European Journal of Agricultural and Rural Education (EJARE)
Available Online at: https://www.scholarzest.com
Vol. 5 No. 11 November 2024
ISSN: 2660-5643

SMART TECHNOLOGIES AND SUSTAINABLE INNOVATIONS: A PATH TO A CLEANER ENVIRONMENT/A REVIEW ARTICLE

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Article history:

Received: 20th August 2024
Accepted: 14th September 2024

Abstract:

Background: This study explores the application of current technologies in Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), and Renewable Energy in areas critical to environmental sustainability, such as agriculture, energy, and transportation. Methodology: A thorough analysis of existing literature was conducted to evaluate the impact of these technologies on achieving sustainability goals. The review focused on the actual technological applications aimed at improving efficiency and reducing environmental pollution. Results: Artificial Intelligence and Renewable Energy technologies have contributed significantly to reducing pollution while enhancing efficiency. The Internet of Things has been instrumental in improving the monitoring and analysis of environmental data. Various applications have led to cost savings and reductions in carbon emissions. Conclusion: The integration of these technologies is crucial for achieving true environmental sustainability. However, public awareness and infrastructure development remain major challenges. These technologies require continued investment and further development to realize long-term environmental benefits.

Keywords: Environmental Sustainability, Environmental Sustainability ,Pollution Reduction Technologies, Renewable Energy

1-INTRODUCTION

Companies with a balanced capital structure can easily adapt to every change in economic circumstances. Purely debt-based companies have to struggle a lot when, in times of crisis, repayment becomes difficult, while those companies that are dependent on equity are strong but cannot grow quickly. The ones that have both in equilibrium know how to adapt to crises. A mix of cheap debt and equity provides financial stability with flexibility for growth, including according [1] :

1. Smart technologies in energy: The second most important innovation in improving efficiency, cost reduction, and increasing sustainability of the energy ecosystem is Smart Technologies in the energy sector. These mainly draw their input from integrating modern technologies of big data, artificial intelligence, and the Internet of Things into the traditional energy system. These will optimize resources management, efficient usage of energy, and bring forth viable solutions to many challenges associated with the production and distribution of energy, the most visibly apparent uses of smart technologies in this area are smart electrical grids. The electrical grids form one of the major evolutions in energy distribution. Contrarily, smart grids have the potential to continuously sense and compute in real time, as opposed to traditional networks, which are based on fixed monitoring and calculations. This is essentially saying that a smart grid is capable of adapting upon any sudden changes in demand or supply. Equally, a smart grid allows for speedy and efficient identification of the problems relating to power outages and unexpected peaks in demand, hence contributing to quicker fixing of faults and achieving better sustainability in energy supply [2] .

In addition to smart grids, there are also smart meters for consumer and energy company use that have the capacity to provide for accurate monitoring of energy consumption in real time. Besides measuring consumption, the meters will encourage sustainable behavior by enabling users to keep track in real time of their consumption. They will also contribute to accurate billing since their readings, based on actual consumption, reduce the errors in calculating bills, hence helping in cost-cutting [3].

Generally speaking, the integration of renewable energy sources-solar and wind energies-is now highly improved with the help of modern technologies in the field of smart renewable energy. These are usually non-stationary sources, which raises challenges about how they will be integrated within the grid. However, with the incorporation of smart renewable energy technologies, the process of power generation is taken to a controlling capacity based on instant changes in demand and supply, hence ensuring continuity of energy supply and reducing dependence on traditional sources such as coal and oil [4], smart demand management is poised as an effective tool to improve energy efficiency. This technology makes it possible to monitor energy consumption in real time and even adjust the consumer's consumption based on grid situation or market price. For instance, users can be incentivized to reduce their consumption during peak periods or motivated to use more energy when the prices are low.

A management system of this nature really helps to enhance efficiency and minimize pressure on the electricity grid [5]. Artificial intelligence is going to play a key role in this regard to enhance the energy consumption pattern. By making an in-depth analysis of big data of energy usage, artificial intelligence can bring out patterns and trends that could help in efficiency. For instance, AI can predict future energy needs highly accurately, this would mean producing energy when it would be much cheaper to do so and thereby enhance distribution with more sustainability [5].

This is one of the modern technologies used in solving the problem of fluctuation in renewable sources of energy. Surplus energy production from sources such as solar or wind can be reserved for use during periods of high demand and low supply. Discussion will range from smart batteries, which are able to contain and distribute energies efficiently through remote control, in regard to electric vehicles and smart charging, it represents a significant development in smart energy technologies. Smart charging networks will be required for electric vehicles, investigating grid conditions so as to determine the most opportune times to charge them to lower pressure on the electricity grid at peak moments. In addition, cars can reduce carbon dioxide emissions and increase the sustainability of transportation [6].

