

Sustainability Communication in the Digital Age: Media, Public Engagement and Behavioural Change

Dr. Rajashree S. Adhikary

Associate Professor, Sharda University

Abstract

The growing urgency of environmental degradation, climate change, biodiversity loss, and unsustainable consumption has placed sustainability at the centre of global policy and public discourse. While governments and international organisations continue to formulate sustainability-oriented policies, their effectiveness increasingly depends on how these ideas are communicated to society. In the digital era, communication has evolved from a one-way dissemination of information into an interactive, participatory process in which audiences actively create, interpret, and circulate content. Digital media platforms—including social networking sites, online news portals, podcasts, blogs, mobile applications, and video-sharing platforms—have transformed sustainability communication by enabling real-time engagement, collaborative knowledge creation, and collective action.

This paper critically examines how digital media contributes to sustainability communication by shaping public engagement and influencing behavioural change. Drawing upon Agenda-Setting Theory, Framing Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, and the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the study develops an integrated analytical perspective on the relationship between digital communication, audience participation, and sustainable action. Through qualitative content analysis of recent sustainability campaigns conducted by international organisations, governmental agencies, and civil society initiatives, the paper explores the communication strategies that successfully encourage environmental awareness and responsible behaviour.

The analysis argues that effective sustainability communication extends beyond raising awareness; it cultivates trust, emotional connection, participation, and long-term behavioural commitment. Interactive storytelling, visual communication, data-driven narratives, influencer advocacy, and user-generated content emerge as powerful tools for engaging digital audiences. However, the study also highlights persistent challenges, including misinformation, greenwashing, algorithmic amplification of misleading content, digital inequalities, and declining public trust in online information ecosystems. The paper proposes an integrated Digital Sustainability Communication Framework that emphasises credibility, transparency, participation, and technological innovation as essential components of effective communication. The study contributes to contemporary media scholarship by demonstrating that digital media has become not merely a channel for sustainability messaging but a transformative space where public dialogue, civic participation, and sustainable behavioural change increasingly converge.

Keywords: Sustainability Communication, Digital Media, Public Engagement, Behavioural Change, Environmental Communication, Social Media, Sustainable Development Goals, Digital Journalism

1. Introduction

The twenty-first century is characterised by unprecedented environmental, social, and economic transformations. Climate change, biodiversity loss, water scarcity, plastic pollution, energy insecurity, and widening social inequalities have collectively challenged governments, industries, and communities across the globe. Addressing these interconnected challenges requires more than technological innovation or policy reform; it demands informed citizens, collective participation, and sustained behavioural change. Communication has therefore become a fundamental pillar of sustainable development, connecting scientific knowledge, public understanding, institutional

accountability, and community action.

The adoption of the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development reinforced the importance of communication in advancing sustainable societies. The seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) recognise that achieving environmental protection, social equity, and economic prosperity depends upon active public participation supported by accessible, transparent, and credible information. Sustainability communication has consequently evolved from being a specialised branch of environmental communication into an interdisciplinary field encompassing media studies, development communication, behavioural science, public relations, journalism, digital technology, and policy advocacy. Rather than simply informing audiences about environmental problems, sustainability communication seeks to inspire dialogue, encourage participation, influence attitudes, and foster long-term behavioural transformation.

The emergence of digital media has fundamentally altered this communication landscape. Traditional media, including newspapers, radio, and television, historically functioned through one-way communication in which institutions acted as information producers while audiences remained passive recipients. Digital technologies have disrupted this model by enabling multidirectional communication, where individuals simultaneously consume, create, modify, and distribute information across interconnected platforms. Social networking sites, digital news portals, blogs, podcasts, online communities, video-sharing platforms, and mobile applications have transformed citizens into active participants in sustainability discourse. Environmental campaigns that once depended primarily on mass media now spread globally within hours through hashtags, livestreams, short-form videos, interactive infographics, and user-generated content.

