

Incorporating Sustainability in Nigerian Universities and the Challenges for Sustainable Future

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Introduction

- World in a crisis
- Global challenges such as poverty, hunger, global warming & climate change etc on the rise
- Debates by world governments and corporations on sustainable solution

UN Agenda 2030 - the SDG

- A paradigm shift for development in global development framework
- 17 UN SDGs and 169 targets
- SDGs and sustainable future



1: University and Sustainability

Sustainability has become a major issue in the 21st Century

• Sustainability in Universities

- Challenges present paradigm & silos
- Call Universities to incorporate sustainability in:
 - Mission
 - Educational practices
 - Operations and activities
 - Partnership and engagements

- curricula

Sustainability challenges University to

- Go beyond integration in curriculum
- Sustainability action projects
- Interdisciplinary, participatory pedagogies, researches
- Open institutional boundaries
Sustainable communities
- Redefine existing relationships
- Create sustainability mindsets: Know, Do, Be



1.1. Sustainability (global) Mindsets and SDGs

Why Universities for SDG ?

- Create and deconstruct paradigms
- Educate, provide knowledge and skills for intellectuals, leaders, innovators and future leaders and decision makers
- Re-align its activities with critical reflexive paradigm to support the construction of more sustainable future
- Educate public and other sectors on SDGS
- Provide social and technical solutions to SDG

SDG Benefits to universities

- New integrated way to show contribution or impact
- New form of collaborations with stakeholders
- Access new funding streams
- Responsible University of the 21st century – to solving global challenges
- Exchange and collaboration programmes ; South-South and North-South partnership
- Need for SDG-related education- ESD



1.2. Education for Sustainability Development

- Indispensable and precursor of SDG 4 to all SDGs
- Growing global recognition
- A key enabler of more just, inclusive and resilient societies
- Progressive pedagogies; 21st Century skills, knowledge and competencies
- Critical thinking, scenario planning, collaboration decision making, problem solving
- Better and sustainable future for all



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1.2 .UNIVERSITIES AND EDS

- Strengthen ESD knowledge and develop innovative approaches
- The UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), & university's engagements :
 - Education, Research, Governance and Operations; External Leadership
- Transformation and social change agent
- Create sustainable mindset for a sustainable future

DIMENSIONS

- integrate sustainability into the curriculum
- Sustainable campus
- Critical Factors:** Political will, Leadership & Management, etc



2.0. Nigeria and the SDGs

- ❖ Nigeria Signed into Agenda 2030 in 2015
- ❖ National Voluntary Reviews of 2017 and SDG Implementation of 'No one is left behind'
 - Mainstreaming the SDGs into national development plans, policies, budgets
 - National Economic and Recovery Growth Plan
 - ESD in Nigerian Universities not a real priority
 - Lack of political will and commitments by government
- ❖ Education and Society we want
 - National Education policy - Latest review of 2013 does not capture the SDGs
 - Curriculum Framework of 2017 – 19th CCEM of 2015
- ☐ Implications for learning, teaching and research



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2.1.Nigerian Universities and ESD

Composition of Nigerian universities

Years of Establishment	Federal Universities	State Universities	Private Universities	Total
1940-1949	1			1
1950-1959	-			
1960-1969	4			4
1970-1979	8	1		9
1980-1989	9	6		15
1990-1999	3	6	3	12
2000-2009	2	20	37	59
2010-2019	17	15	39	73
Total	44	48	79	171



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2.2. Sustainability in Nigerian Universities

No framework/model; low contents & knowledge, uncoordinated practices,

Mission

- Teaching-
- Research-
- Community services

Courses/Programmes

Undergraduate:

- No stand alone sustainability course in universities
- Students receptivity, low SDGs knowledge

Post graduate:

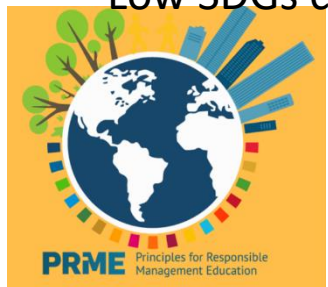
- Only few universities offer full courses in sustainability, except UN-backed programmes
- Low SDGs contents

