

Achieving Sustainable Development Goals: Role of Universities in Pakistan

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Abstract

Achievement sustainable development goals is the priority of the nations in the world. Sustainability is dependent on the peace and cannot be achieved without enhancing the vision of peace in youth. Universities have a significant role in enhancing the vision of in youth. The question is that whether our universities are meeting the needs of peace in society when violence and criminal attitude has been observed in the graduate youth as well. Therefore, this study has been conducted to explore the existing role of the universities in enhancing the vision of peace in youth to achieve the sustainable development goals. The participants of the study are faculty members of the universities and doctoral students in the faculties of social sciences. Before the collection of data, participants' were ensured to keep their names confidential. Unstructured interviews have been used as tool of research. Questions in qualitative research are wide-ranging & ask for an investigation of the central concept in a study and are supportive in giving greater depth of understanding of a phenomenon that is largely unknown (Creswell, 2009). The study is an empirical addition in the knowledge about the existing role of the universities in enhancing the vision of peace in Pakistani youth. The study is supportive in revising the higher education policies and curriculum for further enhancing the vision of peace in graduates of the universities. The study is beneficial for the researchers and doctoral students in understanding the existing challenges in enhancing the vision of peace in universities students.

Keywords: Sustainable, Peace, Universities, Role, Pakistan

Introduction

Higher education institutions have the priorities to enhance the vision of peace in the youth at undergraduate and graduate level. Academic activities of teaching and research have the

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objectives to promote the peaceful thinking in the students in the higher education institutions. Milton & Barakat, (2016) elaborated that educational system for peace is based on exploring conditions and values among young people and to enable them for the expression of their ideas without any fear of the previous generation's negative criticism.

Education for peace performs a vital role in developing awareness in perspective and understanding the world through value systems and ideologies. Schools will need to take on this task with energy and determination, to devote more time to such explorations than ever before, as students struggle to make sense of a world characterized by threat and uncertainty (Skovdal & Campbell, 2015).

For decades, Pakistan has been facing the biggest challenge of terrorism and extremism, consequently affecting all walks of life, including educational institutions. Therefore, the need to investigate educational institutions' active part in promoting education for peace is the call for every academic professional (Gul, Bashir & Mustafa , 2020,p-269).

The teacher plays a significant role in promoting peace. A teacher can create the culture of peace and can assign the activities of peace to the students in the higher education institutions. It's important to assign the tasks of peace activities to the youth of universities for their active participation in peacekeeping in the society in future (John, 2019).

Peace Teachings and Sustainable Development: A General Overview

Peace teachings and sustainable development are interlinked and should be inculcated in the pedagogy of the universities. The teacher training programs for the universities teacher should give the priority to teach peace in the context of sustainable development. Sustainable development looks to be no more focused in the developing societies because of lack of quality of challenges in peace teachings in the higher education institutions (Mitchel, 2018). In the South Asian countries, it's important to improve the quality of peace teachings in the higher education institutions for the active role of universities youth in the sustainable development (Kaleem, 2018). The academic background of the students that are enrolled in the universities look to be weak in peace elaborations and sustainable development. Therefore, it's important that the peace teachings should be further improved at school level as well (Khan 2019).

Role of Universities in Peace Teachings

Existing of three parallel education systems in looks to be major barriers in a collective way enhancing the vision of peace for the sustainable development in the society (Iftikhar, 2019). It's important to revise the curriculum with innovative strategies to enhance the vision of peace in the universities youth (Kamal, 2020). Universities have sufficient role in developing the vision of peace in the youth but further reforms are required in the teacher training programs (Khan, 2019). A climate of peace teachings need to be created in the universities for further enhancing the vision of peace in the youth and for their active participation in the sustainable development in the society.

Statement of the Problem

Achieving sustainable development goals is the agenda of societies. Universities perform a vital role in preparing the youth to achieve the sustainable development goals. How the universities are preparing the youth for their contributions in achieving the sustainable

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development goals is the major question to be addressed. Therefore, the researcher decided to conduct study on the role of universities in Pakistan in achieving the sustainable development goals.

