

International Journal of Human Sciences Research

Acceptance date: 18/10/2024

AN APPROACH TO UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS OF THE UN'S 2030 AGENDA

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Abstract: This study arose from the need to know if university students are aware of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with respect to the 2030 agenda. For this purpose, a conclusive, descriptive methodology was used, in which a survey was applied through Google forms to 165 students in a representative sample and a random sampling was carried out by groups of the different degrees of the Economic-Administrative area of the Academic Unit of Accounting and Administration of the Autonomous University of Nayarit (UACyA-UAN). The results have been favorable since the university students not only know the SDGs, but also agree to participate in achieving them.

Keywords: Agenda 2030, higher education, sustainable development goals, university students.

INTRODUCTION

The present work originates from the need to know if university students have knowledge of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 agenda, since, as citizens they have been taken into account and it is considered that they can make contributions in each of the goals. In addition to complying with them and being able to transform their environment. Starting with their family, their locality, the community and the university.

“Universities, by their essence, by having the cultural, scientific and technological heritage, constitute a dynamic actor, together with their students and professors in alliances with their counterparts in society to contribute significantly to the fulfillment of the SDGs” (Ojeda and Agüero, 2019, p.126).

“Universities can contribute to encourage the local projection of knowledge and innovation, expanding their capacity to promote human welfare in the territories” (Núñez, 2017, p. 58). In this sense at the local level they can observe the needs of the communities and take

advantage of both internal and external resources for the creation of sustainable development.

On the other hand, “at present, the SDGs that focus attention on the well-being of people and community participation are supported” (Murga-Menoyo, 2020, p.3). Of course, the aim is to ensure that all residents of the planet, without exception, manage to live in a better world, with better conditions than in the past.

It is common knowledge that in September 2015 the 2030 agenda was approved by the United Nations Assembly.

Among the issues included in the 2030 Agenda are the reduction of inequality, zero hunger, clean water and sanitation, social justice and peace, and underwater life, among others.

DEVELOPMENT

The SDGs are another way of doing things, creating strategies and conditions in which countries, according to their socioeconomic, political, cultural and other contexts, must act accordingly, this is not based on being spectators of what is happening, since tomorrow has arrived today. It is time for governments and diverse social actors to recognize that they require local, regional, national, international and global strategic alliances; it is about mutual help that benefits everyone. Because we must be aware that we only have one planet and we must inhabit it in the best possible way. And the digitization of public administration offers us the opportunity to move steadily towards the achievement of these objectives (Sanchez and Romero, 2024).

There is no doubt that the Sustainable Development Goals present a holistic view of the manifestation of an excellent world in all its expressions, however, why are each of the categories of Sustainable Development Goals emanating from the 2030 Agenda not widely known?

How much do young university students know about the Sustainable Development Goals?

Since the Universities are modeling the professional who will occupy a place in which he/she will perform with all his/her capacities and proactive attitudes for a better society, it is necessary to be concerned about the events that are taking place today and will be the transcendence of tomorrow. Thus, it is necessary to take into account that the objectives of sustainable development are important for what underlies each one of them. It is not possible to think of an end to poverty when poverty goes beyond the lack of resources and other means to ensure a sustainable quality of life. Poverty is compounded by other situations such as malnutrition, and lack of access to basic services, schools, social security, etc.

Zero hunger, is it possible that with all the resources we have on the planet, water, soil, oceans, forests, biodiversity, everything is being reduced to nothing when we observe climatic situations that are not favorable for its development?

The increase in hunger and the lack of food security call for precautionary measures to counteract these inclemencies, which must be taken into account by governments around the world.

Among the objectives of the 2030 agenda, the 2nd objective mentions the following

HOW MANY PEOPLE GO HUNGRY?

There are millions in the world, according to

(United Nations, n.d.) More than 600 million people worldwide are expected to face hunger by 2030, highlighting the immense challenge of achieving the goal of zero hunger. People experiencing food insecurity and moderate food insecurity are typically unable to eat a healthy and balanced diet on a regular basis due to income or other resource constraints. (United Nations. n.d.)

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Social well-being begins with a healthy society, which is the basis for the development of peoples. That is why nations strive to have strategies that influence a healthy life. For this reason, the SDGs prioritize the promotion of health and well-being.

Good health is an important requirement for the development of any society; therefore, the nations of the world strive to establish strategies that seek to ensure a healthy life and promote the well-being of populations (Medina, E. 2024).

GENDER EQUALITY

Although it is considered that equality in terms of equal work and equal salary has been achieved, it is far from reality when there is a glass ceiling that does not allow women to move up in their work area, the opposite is the case with the “sticky floor” that does not allow women to leave their work area in precarious conditions. In short, this is the reality that then pretends that nothing happens and that there is gender equality. It is true that many women have joined the labor market (Delgado, J. 2020).

However, let's see. Some examples:

Mentioning Information Technologies, it is observed that women earn 20% less than men (Osuna, M. and Osuna, A. 2020).

According to (Government of Mexico, n.d.). Men earn 34.2% more than women per hour of work. This of course varies according to each state, however, the wage gap is evident.

Clean water and sanitation. The scarcity of water resources, increasingly polluted, causing unhealthy situations, inadequate water sanitation, negatively influences the quality of food security.

Affordable, non-polluting energy. For security, for jobs, for climate change and food production, for all is clean energy.

