

Environmental Education via Instagram Shorts and the entrenchment of Environmental Security: A Theoretical Perspective on Functions and Recent Advancements



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Abstract:

This study intends to establish a correlation between the process of environmental education as increasing prevalence within short videos format on Instagram. Instagram, as an interactive platform, is characterized by the circulation of visual content and short videos through various and advanced techniques and applications that offer multiple communicative advantages. Concurrently, environmental education, its purposes, values, and sustainability objectives all included, contribute fundamentally to the attainment of both environmental and human security. It is assumed that environmental education can takes advantage and fully benefit from these new technological affordances by promoting its methods, producing visual environmental content that is rapidly impactful, and transforming educational objectives into actual practice through innovative and inspiring approaches. By conveying focused visual messages on particular environmental issues, Instagram serves as an optimal platform for implementing the functions of environmental education with high effectiveness.

Keywords: *Environmental Education; Environmental Security; Instagram; Short Videos.*

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Introduction:

digital media are no longer just tools for conveying information; they have become platforms with a high capacity for dissemination and rapid access to target groups, which enhances their position in supporting various issues and topics. Thanks to their interactive and open characteristics, these media allow individuals to participate and interact with various content, and help in forming positive behaviors toward different issues thru repetition, motivation, and practical deliberative models. The digital environment also provides a flexible space that enables creators to produce impactful environmental content that may surpass the strength of campaigns by some traditional institutions, thereby expanding the horizons of environmental communication to become a collective process involving individuals alongside organizations. This is reflected in the role of short videos on Instagram directly in environmental education, where Instagram acts as a bridge to transfer knowledge and transform it into values and practical practices, establishing a genuine developmental partnership based on collective environmental awareness that serves sustainable development. This is precisely the starting point of our study, which combines environmental education with its goals and values, and Instagram with its interactive digital functions and innovations that can clearly rejuvenate the process of environmental education. This study will encompass, starting from environmental security and media education, reaching the functions of short videos on Instagram and their innovations. We will address media education and the dimensions and goals of environmental security by presenting the concept of environmental security, environmental security, and human security. Then we will address environmental education, from the target of awareness to the realization of security thru the concept and characteristics of environmental education, followed by the mechanisms and determinants of environmental education, its objectives, and functions, and then environmental education and the goals of achieving sustainability and environmental security. Then moving on to environmental media, and the efforts of environmental education, thru the components of the environmental media process, and environmental education in the context of multimedia. Then, we will address Instagram, an interactive communication network serving environmental education, thru visual content and the discussion of environmental issues, the functional dimensions of environmental education within short videos on Instagram, the latest developments in environmental education, and achieving environmental security thru the use of short videos on Instagram.

1. Environmental security: its concept and its relationship with human security

We will first examine the concept of environmental security and then demonstrate the relationship of this concept to human security.

a. Concept of Environmental Security:

The concept of environmental security includes the environment and security, and the various links between them, encompassing violence or pollution, or wars as causes of environmental destruction. Environmental security, and what this term implies, such as a safer and less polluted environment, is considered one of the most important foundations for the survival and development of society. There is no life for humans and their existence, nor for future generations, as the future of societies is closely linked to it. (Al-Dasouqi, 2009, p. 51) where environmental security is defined as maintaining the environmental conditions that support the development of human activity, and environmental security is associated with the fear of losing the basic conditions To maintain the quality of life. (Deer, 2014, p. 66) This proposition makes environmental security a dimension that transcends the natural aspect to include the social and security dimensions, where a secure environment becomes a condition for growth, development, and stability.

Environmental security can be categorized into three general concerns: the first is the harmful effects of human activities on the environment; the second is the direct and indirect impacts of various forms of environmental changes in terms of scarcity and degradation; and the third is the insecurity of individuals and communities due to water scarcity, air pollution, and global warming. Therefore, environmental security is not a traditional security issue. The concept of environmental security is used to denote the preservation of healthy links between environmental and security conditions, which requires warning against the causes of natural environmental degradation and preventing threats from organized violence groups, and moving forward to build a more interconnected and stable human society. (Mabtouche, 2017, p. 160) These dimensions confirm that environmental security is not a traditional security issue but an existential matter linked to the fate of individuals and communities.

