The role of media in shaping the cognitive awareness of sustainable development among university students

Muntaha Safi Yassir

Assistant Lecturer, College of Arts, University of Baghdad, Iraq

Abstract: Sustainable development is one of the most important issues of concern to the international community in the modern era. It represents a long-term approach to achieving a balance between economic development, environmental protection, and achieving social justice. Achieving sustainable development requires coordination between various stakeholders. A mixed approach was used.

The research results showed that media, whether traditional or digital, play an important role in raising students' awareness about sustainable development issues. Media enhances students' understanding of environmental, social, and economic concepts related to sustainability.

The research showed that digital media (such as social media platforms, blogs, and interactive online content) have a greater impact in attracting the attention of university students compared to traditional media. Students tend to follow interactive digital content that presents sustainable development issues in an innovative and attractive way.

Keywords: Media. Sustainable development. Cognitive awareness.

Introduction: Sustainable development is one of the most important issues that concern the international community in the modern era. It represents a long-term approach to achieving a balance between economic development, environmental protection, and social justice. Achieving sustainable development requires coordination among various stakeholders, including governments, international organizations, the private sector, and civil society. In this context, media is considered one of the effective tools for spreading

knowledge about sustainable development and shaping cognitive awareness among individuals, especially the youth, who represent a large part of the future.

Universities are the ideal environment for shaping cognitive awareness among students, as they serve as educational and cultural centers that contribute to guiding individuals toward important global issues such as sustainable development. Therefore, this research aims to study the role of media in shaping cognitive awareness of sustainable development among university students, by analyzing the roles played by media in this context, the media methods used, and the impact of this on students' behavior and attitudes toward sustainable development issues.

Research Problem

Sustainable development takes into account the social and environmental dimensions alongside the economic aspects, ensuring the optimal use of available resources to meet the needs of individuals while preserving the rights of future generations. The world faces the critical challenge of environmental degradation, which must be addressed without compromising the needs of economic development, as well as social equality and justice. Given the significant impact of the media in spreading awareness for achieving sustainable development, the research problem arises to explore the extent of the media's role in raising awareness.

The main research question: Is there a role for the media in shaping the cognitive awareness of sustainable development among university students?

Research questions:

1. What role does the media play in increasing university students' awareness of sustainable development issues?

2. Which type of media (traditional or modern) is more influential in shaping cognitive awareness among students?

3. How can the media motivate students to engage in environmental and social activities?

4. What is the impact of media on changing students' behaviors towards environmental and social issues?

5. What are the challenges faced by the media in raising awareness about sustainable development?

Research Objectives:

1. Analyzing the role of media in raising awareness among university students about sustainable development issues.

2. Studying the impact of traditional media (such as print media and television) and modern media (such as the internet and social media) in shaping this awareness.

3. Identifying effective media strategies for conveying sustainable development concepts to students.

4. Examining the impact of media on students' behaviors and community engagement in sustainability issues.

5. Comparing the cognitive awareness of university students who are exposed to media content related to sustainable development with those who are not exposed to it.

Importance of the Research:

This research is of significant importance in light of the growing need to raise awareness about sustainable development issues globally. Universities represent the central hub for educating and guiding future generations, and therefore, understanding how the media influences shaping students' awareness is crucial in supporting sustainable development efforts.

Scientific Importance: Expanding the scope of previous studies on media and sustainable development.

Practical Importance: Providing recommendations that can benefit institutions and organizations aiming to use public relations to achieve sustainable development.

Study Hypotheses:

There is a significant effect of media on shaping the cognitive awareness of sustainable development among university students.

METHODOLOGY

The mixed-methods approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to collect and analyze data using both quantitative and qualitative methods. This methodology contributes to providing a comprehensive and accurate picture of the role of media in shaping students' cognitive awareness of sustainable development.

Tools and Methods Used in the Research:

1. Surveys: Targeted at university students to measure their level of cognitive awareness regarding sustainable development issues.

2. Semi-structured Interviews: Conducted with a sample of students to discuss the impact of media on their behaviors and awareness of sustainability concepts.

3. Content Analysis: Of media programs related to sustainable development, such as newspaper articles, TV programs, and online publications.

4. Opinion Polls: Collected from university

professors regarding the role of media in guiding students toward sustainable development issues.

Research Sample:

• Quantitative Sample: A random sample will be selected from university students across various disciplines at a specific university (or multiple universities), consisting of 200-300 students. The survey will include questions related to their attitudes and opinions about media and sustainable development.

• Qualitative Sample: A subset of 15-20 students from the primary sample will be chosen for semi-structured interviews. These interviews will be in-depth and aim to gather personal insights and explanations about the impact of media on their behaviors and awareness of sustainable development.

Methodological Procedures:

1. Survey Design: A survey will be designed that includes closed-ended questions to measure cognitive awareness, along with open-ended questions to understand students' attitudes.

2. Data Collection:

o Survey Distribution: The surveys will be distributed online or through in-person interactions with students on campus.

o Interviews: Personal interviews will be conducted.