Decent work and economic growth. How can we talk about economic growth when more than half of the world's population survives on two dollars a day? And when they have a job, it is not enough to have a quality life and be able to move to the next social layer. (OIT, s.f.)

Up to this point we have mentioned 8 of 17 sustainable development objectives, which, continuing to quote them, would be the following:

Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, Reducing Inequalities, Sustainable Cities and Communities, Responsible Production and Consumption, Climate Action, Undersea Life, Life of Terrestrial Ecosystems, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions, and Partnerships for Achieving the Goals.

As can be seen, some are more important and others no less important, an agenda of Sustainable Development Goals with the aim of providing a better world.

Even with all of the above, what is the role of the University in this scenario?

Considering that Higher Education Institutions are the transformers of students to professionals, creators of critical spirit in the graduates, with the capacity to make the necessary changes and of emergent reaction when required, as in the case of the SDGs, then the participation of the University has a preponderant role of preparation-reaction to causes and facts that cannot be postponed, reason to interfere and give practical solutions to the problems presented. It is to act with the tools and techniques available to make the best decisions and really do what is best for the world in which we live. Given the importance of these goals at a global level, it is imperative that all university students are aware of the SDGs.

Now, the express question is:

Nine years after the approval of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, how much do university students know about these goals? For what is indicated below:

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research used a conclusive, descriptive methodology with a quantitative approach. It is conclusive because the study was conducted only once, it is descriptive because it describes what the SDGs consist of and it is quantitative because a questionnaire was applied through Google forms. To find out how much students know about the 2030 agenda and the 17 sustainable development goals.

PARTICIPANTS

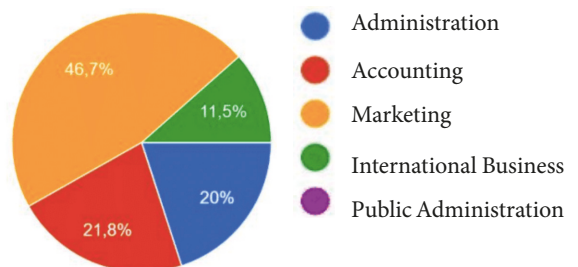
The questionnaire was applied to 165 students in a representative sample and a random sampling was carried out by groups of the different bachelor's degrees of the Economic-Administrative area, especially students of the UACyA-UAN.

TECHNIQUE AND INSTRUMENTS

A 12-item questionnaire was applied, duly pre-coded to guarantee the confidentiality of the respondents. The most relevant items are presented here in the results section of this paper.

RESULTS

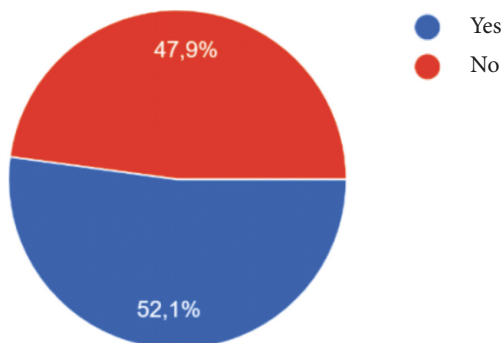
What is the degree you are pursuing?
165 responses



As can be seen, the students of the Bachelor's Degree in Marketing were the ones who participated the most in helping to answer the instrument. Because they showed more interest in the topic and most of them are 1st semester students.

TO A DIRECT QUESTION

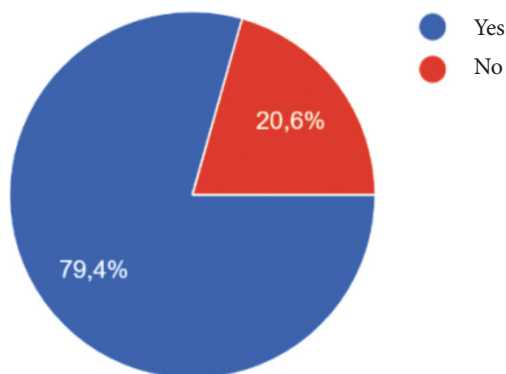
Do you know the Sustainable Development Goals?
165 responses



More than half of the students surveyed are aware of the Sustainable Development Goals, yet one would have expected that with the information available through all media, the percentage of university students who should be aware of the SDGs would be higher.

ON THE OTHER HAND

You would like to participate in achieving the objectives of the 2030 sustainable development agenda.
165 responses



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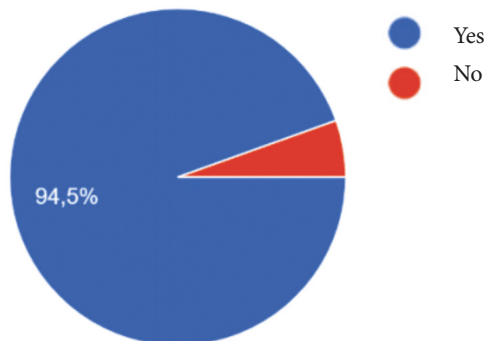
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Nearly 80% are willing to engage in the SDGs and participate in achieving them.

FINALLY

Would you like to learn more about the 2030 agenda for sustainable development?
165 responses



Almost all respondents would like to know more about the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

CONCLUSIONS

As could be observed, university students are not unaware of the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda and are willing to participate so that they are carried out and achieve what is said in the discourse. Their performance is of great importance because they are the link between their home and society. And it is essential to start at home to generate those changes that by far make the difference to achieve the SDGs.

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