



Sustainable Development Goals-17 Role of Educational Institutions

MANOJ SHUKLA

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, AGGARWAL POST GRADUATE COLLEGE BALLABGARH
FARIDABAD, INDIA

ABSTRACT

No community welfare program worth its objectives, source and affiliation can be successful unless masses are effectively communicated its purpose, mission and strategies. Convergence of ideas, cooperation and collaboration are sine-qua-non for successful implementation and getting desired outcomes in time. Sustainable Development Goals-17 adopted by United Nation to be achieved by 2030 for peaceful, inclusive and healthy communities requires global partnership. The paper highlights that it is possible when people are sensitized not only on the benefits due to achievements of these goals but also ways and means to achieve this. Keeping under consideration of resources availability and technical knowledge, the paper identifies five goals related to healthy lives and well being for all, quality education, clean water and sanitation, gender equality, and responsible consumption and production where educational institutions have very important roles and responsibilities. The study opines that educational institutions' roles can be catalytic and game changer in transforming the society through achieving these goals. Student communities will not only practice new measures for sustainability but will also coalesce and convince others to be a part of this noble global mission. The paper recommends ways and means on which students are to be trained to bring about behavioral change among the masses towards sustainable lifestyle.

KEYWORDS: Sustainable, Responsible, Global, Communities

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I. INTRODUCTION

Progress and prosperity is justified if benefits percolate down and all get their justified share. This follows the transformative promise "Leaving no One Behind" in the United Nations Agenda2030 for transformation of the world. Indian ethos, Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas. Unequivocally adheres that it is our collective responsibility to give equal opportunities to all to learn and grow. Our Prime Minister Sh Narendra Modi's motivational slogan Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas Sabka Paryas also adds value to the campaign by emphasising that all should collaborate for community welfare. The camaraderie and coherence in action are very necessary for achieving sustainable development goals. There are seventeen 17 goals and 169 targets. Only eight years are left to achieve the goals. It is very great challenge for all of us. The COVID-19 pandemic, a black swan event has delayed the implementation of various initiatives in this agenda. The present study has taken five SDGs namely Healthy lives and well being for all (SDG-3), Quality Education (SDG-4), Gender Equality (SDG-5), Clean water and Sanitation (SDG-6) and Responsible consumption and Production (SDG-12) with direct reference to leveraging potential in education institutions for community welfare. Educational institutions can play a very important role in awakening the masses on these crucial issues. Adaptability through change in behaviour and habits is to be nurtured among the masses, Students communities are to be inspired and involved in the global mission for local welfare.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The sustainable development goals are a universal call to end penury, Inequality and injustice through improving the quality of livelihoods and lives. The 17 goals adopted by the UN member states in 2015 are No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Healthy lives and well being for all, Quality Education, Gender Equality, Clean Water, Affordable and green energy Decent work, sustainable industrialization, reducing inequality, sustainable cities

and communities, responsible consumption and production, climate action, Conservation of oceans, life on land, justice for all and need for partnerships for achieving goals in time effectively. The term economic development is no longer justified as it is no guarantee of equity and justice. That is why sustainable development is apt and timely as it is long term vision for present and future generations without compromising the quality of life on the planet Earth. Malthus in the theory of population was in fact discussing sustainability in hindsight and cautions the word that as human urge to create is infinite preventive measures like late marriage, self control and simple living are required. As the literacy rate increases, women get empowered their contributions and participation in activities increase. Gender equality would be rather a consequence than a cause of development (Anne Mikkola & Carrie Milles, 2007). Mahatma Gandhi was also talking of sustainability when he said that the Future depends on what you do today. Education is a key to empowerment. Education is both a goal in itself and a means for attaining all other SDGs. It is not only an integral part of sustainable development but also a key enabler for it (UNESCO, 2017). Education is source of knowledge so necessary for empowerment. Knowledge is the most democratic source of power (Alvin Toffler, 1970). The term sustainability has also been interpreted by many scholars across sectors. Sustainability means a capacity to maintain some entity, outcomes or processes (Bariago, 1999). For humanity to survive it is necessary that there is judicious and justified distribution and use of resources on the planet with zero waste. Sustainability brings in to focus human activities and their ability to satisfy human needs and wants without depleting or exhausting the productive resources at disposal (Thomas, 2015). The core message in sustainability is that we should share our knowledge, wisdom and wealth for humanity welfare. It is estimated that 147 million children missed more than half of their in-class introduction over the past two year of pandemic. This generation of children could lose a combined total of \$ 17 trillion in life time earnings in the present value (The SDGs Repot, 2022). Educational institutions have both potential and resources to nudge the masses to adopt healthy life styles for sustainability. "Be the Change" initiative guides and encourage us to live more sustainable at work and at home by changing our consumption pattern, using active transport such as cycling-----inform your family, your friends and your communities about simple action they can take in their daily lives (United Nations 2020). Universities have to involve colleges and schools in mobilizing the masses towards this cause for humanity. Universities have crucial responsibility in the SDGs, as a driver for the achievement of the full set of goals, through the role in human formation, knowledge production and innovation (Maia & Tristan, 2021). Higher education institutions being the key drivers of SDGs have a crucial role to play in raising awareness and fostering better understanding about the SDGs (United Nations HESI, 2017)

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The paper has provided a framework for effective planning and implementation of sustainable development goals. It is an exploratory in nature. It is pure and longitudinal study. It has used both quantitative and qualitative approach to investigation. The study retrieved data from secondary sources like UNESCO, UNO, related research works, newspapers' articles, and journals.