Environmental security is also defined as the interconnection between the environment and sustainable development to meet human needs. The degradation of natural resources directly threatens the value of life, and the consequence of this degradation is a lack of security, making it difficult to achieve the equation of sustainable development. (Al-Dasouqi, p. 52) This definition highlights that environmental security is inseparable from the concept of sustainable development, as the relationship between them is based on meeting human needs without harming the natural resources that ensure the continuity of life. Any deterioration of these resources represents a direct threat to the value of life and leads to a lack of a sense of security.

b. Environmental Security and Human Security:

The Human Development Report issued by the United Nations Development Program enumerated seven levels that constitute the dimensions of human security, which are: economic security, food security, health security, cultural security, community security, political security, and finally, environmental security. The latter, which is considered one of the most prominent modern international concerns. (Hashi, 2021, p. 421) "Norman Myers" is considered one of the first academics to advocate for theorizing environmental issues within the scope of security, arguing that food shortages, water scarcity, climate change, and deforestation are all problems that lead to violent conflicts. (Ben Dheeb, 2024, p. 664) Environmental security represents one of the essential dimensions of human security, alongside the economic, political, and social dimensions. This classification reflects the global shift in perceiving environmental risks as not merely natural or technical issues, but as matters that directly affect human stability. Water scarcity, declining food security, climate change, and deforestation are not just environmental indicators; they are factors that threaten to exacerbate violent conflicts and destabilize communities.

It is well known that environmental security threats are of an international nature, as their effects extend across borders. Moreover, their dimensions are multifaceted, impacting economic, political, social, and cultural fields. Therefore, ecological imbalance and the degradation of natural resources are among the main causes of the deterioration of human rights and human security. Consequently, the role of environmental security in achieving human security primarily requires reducing the severity of environmental threats, specifically by attempting to Reducing the magnitude of its negative impacts on human security. (Ben Khoulouch, 2021, pp. 553-554) Environmental security threats are of a transboundary nature, as their impacts cannot be confined to a narrow geographical scope; they extend to affect various domains. Additionally, ecological imbalance and the depletion of natural resources are two fundamental factors in the deterioration of human rights and the undermining of the pillars of human security. Therefore, enhancing environmental security becomes an urgent necessity to mitigate the severity of environmental threats and to reduce their negative impacts that directly affect individuals' lives and the stability of communities.

The distinctive addition brought by human security lies in ensuring what individuals themselves see as major concerns, meaning that researchers and decision-makers must listen to the voices of the vulnerable. The first priority of the weak should be placed at the top of their list of concerns. Accordingly, global strategies aimed at environmental protection will not be effective if they do not take into account the specificities of the group threatened by the risk of environmental change. This does not mean that there are no global threat values such as the right to clean water and food, but the needs, rights, and values of individuals and groups threatened by the risk of environmental change cannot be

ignored if we want responses to environmental changes to be effective. Khalaf, 2016, p. 67) meaning shifting the focus of attention from the elite visions of decision-makers to the actual concerns of individuals, especially the vulnerable and marginalized groups. Environmental security, in this context, cannot be achieved if it is limited to general international standards without considering the specificities of local communities threatened by the risk of environmental changes. Universal values such as the right to clean water or safe food remain essential, but they are not sufficient unless they are integrated with the daily and living needs of the populations directly affected by environmental changes. Therefore, the effectiveness of global environmental protection strategies is conditional on how well they consider the local priorities and the cultural and social specificities of the targeted communities.