Digital communication has also expanded opportunities for civic engagement. Environmental movements such as Fridays for Future, Earth Hour, Plastic Free July, the United Nations' ActNow campaign, and India's Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment) demonstrate how digital platforms mobilise collective participation beyond geographical boundaries. Individuals no longer participate solely through physical demonstrations; they engage through online discussions, digital petitions, crowdfunding, citizen science initiatives, and collaborative environmental monitoring. These developments illustrate a significant transformation in the relationship between media and society, where communication increasingly functions as a catalyst for collective environmental action.

Despite these advances, the digital communication ecosystem presents equally significant challenges. The same platforms that facilitate rapid dissemination of sustainability information also accelerate the spread of misinformation, climate denial narratives, pseudoscience, and corporate greenwashing. Algorithm-driven content recommendation systems frequently prioritise emotionally engaging or sensational content over scientifically accurate information, contributing to information disorder and public confusion. Furthermore, unequal access to digital technologies continues to create disparities in participation, limiting the inclusiveness of sustainability communication across different socio-economic and geographic contexts. Questions concerning credibility, trust, transparency, and media ethics have therefore become central to discussions of sustainability communication in the digital age.

Another emerging concern is the distinction between awareness and behavioural change. Many digital sustainability campaigns successfully generate substantial online visibility, attracting millions of views, shares, and comments. However, high levels of online engagement do not necessarily translate into meaningful offline behavioural transformation. Public expressions of environmental concern may remain confined to symbolic online participation, a phenomenon often described as "slacktivism." Consequently, researchers have increasingly questioned which communication strategies genuinely encourage sustainable consumption, waste reduction, energy conservation, biodiversity protection, and climate-responsible lifestyles. Understanding how communication influences behavioural intention and actual behavioural change has therefore become one of the most significant challenges in contemporary sustainability research.

Within media and communication scholarship, sustainability communication is increasingly recognised as a multidimensional process involving message construction, media framing, audience interpretation, emotional engagement, and social interaction. Effective sustainability communication

depends not only upon scientific accuracy but also upon narrative quality, cultural relevance, visual storytelling, trustworthiness, and opportunities for audience participation. Digital environments have amplified the importance of these factors by allowing users to selectively engage with information that aligns with their beliefs, identities, and social networks. Consequently, communication strategies must address cognitive, emotional, and social dimensions simultaneously if they are to encourage sustained behavioural transformation.

This paper argues that digital media has become an indispensable component of sustainability communication because it facilitates continuous interaction between institutions and citizens while enabling collaborative knowledge creation and public participation. Rather than viewing communication merely as the transmission of environmental information, the study conceptualises sustainability communication as a participatory ecosystem in which media organisations, governments, corporations, non-governmental organisations, influencers, educators, and citizens collectively shape sustainability narratives. Such an approach acknowledges that sustainable development depends not only upon technological innovation and policy implementation but equally upon communication processes capable of building trust, encouraging dialogue, and inspiring behavioural change.

Accordingly, this study critically examines how digital media contributes to sustainability communication through public engagement and behavioural transformation. Drawing upon established communication and behavioural theories, including Agenda-Setting Theory, Framing Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, and the Theory of Planned Behaviour, the paper develops an integrated analytical framework for understanding contemporary sustainability communication. By analysing recent digital sustainability campaigns and communication practices, the study seeks to identify the strategies that effectively enhance public engagement while also examining the challenges that continue to undermine communication effectiveness.

Ultimately, the paper contributes to the growing body of literature exploring the intersection of media, sustainability, and behavioural science. It proposes that the future of sustainability communication lies not simply in producing more information but in nurturing meaningful participation, strengthening public trust, and creating communication environments that encourage individuals and communities to translate environmental awareness into sustained action. In doing so, digital media becomes more than a technological platform; it becomes a social infrastructure capable of supporting collective responsibility and advancing the global sustainability agenda.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Sustainability Communication in the Digital Age

Over the last decade, sustainability communication has evolved from primarily disseminating environmental information to facilitating public dialogue, stakeholder participation, and collective action. This transformation has accelerated with the rapid expansion of digital media, which has fundamentally altered how sustainability issues are communicated and experienced. Rather than serving merely as channels for information distribution, digital platforms have become spaces where governments, businesses, civil society organisations, and citizens collaboratively construct sustainability narratives. Recent scholarship suggests that effective sustainability communication is increasingly characterised by transparency, participation, and long-term engagement rather than one-way persuasive messaging.