Waste Management and Recycling

Waste management and recycling are very important in environmental protection and sustainability. As the population goes on increasing, so also does the activities of industries that equally demand the need to develop effective strategies in the management of wastes emanating from both communities and industries, the aim of waste management is to mitigate the adverse environmental and public health impacts through minimization of the volume of wastes generated, maximizing the rate of recovery of reusable material, and conversion of waste into useful resources. Waste management encompasses activities of waste collection, transportation, processing, and disposal in a manner that is safe and environmentally non-obnoxious. These processes are considered important aspects of environmental protection due to the fact that they reduce pollution resulting from waste scattered in public places or disposed of in an unsanitary manner. Waste is divided into a number of types, including household, industrial, medical, and electronic, each of which requires treatment with a special method [7].

The most important factor in managing wastes is waste production reduction through better design of industrial products and processes to be less wasteful of resources. Sorting and sorting remains one of the most basic steps in managing wastes whereby materials that can be recycled are separated from other materials that may need special treatment due to being toxic or dangerous.

Recycling is the process of re-converting waste and consumables into usable products once again. Recycling will be carried out through a series of mechanical or chemical processes recovering raw materials from wastes, like metals, glass, paper, and plastics. This will reduce the need to extract raw materials from nature. It helps in reducing waste and conserving natural resources, thereby reducing energy usage and greenhouse gas emissions [8] .

Different materials require different recycling methods. For example, paper can be recycled by treating it in such a way that fibers from the reused material are obtained, through which new paper can then be produced. Plastics can also be retrieved through shredding and molding again into usable products. While for metals, like aluminum or iron, recycling is a standard activity since metals can repeatedly be put into another use without loss of quality, one of the biggest headaches in recycling is contamination from mixed materials, since some materials cannot be recycled upon being mixed with other materials containing non-recyclable materials. Therefore, sorting of wastes is an essential step in this process [9].

Benefits of Waste Management and Recycling

Reduce pollution: It reduces waste on the environment through an improvement in handling and guiding the recyclable materials into the recycling streams. Recycling reduces the amount of waste taken to landfills for burial, that can lead to soil and water pollution , the process of recycling means that recyclable materials are not used up but are put to work in the making of other new products. This saves the environment from

unnecessary extraction of new raw materials [10] . For the most part, the process of recycling does not require as much energy as that used in making raw materials. For instance, it takes up to 95% less energy to recycle aluminum than it would to produce it from its virgin raw materials also prone to stimulating the economy, with new areas for activities; development of new industries such as recycling plants and waste-to-energy industries. Such processes contribute to the creation of new employment opportunities within a community. Recycling and reduction of waste allow future generations to exploit the resources of the Earth and thus strive towards attaining environmental sustainability the great advantages gained from recycling, there are some challenges standing in the way of this field. The most prominent is the lack of awareness on the part of the public with regard to the importance of recycling and the effect of waste on the environment. Society needs more awareness about how to properly sort waste and how it could contribute to reducing its production [11].

Advanced Technologies for Agriculture

Smart technologies in agriculture represent some of the most salient developments that have taken place in the modern era, changing the method of carrying out agricultural production. Advanced technology together with scientific innovations goes into developing more efficient and sustainable agricultural methods that help increase agricultural productivity, reduce costs, and protect the environment. It allows farmers to monitor crops and manage resources with full accuracy, improving overall agricultural performance [12].

Smart agriculture may be described as precision agriculture through improvements in advanced technological methods of data gathering and processing, aiming at the enhancement of agricultural practices. These cover sensor systems, artificial intelligence, robotics, IoT, big data, drones, among others. It means newer technologies that enhance agricultural productivity while improvement in sustainability is achieved by shifting towards limited resources like water, fertilizers, and energy consumption.

The most important smart technologies applied in agriculture are according [13]:

A-Drones and remote sensing: Drones normally play a very important role in smart agriculture. Drones are used for periodic crop and farm monitoring through capturing images at a certain time frequency. With cameras and sensors, these flying objects capture data regarding plant health, moisture in the soil, crop growth, and the spots needing additional care in farming. These can then give farmers a full idea of the condition of their crops without having to go to every part of the farmland.

B-IoT-Internet of Things: IoT in agriculture varies from internet-connected sensors for monitoring crops and soil. Temperature, soil moisture, and nutrient content in the soil are some of the sensors. This information, after being received, helps farmers apply irrigation and fertilizers in the right time and quantity, hence reducing water and fertilizer wastage and making better use of these resources.

C-Artificial Intelligence and Data Analysis: AI technologies allow analyzing large volumes of data emanating from agricultural fields. Such huge data may be analyzed for patterns and trends using advanced algorithms and may assist the farmer in making correct decisions on timing related to planting, irrigation, spraying, and harvesting. These systems can also be utilized for risk predictions concerning insect attacks or agricultural diseases so that timely preventive measures may be undertaken to avoid them.