Data Analysis:

• Quantitative Data: Statistical analysis will be conducted using tools like SPSS or Excel to analyze numerical data and identify patterns and relationships.

• Qualitative Data: Thematic analysis will be applied to the interviews, identifying key themes and trends from the responses to understand students' perspectives on the role of media in shaping awareness of sustainable development.

Media Content Analysis: Studying media programs related to sustainable development and analyzing their content to determine how these issues are presented across different media platforms.

Theoretical Framework

Media and Sustainable Development

Introduction:

The media is one of the key tools that contribute to shaping the cognitive awareness of university students regarding sustainable development issues. Through media, students' understanding of environmental and social issues can be enhanced, and they can be motivated to actively participate in efforts to achieve sustainable development goals. With the rise of digital transformations, it has become essential to use modern media to broaden its impact and deliver messages more effectively.

It is crucial for universities to continue collaborating with the media to enhance this awareness, organizing educational and awareness programs that focus on sustainability in line with contemporary global challenges.

1. Media and Sustainable Development

• Media is considered one of the vital tools in spreading awareness about sustainable development issues. It can provide scientific information and promote environmental and social initiatives that contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

• Media helps bring about behavioral changes in individuals by highlighting environmental and social issues such as climate change, social justice, and natural resource management.

Types of Media and Their Impact on Cognitive Awareness

• Traditional Media: Includes newspapers, magazines, radio, and television. Although the influence of traditional media has declined in the digital age, it still plays a significant role in transmitting knowledge to large segments of the audience.

• Digital Media: Includes the internet and social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. Digital media is characterized by its rapid spread, easy accessibility, and ability to attract younger audiences.

Cognitive Awareness of Sustainable Development

• Refers to the understanding individuals have about the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and how these goals impact their daily lives. Enhancing cognitive awareness about sustainable development requires providing accurate information, encouraging critical thinking, and promoting active participation in environmental and social issues.

The Role of Media in Shaping Cognitive Awareness of Sustainable Development Among University Students

1. Education and Awareness

Media plays a crucial role in providing educational programs focused on sustainable development topics through documentaries, journalistic articles, and digital seminars. For example, media can offer awareness programs on environmental sustainability, green economy, and social justice.

2. Encouraging Community Engagement

Media enhances the active participation of students in activities that promote sustainability issues, such as

environmental campaigns, research competitions, and student initiatives. Many universities worldwide rely on campus media to raise awareness and promote community involvement.

3. Enhancing Critical Thinking

Media provides a platform for critically addressing sustainable development issues, encouraging students to think of innovative solutions to environmental and social problems. It also allows them to discuss government policies and international decisions related to sustainable development.

4. Transfer of Scientific and Technical Information

Media contributes to providing scientific information related to the environment, renewable energy technologies, and sustainable resource management. This information can help students gain a deeper understanding of concepts such as climate change, sustainable energy, and balanced economic development.

5. Digital Media and Its Role

- Social media: Plays a significant role in quickly raising awareness among university students through digital campaigns, discussion groups, and continuous interaction.

- Online Educational Platforms: Provide students with the opportunity to access courses and lectures focusing on sustainable development topics.

Media Methods in Raising Awareness of Sustainable Development

1. Interactive Media Content

This includes the use of blogs, podcasts, and interactive video clips that allow students to engage with topics related to sustainable development directly.

2. Press Reports and Television Program

Traditional media provides research reports and field reports focused on environmental and social issues, which help shape public opinion on these topics.

3. Digital Media Initiatives

This includes online media campaigns, such as awareness campaigns on social media platforms, aimed at encouraging students to participate in environmental and social activities.

The Impact of Media on University Students' Behavior

1. Increasing Environmental Awareness

Studies show that students who are regularly exposed to media content focused on the environment and sustainability have a better understanding of environmental issues such as climate change and natural resource consumption.

2. Participation in Environmental Activities

Research indicates that students who follow media programs focused on sustainable development are more likely to engage in activities that promote environmental conservation, such as sustainable farming, recycling, and using renewable energy.

3. Changing Personal Behaviors

There is a clear impact of media on students' behaviors in their daily lives, such as reducing plastic use and adopting more sustainable lifestyles.

Challenges Faced by Media in Raising Awareness About Sustainable Development

Information Challenges

There may be a lack of accurate and comprehensive information about sustainable development issues, which can lead to the presentation of unclear or distorted messages.

2. Media Challenges

There is a lack of specialized media programs that focus intensively on sustainable development, which reduces the effectiveness of media in influencing students' behaviors.

3. Cultural Challenges

Some communities may face difficulties in accepting sustainable development concepts due to cultural or economic differences, making it difficult to implement sustainability practices.

Secondly: The Concept of Sustainable Development, Its Goals, Dimensions, and Principles

Sustainable development is a relatively modern concept that emerged due to growing concerns about the depletion of natural resources and the worsening of social and economic disparities. This concept aims to strike a balance between the needs of the present and the future, making it a comprehensive framework for bringing about radical changes in development policies.