As for the Canadian and Japanese perspectives on the concept of human security, which are considered among the most important theories of human security, we find that both theories have referred to the environment as a domain within human security. According to the Canadian perspective, human security issues include the personal security of individuals from violence, harm, access to basic life needs, protection of individuals from crime, terrorism, diseases, political corruption, mass migration, protection of human rights, liberation from gender-based violence, prevention of the misuse or overuse of natural resources, environmental sustainability, and efforts to reduce pollution. (Hawas, 2020, p. 47) As for the Japanese perspective, it believes that human security should receive official approval at the international level, in addition to enhancing efforts to address the dangers that threaten human life, livelihood, and dignity, such as poverty, environmental pollution, organized crime, diseases, refugees, and landmines, thru taking tangible actions and implementing projects related to human security. (Hawas, p. 49) This means that the environment is not a secondary element, but an essential component in protecting individuals' lives and dignity. The Canadian vision emphasizes environmental sustainability and preventing the misuse of natural resources as a condition for achieving personal and social security, while the Japanese vision focuses on the importance of incorporating human security into the international agenda thru tangible projects to address poverty, environmental pollution, diseases, and displacement. This convergence between the two theories reflects a shared understanding that environmental security is a necessary condition for enhancing the other dimensions of human security, from food and health to social and political peace.

So, the inclusion of the environment and its problems such as pollution, poverty, and natural disasters... In the concept of human security, this indicates that individual environmental security has become an area of human security at both the regional and international levels. (Ben Dheeb, p. 665) The integration of the environment, along with its associated pollution, poverty, and natural disasters,

into the concept of human security confirms that environmental security is no longer an isolated issue, but has become an essential area of human security at both the regional and international levels. This growing awareness reflects the international community's recognition that environmental challenges directly translate into threats to health, economic stability, and even social peace. Thus, protecting the environment is no longer just a developmental choice, but a fundamental condition for ensuring a safe and dignified life for individuals.

2. Environmental education, from raising awareness to achieving security :

Merely establishing environmental policies and legislation is not enough to ensure this security; it also requires enhancing environmental awareness and knowledge among individuals and communities. This highlights the role of environmental education as a fundamental mechanism for instilling values of environmental preservation and promoting sustainable behaviors.

a. Concept and Characteristics of Environmental Education:

Environmental education is characterized by numerous features and traits that make it unique in its practices and goals. It aims to enable individuals to understand environmental challenges, adopt responsible practices, and actively participate in protecting natural resources, contributing to sustainable development and a secure environmental future.

- **The Concept of Environmental Education:** The concept of environmental education is related to the principle of understanding the importance of the environment, its problems, and various issues, and finding solutions for them. This education consists of a set of components that include recognizing the environment, acquiring skills to solve its problems, in addition to participating in environmental activities to improve it. It enables people to pay attention to their surroundings by establishing environmental organizations and urban planning for cities to ensure the care of the environment and its issues in both the present and the future. This includes educating people about its importance in various places such as centers, gardens, museums, and schools... (Razaïkia, 2022, p. 163) It is a comprehensive system that includes understanding the environment, acquiring skills to solve environmental problems, and actively participating in activities aimed at improving the surroundings. Environmental education also extends to include organizational initiatives such as the establishment of environmental associations, sustainable urban planning for cities, as well as the role of cultural and educational institutions like schools, museums, and parks in raising environmental awareness.

The Tbilisi Conference defined environmental education as a process through which individuals and the community are made aware of their environment and the interaction of its biological, physical, social, and cultural elements, as well as

providing them with knowledge, values, competencies, experience, and management skills that facilitate their efforts to address environmental issues in the present and future. (Sabareeni, Dr. S, p. 176) It seeks to build cognitive and value-based awareness, and to equip individuals with the necessary competencies, skills, and experiences that enable them to manage environmental issues and interact with them effectively. In this sense, environmental education becomes a continuous process And innovative, aiming to empower individuals to face the challenges of the present and prepare for future problems, thereby enhancing their ability to formulate realistic and sustainable solutions.