OBJECTIVES

- 1 To explain the significance and role of educational institutions in achievement of five key Sustainable Development Goals
- 2 To explore and suggest need, ways and means to involve student communities in achieving the goals effectively

IV. SUSTAINABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainability is in fact a life style which does not have an adverse effect on planet and its inhabitants and people are enjoying fruits of production and consumption in a way that current generation gets sufficient for quality life and future generation is not deprived of its due. Sustainability is a three dimensional concept covering economical, social and governance. Production and consumption is done in such a way the while resources are being utilized, proper provision of conservation is in place and quality of environment is not compromised. The scope of sustainability is concerned with the blending of Economics, Sociology, Political Science and Engineering. Sustainability requires both technology changes for mitigation and behavioural changes for adaptability. Sustainability is basically a judicious use of resources so that all get equal and justified share. The recycling of waste water from kitchen and bathrooms for flush tank is in fact practising sustainability through behavioural change and so is the use of public transport. The use of CNG instead of petrol and diesel in cars is leveraging technology for sustainability.

Sustainable development entails taking up projects in such a way that environment suffers minimum damage and bio diversity is protected. Metro Rail in India has to uproot a innumerable trees for construction of tunnels and bridges but at the same time a mass plantation drive abutting tracks is sustainable development initiatives. There has to be a collaborative approach in policies and programs for achieving goals in time.

Democracy to flourish requires responsible Institutions and responsible citizenry. Institutions particularly educational institution has to take up this responsible task of achieving goals in time. This is because educational institutions have ways and means to sensitize and involve the masses aware on issues related to these goals. Sabaka Saath, Sabaka Vikas ,Sabaka Vishvas mission is possible when student communities empowered through training and counseling take up this cause for humanity.

V. KEY SUSTAINABLE GOALS

5.1.1 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL BEING (SDG-3)

The goal is to make the people aware and understand that the good health and well being can be improved through change in behavior, belief, attitudes and values while doing our daily chores. The people are to be convinced to adopt environment friendly life style. A series of motivational talk should be organized at the mohalla or village level on healthy food eating and minimizing wastage. Our traditional culture of sharing old items needs to be revived. The core mission is to adopt a life style where people reduce, reuse and recycle the products. Institutions should prepare a monthly plan and a group of students guided and motivated by teaches should choose a particular area to execute the plan. The role of educational institutions is to provide a common platform to public institutions and NGOs to interact with the people. The progress should be closely monitored and appreciated.

5.1.2 QUALITY EDUCATION (SDG4)

The aim is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Higher education institutions at the district level has the knowledge, resources and required infrastructure to provide quality primary and secondary education.. We need to inbuilt such programs and partnerships that promotes equality and inclusion and for that institution involves students as strategic partners advancing social responsibility efforts across different sectors. As the Covid-19 pandemic kept students away from school particularly in primary stage and the accessibility and affordability of online teaching has been disappointing and disastrous and this underlines the need for in-person education to not only to bridge the learning gap but also provide emotional support to deprived children. To involve our students in this noble cause of providing education to children at the door step shall be helpful in bridging the learning gap.

5.1.3 GENDER EQUALITY (SDG-5)

Research finding have proved that increasing women participation in economic activities is best remedy for various social ills. To inculcate the values of gender equality ,we need to work at the micro level. Elderly people particularly women in the families need to be involved in the mission that no discrimination is practiced at the family level. Both daughters and sons are to be nurtured on equal footing. Documentaries on women health and success stories of great and successful women should be shown in the houses so that they understand the benefits of giving equal opportunities to all. Educational institutions should organize programs and activities for nudging families on befits for gender **equality**.

5.1.4 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION (SDG-6)

The availability of pure water is panacea for water borne decease so common in villages and towns with a very high social cost. Water contamination and its scarcity can be addressed through change in behavior and life style .Environmentally conscious locals can press local authorities that availability of pure water should be the priority. Minimizing water wastage and management of waste water require adaptability for eco friendly practices in our daily life. People need to be nudged towards collective efforts for water conservation. Sanitation is another area where behavior change shall have wider and deeper impact on our surrounding environment. Students along with senior citizens should take up responsibility to keep the streets and common public spaces litter free through changes in attitude and habits with active cooperation of local authorities. People are always willing to contribute in noble causes if they understand, get inspiration and due reorganization. Here the institutions have to come forward and inspire them to be partner in this mission

5.1.5. RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION (SDG12)

Responsible citizenry is very crucial for attainment of goals at the local level effectively, as they understand that nature and methods of consumption and production have wider impact on the environment.. Citizenries should be guided and motivated for eco friendly consumption which causes least environmental damage with minimum wastage Student communities should not only practice themselves eco friendly consumption through change in habits and behavior but also corral people to be responsible consumers. Local people consume that which is accessible, affordable and economical. Readymade food vendors provide this combination easily. The institutors have a role in nudging the vendors that unhealthy and unhygienic food not to be prepared and sold. Both vigil with active cooperation of civic authorities and counseling shall be rewarding.

