



The Impact of Media Sensitization Campaigns on Food Waste Reduction and Sustainable Consumption Habits

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Introduction

Food waste is a growing global concern, with approximately 1.3 billion tons of food wasted annually, accounting for nearly one-third of all food produced. This waste contributes to 8-10% of global greenhouse gas emissions and exacerbates food insecurity, affecting over 828 million people who experience hunger. Despite significant agricultural advancements, a substantial portion of food is lost at consumer, retail, and supply chain levels due to inadequate awareness, poor consumption habits, and inefficient distribution systems. Media sensitization campaigns play a crucial role in addressing this challenge by shaping public attitudes, encouraging responsible consumption, and promoting sustainable food practices. This study investigates the effectiveness of media-driven campaigns in reducing food waste and fostering sustainable consumption habits. The research objectives are to analyze the impact of media campaigns on food waste reduction, assess the role of traditional and digital media, and evaluate strategies for promoting sustainable consumption behaviors.

Materials and Methods/Methodology

Using a qualitative approach, the study examines case studies from global and local food waste awareness initiatives. The research analyzes the role of digital and traditional media in influencing consumer behavior and evaluates targeted messaging strategies. Key campaigns analyzed include the United Nations' "Think.Eat.Save" initiative, the European Union's "Stop Food Waste" program, and Nigeria's emerging digital advocacy efforts against food waste. Additionally, behavioral change theories such as the Social Cognitive Theory and the Theory of Planned Behavior were applied to assess their effectiveness in reinforcing positive food management habits.

Results and Discussion

Preliminary findings indicate that countries with sustained media awareness programs have reduced food waste by up to 25% over a decade. Strategic media interventions—such as social media activism, public service announcements, documentary storytelling, and influencer marketing—have led to a 15-30% increase in food conservation awareness among urban households. Integrating behavioral change theories has enhanced the effectiveness of campaigns by reinforcing sustainable consumption habits. Moreover, findings show that media-driven initiatives significantly boost public understanding of food sustainability, with digital platforms outperforming traditional media in terms of reach and engagement, particularly among younger demographics.

Conclusion

This study concludes that media sensitization campaigns are powerful tools for reducing food waste and promoting sustainable consumption behaviors. It recommends a collaborative approach involving governments, media organizations, and food industry stakeholders to design evidence-based and theory-informed campaigns. The study also emphasizes the necessity for policies that support public education on food sustainability, corporate responsibility in food distribution, and the integration of digital technologies for effective consumer engagement. Leveraging media as an instrument for change holds the potential to achieve up to a 50% reduction in global food waste by 2030, aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 12.3 on responsible consumption and production.

Keywords: Food Waste, Media Campaigns, Behavioral Change, Food Security, Digital Media, Food Sustainability Policies.