- Characteristics of Environmental Education:

Environmental education is characterized by a set of features that we summarize as follows:

- Environmental education usually aims to solve specific environmental problems by helping individuals recognize and understand the issues in their surrounding environment. (Sabareeni, p. 176).
- Environmental education aims to solve specific problems related to the human environment by helping individuals recognize their issues, clarifying complex environmental problems, and emphasizing the necessity of combining the knowledge required to interpret them.
- Environmental education adopts a comprehensive approach that integrates multiple scientific disciplines in addressing environmental issues. (Mazen, 2007, p. 15).
- She is keen to open up to the local community, believing that individuals only act to protect it within the framework of their daily lives.
- She cares about the current and future conditions of the environment and focuses on the cooperation of community members to solve and prevent them.
- Forming a comprehensive awareness linked to the skills and experiences that make individuals' behaviors positive toward the environment.
- Takes into account the environment in its natural, social, economic, and legislative aspects.
- It aims to solve problems thru the development of strategies and activities, and by providing methods and means for all individuals, groups, and communities participating in environmental protection, with the involvement of various media outlets. (Matawa, 2001, p. 31).

The characteristics of environmental education show that it is a multidimensional approach, as it starts from solving specific environmental problems by helping individuals recognize the issues of their surroundings and

clarifying the complexities of the human environment in its natural, social, economic, and legislative interactions. Environmental education also relies on an integrative approach that combines different scientific disciplines and emphasizes openness to the local community, considering that environmental protection can only be achieved thru a direct connection to individuals' daily lives. In addition, it does not only focus on addressing current environmental conditions but also looks to the future by building preventive strategies and activities that emphasize collective cooperation and the formation of a comprehensive environmental awareness based on knowledge, skills, and practical experiences.

b- Environmental education and the goals of achieving sustainability and environmental security:

Over time, humans have excessively exploited the environment and harmed it, believing that they could replace the complex natural relationships between environmental factors with simple artificial ones. They opposed the laws governing nature, and with their sciences and technologies, they created miracles and achieved prosperity and well-being. However, in return, they now face the repercussions of this prosperity, manifested in pollution, global warming, climate change... He harmed the environment and spoiled the quality of life. (Qassem, 2007, pp. 35-36) From here, one cannot ignore the relationship that binds the individual to their environment and its impact on development in general and sustainable development in particular. This relationship has undergone significant developments over time.

The individual's interaction with behaviors, most of which were negative, prompted scientists to sound the alarm and direct their attention toward establishing mechanisms to change these behaviors and develop that relationship positively to foster environmental awareness that supports sustainable development. (Rahali, p. 357).

Here, the central issue in the relationship between humans and the environment emerges, as the excessive exploitation of natural resources and the replacement of natural laws with artificial factors have led to serious consequences manifested in pollution, global warming, and climate change. These repercussions do not only affect the quality of life, but also pose a direct threat to environmental security as one of the pillars of human security. The negative practices accumulated by individuals over time have highlighted the need for reformative mechanisms capable of reshaping environmental behavior according to sustainability values. Environmental security becomes contingent upon instilling a collective environmental awareness that recognizes the dangers of environmental degradation on sustainable development, and promotes a shift toward responsible practices that protect resources and ensure a balance between humans and their natural surroundings.

It is worth noting that the concept of sustainable development initially emerged with the idea of environmental development within the framework of self-reliance strategies (Muhareb, 2011, p. 15) when humans began to threaten the quality of life, prompting the world to call for the necessity of restoring the balance in the environment and building environmental awareness among the components of society, both individuals and institutions, to activate sustainable development that meets the needs of the current generation without depriving future generations of their right to a quality life and a healthy environment (Al-Gharaibiya, 2011, p. 28). Al-Gharaibiya, 2011, p. 28).

Sustainable development is not just a developmental choice but a fundamental condition for achieving environmental security, as preserving the rights of future generations to a sound environment is linked to the present generation's right to stability and health. Thus, environmental security is embodied in the ability of communities to establish responsible practices that achieve a balance between meeting today's needs and ensuring the safety of the future, which makes environmental awareness a solid foundation for protecting humans and their surroundings across generations.