Sustainable Development Concept

The concept was officially introduced in the 1987 report "Our Common Future" by the United Nations, which emphasized the need to balance the three aspects: environmental, economic, and social.

Principles of Sustainable Development

1. Equity: Ensuring that every individual receives a fair share of the community's wealth.

2. Empowerment: Providing every individual with the opportunity to contribute and participate effectively in decision-making or influencing decisions, fostering a sense of belonging that allows them to actively engage in the development process.

3.	Solidarity: Promoting the idea of solidarity among different sectors of society.

4.	Good Governance: Ensuring that individuals in society adhere to specific principles, including dialogue, accountability, transparency, and oversight, to avoid corruption and other harmful influences.

3-Dimensions of Sustainable Development

-	Economic Dimension: Promoting economic growth and creating job opportunities.

-	Social Dimension: Achieving social justice and empowering communities.

-	The environmental dimension: preserving the environment and reducing emissions.

RESULTS

After studying the role of media in shaping the cognitive awareness of sustainable development among university students, the following results can be concluded:

1.	The research results showed that both traditional and digital media play an important role in raising awareness among students about sustainable development issues. The media enhances students' understanding of environmental, social, and economic concepts related to sustainability.

2.	The research revealed that digital media (such as social media platforms, blogs, and interactive online content) have a greater impact in attracting the attention of university students compared to traditional media. Students tend to follow interactive digital content that presents sustainable development issues in an innovative and engaging way.

3.	The results showed that students who are exposed to media content focusing on environmental and sustainable development issues are more inclined to participate in environmental activities and community initiatives that support sustainability. For example, engaging in activities such as awareness campaigns, organizing environmental events, and participating in renewable energy projects.

4.	The research results also showed that university media (such as university newspapers, magazines, and campus radio) plays a significant role in shaping students' awareness of environmental and social issues. It is considered one of the main sources of information within the university environment. University media is an important platform for conveying and clarifying the concepts of sustainable development.

5.	Despite the role played by traditional media, such as television and newspapers, in raising public awareness in general, its impact on university students in the field of sustainable development was lower compared to digital media. University students prefer interactive content that provides them with the opportunity to engage and discuss.

6.	Some challenges facing media in this field were identified, such as a lack of accurate information, conflicting messages at times, and the absence of specialized programs on sustainable development issues. It was also found that cultural barriers may affect the acceptance of some sustainability-related media messages in certain communities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the research, the following recommendations are made:

1.	Strengthening cooperation between universities and media: It is important for universities to enhance cooperation with various media (traditional and digital) to develop comprehensive awareness programs on sustainable development issues. Joint media campaigns between educational institutions and media outlets can be organized to emphasize the importance of sustainability in daily life.

2.	Increase the use of digital media: Universities should focus on using digital media platforms (such as websites, blogs, social media) to disseminate educational and awareness content on sustainable development. Platforms like YouTube and Instagram should also be leveraged to reach as many students as possible through multimedia techniques.

3.	Develop specialized media programs on sustainable development: It is recommended to develop dedicated media programs within universities that focus on educating students about sustainable development issues such as climate change, renewable energy use, and recycling. Online courses can also be created in partnership with media institutions.

4.	Provide interactive and engaging content: Media should offer interactive and engaging content that allows students to express their opinions and participate in discussions related to sustainable development. Educational games, competitions, and innovative apps can be used to encourage students to take practical steps toward sustainability.

5.	Strengthen student education on environmental issues within curricula: It is important to periodically include sustainable development concepts in university curricula and offer specialized courses on environmental, economic, and social sustainability. Media should be an integral part of the formal educational process, allowing students to engage with sustainability issues through case studies, research, and projects.

6. Combating media misinformation: Media should work to combat misinformation that may hinder the dissemination of accurate information about sustainable development. By publishing academic reports and reliable data on environmental and social issues, the media can help correct misconceptions and enhance students' understanding of the correct concepts.

7. Supporting student initiatives: It is recommended to support student initiatives that aim to raise awareness about sustainability issues, by providing media platforms in universities or online to enable students to exchange ideas and projects that promote sustainable development.

8. Providing training programs for journalists and media professionals: It is important to train journalists and media professionals on how to accurately and objectively cover sustainable development issues. Workshops and training courses can be organized to introduce media personnel to the importance of sustainable development and how to address these issues in their reports and media content.

CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates that media plays a pivotal role in shaping the cognitive awareness of sustainable development among university students. Despite the challenges faced by the media in this area, there are significant opportunities to use media more effectively to transfer knowledge and enhance community participation. Universities and media outlets must collaborate to develop comprehensive awareness programs that contribute to building a generation of young people who are informed about sustainability issues, relying on media as a vital tool for promoting positive change.

Expected Challenges:

• Challenges in Data Collection: There may be difficulty in obtaining a sample that accurately represents all segments of university students.

• Challenges in Analyzing Qualitative Data: It might be difficult to categorize and analyze open-ended responses accurately.

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