



English Teachers' Awareness towards Sustainable Development Goals: Myanmar Context

Ni Ni Hlaing ^{1*} 

¹ Professor, Head of English Department (Retired), Mandalay University of Distance Education, Mandalay, Myanmar

APA Citation:

Nlaing, N.N. (2023). English teachers' awareness towards sustainable development goals: Myanmar context *Journal of English Language and Linguistics*, 4(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/xxxxx>

Received: April 12, 2023

Accepted: June 27, 2023

Published: June 30, 2023

Abstract

Teacher sustainability involves teachers' participation in activities or courses related to Sustainable Development Goals. Moreover, university commitment to achieving a sustainable future through initiatives and activities that are mainly used to integrate sustainability issues into educational programmes is also very important. However, despite the gradually added experience of implementing on education aimed at achieving SDGs, factors that contribute to the associated learning outcomes at the institutional level are yet to be completely explored. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the individual and institutional-level factors connected with the desired learning outcomes in the areas of Sustainable Development Goals. The results highlight several considerations on awareness of English teachers to achieve a sustainable future in Myanmar that may develop the effectiveness of teaching and learning in these areas. Moreover, participants suggest the sources from which they obtained the knowledge they have on each topic. The obligation of Myanmar universities to a stronger integration of sustainability issues into educational programmes still requires to be expanded. As a result, there is a great need for forward-looking programs that will complete the quality education while going beyond the current goals. A future education program must explore how education systems should adjust to deal with new challenges and provide to peace and sustainable development. Finally, the study showed the requirements for awareness of English teachers and university obligation to achieve a sustainable future.

Keywords: Awareness, English teachers, Myanmar, Sustainable development goals

*Corresponding author.

E-mail address: ninihlaing59@gmail.com

Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were realized by the United Nations in 2015 as a general call to action to end poverty, safeguard the planet, and make certain that by 2030, all people experience peace and prosperity. Countries have committed to focus on progress for those who are furthest behind. The SDGs are intended to end poverty, hunger, AIDS, and discrimination against women and girls. The creativity, knowhow, technology, and financial resources from all of society is necessary to succeed the SDGs in every perspective. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are 17 goals with 169 targets that all 191 UN Member States have agreed to try to accomplish by the year 2030 (Sterling, 2016). The SDGs aim to address domestic and global issues, regardless of whether they occur in developed or developing countries. While the public sector, such as governments of developing and developed countries and international organizations, has traditionally been at the centre of the implementation of the international goals, the SDGs are also unique in that they explicitly include a partnership with a variety of actors, such as companies and civil society, as one of the goals. Education in a globalized world is increasingly putting stress on the importance of attitudes and communication skills as an important complement to cognitive knowledge and skills. The society in Myanmar is also paying increasing attention to the importance of education in understanding social, political, cultural, and global issues. This includes the role of education in keeping peace, human rights, equity, acceptance of diversity, and sustainable development. Thus, efforts are needed to speed up development progress. Of the 17 SDGs, Goal 4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote life-long learning opportunities for all) includes a direct reference to Global Citizenship Education (GCE) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

Literature Review

Today, every country of the world is trying to be developed in every possible way. Every country whether it is a developed or developing, they both want to progress in a scientific way. Education is a vital means for the potentialities of a human being to emerge in a positive direction so that a man can live in society with full of dignity and can mould the habits, tastes and character of individuals living in society by imparting knowledge and information. Basic education is, and always has been, the key to freedom from defeat, fear and want. Education is an effective weapon to fight poverty. Education fosters tolerance and understanding and upgrades democratization and stability. It saves lives and gives people the chance to improve their lives. Quality education supplies people with the knowledge, skills, and self-reliance they need to increase income and expand opportunities for employment. Therefore, education gives people a voice and it increases a nation's productivity and competitiveness and is influential for social and political progress.

1. Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT)

Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) is a relatively new theory that is aimed at clarifying three combined characteristics of career development: (i) how basic academic and career interests change, (ii) how educational and career selections are made, and (iii) how academic and career success is gained. The theory incorporates a variety of concepts that appear in earlier career theories and have been found to affect career development (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 2000). SCCT is based on Albert Bandura's general social cognitive theory, which is an important theory of cognitive and motivational processes. Over the course of childhood and adolescence, people are exposed, directly and vicariously, to a variety of occupationally relevant activities in university, at home, and in their communities (Brown, Lent, & Hackett, 2000). Depending on cultural norms, girls are typically exposed to and reinforced for engaging in different types of activities than are boys (Lent, Hackett, Brown, 1999). Rising mostly through self-efficacy and outcome expectations, career-related interests encourage educational and occupational choice goals (Bandura, 1997). Especially to the extent that they are clear, specific, strongly held, stated publicly, and supported by significant others, choice goals make it more likely that people will take actions to reach their goals (Lent, Hackett, Brown, 1999). The aim of SCCT is to touch links between individuals and their career related contexts and attempts to consider the entire environment in which they make career related decisions. It also attempts to locate connections between cognitive processes and interpersonal factors. It tries to explain how individuals' self-concept is influenced by external factors – which influences in his/her environment influence who he/she feel and think he/she is. Within that, it attempts to find the links between self-imposed influences and externally forced influences such as the limitations people put upon themselves because of external influences. Thus, SCCT suggests that individuals are products of their surroundings which are the products of their interactions.

2. The Role of Universities and other higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goal Agenda

HEIs are stated specifically under SDG 4 on quality and inclusive education, but in fact their influence extends across all the goals through teaching and learning, research output, and campus initiatives. HEIs facilitate social, environmental, and economic development. They are one of the most significant breeding places of ideas and solutions to global problems, and their central position amongst networks of government, civil society and industry partners mean that they have vast potential to generate positive impact. Some HEIs have formed campus greening initiatives to improve their internal sustainability, while others have implemented community outreach programmes, student groups, and research and innovation centers. However, in Myanmar, progress has been slow in the development of monitoring tools to evaluate their progress towards meeting the SDGs. The universities were encouraged to better advance gender

equality by not only focusing on access, but also on leadership opportunities and equal reward. The universities agreed to work collaboratively in achieving SDGs, more particularly SDG4, and to ensure alignment between the SDGs and their own strategies. Universities also agreed to share the knowledge they acquired with all staff in their university to build their awareness on SDGs. Lastly, participants expressed their willingness to integrate the SDGs in university curricula, as well as to encourage PhD candidates to write their thesis and do research on themes related to SDGs. The work of university is significant to the achievement of the SDGs, not only when it comes to achieving SDG4 (i.e., the goal directly associated with education), but also when it comes to achieving other goals. Indeed, education is considered a driver for all of the SDGs. However, if we are to gain insights into the practices that are associated with positive outcomes related to the SDGs, it is helpful to employ a conceptual structure that draws attention to the factors that contribute to those.

Research Objectives

This study aims to explore key issues to achieve a sustainable future among English teachers in Myanmar and to discuss on how to strengthen learning and teaching through a systematic review of the literature that focuses on program implementation, monitoring, and evaluation in these fields of education. More specifically, it tries to investigate the awareness of English teachers towards Sustainable Development Goals, the sources from which they obtained the knowledge they have on each topic and university's commitment to achieve a sustainable future in Myanmar.

Methodology

The survey was designed to identify the teacher awareness related to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) based on the Social cognitive career theory (SCCT) which is a relatively new aiming at explaining three integrated research objectives: (i) how English teachers aware on SDGs, (ii) how participants indicate the sources from which they obtained the knowledge they have on each topic, and (iii) how Myanmar universities commit to educating students on sustainability. As noted previously, we focus on both English teachers and universities they are currently working which are essential to achieving the SDGs. Additionally, this questionnaire study was conducted at selected universities during January and February 2023 through an online survey. The target group of the study was English teachers working in English departments of universities. This survey investigated English teachers' awareness towards the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda, the sources from which they obtained the knowledge they have on each topic and university's commitment to achieve a sustainable future in Myanmar. The items and structure of the questionnaire were selected by the researcher from concepts, indicators, documents, and models found in the existing literature on the SDGs that combine environmental, social, and economic elements. An online survey was conducted with 34 items. The survey consisted of 4