Sustainable development, in its environmental dimension, establishes a positive relationship between the individual and their environment, a relationship that respects and ensures the needs and rights of future generations. This draws attention to a new type of justice and equality that has rarely been considered before, which is the principle of intergenerational equality. This type of equality should occupy a significant place among individuals and communities. (Environmental, Population, and Health Activities Document, p. 6) There is no way to succeed in environmental pollution control and nature conservation programs without the awareness and participation of individuals. However, an individual will not be proactive in fulfilling their responsibilities unless they are aware of the nature of the relationship between humans and the environment, and between the components of ecosystems and their interconnections. (Saber, 2000, p. 66).

However, the success of this approach remains contingent upon the extent to which individuals are aware of the intricate relationship between humans and the components of ecosystems, as combating pollution or preserving nature cannot be achieved without conscious community participation. From here, the close connection between environmental awareness and environmental security becomes clear. The more conscious participation of individuals in protecting the environment is strengthened, the more communities ensure long-term environmental stability that achieves intergenerational justice and maintains human security in its vital dimensions.

3. Instagram, an interactive communication network in the service of environmental education:

Short videos on Instagram are considered a practical tool that can motivate users to adopt positive behaviors related to sustainability and environmental development.

a- The functional dimensions of environmental education within short videos on Instagram:

Instagram is one of the most prominent digital platforms that embodies the functions of environmental media in a contemporary context characterized by the rapid and flexible exchange of information, especially thru the short video technique that has proven effective in conveying environmental messages in a simplified and engaging manner. The function of providing the audience with environmental facts and information is clearly achieved thru concise visual content that presents accurate data on environmental issues, and Instagram contributes to this thru video. The short format in creating awareness and perception thanks to the power of image, symbol, and brevity, enabling the recipient to form a clear and quick understanding of environmental risks. As for the function of influencing attitudes and behaviors, it is enhanced by the interactive nature of the platform, where the features of likes, comments, and shares create a communicative space that reinforces environmental values and encourages positive behavior. Instagram also serves the function of alerting public opinion and engaging it in the raised issues, as a short video can transform a simple local environmental event into a cross-border public issue. Thus, the platform, thru the dissemination of short videos, does not merely convey environmental information, but also integrates awareness, education, and motivation to act, making it a strategic tool for achieving environmental media goals in light of current communication transformations.

Here, we summarize the major functions of media education in light of the use of short videos on Instagram:

- Cultivating environmental awareness in individuals: Short videos on the Instagram platform stand out as an effective tool for translating this educational function into practical practices. They are capable of simplifying complex environmental concepts into quick and impactful visual content, making it easy to share among individuals and stimulating their awareness and emotions, thereby enhancing the building of environmental consciousness in a short time. These clips also enable behavioral change thru participatory environmental campaigns and challenges, contributing to the transformation of knowledge into sustainable collective behavior. Thus, one of the most important goals of environmental education is achieved in a contemporary context that aligns with the interests of the digital generation.
- Addressing environmental issues: Short videos on Instagram serve as a practical means to embody this educational function, as they can convey quick and

impactful messages highlighting the dangers of pollution or environmental depletion and directly linking them to individuals' daily lives. These clips also allow for correcting prevailing misconceptions and fostering environmental awareness thru real-life stories or visual examples of the impacts of negative behaviors on resources. In addition, these videos can be a tool to mobilize individuals to participate in collective initiatives such as tree planting or recycling campaigns, transforming environmental education from a theoretical framework into a practical practice that effectively contributes to promoting sustainable development.

b-Updates in environmental education and achieving environmental security in light of short video usage on Instagram:

various developments accompanying the process of media education thru short videos on Instagram can be inferred, and what this offers in terms of innovative and developmental dimensions for media education:

- These videos serve an educational and awareness-raising function by simplifying environmental risks such as pollution or resource depletion and directly linking them to community safety. Environmental education, when presented in a simplified and widely disseminated visual language, contributes to the establishment of the concept of environmental security, as it calls on individuals to be aware that maintaining a less polluted environment is not just a moral value, but an existential guaranty linked to both the present and the future.