Weder, Krainer, and Karmasin (2021) argue that sustainability communication has moved beyond corporate reporting and environmental awareness campaigns to become a strategic process of stakeholder engagement that promotes shared responsibility and collaborative governance. Their study emphasises that successful sustainability communication depends on dialogue, trust, and organisational accountability rather than simply providing environmental information. While the authors establish the importance of participatory communication, they also acknowledge that empirical evidence explaining how such engagement translates into measurable behavioural change remains

limited.

Similarly, Velenturf and Purnell (2021) examined communication within the context of the circular economy and found that sustainability initiatives become more effective when messages are locally relevant, solution-oriented, and easily understandable. Their research highlights that audiences respond more positively to practical communication that demonstrates achievable actions rather than abstract discussions of environmental crises. However, their analysis primarily focuses on policy communication and offers limited insight into how digital media platforms influence the wider dissemination and adoption of these messages among diverse audiences.

The growing importance of digital literacy has also attracted considerable scholarly attention. UNESCO (2021) reported that media and information literacy significantly enhances individuals' ability to critically evaluate sustainability-related information, particularly in an online environment characterised by misinformation and conflicting narratives. The report argues that improving digital literacy strengthens public resilience against climate misinformation and enables citizens to make informed sustainability decisions. Nevertheless, the relationship between digital literacy, online engagement, and long-term behavioural change remains insufficiently explored within communication research.

Recent studies increasingly recognise that digital media has transformed sustainability communication into a participatory ecosystem where audiences actively contribute to content creation and dissemination. Unlike traditional media, social networking platforms facilitate continuous interaction between communicators and audiences, enabling collaborative learning and public participation. De Vries, Terwel, and Ellemers (2022) demonstrated that public trust in information sources significantly influences the effectiveness of climate communication. Their findings indicate that messages supported by scientific credibility generate stronger behavioural intentions than emotionally persuasive messages lacking trustworthy evidence. Although their research provides valuable insights into climate communication, it concentrates primarily on environmental risk perception rather than the broader dimensions of sustainability communication involving social and economic sustainability.

The effectiveness of interactive communication has been further supported by Matos and Rossi (2022), who found that social media campaigns encouraging audience participation through comments, content sharing, and user-generated contributions achieve significantly higher engagement than static information campaigns. Their findings suggest that digital communication succeeds when audiences become active participants rather than passive recipients. However, the study measures campaign effectiveness primarily through digital engagement indicators, providing limited evidence regarding whether online interaction ultimately influences sustainable behaviour beyond the digital environment. Growing concern over public engagement has encouraged researchers to examine how digital communication influences civic participation. Boulianne, Lalancette, and Ilkiw (2023) observed that digital interaction strengthens public participation when information is perceived as credible, relevant, and personally meaningful. Their study demonstrates that trust remains a central determinant of meaningful engagement across digital platforms. Nevertheless, their analysis primarily focuses on political communication and civic participation, leaving questions regarding sustainability-specific behavioural outcomes largely unanswered.

The transformation of news consumption has also influenced sustainability communication. According to the Reuters Institute Digital News Report (Newman et al., 2023), younger audiences increasingly rely on social media platforms, online videos, and digital creators rather than traditional journalism for environmental information. This shift has significant implications for sustainability communication because digital platforms favour visual storytelling, personalised content, and interactive engagement. However, existing research has yet to establish which forms of digital storytelling most effectively encourage sustained environmental behaviour across different demographic groups.