sections: (1) 3 question items for awareness, (2) 14 question items for sources of information (3) 8 question items for school commitment and (4) 9 question items for socio-demographic characteristics of respondents. A 3-point Likert scale was used to measure awareness in Phase 1 (Mean 1.00-1.33=Can be seen as a low awareness; Mean 1.34-1.66=Can be seen as a moderate awareness; Mean 1.67-2.00=Can be seen as a high awareness). For each of the same topics in Phase 2, participants indicate the sources from which they obtained the knowledge they have on each topic. The options are (i) I have no knowledge of the topic (ii) Specific training (courses, conferences etc.) and (iii) Television Newspapers/magazines/books Internet (websites, social networks, blogs etc.) If they do not know them, they select the option "I have no knowledge of the topic". They can select more than one option for each topic. For each of the following topics, they must indicate the sources from which they obtained the knowledge they have on each topic. If they do not know them, they can select the option "I have no knowledge of the topic". They can select more than one option for each topic. For university commitment in Phase 3 they have five options (No commitment; Minimum commitment; Moderate commitment; Good commitment; Very good commitment). The time taken to complete the questionnaire was estimated at 20 minutes. Only fully completed questionnaires were considered. The online questionnaire was made available on the survey platform, which ensures complete anonymity of the participants. The teachers who voluntarily participated in the study by completing the questionnaire gave their consent to the anonymous use of the data collected. English teachers were invited to participate in the study "Sustainable Development Goals and 2030 Agenda" - Survey on their awareness. This study aims to measure the general level of awareness towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the key issues to achieve a sustainable future among members of the English teaching staff.

1. Participants

The data on respondents' general and biographical data, including age, gender, educational attainment, area, teaching field, type of university, number of students attending the university, geographical location of the university, initiatives, and activities of the university to integrate sustainability in teaching activities, previous participation in specific activities/training related to the SDGs and sustainability were collected. The participants of the study are at the age between 29 and 65. The majority of the participants were female (88%) and the minority is male (12%). Among the participants, 93% were master's degree holders and 7% got Ph.D. The teaching area they belong to is general English. Most of the participants teach both undergraduate and postgraduate level. According to the responses, most of them are working in upper Myanmar and some from lower Myanmar universities which are located in urban and rural areas. Most of the participants are from arts and science universities. Only some of them have experienced in sustainable development goals. The participation is voluntary and free of charge and took approximately 15 minutes. Participants can withdraw their consent at any time by simply not

completing the questionnaire, without providing any explanation and without losing any rights and benefits. Only data from fully completed questionnaires have been collected and considered. In case of withdrawn consent, no new information will be collected and added to the existing data. As the study is observational, no risks to participants are apparent. By agreeing to participate in this study, they declare that they have read and understood the information in this text. If they would like further clarification or information, they can contact the researcher's email.

2. Data Collection

The procedures for conducting this research were divided into three main stages. The first stage involved preparing the questionnaire statements based on the objectives and the research questions. The second stage involved the distribution of the questionnaire to the target participants to collect the data. The final stage involved analysing the data in terms of numbers by using SPSS software and then discussing the findings to answer the research questions and draw the final conclusions. A snowball sampling method was used by asking participants to participate their colleagues through social networking platforms and other communication channels. Participation in the survey was totally free of charge.

Results

Results are discussed along with three different dimensions. First, we characterize the level of awareness of English teachers on Sustainable Development Goals. This is followed in the second results section by a discussion of the outcomes that were found to be statistically significant on sources of information for topics in session 2 of the questionnaire. Guided by the conceptual framework, the third section on university commitment is related to the SDGs and sustainability.

1. Phase 1: Awareness of English Teachers on Sustainable Development Goals

Despite the limitations, this study tries to explore English teachers' experience of incorporating SDGs in their teaching by applying Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) lens. It is a study to examine how Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is realised in a language classroom by examining how university promote the integration of sustainability issues in educational programmes.

Table 1*Promoting the Integration of Sustainability Issues in Educational Programmes in Universities*

Question No	Item	Responses		Calculation		Interpretation
		No	Yes	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
1	Does your university promote the integration of sustainability issues in educational programmes?	69%	31%	1.31	0.46	Low support

According to the data, low support has been provided in relation to the integration of sustainability issues in educational programmes to attain the SDG goals (Mean=1.31). This finding can provide insights for universities providing educational programmes to achieve and to promote sustainable development in language subjects.

Furthermore, sustainability was already totally measured in education three decades ago, especially in higher education of Myanmar, where most teachers do their preparatory, modifying the commitment and social responsibility of universities in training human resources with sustainability-oriented visions and competences. With this idea, we collected the data to gain information about initiatives mainly used to integrate sustainability issues into university educational programmes.

