Environmental Communication: An Overview

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Editorial

Environmental communication is "the dissemination of information and the implementation of communication practices that are related to the environment. In the beginning, environmental communication was a narrow area of communication; however, nowadays, it is a broad field that includes research and practices regarding how different actors (e.g., institutions, states, and people) interact with regard to topics related to the environment and how cultural products influence society toward environmental issues".

Human interactions with the environment are also included in environmental communication. This might involve everything from interpersonal contact to virtual communities to participatory decision-making and environmental media coverage. Environmental communication, according to Alexander flor, is the use of communication approaches, principles, tactics, and techniques to environmental management and conservation [1].

History

Environmental communication originated in the United States in the 1980s, deviating from standard rhetorical theory. Because of the way environmental activists employed pictures and phrasing to influence their audiences, researchers began studying environmental communication as a stand-alone theory. Since then, environmental communication theory has achieved a number of milestones, including the establishment of an environmental communication magazine in 2007 [1].

Climate change communication

Climate communication, often known as climate change communication, is a branch of environmental and science communication concerned with the causes, nature, and consequences of human-caused climate change. The field's research began in the 1990s and has since expanded and varied to encompass media studies, conceptual framing, and public interaction and response. Since the late 2000s, a growing number of researches focusing on climate communication with marginalised communities have been done in developing nations.

The majority of study focuses on increasing public awareness, understanding underlying cultural values and emotions, and encouraging public participation and action. The audience's familiarity, hurdles to public understanding, change, audience segmentation, evolving discourse, public health, narrative, media coverage, and popular culture are all major challenges [2].

Information Technology and Environmental Communication

The technical advancements made possible by the Internet are also

contributing to environmental issues. Online technologies also contribute to air pollution, acid rain, global warming, and the depletion of natural resources. According to Netcraft, the world's 7,290,968 web-facing computers, 214,036,874 unique domain names, and 1,838,596,056 websites consume a substantial amount of energy. As a result, concepts such as "Green Websites" have emerged to aid in the resolution of this problem. "Green Websites" is "related to climate-friendly policies and attempts to improve the Earth's natural habitat." Renewable energy, the usage of black colour, and a focus on environmental news are just a few of the simplest and cheapest ways to help with climate change." The aforementioned word is part of a larger category known as "Green Computing," which aims to reduce carbon emissions, reduce energy usage, and improve computing performance [3].

Environmental Communication Theory

Researchers believe that one's perspective on the environment shapes one's beliefs in a variety of ways, which helps them understand how environmental communication affects individuals. The idea that nature "speaks" is central to the study of environmental communication. Theories abound in this discipline in an attempt to comprehend the foundations of environmental communication.

Material-symbolic discourse

Environmental communication is viewed as both symbolic and material by researchers. They suggest that the tangible world aids in the shaping of communication, just as communication aids in the shaping of the world. The word environment is used to construct cultural understandings of the material world. It is a primary symbol in western civilization. This knowledge allows academics to investigate how cultures respond to their surroundings [4].

Mediating-human nature relations

Humans react to their surroundings and generate ideas depending on what they see. Human relationships are influenced by nature. This theory aims to establish a link between human and natural relationships. Because environmental communication aims to understand how nature influences human behaviour and identity, this notion lies at the heart of it. Researchers believe that this theory and phenomenology have something in common.

Applied activist theory

When it comes to environmental communication, it's difficult to resist the phrase "call to action" because it's so closely related to topics like climate change, endangered wildlife, and pollution. It is difficult for academics to publish objective studies in this topic. Others, on the other hand, say that it is their ethical obligation to alert the public about environmental change while also giving remedies.

As the next section explains, there are many different types of environmental communication research and practises, one of which is social marketing and advocacy campaigns. Though this is a vast topic, the language used in campaign materials is an important part of successful environmental efforts. Individuals who are worried and engaged in environmental actions respond well to messages with strong language, according to researchers; whereas, individuals who are less concerned and interested in environmental attitudes respond better to less assertive messages. Although environmental communications generally try to compel customers who already believe the problem being promoted is important to take action, it is critical for message producers to study their target population and modify messages accordingly [5].

Conflict of Interest

None.

References

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