The transition from awareness to behavioural change has become one of the most significant themes within recent sustainability communication research. White, Habib, and Hardisty (2023) argue that providing environmental information alone rarely changes behaviour. Instead, communication strategies combining emotional storytelling, social norms, and personalised behavioural feedback are

substantially more effective in encouraging sustainable consumption and environmentally responsible lifestyles. Their work demonstrates that behavioural interventions grounded in behavioural science outperform traditional awareness campaigns. Despite these advances, the authors acknowledge that empirical studies comparing different communication strategies across multiple digital platforms remain relatively scarce.

Similarly, the United Nations Environment Programme (2023) highlighted the growing importance of behavioural science in sustainability communication. The report concludes that communication campaigns become significantly more effective when they encourage achievable everyday actions rather than focusing exclusively on large-scale environmental threats. Messages emphasising individual efficacy and practical solutions generate stronger public participation than fear-based communication centred on environmental catastrophes. However, the report also recognises that behavioural communication research has yet to fully explain how digital engagement develops into long-term behavioural commitment.

Digital influencers have emerged as another influential component of sustainability communication. Abidin (2023) argues that authenticity represents the strongest determinant of audience engagement with sustainability-related influencer content. Unlike traditional celebrity endorsements, influencers often establish stronger emotional relationships with followers through continuous interaction and perceived personal credibility. Consequently, influencer communication can effectively promote sustainable lifestyles, ethical consumption, and climate awareness among younger audiences. Nevertheless, the study also warns that commercial partnerships and sponsored sustainability content may undermine authenticity, creating new opportunities for greenwashing and audience scepticism.

Visual storytelling has similarly become a defining characteristic of digital sustainability communication. Research published by the World Economic Forum (2024) suggests that campaigns combining scientific evidence with compelling personal narratives generate substantially higher audience participation than information-centred campaigns alone. Interactive graphics, short-form videos, immersive documentaries, and user-generated visual content simplify complex sustainability issues while strengthening emotional engagement. Although these findings reinforce the value of storytelling, comparative empirical research evaluating the effectiveness of different visual communication strategies remains relatively limited.

Despite these positive developments, recent scholarship consistently identifies several challenges confronting digital sustainability communication. Greenwashing continues to undermine public trust as organisations increasingly exaggerate environmental achievements through strategic communication rather than substantive sustainability practices. Delmas and Burbano's recent discussions (2022–2024) indicate that misleading sustainability claims reduce organisational credibility and contribute to growing public scepticism towards corporate environmental messaging. Likewise, the rapid spread of misinformation has become an increasingly significant obstacle. The United Nations Development Programme (2024) reports that misinformation surrounding climate science and environmental policy substantially delays public acceptance of sustainability initiatives and weakens support for evidence-based environmental action.

The World Economic Forum's Global Risks Report (2025) further identifies misinformation and declining information integrity as among the most significant risks confronting global sustainability governance. Algorithm-driven digital platforms frequently prioritise emotionally engaging content over scientifically accurate information, thereby amplifying misleading narratives and increasing public confusion. Although researchers increasingly acknowledge the influence of misinformation on sustainability communication, relatively few empirical studies integrate algorithmic influence, communication credibility, public engagement, and behavioural change within a unified analytical framework.

Generally, the contemporary literature demonstrates that sustainability communication has become increasingly participatory, interactive, and digitally mediated. Scholars generally agree that digital media offers unprecedented opportunities for public engagement through storytelling, visual communication, influencer participation, and collaborative knowledge creation. However, several

important gaps remain. Existing research often examines climate communication, digital engagement, behavioural science, and sustainability communication independently rather than integrating these perspectives into a comprehensive communication model. Moreover, most studies evaluate campaign effectiveness using digital engagement indicators instead of investigating whether engagement results in sustained behavioural change. Finally, limited research comparatively examines how credibility, transparency, digital storytelling, and audience participation collectively shape sustainable behaviour across multiple digital media platforms. Addressing these gaps forms the central objective of the present study, which proposes an integrated framework linking digital media, public engagement, and behavioural change within the broader context of sustainability communication.