D-Robots used in Agriculture: Nowadays, agricultural robots are in great use in farming. They help farmers in planting the crops, gathering products of crops, harvesting, and weed control. Further, a number of tasks involving robots increases the efficiency of farms and reduces human labor. Robots have no adverse impact on the environment or soil, and they can be programmed to work in an unfavorable environment such as extreme heat or dry conditions.

E-Vertical farming and closed hydroponic systems: It is a farming method whereby crops are grown on vertical layers rather than horizontal spaces, thus saving lots of space, in addition to reducing water usage. In closed hydroponic systems, plants can be grown without soil by using water solutions that contain the nutrients the plants need. These systems offer a controlled environment that can be precisely regulated in terms of light, temperature, and humidity, hence leading to higher yields in small areas and with minimal use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers.

E-Software applications and digital platforms: The software applications developed for the farmers guide them towards smart management of the agricultural operation. These include living data on crop conditions, analysis of environmental risks like weather, appropriate irrigation times, and guidance toward precision farming. Performance tracking of crops may also be considered, integrated scheduling of agricultural activities, and inventory management.

Benefits of Smart Technologies in Agriculture include according [14]:

A-Increased productivity: The high degree of precision in monitoring crops and analyzing agricultural data, farmers can make better and quicker decisions to improve the yield of their agricultural produce, achieving sustainability involves smart technologies that contribute to an improved resource use of water,

energy, and fertilizers, among others, so as to reduce waste for more sustainable agricultural practices. This reduces environmental impact and helps preserve it for future generations.

B-Cost reduction: Farmers can reduce the cost of irrigation, fertilizers, and labor by making use of various technologies such as remote sensing and data analysis. The potential for crop loss due to diseases or pests can also be reduced by early prediction and taking precautionary measures.

C-Improvement in the quality of the crops: Smart agriculture technologies improve the quality of crops by developing an ideal growth environment. Continuous monitoring of soil and climate could therefore contribute to improvements in crop characteristics like size, taste, and nutritional value.

Smart and Sustainable Transportation

Smart and sustainable transportation is one of the new concepts that merges technological innovation with environmental needs. The concept is to enhance transportation systems to be more efficient yet reduce adverse environmental impacts, the underlying definition of smart transportation is a set of technologies powered by artificial intelligence, data analysis, electric vehicles, and comprehensive public transportation in the service of the objectives of smoother traffic flow, reduced carbon emissions, and improved road safety. Importance of smart and sustainable transport The transportation sector has immense impacts on the environment through harmful gas emissions from fossil fuel-dependent vehicles. Hence, the relevance of smart and sustainable transportation capable of mitigating these negative impacts through the introduction of innovative technologies like electric cars, integrated transport systems, and artificial intelligence, which allow them to contribute toward reduced pollution, improved energy use, and, finally, to make transportation part of the solution for the environment rather than part of the problem [15].

Basic technologies in smart and sustainable transportation including according [16]:

A-Smart traffic management: Also referred to as an intelligent transportation system, advanced technologies such as sensors and sensors are applied to roads and at traffic lights, assembling data that is analyzed instantly. Such traffic systems enhance the flow of traffic since the signals change according to the real-time volume of the traffic, hence reducing congestion, wait times, and, generally, pollution by stationary or slow-moving vehicles, the electric transport is considered one of the huge parts that were taken into consideration for smart, sustainable transportation by shifting towards electric vehicles. Indeed, an electric vehicle does not use fossil fuel and has zero emissions. Moreover, continuous development in battery technology allows electric vehicles to increase their efficiency regarding distance travelled and fast charging. Even smart charging stations contribute much to the development in enhancement of speed in charging and balancing energy distribution.

B-Multimodal transportation: It also means integrated transportation with buses, trains, electric vehicles, bicycles, and others constituting smart transport. The passengers plan and execute their trips using smartphone applications across multiple modes of transportation, which helps reduce dependence on private cars and thus congestion and air pollution. Self-driving cars are part of the revolution in smart transport. Self-driving technologies are those vehicles enabled with a set of sensors and cameras that enable the movement of the vehicle without human interference. Besides reducing human errors that cause road accidents, it would also be helpful in smooth traffic flow since these vehicles can also communicate with one another and with the road infrastructure.

C-Smart public transportation systems: Through smart transportation, the efficiency of public transportation is developed through adding smart systems to buses and trains to accurately estimate the arrival and departure times in preventing long waits for passengers. These systems depend on real-time data concerning arrival and departure times, hence improving efficiency and reducing wastes of time.

