can call new media, has its own advantages that make it a better, easier, and faster way to raise awareness among people. Both mass media and social media have the ability to influence a larger audience, including both younger and older generations, respectively. Nevertheless, traditional media, or mass media,

is doing a great job of making people realize the need of their concern for climate change and environmental protection. We may observe that various mass media platforms are not being used to their full potential and are stalling somewhere.

Some point in directing people's focus toward various global challenges. On the other hand, people are consistently engaging in more active and productive participation on the topics that are being emphasized by social media.

Since it is a simpler and more accessible means to obtain information and remain up to speed with the news on a local, national, and international level, the majority of students utilize it to obtain news, information, and general knowledge. As of 2024, there were 462 million active social media users in India. Additionally, it was projected that there will be nearly 1.5 billion social network users in the nation by 2040.

As of 2020, Facebook was still the most widely used social media site. The popularity of social media among Indian users is demonstrated by Statista (2021), which is why environmental issues have received more attention as a result of social media. This study investigates the use of social media to raise youth awareness of environmental issues. The study examines the ways in which social media is used to foster eco-friendly behaviors, connect with others, and share knowledge. It demonstrates how social media can inspire youth to take environmental action by examining campaigns, user actions, and examples. Additionally, the extensive usage of hashtags such as #ClimateAction, #GoGreen, and #PlasticFree has facilitated the dissemination of information to a wider audience by amplifying the voices of environmental advocates.

These channels are frequently used by environmental organizations, activists, and influencers to inform, encourage, and challenge youth to lead more sustainable lives. Social media also gives young people a platform to organize online petitions, awareness campaigns, and even global movements like FridaysforFuture, a youth-led initiative for climate action. By giving young people instant access to news, conversations, and events, social media not only connects them with environmental experts and activists but also gives them a sense of agency and empowerment, encouraging active participation in environmental preservation. As a result, social media plays a crucial role in influencing the younger generation's environmental mindset, promoting awareness and action toward a more sustainable future. The study emphasizes social media tactics for raising awareness and encouraging active participation. This strategy aids social media in raising awareness and motivating youth to take action, resulting in a society that is more ecologically conscious and sustainable.

Need of the study

Climate change, deforestation, pollution, and biodiversity loss are escalating environmental issues. The younger generation, particularly those with tech-savvy skills, can play a crucial role in addressing these issues. Social media, a powerful platform for information exchange and behavior modification, can promote environmental knowledge and inspire action among adolescents. Platforms like Instagram, Twitter, and TikTok can be used to educate, advocate, and activism, but their actual impact on advancing environmental sustainability is still unknown. Understanding how to use these platforms can help the younger generation become change agents.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study explores the role of social media in promoting environmental awareness among young people aged 15-30. It examines how social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, and YouTube can inform, engage, and inspire sustainable behaviors. The research also examines the impact of social media on sustainable practices like recycling and waste reduction. It also examines the role of stakeholders like influencers, environmental organizations, and content creators in shaping environmental conversations. The study also examines current trends in social media usage for environmental awareness. The findings aim to improve the impact of social media in promoting sustainability and encourage young people to take responsibility for environmental stewardship.

Objective

- To study the efficiency of various social media sites.
- To understand how youth were taught about environmental issues through social media.
- To analyze Social media campaigns' effects on youth's environmental education.

Limitations of the study

Participants' awareness of environmental issues may be overstated, and the results may be influenced by changes in actions and views. Rural youth may have limited access to social media, and changes in algorithms may render results outdated. Monitoring the impact of social media on environmentally beneficial behavior is challenging, and the influence of government campaigns and media coverage complicates the study.