3. Theoretical Framework

This study draws upon four complementary theories to explain how digital media influences sustainability communication, public engagement, and behavioural change.

Agenda-Setting Theory (McCombs & Shaw, 1972) suggests that media shape public priorities by determining which issues receive greater attention. Frequent coverage of climate change, sustainable consumption, and environmental protection through digital media increases public awareness and encourages discussion of sustainability issues.

Framing Theory (Entman, 1993) explains that the way sustainability issues are presented influences how audiences interpret and respond to them. Communication framed around solutions, collective responsibility, and positive action is more likely to encourage public engagement than messages based solely on fear or environmental crises.

Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) proposes that people learn behaviours by observing others. Digital media platforms provide opportunities for observational learning through influencers, environmental campaigns, and peer interactions, encouraging individuals to adopt sustainable practices such as recycling, energy conservation, and responsible consumption.

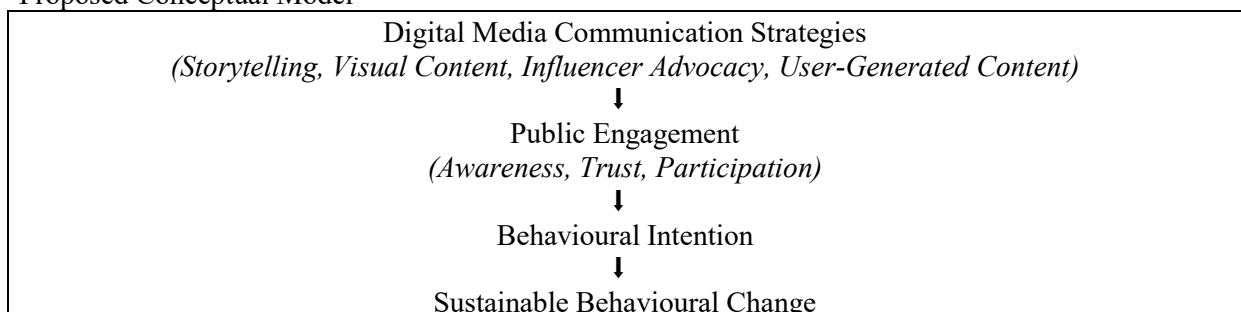
Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991) explains that behavioural intention is influenced by attitudes, social norms, and perceived behavioural control. Digital sustainability campaigns can strengthen these factors by increasing environmental awareness, promoting positive social norms, and demonstrating practical actions that individuals can adopt in their daily lives.

Together, these theories provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how digital media increases awareness, shapes public perceptions, encourages engagement, and ultimately promotes sustainable behavioural change.

3.1 Conceptual Framework

Based on the reviewed literature and theoretical perspectives, this study proposes that digital media platforms communicate sustainability through strategies such as storytelling, visual communication, influencer advocacy, and user-generated content. These strategies enhance public awareness, trust, and participation, which subsequently influence behavioural intention and sustainable behavioural change. The framework also recognises that communication credibility and transparency strengthen the effectiveness of sustainability messages in digital environments.

Proposed Conceptual Model



↓ Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

This framework serves as the foundation for examining how digital media communication strategies influence public engagement and behavioural change in support of sustainable development.

4. Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research approach to examine how digital media facilitates sustainability communication and influences public engagement and behavioural change. A qualitative content analysis was employed to analyse sustainability communication strategies disseminated through digital media platforms. This approach is appropriate because it enables a systematic examination of communication content, message framing, audience engagement strategies, and behavioural appeals across diverse digital platforms.

The study focuses on sustainability campaigns published between 2022 and 2025, reflecting recent developments in digital communication and sustainability practices. Purposive sampling was used to select prominent sustainability campaigns from international organisations, government initiatives, non-governmental organisations, and media platforms.

