

Research Article

Digital Public Relations Strategies on Instagram in Promoting Environmental Sustainability: Content Analysis of @nucare_lazisnu

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ABSTRACT

This study examines digital public relations strategies employed through Instagram in promoting environmental sustainability, focusing on the official account of NU Care-LAZISNU, @nucare_lazisnu. Using a qualitative research design, the study applies descriptive thematic content analysis to Instagram posts related to environmental sustainability published over a defined period. The analysis reveals that sustainability communication is predominantly oriented toward informational and educational messages, supported by visual storytelling that enhances message clarity and public awareness. Image-building strategies play a significant role in integrating environmental sustainability into the organization's humanitarian identity, thereby strengthening organizational credibility and public trust. Persuasive messages and explicit calls to action generate higher levels of audience engagement, indicating the importance of participatory communication in sustainability campaigns. However, the findings also show limited dialogic interaction, suggesting that Instagram is primarily utilized as a one-way communication channel rather than a fully interactive public relations platform. This study contributes to the literature on digital public relations and environmental communication by providing empirical evidence from a non-profit, faith-based organizational context in a developing country. The findings offer practical insights for organizations seeking to enhance the effectiveness of sustainability communication through social media.

Keywords: Content Analysis; Digital Public Relations; Environmental Sustainability; Instagram; Nucare_Lazisnu

1. INTRODUCTION

The growing urgency of environmental degradation and climate change has positioned environmental sustainability as a central concern in global development agendas (Crossley et al., 2021). Efforts to promote sustainable practices increasingly rely not only on technological innovation but also on effective communication strategies that can influence public awareness, attitudes, and behavior. In this context, communication plays a strategic role in translating sustainability concepts into messages that are understandable, persuasive, and actionable for diverse audiences. Without well-designed communication, environmental initiatives risk limited public engagement and low levels of societal participation (Jansom & Pongsakornrunsilp, 2021).

The rapid development of digital media has transformed the way organizations communicate sustainability issues to the public (Abas Rosadi, 2025). Social media platforms, particularly Instagram, have become important channels for disseminating environmental messages due to their visual orientation, interactive features, and broad audience reach (Sailer et al., 2022). Instagram enables organizations to combine visual storytelling with concise narratives, making it a powerful tool for digital public relations activities aimed at raising awareness and encouraging public involvement in environmental sustainability programs. Public relations, as a strategic communication function, plays a crucial role in shaping organizational image, building trust, and fostering long-term relationships with stakeholders (Zahro & Diana, 2025). In the context of environmental sustainability, public relations strategies are expected to not only inform but also engage communities in pro-environmental actions (Hatta et al., 2025). Digital public relations, which integrates traditional public relations principles with digital platforms, allows organizations to conduct two-way communication and strengthen stakeholder engagement through interactive media such as social networks.

Previous studies on environmental communication and digital public relations have demonstrated that social media can effectively support sustainability campaigns by increasing visibility, awareness, and public participation (Nabivi, 2025). Research has explored various aspects such as message framing, audience engagement, and media effectiveness in environmental campaigns. However, much of the existing literature focuses on corporate or governmental actors, while

limited attention has been given to non-profit and faith-based organizations that actively participate in environmental sustainability initiatives through digital platforms (Rosana et al., 2025).

In Indonesia, non-governmental and non-profit organizations play a significant role in promoting environmental sustainability at the community level. NU Care–LAZISNU, as a humanitarian and social organization, has expanded its activities to include environmental programs aimed at fostering sustainable practices among communities. Through its official Instagram account, @nucare_lazisnu, the organization disseminates information, campaigns, and calls to action related to environmental sustainability, positioning digital public relations as a key instrument in its communication strategy (Aldarazi, 2025).

Despite the growing use of Instagram for sustainability communication, empirical research examining how digital public relations strategies are implemented by non-profit organizations in promoting environmental sustainability remains limited (Arif et al., 2024). There is a need for systematic analysis to understand how environmental messages are constructed, what communication strategies are emphasized, and how public engagement is facilitated through social media (Emirzade & Huseyinoglu, 2025). Addressing this gap is important to enrich the academic discourse on digital public relations and environmental communication, particularly within the context of developing countries.