Review Of Literature

- Nyshta, D.R. [2024], Design of Advertising Products Aimed at Raising Consumers' Under the direction of Vasnytsia R.B., "Environmental Awareness" by Nyshta D.R. explores the important role that advertising plays in bringing attention to environmental issues, particularly among youth. One of the main findings of this study, which is a component of a Master's program at Lviv Polytechnic National University, is the growing demand for environmentally conscious advertising that is not only educational but also captivating and visually appealing. The study demonstrates that advertising can be an effective means of communicating environmental issues, particularly when it is intended to draw attention and spur change. Ads can influence customer behavior and motivate them to take action to safeguard the environment by using

graphic components. Examine the ideas and purposes of designing advertisements that promote environmental consciousness. Examine the ways that environmental messages, especially those conveyed through posters, can affect people's attitudes and actions. Examine the creative and visual methods employed in environmental advertising, paying particular attention to how they might involve youth and increase awareness.

- Deepika [2024] In response to the increasing prevalence of digital media and its impact on rural youth, Deswal, Deepika's study, "The influence of Social media by youth," explores the sociological effects of electronic media on the younger generation in rural areas. It provides a thorough examination of this changing relationship. Deepika Deswal is a specialist in the sociological effects of media, with an emphasis on how electronic media affects rural youth. She has been actively involved in this subject for a number of years, studying how people's lives are shaped by the growing usage of media, especially television, mobile phones, and the internet.
- Sammy Ornella Hua[2024] , Social media has developed into a potent instrument for information exchange, teamwork, and organizing activities for both personal and professional goals. It is essential in the healthcare industry for raising awareness, facilitating early diagnosis, and promoting disease prevention. Using a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methodologies, this study examines how people and health organizations utilize social media to connect with audiences and increase awareness about health issues. It focuses on how social media is being used to promote health awareness in Meghalaya. The research aims to understand both the potential and the challenges of using social media as a tool for fostering health awareness in Meghalaya, shedding light on its impact and effectiveness in this particular context. The findings show that social media has created vibrant online communities that engage in diverse ways to promote health awareness for a variety of goals.
- Ram Kumar Singh, [2023], This study examines secondary school pupils' awareness of environmental issues. Teaching kids about the environment and how they may contribute to its protection is crucial given the issues the globe faces, such as natural catastrophes, climate change, and health hazards. Promoting eco-friendly behaviors for a healthy planet is the aim. Acceptance. descriptive research, in which data is gathered and examined without any modifications. A specially designed survey to gauge students' understanding of environmental issues. Determining whether gender and students' urban or rural residences influence their awareness.
- Mounika [2021], Social media has taken center stage in our lives, impacting almost every facet of our interactions and connections with the outside world. Young people, particularly those between the ages of 18 and 29, are among the most active users. This study examines the effects of social media on this demographic and reveals some significant findings. The results indicate that the majority of young people are aware of the advantages and disadvantages of online platforms and are able to distinguish between safe and unsafe activities. Nevertheless, many of them use social media as a means of escape when faced with difficulties or discontent in their off line lives. Addiction to social media can occasionally result from this increased dependence.

Research Methodology

Both primary and secondary data are being used in this study's investigation.

Primary Information

Structured questionnaires are used to gather primary data from a variety of respondents.

Secondary Information

Secondary data is gathered from a variety of sources, including books, periodicals, journals, publications, and the Internet.

Sample Of Study:

Focus groups: three to four groups of eight to ten young people chosen because of their demonstrated involvement or interest in environmental concerns.

Statistical Tools

MS Excel was used to perform tests such as Anova, and ChiSquare.

(H₀): There is no association between following environmental accounts/pages/influencers on social media and changing personal habits due to environmental awareness gained from social media.

(H₁): There is an association between following environmental accounts/pages/influencers on social media and changing personal habits due to environmental awareness gained from social media.

Results						
	followenvironmentalaccounts(yes)	followenvironmentalaccounts(no)				RowTotals
changedhabits(yes)	38(37.81)[0.00]	17(17.19)[0.00]				55
changedhabits(no)	6(6.19)[0.01]	3(2.81)[0.01]				9
ColumnTotals	44	20				64(GrandTotal)

Interpretation:

The p-value of 0.8 suggests that there is no significant association between following environmental accounts and changing personal habits in this dataset (with the proportions provided). However, this might be due to the estimation method used to split the summarized data. Since the p-value=0.8, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

(H₀): The mean knowledge improvement score is the same for both groups (followers and non-followers of environmental accounts).