Table 2*Initiatives Used to Integrate Sustainability Issues into University Educational Programmes*

Question No	Options	Responses		Calculation		Interpretation
		No	Yes	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
1	Classroom-taught lesson	40%	60%	1.60	0.49	Show moderate initiatives
2	Interactive workshops	66%	34%	1.34	0.47	Show moderate initiatives
3	Active citizenship projects	81%	19%	1.19	0.39	Show a little initiative
4	Experiences	75%	25%	1.25	0.43	Show a little initiative
5	Others	98%	2%	1.02	0.14	Show a little initiative
	Average	72.00%	28.00%	1.28	0.45	Show a little initiative

Among all types of initiatives, classroom-taught lesson (Mean=1.60), interactive workshops (Mean=1.34) and experiences (Mean=1.25) were associated with the teachers' opinion of currently used initiatives to sustainability issues.

For the implementation of ESD, the teacher becomes an essential facilitator, guiding learners to explore values, awareness, and visions of possible futures, with new methods of active learning based on activities or courses.

Table 3
Teacher Participation in Activities or Courses Related to Sustainable Development or the Sustainable Development Goals

Question No	Item	Responses		Calculation		Interpretation
		No	Yes	M	SD	
1	Have you ever participated in activities or courses related to sustainable development or the Sustainable Development Goals?	67%	33%	1.33	0.47	Low

The integration of ESD into educational policies, strategies, and programmes at local and international levels, into curricula and textbooks, and into the training of educators themselves are the requirement for the implementation of activities or courses. Participation in activities or courses in which the goal of knowledge, the goal of knowing how to do, the concept of agency and the sense of belonging to a group and to a society are explored in this phase. According to the data, most of the teachers have low participation in activities or courses related to sustainable development goals (Mean=1.33).

The teachers who participated in the study responded three questions about integration of sustainability issues in educational programmes, initiatives mainly used to integrate sustainability issues into university’s educational programmes and activities or courses related to sustainable development or the Sustainable Development Goals. Finally, teachers’ awareness concerning the Sustainable Development Goals can be seen as a low positive step in awareness.

Table 4
English Teachers’ Awareness Concerning the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Question No	Item Responses	Calculation		Interpretation
		M	SD	
1	Does your university promote the integration of sustainability issues in educational programmes?	1.31	0.46	Low awareness
2	What kind of initiatives and activities are mainly used to integrate sustainability issues into university’s educational programmes?	1.28	0.45	Low awareness
3	Have you ever participated in activities or courses related to sustainable development or the Sustainable Development Goals?	1.33	0.47	Low awareness
	Average	1.29	0.45	Low awareness

The results of the mean scores of English teachers on Sustainable Development Goals and university commitment show a less awareness (Average Mean=1.29). Similarly, teachers' responses on university support to promote the integration of sustainability issues in educational programs also has a low level (Mean=1.31). Analyses using the SPSS version 20 also show a low level of initiatives and type of activities which are mainly used to integrate sustainability issues into university's educational programs (Mean=1.28) and participation in previous courses/activities on the SDGs (Mean=1.33).

2. Phase 2: Sources of Information

For each of the following topics, participants indicate the sources from which they obtained the knowledge they have on each topic. If they do not know them, they select the option "I have no knowledge of the topic". They can select more than one option for each topic.

Table 5
Responses on Knowledge of the Given Topics

Sr No	Subject Matters	I have no knowledge of the topic.		Calculation		Interpretation
		No	Yes	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
1	SDGs and 2030 Agenda	66%	34%	1.34	0.47	Moderate
2	Ecological footprint	58%	42%	1.42	0.49	Moderate
3	Greenhouse effect	51%	49%	1.49	0.50	Moderate
4	Resilience	46%	54%	1.54	0.50	Moderate
5	Social gradient	51%	49%	1.49	0.50	Moderate
6	Determinants of health	33%	67%	1.67	0.47	High
7	Green Gross Domestic Product	44%	56%	1.56	0.50	Moderate
8	Human Development Index (HDI)	53%	47%	1.47	0.50	Moderate
9	Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare (ISEW)	32%	68%	1.68	0.47	High
10	Equitable and sustainable wellbeing	28%	72%	1.72	0.45	High
11	Brundtland Report (1987)	80%	20%	1.20	0.40	Low
12	Kyoto Protocol (1997)	66%	34%	1.34	0.47	Moderate
13	Paris Agreement on climate change (2015)	71%	29%	1.29	0.45	Low
14	Doughnut Economy	80%	20%	1.20	0.40	Low
	Average	54.21%	45.79%	1.46	0.50	Moderate

