

ROLE OF MEDIA IN CONSERVING ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT:-This paper explores the role that the media can play in contributing to a sustainable society. Unsympathetic attitude of humans towards the environment has made it more susceptible and pushed it to the cusp of acute crisis. Unless prudent measures are taken to curtail the degradation of environment then we are doomed to irreparable sufferings. Media can play a vital role in waking up people from their slumber as it is potential enough to deliver particular message to each and every door. This study analyses the media's contribution towards safeguarding the environment. These days Climate Change issues are the getting the highest priority and making the headlines in print and electronic media. Governments and the people depend on Communication and Mass Media not only for disseminating information, but also in setting agenda for the development and other allied activities. Thus, communication media become a powerful tool for disseminating information and diffusion of innovations. Due to depletion of natural resources and burning of fossil fuels there is a great threat to environment. It is high time to save the depleting natural resources and discourage the irrational usage of natural resources by focusing on Sustainable Development.

KEYWORDS:- Social Media, Environment, Awareness, Innovations, Sustainable.

INTRODUCTION:-Social Media has been grown rapidly as a type of online communication tool wherever users make comments, shares, and put videos, photos and posts on social network at a remarkable rate. Environmental issues are progressively getting to be concern of the worldwide. Contribution of media generally and social media particularly in the raising environmental awareness in the target group is important because of produce greater environmental influence on growth of world population and standards for high lifestyle of our communities.

There are an excess of Internet facilities that can be sorted as social media. Social Media has been grown rapidly as a type of online communication tool wherever users make comments, share, and put videos, photos and posts on social network at a remarkable rate. Therefore, The definition of Social Media is “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user-generated content”.

Social media can be separated into different types, which are making content and distributing in social media; sharing the content in social media; cooperative creating in social media; computer-generated worlds; supplements and social networks. The most common kinds of web-based social media are the social networks. One of the most popular social networking sites in the world today's is Facebook; according to the active users of Facebook are more than 1.5 billion. Other social media involves You Tube over 1.0 billion users, Instagram 400 million users, and Twitter 320 million users. Facebook delivers some services for users when compared with other social media for instance the user can share different types of their content on Facebook for example; video, photo, links and text while other social media for example Twitter offers limited services for inserting photo and sending short text. Environmental issues are progressively getting to be concern of the worldwide Groups. Also, awareness of environment has become one of the issues that all countries and major organizations working on it at International level. Because of countries are facing environmental crisis, some of them are local problems while others are global, therefore working to solve these problems need a different ways. The environmental awareness and education are two ways to solve these problems.

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Some of Internet usages to raise the environmental awareness are the following:

- **Documentaries and amateur videos:** as mentioned before, exposing an environmental situation or hazard could be a difficult endeavor. The power of pictures and videos to illustrate, captivate or shock, is undoubtedly, as according to Ottino (2003), “seeing and representing are inextricably linked to understanding”. Via the Internet, people have an instant, cost free and unlimited access to a great number of environmental documentaries.
- **Blogs, Wikis, Forums and educational portals:** such websites, on the one hand give access to an vast amount of information regarding the planets and its protection, without any consumption of paper and ink, and on the other hand, provide a virtual space of communication and exchanging of information and ideas, without the burden of travelling.
- **Virtual environments and e-museums:** which represent an attractive alternative for the enhancement of the environmental awareness, as the user has the opportunity to navigate and sometimes interact with the presented environment.

- **E-learning:** such educational practice has a double impact on the enhancement of environmental awareness. Firstly, it is an effective way for organizations and academic institutes to reduce their carbon footprint, with the elimination of face-to-face presence, and the paper and ink usage. Secondly, over the Internet there are many available courses regarding the nature, the environmental problems, the use of green technologies, the ecological friendly agriculture, the ecotourism, etc..

Media and the Environmental Awareness: The environmental emergency that we are facing, needs to be addressed and analyzed “within a social frame of reference” (Arlt et al., 2011). Media seem to be an interesting approach towards such direction. The great potential of the media in regards to the provision of information, the construction of knowledge and the cultivation of skills and attitudes, has been proved scientifically over the years.