VI. ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

UNO mandates clearly states that “Involving the stakeholders in awakening the citizenry about SDGs and while doing so leveraging the programs and policies for holistic development of our students to make them skilled & responsible ambassadors for SDGs” Being the major stakeholders in nation’s progress universities, colleges and schools have to collaborate and work collectively to activate these goals. The Universities are the centers of knowledge to invent and share innovative and economical user friendly products and practices for masses to adopt so as to ensure sustainability in activities. The colleges have to act as the centers of knowledge dissemination on way to adopt such practices by the masses that is in sync with sustainability. The Schools are centre where actual execution of policies shall be done. Students shall awaken the masses to understand the urgency for harmonious and stable relationship between human activities and nature for clean, green, safe and healthy environment and to make them responsible citizens. It is necessary to understand that at all the three levels of education role and responsibilities are different but common goals are to be achieved working in perfect harmony. Taking cue from the message from our scriptures “Prakriti Rakshati Rakshitah”(Nature protects if she is protected) Prime Minister Narendra Modi has given a new initiative LIFE(Life Style for Environment) wherein he emphasized that community should prioritize climate change adaptation over mitigation. As two third of Green house gas emission are attributed to household consumption and life style, he has given a clarion call to youth to adopt and mobilize others in Jan Angolan on green life styles. It is incumbent upon educational leaderships that students should be sensitized about green life style and become partner in the Mission LIFE to save Planet Earth and live in harmony with nature. Following are the key tasks which educational institution at all levels should take so as to inspire and involve students in making this initiative a success.

6.1FORMATION OF SDGS ASSOCIATIONS

Achieving sustainable development goals in time require partnerships and collaboration. To make this possible every education institution should constitute an SDG Associations comprising faculty members across streams, a select group of students with leadership skills, institution’s alumni, Industrialists, officials from Municipal Corporation/ Committees/ Gram Sabaha/Public Health Departments and office members from RWAs. They should collectively design a road map for programs and policies on involving students and communities at large on issues related to sustainability.

6.2WORKSHOPS FOR TEACHERS

Teachers at all levels need to be trained on ways and means for making students understand the importance of their role and responsibilities. Teachers have to take up leadership positions to create platforms where students and community interact for sharing and practicing sustainable activities.

6.3WORKSHOPS FOR STUDENTS

Workshops should be organized in the college campus and college faculty and experts from other institutions should be invited to inspire and train so that capable and confident students deploy “nudges” and gentle persuasion techniques to adopt green practices in everyday life. Students should be trained on interpersonal skills as they have to take up leadership role. They have to work as a team and nudge people to bring about change in their belief, behavior, cultural and values.

6.4 ACADEMIA-SOCIETY-INDUSTRY LINKAGES

Coherence in action and convergences of ideas are necessary for success of any collective effort for desired outcomes in any social initiatives and hence need for developing and leveraging academia-society-industry linkage. UN document explains the involvement of youth in research (Data collection, analysis & conclusions for policy making & appropriate actions). There should be Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) and linkages with NGOs and corporate houses for effective implementation of policies and programs.

6.5Social Networking

It is necessary to involve senior citizens and housewives at the local level to mobilize the local communities and in organizing events on various issues related to the goals. Senior citizens understand and have wisdom and experience to convince and coax the people to adopt eco friendly practices in their daily life. Students under the guidance and supervision of their teachers have to create this kind of social grouping at the local level.

6.6 ADOPTION OF VILLAGES AND LOCALITIES Effective implementation and success of sustainable developments goals depends on working at micro level with a active involvement of student communities. Both adaptability and resilience require nudging masses to bring change in their attitudes, behavior and habits. That is

possible when they understand problems and need for collective action. The educational institutions should make a group of students to adopt villages and localities for implementing program and policies related to five SDGs.

6.7 CAPACITY BUILDING AND SKILL ENHANCEMENT COURSES

The universities and the colleges should make use of their respective academic infrastructures to provide basic interpersonal skills and digital skills to school level students. The aim of SDGs is to make them lifelong learners, The training on fundamentals at his stage shall make them capable and confident to learn more and experiment. The classes for them should be organized after college hours and on holidays. NGOs should be roped in to arrange experts for delivering lectures and other logistics.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

Achieving sustainable development goals is a collective responsibility and requires cooperation and collaboration of all. Educational institutions have young and energetic human resource with humongous potential at their disposal which can be inspired and trained to be an active partner in the noble global mission through nudging local populace to adopt eco friendly life styles.

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