Significance of the Study

The study is significant for the researchers and universities administration. The universities leadership can further streamline their policies for preparing the youth to achieve the sustainable development goals.

Selection of Participants:

Three (03) federal public sector universities (National University of Modern languages, Federal Urdu University and International Islamic University, Islamabad) were selected as participants of the study. Faculty members of the Faculties of Social sciences of the concerned universities were considered as sample of the study. First of all, unstructured interview questions were developed and the reliability and validity of the interview items was determined by the experts. Peace experts and professionals were included for their expert opinion about the validity and reliability of the interview items. The participants of the study were university teachers and graduates belonging to faculties of social sciences of the federal universities.

Research Design:

The study focuses on eliciting the experiences of faculty members of faculties of social sciences of federal universities of Pakistan. These experiences formed the basis of the data. Burnett (1998) contends that “the depth of violence experienced in the school context could hardly be measured quantitatively” (p. 791). This study was therefore qualitative in design. This design was chosen as it was concerned with engaging participants’ insights and gaining an understanding of their experiences. Further it allowed for the acknowledgement of the context of the participant (Guba & Lincoln, 1994).

Data Collection

The data was personally collected by the researcher from the participants. Prior permission was taken from the selected participants for the conducting the interview.

Data Analysis:

Thematic analysis was used for the analysis of collected data. Thematic analysis with deductive way of coding is used on the basis of grounded theory. There are different approaches to conduct thematic analysis but the major are: familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing up (Caulfield, 2021).

The collected data has been analyzed keeping in view objectives of the study. Wolcott (1994) stated that “the real mystique of qualitative inquiry lies in the process of using data rather than in the process of gathering data and the ultimate challenge lies in organizing, analyzing, and interpreting the collected data” (p.1). Rubin (2005) recommended to write the summary of the contents of the interview after transcribing.

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Developing Deductive Categories

Deductive categories have been deduced from theories. Either a structured or unconstrained matrix of analysis can be used in deductive content analysis, (Kynga's & Vanhanen 1999). It is generally based on earlier work such as theories, models, mind maps and literature reviews (Sandelowski 1995, Polit & Beck 2004, Hsieh & Shannon 2005).

The following themes were identified through data analysis:

- i. Place of peace teachings in the curriculum
- ii. Linkage of peace teachings and sustainable development

Table 1: **Themes and Categories**

S. No	Themes	Categories
1.	Place of peace teachings in the curriculum	<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. Defining peace activitiesii. Strategies to avoid violent activities.iii. Conceptual understanding of peace activities.iv. Nature and type of peace activities in society.
2.	Linkage of peace teachings and sustainable development	<ol style="list-style-type: none">i. Nature of peace teachings and sustainable development.ii. Foundations of linkage of peace teachings and sustainable development.

Discussion:

After the extensive review of the available literature review and the data collected from the interviews of the participants, the emerging themes represent about the role of universities to enhance the vision of peace for the sustainable development in the society. The themes indicated that universities have vital role in enhancing the vision of peace in the students for their active contribution in sustainable development in the society. Although, content of peace teachings need revisions keeping in view existing situation of violence and crimes in the youth. The themes of the collected data indicated that universities have priorities to arrange the programs that are concerned with enhancing the vision of peace in the students.

Findings of the Study:

Similarities have been found in the thematic analysis of the collected data from the participants and after the extensive review of the available literature. The findings of the study include:

1. Majority of participants were agreed that teachers have a significant role in enhancing the vision of peace in the universities youth for their active participation in the sustainable development in the society.
2. Majority of the participants were agreed that the universities curriculum reflects the linkage between peace teachings and sustainable development and is significant in

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promoting the vision of peace in the universities youth.

3. Majority of the participants were agreed that existing policies regarding peace teachings need for further revisions.
4. Majority of the participants were agreed that the adopted pedagogy for peace teachings need to be further strengthened.
5. Majority of the participants were agreed that universities arrange programs continuously on the peace teachings and sustainable development.

Conclusion

Innovative strategies are required to for further strengthening the vision of peace in the universities youth for their active participation in the sustainable development in the society. Universities teachers have active role in enhancing the vision of peace in the youth.

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