The sources of information vary for each item, but teachers have got high mean value on equitable and sustainable wellbeing (Mean=1.72) followed by index of sustainable economic welfare (ISEW) (Mean=1.68) and determinants of health (Mean=1.67) among overall knowledge of the given topics.

Regarding specific training, the teachers responded for different topics given to them.

Table 6
Responses on Having Specific Training (Courses, Conferences Etc.) of the Given Topics

Sr No	Knowledge	I have specific training (courses, conferences etc.).		Calculation		Interpretation
		No	Yes	M	SD	
1	SDGs and 2030 Agenda	81%	19%	1.19	0.39	Low
2	Ecological footprint	78%	22%	1.22	0.41	Low
3	Greenhouse effect	66%	34%	1.34	0.47	Moderate
4	Resilience	51%	49%	1.49	0.50	Moderate
5	Social gradient	59%	41%	1.41	0.49	Moderate
6	Determinants of health	47%	53%	1.53	0.50	Moderate
7	Green Gross Domestic Product	55%	45%	1.45	0.50	Moderate
8	Human Development Index (HDI)	56%	44%	1.44	0.50	Moderate
9	Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare (ISEW)	48%	52%	1.52	0.50	Moderate
10	Equitable and sustainable wellbeing	33%	67%	1.67	0.47	High
11	Brundtland Report (1987)	73%	27%	1.27	0.44	Low
12	Kyoto Protocol (1997)	68%	32%	1.32	0.47	Low
13	Paris Agreement on climate change (2015)	39%	61%	1.61	0.49	Moderate
14	Doughnut Economy	77%	23%	1.23	0.42	Low
	Average	59.36%	40.64%	1.41	0.49	Moderate

The specific training (courses, conferences etc.) of the given topics expressed by teachers show a moderate mean (Mean=1.41) towards teaching sustainability in designated lessons or, for others, teaching sustainability in the current lessons of their subject, as an integral part. In terms of specific training, only a few areas, equitable and sustainable wellbeing (Mean=1.67), Paris agreement on climate change (2015) (Mean=1.61) and determinants of health (Mean=1.53) were reported to have high to moderate frequency. Teachers have no knowledge about the SDGs and 2030 Agenda (Mean=1.19) followed by ecological footprint (Mean=1.22).

Regarding responses on learning from television newspapers/magazines/books, Internet (websites, social networks, blogs etc.) about the given topics, moderate level is achieved on the item 6, 7 and 10.

Table 7

Responses on Learning from Television Newspapers/Magazines/Books, Internet (Websites, Social Networks, Blogs Etc.) about the Topics

Sr No	Knowledge	I learn from television newspapers/magazines/books Internet (websites, social networks, blogs etc.).		Calculation		Interpretation
		No	Yes	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
1	SDGs and 2030 Agenda	59%	41%	1.41	0.49	Moderate
2	Ecological footprint	69%	31%	1.31	0.46	Low
3	Greenhouse effect	55%	45%	1.45	0.50	Moderate
4	Resilience	57%	43%	1.43	0.50	Moderate
5	Social gradient	58%	42%	1.42	0.49	Moderate
6	Determinants of health	44%	56%	1.56	0.50	Moderate
7	Green Gross Domestic Product	53%	47%	1.47	0.50	Moderate
8	Human Development Index (HDI)	59%	41%	1.41	0.49	Moderate
9	Index of Sustainable Economic Welfare (ISEW)	48%	52%	1.52	0.50	Moderate
10	Equitable and sustainable wellbeing (BES)	41%	59%	1.59	0.49	Moderate
11	Brundtland Report (1987)	62%	38%	1.38	0.49	Moderate
12	Kyoto Protocol (1997)	70%	30%	1.30	0.46	Low
13	Paris Agreement on climate change (2015)	63%	37%	1.37	0.48	Moderate
14	Doughnut Economy	77%	23%	1.23	0.42	Low
	Average	58.21%	41.79%	1.42	0.49	Moderate

The results show that learning is generally moderate (Average Mean=1.42), except for some of the items studied. The attitudes expressed by teachers show a trend towards equitable and sustainable wellbeing (Mean=1.59) followed by determinants of health (Mean=1.56) and green gross domestic product (Mean=1.47) were found in television newspapers/magazines/ books Internet (websites, social networks, blogs etc.).