Curriculum design and contents

- NUC Benchmark Minimum Academic Standard (BMAS)
- Out-dated & needs revision
- Imbalance in economic, social & environment issues
- Not link to real world & SDGs
- Not enough knowledge, skills, values to respond

Campus operations

Partnerships & Social inclusion



2.3. ESD Transition: Learning and Teaching

Moving from (Our Universities)

- Seeing people as problem
- Passing on knowledge and awareness
- Negative problem solving approach
- Isolated change and action
- Accumulated knowledge or certification only

Moving towards

- People seen as **change agent**
- Questioning and getting to the root cause of issues
- Constructive creation of alternative future
- *Learning for change*
- Acquiring knowledge and skill **to solve societal problems**

2.4.ESD Transition: Researches

Shift from (Our Universities)

- Research disciplined-based
- Research with academic impacts
- Researches that inform
- Research on technologies and behaviour change
- Research on people
- Researchers as experts

Shift to

- Inter/trans/multidisciplinary researches, sustainability science
- Social impacts/ total change
- Researches that transform
- Focus on social / structural change
- Research with people
- Researchers as partners

2.5. Challenges of ESD in Nigerian Universities

- Traditional conservative curricula / discipline-based learning
- Difficulty in integrating sustainability into curriculum and teaching
- Culture of indifference
- Lack of understanding of ESD
- No orientation of sustainable university model - governance and operation
- Lack of institutional and top management support
- Few and Insufficient support for teaching staffs
- Many Nigerian universities have not signed into the SDG accords, HEI declarations and UN PRME
- Lack of political will



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2.6. Consequences of lack of Sustainability integration

❑ Nigerian Universities

- Lose of Relevance, reputation and ranking
- Continuous Detachment and disconnection from societies
- Little contribution to SDGs, Societies and national development
- Not agent of social change and solutions for SDGs

❑ Country and Global implications

- Poor Performances in the SDGs
- Unable to meet Agenda 2030 in a decade's time
- More worsening poverty, hunger & inequalities,
- Governance & human rights (#Endsars),
- Unsustainable Consumption & production, more damage to ecosystem
- Climate change deterioration



3.0. Integrating Sustainability into the Curriculum

Challenges

- Slow & complex process
- Lack of systematic approach
- Resistance to change
- Lack of motivation/ understanding
- Leadership / capacity
- Other priorities- commercial orientation etc
- Culture and value
- Education policy and frameworks: NUC minimum benchmark
- Building and sustaining the **sustainability mindset**

Motivations

- **Teacher's attitude, training / research interests**
- Industry's influence
- Professional bodies
- Employer/students demands
- Education policy/curriculum
- **UN- MESA/UN-DESD, UNSD Networks**
- UN PRME
- Government's consciousness and support
- Capital market requirements.
- **Nigeria Code of governance (2018)**

3.1. Models and Approaches of Integration into Curriculum

Common models/approaches

- Functional: partnering with departments, and businesses
- Interpretive: cross-campus or campus-wide initiative
- Complex : extends to the broader community
- Integrative- holistic: embraces curriculum, campus, community and research

Implementation

- .Integrate into existing courses or programmes: Method used in most Nigeria universities
- 2.Create new disciplines, specific sustainability courses/ programmes
- Integrate into core common requirements
- 4.Create new cross disciplinary sustainability courses/programme



3.2. Processes of integrating sustainability

Different approaches by universities?

- Assessment,
- Mapping,
- Build capacity, & competencies
- Gap analysis,
- Integrate SDG
- Monitor, evaluate



4.0.Conclusion

Based of the implications on realizing the SDGs

- Urgent revision of the national educational policy/ curriculum framework
- Government support
- Paradigm change in Nigerian universities
- Nigerian Universities should shift from the traditional to sustainability model in:
 - learning and teaching
 - Researches (trans/inter disciplinary, evidenced and impact-based and cross-cutting)
 - Leadership and Governance, culture and Operations in universities' campuses
 - Broader (internal/ external) partnerships and engagements
- Universities should sign into UNGC, PRME & other HEI declarations on sustainability



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4.0.Conclusion cont.

- North-South exchanges , collaborations and support
- Capacity building and support for teachers and researchers in sustainability for effectiveness
- Integrate sustainability in curriculum as core or strengthen sustainability contents and mindsets



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