Benefits of smart and sustainable transportation including according [17]:

1- Emission and Pollution Reduction: Electric vehicles and increased usage of integrated public transportation reduce greenhouse gas emissions contributing to global warming.
2- Efficient Transportation: Smart traffic management systems regulate the flow of vehicles, hence reducing congestion and efficiency results in reduced wait times.
3- Safety Increase: Smart vehicles, like self-driving cars, introduce new ideas that can help improve safety on the road. This reduces human error accidents and helps individuals travel smoothly.
4- Transportation Integration: Intelligent Multimodal Transport Systems allow passengers to use single applications for connecting journeys across different modes of transport. That would ensure smoother transportation and help in reducing the number of private cars on the road.

Smart Cities for Sustainable Urban Development:

Smart cities signify a complete paradigm shift in the management of cities and in providing services to citizens through the use of advanced technologies. These cities depend on big data, artificial intelligence, and the IoT for enhancing the living standards, better resource efficiency, and reduced adverse environmental

impacts. It is connected to long-term environmental, social, and economic objectives with respect to enhancing the quality of life in urban areas in a manner that provides a balance between the needs of the present and the ability of future generations to satisfy their own needs [18].

The concept of a smart city denotes an urban area in which advanced technologies are exploited for enhanced performance and higher efficiency in various fields such as transport, energy, health, education, security, among others, and effective management of natural resources. These cities have a great reliance on information and communication technology that eases the flow of communication between systems, infrastructure, and even the people. For instance, a smart city can rely on smart power grids capable of monitoring and managing in real time the consumption of electricity to reduce wastages and hence make supplies more sustainable [19].

It is a process by which cities are built or developed in a manner that makes them ensure environmental and social sustainability. This development targets the implementation of viable and lasting urban environments that answer the needs of the current generation without jeopardizing the opportunity of future generations to do the same. In essence, therefore, sustainable development in cities encompasses a number of areas ranging from infrastructure improvement and reduction of pollution to job provision and social inclusiveness. This includes urban planning that incorporates green spaces, improved access to dependable public transportation, and increased utilization of renewable energy [20].

Smart technologies and their help towards the sustainable development of urban cities include according [21,22]:

1- Smart Traffic Management: These are smart cities making use of technology in the form of cameras and sensors installed on the roads for effective traffic management. It lessens road congestion and, therefore, reduces air pollution emanating from stuck or slow-moving cars. Through real-time data analysis, traffic signals will be changed, and vehicles are to be redirected to traffic with minimal flow to reduce congestion, another very important aspect is that of sustainable energy. Smart cities operate on smart energy grids which monitor and record electricity consumption, furthering the cause of enhanced energy distribution in the name of resource utilization. Investments are also made in renewable sources of energy like solar and wind energy, cutting reliance on fossil fuels and thereby reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

2- The management of water: This can be effectively monitored and managed through the intervention of smart technologies. Water leakages or wasteful practices can be detected with sensors in order to save precious water resources. Other technologies, such as desalination and grey water recycling, are also under development to further enhance the sustainability of the supplies.

3- Green Buildings and Artificial Intelligence: Smart cities are adopting green buildings that are designed on the basis of advanced thermal insulation, solar energy, and other smart building technologies that help improve their energy efficiency. Artificial Intelligence is also utilized in constant monitoring and improvement within the performance of buildings. For example, AI automatically regulates lighting, ventilation, and heating according to actual needs, thereby reducing energy consumption while enhancing comfort for the residents.

4- Intelligent and Green Transportation: Smart transportation results from integrated public transportation systems in sustainable cities. There would also be provided with electric modes of transportation like electric bikes and cars that run on clean energy. Traffic data can also be used in facilitating the guidance of passengers towards public transportation for efficiency to decrease congestion on the roads [23].

CONCLUSION :

1- Sustainability smart technologies are fundamental in the light of modern technologies like artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, and renewable energy, which provide major impetus toward environmental sustainability in key areas like energy use, transportation, agriculture, and waste management.

2- Efficiency Enhancement and Cost-Cutting: Energy can be efficient, wastes reduced, and thus lower operational costs in either energy, transportation, or agriculture through the adoption of such technologies.

3- They will play a great role in reducing pollution. These technologies contribute to reducing carbon emission and environmental pollution through better utilization of resources and reduction of wastes. For example, recycling and sustainable transport innovations reduce the environmental impacts.

4- Technological integration is important. The integration of technologies such as artificial intelligence with the Internet of Things and renewable energy enhances their effectiveness in achieving sustainability and in solving emerging environmental challenges.

5- This ranges from the need to increase public awareness of the importance of such technologies, besides developing appropriate infrastructures to support such advanced systems.
6- Scalability and Improvement: These technologies may provide positive results if well invested in by governments and companies with a view to achieving sustainable development goals.

Acknowledgment: The authors would like to thank Baghdad – Iraq for its support in the present work and Al-Karkh University of science College of Energy and Environmental science,Department of Environment to help us to get our data.

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