In terms of sources of information about the topics, teachers reported moderate shortcomings for the integration of sustainability topics, or at least is perceived to be insufficient. The results of the descriptive analyses indicated for all three items are summarized in Table 8.

Table 8
Responses on Sources of Information about the Topics

Sr No	Subject Matters	Calculation		Interpretation
		M	SD	
1	I have no knowledge of the topic.	1.46	0.50	Moderate shortcomings
2	I have specific training (courses, conferences etc.).	1.41	0.49	Moderate shortcomings
3	I learn from television newspapers/magazines/books Internet (websites, social networks, blogs etc.).	1.42	0.49	Moderate shortcomings
	Average	1.43	0.49	Moderate shortcomings

The results of the responses on sources of information about the topics show the moderate shortcomings of the situation. Although most of the participants respond themselves as having moderate shortcomings (Average mean=1.43), others responded that they have no knowledge of the topic (Mean=1.46).

3. Phase 3: University Commitment to Educating Students on Sustainability

Participants rate their university commitment to educating students on sustainability in terms of knowledge and skills on each of the given topics. Table 3 shows descriptive analysis of university commitment, presented for each item as mean and SD.

Table 9
University Commitment to Educating Students on Sustainability (n=55)

Sr No	Items	Attitude					Calculation		Interpretation
		No commitment	Minimum commitment	Moderate commitment	Good commitment	Very good commitment	M	SD	
1	Sustainable food production and consumption	19%	20%	16%	33%	12%	2.99	1.33	Moderate commitment
2	Recycling and waste reduction	16%	16%	20%	35%	13%	3.13	1.29	Moderate commitment
3	Resilient infrastructures and sustainable industrialisation	17%	25%	33%	15%	10%	2.76	1.19	Moderate commitment
4	Energy conservation and diffusion of renewable energy sources	10%	20%	25%	29%	16%	3.21	1.22	Moderate commitment
5	Entrepreneurial skills and competences in labour market	7%	15%	20%	36%	22%	3.51	1.19	Good commitment

Table 9 (Continued)

Sr No	Items	Attitude					Calculation		Interpretation
		No commitment	Minimum commitment	Moderate commitment	Good commitment	Very good commitment	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	
6	Fight against inequalities, poverty, and social exclusion	13%	27%	26%	23%	11%	2.92	1.21	Moderate commitment
7	Circular economy and correct choice of assets	25%	25%	22%	20%	8%	2.61	1.27	Moderate commitment
8	Building of participatory and inclusive societies	51%	30%	13%	5%	1%	1.75	0.93	No commitment
	Average	19.75%	22.25%	21.88%	24.50%	11.63%	2.86	1.30	Moderate commitment

University commitment to integrating sustainability activities has been found with average mean 2.86 (SD=1.30) which indicates moderate commitment. For the individual items, more than half of the respondents indicated at least good commitment to entrepreneurial skills and competences in labour market (Mean=3.51). Building of participatory, inclusive, and pacific societies was indicated as the lowest mean value of the responses (Mean=1.75). More issues with the most weaknesses were fighting against inequalities, poverty, and social exclusion (Mean=2.92) and circular economy and correct choice of assets (Mean=2.61).