Based on this background, the aim of this study is to analyze digital public relations strategies employed through Instagram in promoting environmental sustainability, using the official account @nucare_lazisnu as a case study (Muhammad & Purwatiningsih, 2025). Specifically, this research seeks to identify dominant communication strategies, message patterns, and engagement-oriented practices used in environmental sustainability campaigns (Susanti & Amelia, 2021). The findings are expected to contribute to the development of digital public relations scholarship and provide practical insights for organizations seeking to enhance the effectiveness of sustainability communication through social media.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research design using a descriptive content analysis approach to examine digital public relations strategies on Instagram in promoting environmental sustainability. Content analysis was selected because it enables systematic and objective examination of communication messages to identify patterns, themes, and strategic elements in digital public relations practices (Emilia & Sumarlan, 2025). The research focused on how environmental sustainability messages were constructed and communicated through the official Instagram account of NU Care–LAZISNU, namely @nucare_lazisnu, as part of its organizational digital public relations activities. The object of this research was the Instagram account @nucare_lazisnu, while the unit of analysis consisted of Instagram feed posts that contained visual elements, caption texts, hashtags, and public engagement indicators such as likes and comments. Data were collected using non-participant observation and documentation techniques by systematically identifying and archiving posts related to environmental sustainability published within a defined research period (Rohmawati & Hamidah, 2025). Only posts explicitly addressing environmental sustainability programs, campaigns, or messages were included in the analysis to ensure data relevance and focus.

Data collection was conducted in Indonesia and covered posts published over a specified timeframe, such as January to December 2024, to capture consistent patterns of digital public relations communication related to environmental sustainability. All selected posts were documented by recording the date of publication, visual content, caption narratives, hashtags used, and engagement indicators. This process ensured that the data were preserved in their original form without any intervention from the researchers. The data analysis process followed a thematic content analysis procedure, beginning with data reduction to filter content relevant to environmental sustainability. The selected posts were then coded using a coding framework developed based on digital public relations and environmental communication theories. The coding categories included informational communication, persuasive communication, image-building communication, and engagement-oriented communication. After coding, the data were categorized and interpreted to identify dominant public relations strategies and message patterns used by @nucare_lazisnu in promoting environmental sustainability. To ensure research validity and reliability, theoretical triangulation was applied by comparing findings with relevant literature on digital public relations, environmental communication, and sustainability campaigns. Repeated coding and cross-checking were conducted to minimize subjectivity in interpretation. This study relied solely on publicly accessible social media content, and all data were used exclusively for academic purposes, adhering to ethical principles of digital research, including responsible data usage and respect for data integrity.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Distribution and Dominance of Digital Public Relations Content

3.1.1 Informational and Educational Message Orientation

The results of the content analysis demonstrate that environmental sustainability communication on the Instagram account @nucare_lazisnu was predominantly oriented toward informational and educational messages. As summarized in Table 1,

most of the analyzed posts focused on disseminating knowledge related to environmental care, community-based environmental activities, and organizational initiatives supporting sustainability (Zhang et al., 2021). These messages were typically delivered through a combination of visual documentation such as photographs of environmental actions and community involvement and explanatory captions that provided contextual information and narrative clarity. This pattern indicates a structured and deliberate approach to informing audiences about both environmental issues and the organization's role in addressing them (Lee et al., 2024).

The dominance of informational content reflects a strategic emphasis on awareness-building within NU Care-LAZISNU's digital public relations practices. In environmental sustainability communication, awareness and understanding are critical precursors to attitude formation and behavioral change (Chamid, 2024). This finding is consistent with previous studies in environmental communication, which emphasize that clear, factual, and visually supported messages are more effective in enhancing audience comprehension and message credibility. Within this framework, Instagram functions not merely as a promotional platform but as an educational medium that supports the transmission of sustainability knowledge to a broader public (Ahmad Fauzi et al., 2025).