Table 1. Sustainability Campaigns and Digital Platforms

Campaign/Initiative	Organization	Digital Platform(s)	Communication Format	Key Communication Strategy	Parameters Analysed
ActNow Campaign	United Nations (UN)	Website, Instagram, YouTube, X (Twitter), Facebook	Videos, social media posts, infographics	Storytelling, behavioural nudges, citizen participation	Message framing, audience engagement, behavioural appeal, visual communication
Beat Plastic Pollution	United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)	Website, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube	Campaign videos, posters, digital graphics	Awareness and advocacy	Visual content, call-to-action, participation, framing
Earth Hour	World Wildlife Fund (WWF)	Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, Website	Digital campaigns, live events, videos	Community participation and collective action	Public engagement, storytelling, behavioural intention, audience interaction
Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment)	Government of India	Website, YouTube, Instagram, X	Short videos, awareness posts, digital campaigns	Behavioural change and sustainable lifestyle promotion	Awareness, trust, participation, behavioural appeals

Plastic Free July	Plastic Free Foundation	Website, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn	Challenge campaigns, user-generated content	Community engagement and behavioural commitment	User-generated content, participation, message framing, behavioural outcomes
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As mentioned above, Table1 depicts the selected campaigns represent diverse communication approaches adopted by international organisations and public initiatives. Together, they provide a comprehensive sample for examining how digital media strategies are used to enhance sustainability awareness, encourage public participation, and promote behavioural change across different online platforms.

The unit of analysis comprised digital communication materials, including campaign videos, social media posts, infographics, digital advertisements, news stories, and multimedia content. The analysis focused on identifying recurring themes related to communication strategies, message framing, storytelling techniques, visual communication, influencer participation, audience interaction, and behavioural appeals. These themes were interpreted using the theoretical perspectives of Agenda-Setting Theory, Framing Theory, Social Cognitive Theory, and the Theory of Planned Behaviour.

Table 2. Coding Framework for Qualitative Content Analysis

Analytical Dimension	Indicators
Communication Strategy	Storytelling, visual communication, influencer advocacy, user-generated content
Message Framing	Problem-focused, solution-focused, emotional, informational
Visual Elements	Images, videos, infographics, animations, graphics
Audience Engagement	Likes, comments, shares, participation, online challenges
Behavioural Appeal	Recycling, waste reduction, energy conservation, sustainable consumption
Communication Credibility	Scientific evidence, transparency, organisational trustworthiness
Expected Outcome	Awareness, behavioural intention, sustainable behavioural change

The coding framework as shown in Table 2 guided the thematic analysis by categorising communication content according to recurring patterns and analytical dimensions. This systematic approach ensured consistency in identifying the communication strategies employed across the selected campaigns and their potential influence on public engagement and sustainable behavioural change.

Data were analysed using thematic content analysis, whereby recurring patterns and themes were identified, coded, and interpreted in relation to the study's theoretical framework. The findings were subsequently organised into key themes that explain the relationship between digital media communication strategies, public engagement, behavioural intention, and sustainable behavioural change.

The methodological approach enables a comprehensive understanding of contemporary sustainability communication practices while providing insights into the role of digital media in supporting public participation and sustainable development.

5. Findings and Discussion

The analysis reveals that digital media has significantly transformed sustainability communication from a one-way dissemination of information to an interactive process that encourages participation, dialogue, and behavioural change. Five major themes emerged from the analysis.

5.1 Storytelling Enhances Public Engagement

The findings indicate that storytelling has become one of the most effective communication strategies for promoting sustainability. Rather than presenting scientific facts alone, successful campaigns integrate human experiences, community narratives, and real-life examples to communicate environmental challenges. Story-driven communication enables audiences to emotionally connect with sustainability issues, making complex topics such as climate change, biodiversity conservation, and responsible consumption more relatable. Campaigns such as Earth Hour and Mission LiFE effectively use personal stories and community participation to motivate individual action.

5.2 Visual Communication Improves Message Effectiveness

Visual content, including infographics, short videos, animations, and interactive graphics, was found to increase audience attention and comprehension. Digital platforms favour visually engaging content, enabling sustainability messages to reach diverse audiences quickly. Visual communication simplifies complex scientific information and enhances message recall, particularly among younger users. The growing use of short-form videos and data visualisation reflects changing audience preferences in digital environments.