Discussion

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is commonly understood as education that encourages changes in knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes to enable a more sustainable and just society for all. According to Barth (2015), ESD aims to empower and prepare current and future generations to see their needs using a balanced and integrated approach to the economic, social, and environmental scopes of sustainable development. The concept of ESD was born from the need for education to address the increasing environmental challenges facing the earth. To do this, education must change to provide the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that empower learners to contribute to sustainable development. At the same time, education must be reinforced in all agendas, programmes and activities that promote sustainable development. In short, sustainable development must be integrated into education and education must be integrated into sustainable development. ESD is all-inclusive and transformational education and concerns learning content and outcomes, pedagogy, and the learning environment (UNESCO, 2014). With regards to learning content such as curricula, the complex sustainability challenges facing societies cut across boundaries and multiple thematic areas. Education must therefore address key issues such as climate change, poverty, and sustainable production. ESD promotes the integration of these

critical sustainability issues in local and global contexts into the curriculum to prepare learners to understand and respond to the changing world. ESD aims to produce learning outcomes that include core competencies such as critical and systemic thinking, collaborative decision-making, and taking responsibility for present and future generations. To deliver such varied and growing issues, ESD uses advanced pedagogy, encouraging teaching and learning in an interactive, learner-centred way that enables exploratory, action-oriented, and transformative learning. Learners are enabled to think critically and systematically develop values and attitudes for a sustainable future. In this research, we aimed to identify, first, English teachers' awareness concerning the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), second, sources from which they obtained the knowledge they have on each topic and third, university commitment to educating students on sustainability. The survey was designed based on previous surveys used for similar assessments based on the Social cognitive career theory (SCCT). As have been seen, the data indicated that it is important to make progress towards the SDGs, as explained, while also highlighting some of the limitations associated with (a) awareness of English teachers on Sustainable Development Goals, (b) sources of information from which they gained the knowledge they have on each topic and (c) university commitment to educating students on sustainability. This study thus contributes considerations that can serve to improve current practices by suggesting the need to think critically about the foundations of current approaches towards the SDGs. Advancing towards the SDGs, many scholars suggest the need to think beyond the current paradigm within which the SDGs and related curricular practices have developed. In addition, this study suggested that universities need to promote the integration of sustainability issues in educational programmes as low awareness was found in this area. The findings also show that teachers have low awareness on which initiatives and activities should be mainly used to integrate sustainability issues into university's educational programmes. Ofei-Manu & Didham (2014) also state that a few teachers know to participate in activities or courses related to sustainable development or the Sustainable Development Goals. Addressing these limitations could now be done more easily to reduce the existing gap between the goals and their achievement. Undesirably, SDG topics are not yet seen as a shared responsibility among teachers of English, so that for many topics teaching is proposed in chosen lessons that have nothing to do with current activities. In Myanmar universities, the percentage of teachers with better knowledge of sustainable development is small, and this is related to university engagement with sustainability issues. Therefore, this could probably be the first situation where ESD should be emphasised, through teacher empowerment. Further action is needed to support teachers and universities to promote sustainability and empower students to behave sustainably. Further studies need to be conducted that focus on the impact of increasing university engagement at ESD.

Implications

Today, ESD maybe at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2015). The SDGs recognize that all countries must arouse action in the following key areas - people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership - to tackle the global challenges that are critical for the survival of humanity. Achieving these goals requires a profound transformation in the way we think and act. This study thus contributes by providing insights that can serve to improve current practices while also suggesting the need to think critically about the foundations of current approaches if, in our opinion, meaningful progress towards the SDGs is to be made. Advancing towards the SDGs can be seen as a positive step however, many scholars suggest the need to think beyond the current pattern within which the SDGs and related curricular practices have emerged. There are several implications drawn from this study which support the ideas of Halinen (2017) that apply to practice, policy and theory related to future curriculum development and effective implementation of educational programs related to SDG.

Conclusion

The aim of this study was to review teachers' awareness, sources of information and university commitment towards the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda among English teachers. The results show that teachers' awareness can be generally seen as a low positive step. Most of the participating teachers stated that sustainability topics are partially integrated into the teaching programmes and activities of the university in which they currently work. Thus, the level of awareness confirms as a low awareness. In terms of sources of information about the given topics, teachers reported moderate shortcomings for the integration of sustainability topics perceived to be insufficient. The university commitment towards sustainability also shows a moderate level. In terms of the level of commitment of universities, with the lowest mean value for building of participatory and inclusive societies, moderate commitment is found, indicating less awareness to both environmental and social aspects of sustainability. When considering the university commitment in integrating sustainability issues into improving activities, this seems to indicate a difficulty of this integration in universities where programmes are less flexible. If this hypothesis is correct, integration would be easier in independent universities and sustainability could be added more effectively to the ministerial learning outcomes already established (Goren et al., 2017). This situation could also be partly related to the isolation and lack of collaboration that teachers experience when trying to integrate sustainability into their teaching, without resources and a common project. Secondly, the results show teachers' awareness and the university commitment to methods of teaching sustainability, especially when comparing different teaching strategies such as interactive workshops and active citizenship projects with classroom-taught lessons. The results of this study need to be commented on in the context of education for