Table 1. Distribution of Environmental Sustainability Content Orientation on Instagram @nucare_lazisnu

Content Orientation	Description	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Informational and Educational	Posts providing environmental knowledge, awareness messages, documentation of environmental activities, and explanations of sustainability programs	28	35.0
Image-Building	Content emphasizing organizational identity, moral values, credibility, and social responsibility related to environmental initiatives	22	27.5
Persuasive	Messages aimed at shaping attitudes and encouraging positive perceptions toward environmental sustainability	18	22.5
Call to Action	Posts explicitly inviting audiences to participate in environmental programs or adopt environmentally responsible behaviors	12	15.0
Total		80	100.0

Source: Processed by the author based on content analysis of Instagram posts @nucare_lazisnu

3.1.2 Strategic Implications for Awareness-Based Sustainability Communication

From an applied communication perspective, the prevalence of informational sustainability content highlights the potential of Instagram as a strategic tool for bridging public knowledge gaps related to environmental issues (Kádár & Klaniczay, 2022). For non-profit organizations, particularly those operating at the community level, digital platforms offer accessible channels to disseminate environmental education beyond formal institutional settings. By consistently presenting structured and educational content, organizations strengthen their position as credible and trustworthy communicators within sustainability discourse. This finding is especially relevant in the context of developing countries, where access to formal environmental education may be uneven or limited (Durrani et al., 2024). Digital public relations strategies that prioritize informational and educational messages can therefore play a complementary role in supporting broader sustainability goals. The results of this study suggest that awareness-based digital communication is not only a foundational public relations strategy but also a practical contribution to fostering environmentally responsible attitudes and behaviors within society.

3.2 Strategic Image-Building and Organizational Credibility

3.2.1 Integration of Environmental Sustainability into Organizational Identity

The findings indicate that image-building communication formed a central component of the digital public relations strategy employed by @nucare_lazisnu. As illustrated in Figure 1, environmental sustainability messages were frequently framed as an integral extension of the organization's humanitarian mission, rather than as stand-alone or incidental activities (Lomachinska, 2025). Posts consistently highlighted organizational identity, moral values, and social responsibility, thereby positioning environmental programs within a broader narrative of social care and community service. Visual elements portraying collective environmental action and community involvement further reinforced this narrative by creating emotional resonance and a sense of shared responsibility. This integration of environmental sustainability into organizational identity is significant because it strengthens message coherence and perceived authenticity (Zakiyah et al., 2025). Previous studies in public relations and sustainability communication emphasize that audiences are more likely to trust organizations whose environmental initiatives are aligned with their established values and long-term missions (Varni et al., 2024). The results of this study corroborate these findings by demonstrating that sustainability communication is

more effective when it reflects an organization's core identity, thereby reducing perceptions of opportunism or symbolic environmentalism.

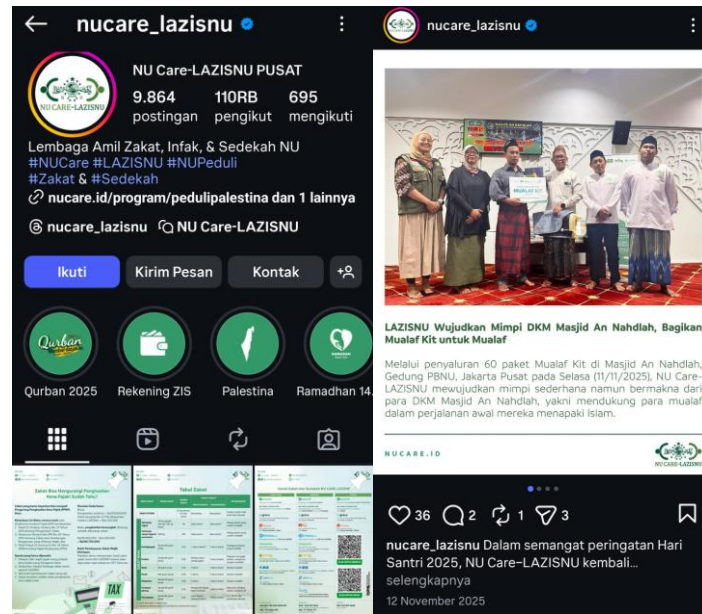


Figure 1. Profile of Lazisnu

3.2.2 Organizational Credibility and Stakeholder Trust in Sustainability Communication

The analysis also underscores the role of image-building communication in enhancing organizational credibility and stakeholder trust (Pellegrino et al., 2022). By consistently presenting environmental sustainability as a moral and social responsibility, @nucare_lazisnu reinforces its position as a credible actor in environmental discourse. This approach aligns with reputation management theories, which suggest that credibility is built through consistent messaging, value congruence, and visible commitment to socially relevant issues (Zafar & Blackmer, 2025). The strategic use of visual documentation showing real environmental actions further supports credibility by providing tangible evidence of organizational involvement. From a practical standpoint, these findings suggest that effective environmental public relations should be embedded within broader organizational narratives and values. For non-profit and faith-based organizations, integrating sustainability messages into existing humanitarian frameworks enhances public acceptance and legitimacy (Sumarlan et al., 2025). Such alignment increases the likelihood that audiences perceive environmental initiatives as genuine and socially meaningful, fostering long-term trust and sustained stakeholder support. Consequently, strategic image-building through digital public relations not only strengthens organizational reputation but also contributes to the broader effectiveness of environmental sustainability communication.