The goal of Sustainable development cannot be achieved by any government at its own level until the public has a participatory role in it. Public participation is possible only when the public is aware about the ecological and environmental issues. The public has to be educated about the fact that if we are degrading our environment, we are actually harming our own selves. This is because we are a part of the complex network of environment where component is linked up. It is all the more important to educate the people that sometimes the adverse impact of environment are not experienced until a threshold is reached.

A drive by the government to ban the littering of polythene cannot be successful until the public understands the environmental implications of the same. The public has to be made aware that by littering polythene, we are not only damaging the environment but posing serious threats to our health.

Role of Mass Media in Spreading Environmental Awareness:

- **Newspapers** continue to be the predominant medium in influencing the people for ages and can play a bigger role in protecting the environment. Though newspapers cover the environmental issues the much needed focus is not given on consistent basis. It is the sensational crime or hot politics that takes its place as the highest coverage most often since these are the topics which attracts more readers, by and large every paper goes with this trend. Environment is a basic need for all living beings because every necessity for them depends on the environment. Unless the environment is protected, the existence of life on the planet Earth would be impossible.
- **Television** is visual and auditory, and therefore doesn't require viewers to be literate. It has the potential to be free, besides the initial costs for obtaining a television. Television is still ageless in the sense that anyone from any walk of life can use it, and most importantly, anyone is able to comprehend the contents that are being emitted from the television. Television programming uses storytelling or engaging narratives to capture people's attention. Television, unlike print media, due

largely to literacy, and film, due to financial accessibility, has a lower threshold for consumption. According to Gerbner, television has become the "central cultural arm of our society." Television is one of the most powerful and effective means of communication in influencing and persuading people. A television program joins the members of the house and makes them to enjoy time together. With this power of joining people, television can do a lot in improving the environmental awareness among the people. But primary contents which occupy the television channels are entertainment related which can expand the viewership. Television scores high among the media in terms of public interest due to its visual and auditory attributes and acts as a strong medium in carrying a particular message to masses. Television programs join the members of the house and make them to enjoy time together. With this power of joining people, television can do a lot in improving the environmental awareness among the people. But primary contents which occupy the television channels are entertainment related which can expand the viewership. Television is in the world of complete commercialization; either it is a reality show or mega serials that fill the slots! The intention of the media is to gain profit. It is the entertainment, politics and the news on celebrities takes the higher coverage, which are proven as higher TRP contents as well. Commercialization is not restricted only to advertisements but it is also held within the program content. Television channels are obsessed with financial gains in each and every program they broadcast. It can contribute highly to society by developing a broader vision towards educating a common man about the dos and don'ts that would uplift the standard of the environment and hold the earth from peril. Though there are programs which are environmental centric, it is very few and meager considering the need of the hour.

- **Radio** is an affordable and easily accessible medium. Its signals cover almost the whole country. Government channels in radio medium do a better job in promoting the social and environmental awareness than filling the contents with entertainment. After the birth of FM stations radio has become more commercial. Though the services work for 24/7, most of the times FM station covers film songs, announcements and talk shows. Messages on social concerns are rarely seen. FM channels should take steps in ameliorating the environmental conditions by providing influential and frequential messages on Environmental protection. Due to the high level of illiteracy in India, electronic media are in a key position in bringing a change in the minds of the people. Furthermore, inquiries have shown that both radio and television are perceived as authoritative and friendly media by vast percentages of the population. radio is well below its potential in creating environmental awareness and over the last few years no increase in broadcasts on environment can be observed.

CONCLUSION: The literature findings indicate that media, and especially digital ones, play an important role in the enhancement of environmental awareness and the establishment of a more ecological friendly way of living. In fact, they have a double influence. Firstly, they constitute a flexible environment in order to decompose and explain a complex issue, as an ecological disaster, via different types of information, text, pictures, multimedia presentation, virtual simulations, smart technologies that assist individuals in monitoring their resource use. Secondly, they promote and facilitate the adoption of the ecological philosophy, as they contribute to eco-tourism, to reduction of fuel, and minimize paper and ink consumption.

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