Media and Information Literacy for Sustainable Development: A Systematic Review of Roles, Trends, and Challenges in the Digital Environment

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Abstract

Media and Information Literacy (MIL) has become increasingly important amid rapid transformations in the digital environment, including the expanding volume of information, the spread of misinformation, the growing influence of digital platforms, and advances in artificial intelligence. MIL competencies enable individuals to access, analyze, evaluate, and use information critically, ethically, and responsibly, thereby supporting informed participation in matters related to sustainable development. Despite growing scholarly interest in the relationship between MIL and sustainable development, relevant research remains dispersed across diverse topics, concepts, and contexts, highlighting the need for a systematic synthesis of existing knowledge. This study systematically reviews literature published between 2015 and 2026 on the relationship between MIL and sustainable development. It adopts a systematic literature review (SLR) approach, guided by the PRISMA 2020 guidelines for study identification, screening, selection, and reporting. The review examines the roles attributed to MIL in supporting sustainable development, maps key thematic and methodological trends, analyzes challenges associated with the digital environment, and identifies research gaps and future research directions. The study seeks to provide an integrated synthesis that clarifies how MIL has been conceptualized and studied in relation to sustainable development and helps inform future research in this field.