3.2.3 Audience Engagement Patterns and Practical Implications for Sustainability Communication

The results related to audience engagement indicate varying levels of interaction across different content types. As presented in Table 2, posts that incorporated persuasive elements and explicit calls to action such as encouraging environmentally responsible behavior or participation in sustainability programs tended to generate higher levels of engagement, measured through likes and comments (Chou & Chen, 2025). This suggests that audiences respond more actively to content that invites participation rather than purely informational messages. However, despite the presence of engagement-oriented content, dialogic communication practices were relatively limited. The analysis shows that interaction was predominantly one-directional, with fewer instances of sustained dialogue between the organization and its audience. This finding aligns with previous studies on digital public relations, which note that many organizations utilize social media primarily as broadcasting tools rather than platforms for two-way communication. The limited dialogic engagement identified in this study indicates an underutilization of Instagram's interactive potential (Vassey et al., 2023). From an applied communication perspective, these findings underscore the need to strengthen dialogic public relations strategies to enhance the effectiveness of environmental sustainability campaigns (Darko et al., 2022). Increasing responsiveness to audience comments, encouraging discussions, and fostering online communities could amplify public participation and commitment to sustainability initiatives. Such practices not only improve engagement metrics but also support long-term stakeholder relationships, which are essential for sustaining environmental programs beyond short-term awareness campaigns.

Table 2. Audience Engagement Levels Based on Digital Public Relations Content Types on Instagram @nucare_lazisnu

Digital PR Content Type	Number of Posts (n)	Average Likes	Average Comments	Engagement Interpretation
Informational Content	28	312	9	Low–Moderate
Image-Building Content	22	428	14	Moderate
Persuasive Content	18	536	21	Moderate–High
Call to Action Content	12	684	29	High

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that digital public relations strategies implemented through Instagram play a significant role in promoting environmental sustainability, as demonstrated by the communication practices of the @nucare_lazisnu account. The content analysis results indicate that informational and educational messages dominate sustainability communication, supported by visual storytelling that enhances message clarity and audience understanding. These strategies effectively position Instagram as a key digital channel for raising environmental awareness and disseminating sustainability-related information within non-profit organizational contexts. The findings further show that strategic image-building communication strengthens organizational credibility and public trust in environmental sustainability initiatives. By integrating sustainability narratives into its broader humanitarian and organizational identity, NU Care–LAZISNU successfully reinforces its reputation as a socially responsible institution. Additionally, while audience engagement is present particularly in posts featuring persuasive messages and calls to action the study identifies limitations in dialogic communication, indicating opportunities to enhance two-way interaction and stakeholder participation in sustainability campaigns. From a scientific perspective, this research contributes to the development of digital public relations and environmental communication scholarship by providing empirical evidence from a non-profit, faith-based organizational context in a developing country. The study extends existing literature by demonstrating how digital public relations strategies are operationalized on Instagram to support environmental sustainability initiatives, thereby enriching theoretical discussions on sustainability communication, organizational credibility, and stakeholder engagement. These contributions offer a valuable reference for future research and provide a foundation for comparative studies across different organizational and cultural settings.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Future research is recommended to expand the scope of analysis by employing mixed-methods or quantitative approaches to examine the effectiveness of digital public relations strategies in promoting environmental sustainability across multiple social media platforms. Comparative studies involving different types of organizations, such as governmental institutions, private companies, and non-profit organizations, would provide broader insights into variations in sustainability communication practices. In addition, future studies may incorporate audience perception analysis to assess how digital public relations messages influence attitudes, behavioral intentions, and long-term engagement in environmental sustainability initiatives. Such research directions are expected to deepen theoretical understanding and enhance practical applications of digital public relations in sustainability communication.

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