5.3 Public Participation Strengthens Sustainability Communication

Unlike traditional media, digital platforms encourage audiences to actively participate in sustainability discussions through comments, content sharing, online challenges, and user-generated content. Such participation strengthens public ownership of sustainability initiatives and creates opportunities for collaborative learning. The findings suggest that communication becomes more effective when audiences perceive themselves as contributors rather than passive recipients of information.

5.4 Credibility and Trust Influence Behavioural Intention

The analysis highlights that the credibility of information sources significantly affects audience responses to sustainability communication. Messages supported by scientific evidence, recognised institutions, and transparent communication practices generate greater public trust than promotional or commercially motivated content. Conversely, greenwashing and misinformation reduce communication effectiveness by creating scepticism toward sustainability claims. Trust therefore emerges as a critical factor connecting communication exposure with behavioural intention.

5.5 Digital Communication Encourages Sustainable Behaviour

The findings suggest that digital media contributes to sustainable behavioural change by promoting practical, achievable actions rather than abstract environmental concerns. Campaigns encouraging recycling, waste reduction, energy conservation, and responsible consumption demonstrate greater public participation when communication provides clear behavioural guidance. Interactive features such as online pledges, sustainability challenges, mobile applications, and personalised feedback further strengthen behavioural commitment by reinforcing individual responsibility and collective action.

These findings indicate that the effectiveness of sustainability communication depends not only on message dissemination but also on audience engagement, communication credibility, and opportunities

for meaningful participation. Digital media therefore functions as both a communication platform and a catalyst for behavioural transformation, supporting broader sustainability objectives.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the digital revolution has fundamentally transformed sustainability communication from a one-way process of information dissemination into an interactive and participatory ecosystem that encourages public engagement and collective action. This study demonstrates that digital media platforms have become powerful tools for communicating sustainability by combining storytelling, visual communication, influencer advocacy, and user-generated content to increase awareness and promote environmentally responsible behaviour. Unlike traditional communication approaches, digital media enables continuous interaction between institutions and citizens, fostering dialogue, knowledge sharing, and community participation.

The review of recent literature and analysis indicate that effective sustainability communication extends beyond creating awareness. Communication strategies that are credible, transparent, audience-centred, and action-oriented are more successful in influencing behavioural intention and encouraging sustainable practices such as responsible consumption, waste reduction, recycling, and climate-conscious lifestyles. At the same time, challenges including misinformation, greenwashing, information overload, and declining public trust continue to limit the effectiveness of digital sustainability communication, highlighting the need for ethical and evidence-based communication practices.

The study contributes to sustainability communication research by integrating media communication theories with behavioural perspectives to explain how digital media influences public engagement and behavioural change. The proposed conceptual framework demonstrates that digital communication strategies enhance awareness, trust, and participation, which subsequently strengthen behavioural intention and contribute to sustainable behavioural change. This integrated perspective offers a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between digital media and sustainability communication in the contemporary information environment.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that governments, media organisations, corporate communicators, non-governmental organisations, and educators should prioritise participatory communication, authentic storytelling, scientific credibility, and audience interaction when designing sustainability campaigns. Communication efforts should move beyond merely informing audiences to empowering them with practical, achievable actions that encourage long-term behavioural change and support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Despite its contributions, this study is limited by its reliance on qualitative content analysis of selected digital sustainability campaigns. Future research may adopt mixed-method or quantitative approaches to examine the effectiveness of specific digital communication strategies across different demographic groups and cultural contexts. Comparative studies involving emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, immersive media, and virtual reality could further enhance understanding of the evolving landscape of sustainability communication.

Thus, sustainability communication in the digital age is no longer confined to raising environmental awareness; it has become a strategic process of engagement, building trust, and inspiring behavioural transformation. By effectively leveraging digital media, stakeholders can strengthen public participation and accelerate collective efforts towards a more sustainable and resilient future.

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