- Short videos on Instagram represent an effective means of reframing environmental concerns into an educational visual discourse that is easily shared among the public, as environmental education thru short videos on InstagramBy embodying complex risks in short and direct content that captures attention and stimulates interaction. Thus, the digital platform transforms from merely an entertainment space into a tool for raising awareness about environmental threats, warning against the causes of degradation, and mobilizing individuals to contribute to the stability of human society, making it an assisting tool in establishing comprehensive environmental security.

- The importance of environmental education is evident in short videos on Instagram as a means to present content that illustrates how excessive consumption, pollution, or lack of environmental awareness undermines the foundations of sustainable development. These videos also allow for the construction of an awareness-raising discourse that links daily individual behavior to the collective security of future generations, enhancing the recipient's understanding that protecting the environment is not a secondary option but a necessity for both security and development. Thus, digital environmental education becomes a tool to root the awareness that human stability and security are

contingent upon the health of the environment and the preservation of its resources.

-Environmental education emerges as a preventive tool for protecting environmental security, carrying with it behavioral and cognitive awareness that can mitigate these risks. Here, the content of short videos on the Instagram platform plays a pivotal role, as it is capable of simplifying these complex concepts and transforming them into quick-to-understand visual messages.

- Environmental education has emerged as a strategic means to confront these threats, as it establishes a collective awareness based on linking individual behavior to global outcomes. Here, the short video on Instagram gains practical value, as it can translate these complex issues into simplified messages that clarify to the audience that simple actions like water wastage or pollution extend beyond their local impact to become global threats affecting all human lives. Therefore, the use of short videos in environmental education contributes to creating a globally connected awareness, where individuals realize that protecting natural resources or adopting proper environmental behavior is not just a local act, but part of a comprehensive contribution to enhancing human security thru establishing environmental security.

- Short videos on Instagram are an ideal tool for conveying the voices of individuals and communities at risk directly and quickly. For example, clips documenting the suffering of residents in an area experiencing drought or industrial pollution can transform into powerful visual testimonies that reflect reality and influence public opinion and decision-makers. Thus, environmental education thru social media becomes an interactive and participatory process that not only imparts environmental messages to individuals but also gives them space to express their concerns and values.

-Short videos on the Instagram platform represent an effective channel for embodying contemporary environmental education. They allow for the delivery of focused messages about specific environmental issues, such as pollution or excessive water consumption, and provide practical, applicable solutions. They also encourage participation in local environmental activities. In addition, the interactive nature of the platform allows for transforming followers from mere recipients to contributors by sharing their environmental experiences or promoting community initiatives.

-Short videos on Instagram represent an effective tool for correcting negative environmental behaviors thru quickly impactful visual content. For example, a short clip can illustrate the serious consequences of littering in public places or highlight the long-term devastating effects of deforestation. These videos can also provide practical and simple behavioral alternatives, making it easier for individuals to adopt them on a daily basis. Thanks to repetition and rapid dissemination, these

messages can become part of the new environmental culture that contributes to reshaping individual and collective behavior patterns.

Conclusion:

Instagram, with its focus on visual content, short videos, and daily stories, constitutes an ideal platform for effectively achieving environmental education functions. The platform provides quick and interactive access to audiences, enhancing the function of conveying environmental knowledge and information in an engaging and easily digestible manner, and allowing for the clarification of complex environmental issues and the stimulation of critical thinking about them. Visual media and short videos also play a role in changing attitudes and behaviors by presenting practical solutions and daily experiences, thereby promoting sustainable practices. The emergence of influencers adds another dimension, as their impact can be harnessed to guide their followers toward positive environmental behaviors and stimulate community participation in environmental initiatives, thereby supporting the development of environmental awareness and responsibility among individuals. And thru direct interaction, such as likes, comments, and live broadcasts, the function of participation and contribution to environmental issues is enhanced, making environmental education on Instagram a dynamic, inclusive process capable of effectively instilling values of sustainability and environmental security in the modern digital community.

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