(H₁): The mean knowledge improvement score is different between the two groups.

Anova:

Single Factor

SUMMARY

<u>Groups</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Sum</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>Variance</u>	
agegroup	64	197	3.078125	0.644593	
Que8	64	264	4.125	1.031746	
<u>SS</u>	<u>df</u>	<u>MS</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>P-value</u>	<u>Fcrit</u>
35.07031	1	35.07031	41.84154	1.98E-09	3.916325
105.6094	126	0.83817			
140.6797	127				

Interpretation:

The F-value (41.84154) is significantly larger than the F-critical value (3.916325). The P-value (1.98E-09) is much smaller than 0.05, indicating strong statistical significance. This means there is a significant difference between the two groups in terms of their knowledge about environmental issues. Since the p-value is extremely small, we reject the null hypothesis.

Findings

- From the Chi Square test (p value=0.8) suggests that there is no significant association between following environmental accounts and changing personal habits in this dataset.
- The correlation test showed a weak negative correlation (p=0.542) between age group and how informative do you find the environmental campaigns you encounter on social media.
- The P-value (1.98E-09) is much smaller than 0.05, indicating strong statistical significance. This means there is a significant difference between the two groups in terms of their knowledge about environmental issues.
- 79.7% of respondents use social media daily, showing its strong role in spreading environmental awareness.
- 90.6% believe social media campaigns can inspire youth action, reinforcing the need for digital engagement in sustainability movements.
- Most of the respondents have changed their personal habits due to environmental awareness gained from social media.

Conclusion

Particularly among youth, social media has become a potent tool for influencing environmental consciousness and motivating action. Given that 90.6% of respondents think social media campaigns can inspire youngsters to take collective action, it is evident that digital platforms serve as catalysts for change in addition to being informational sources. Given that 79.7% of participants use social media on a regular basis, it is clear how ingrained these platforms are in their life and how effective they are at disseminating environmental messages.

What is particularly noteworthy is how this digital engagement is resulting in personal transformation— Because they learned more about the environment online, 85.9% of respondents changed their daily routines. Social media is directly influencing how people behave, whether it's through cutting back on plastic use, embracing sustainable buying practices, or choosing more environmentally friendly lifestyle options. Although this change in personal behaviors is positive, the leap from online lobbying to offline activism is still difficult. Just 50% of respondents said they would be willing to take part in offline activities like tree planting or protests, whilst 40.6% were hesitant and 9.4% were unwilling to go further.

This discrepancy between awareness and action implies that although social media can initiate dialogues and motivate change, it might not be sufficient on its own to maintain sustained engagement over the long run. Campaigns need to shift their focus from passive awareness to concrete, community-driven solutions if they are to effectively motivate youth away from screens. Digital participation could be transformed into long-lasting environmental

change by providing chances for direct involvement, encouraging a feeling of shared responsibility, and demonstrating the tangible effects of individual acts. In the end, social media has emerged as a vital instrument for activism and environmental education, but in order for it to bring about significant change, we need to figure out how to close the knowledge gap. Ideas

Suggestions

- Campaigns should contain challenges, contests, and calls to action that motivate people to perform concrete, tiny actions rather than merely disseminating information.
- To facilitate the shift from online advocacy to practical action, campaigns could offer simple offline engagement opportunities, such as neighborhood clean-up drives, tree-planting occasions, or sustainability workshops.
- Promoting local eco-groups and student-led sustainability clubs are examples of community-led initiatives that can foster a sense of shared responsibility.
- In order to facilitate the shift from online advocacy to practical action, campaigns should offer simple offline engagement opportunities, such as neighborhood clean-up drives, tree-planting occasions, or sustainability workshops.
- By making environmental challenges easier to comprehend and share, short films, info graphics, and interactive reels can boost audience engagement.
- Sharing true tales of people and communities making a difference can inspire people and demonstrate how minor adjustments lead to larger environmental objectives.

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