sustainability worldwide and in Myanmar. The findings support the idea of developing awareness, knowledge and action skills related to sustainability in university students over time by formalising both a general and diverse approach by teachers and accepting the influence of the university as determinative. While providing teachers with the time, places, and tools to integrate sustainability into their teaching is an essential component of university support, some problems are found in the experience and vision of teaching by teachers themselves.

Limitations

This study has some limitations that the author is aware of. First, despite the emphasis on measuring knowledge of facts, figures, philosophies, strategies and so on, other researchers are trying to obtain more information about context with background collection on students. It might be worth reconsidering the value of more open-ended questions in the questionnaire and interview survey. While relatively more complicated to interpret and analyse, open-ended questions could provide more information beyond a programmed scope and in context for qualitative analysis (i.e., coding these answers through a set framework driven by the content of the data). Collecting data about context could also be a way to measure contribution to sustainable development. This may help learn more about approaches and areas of learning that may not seem obvious but could be crucial to sustainable behaviour and activities, such as non-formal education and informal, intergenerational, lifelong learning, among others. Qualitative methods such as classroom observation, interviews and focus group discussions would also help researchers perform more explorative, open-ended, data-driven monitoring of the educational process at the local level. These approaches could also help researchers make better predictions about how the educational process and learners' experiences explain into actual sustainable development, and whether this will make a difference. Findings could also speak to the quality of learning, part of which is defined by the staying power of learners' thoughts and ideas, which can be built upon by learners beyond university. Qualitative approaches should also link to global monitoring, although researchers are still working out how to deal with this type of data at this level. These approaches should feed up into general, frameworks for country monitoring.

References

- Barth, M. (2015). *Implementing Sustainability in Higher Education: Learning in an Age of Transformation*. London: Routledge.
- H. Goren et al. (2017). *Global citizenship education redefined: a systematic review of empirical studies on global citizenship education* Int.
- Azar A.S. et al. (2020). *The impact of effective educational leadership on school students' performance in Malaysia* Educ. Q. Rev.

- Bourn D. et al. (2017). A Review of Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship Education in Teacher Education. *Background Paper for the 2017/8 Global Education Monitoring Report*
- Halinen, I. (2017). The conceptualization of competencies related to sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles. *Current and Critical Issues in Curriculum, Learning and Assessment*, 8. Paris: IBE-UNESCO.
- Kickbusch, I.; Hanefeld, J. (2017). Role for academic institutions and think tanks in speeding progress on sustainable development goals. *BMJ*, 358, 3519.
- Leal Filho, et al. (2019). Sustainable Development Goals and sustainability teaching at universities: Falling behind or getting ahead of the pack? *J. Clean. Prod.*, 232, 285–294.
- Ofei-Manu, P. & Didham, R.J. (2014). Quality Education for Sustainable Development: A Priority in Achieving Sustainability and Well-being for All. *IGES Policy Brief, No. 28. Hayama, Japan*. <http://pub.iges.or.jp/modules/envirolib/view.php?docid=4966>.
- Sachs, J.D. (2012). From Millennium Development Goals to Sustainable Development Goals. *Lancet* 379, 2206–2211.
- Sterling, S. (2016). A commentary on education and Sustainable Development Goals. *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*, 10(2): 208-213.
- UNESCO. (2015) *Transforming Our World—Literacy for Sustainable Development*. Available online: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000234253> (accessed on 13 June 2022).
- UNESCO. (2020) *Education for Sustainable Development—A Roadmap*. (2020). Available online: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000374802> (accessed on 17 May 2022).
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. (2017). *Education for Sustainable Development Goals—Learning Objectives*. Available online: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000247444> (accessed on 9 March 2022).
- World Health Organization. Sixty-Sixth World Health Assembly, (2013). World Health Assembly Resolution WHA66.11. *Health in the Post-2015 Development Agenda*. Available online: https://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/WHA66-REC1/WHA66_2013_REC1_complete.pdf (accessed on 28 April 2022).