

Sustainability in the eyes of students and academic teachers of the Institute of Biology of the Pedagogical University in Krakow.

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Abstract

In 2017, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) set out 17 Sustainable Development Goals that relate to culture, education, and natural and social sciences. Education for sustainability can influence moral perceptions of what constitutes socially appropriate behavior (Felgendreher & Löfgren, 2018). In this paper, the opinions of laboratory teachers and students regarding sustainable development were examined. Students completed an online survey in which they assessed the classes conducted at the Institute of Biology in terms of various aspects: energy consumption, production of toxic waste and its disposal. In the case of the instructors, the survey was divided into five parts regarding: expected performance and effort, social impact, facilitating conditions and behavioral intentions of the respondents. The results of the student survey indicate that students do not see much need to change their classes and at the same time express the need to discuss methods of waste disposal from classes. In the case of teachers, they are aware of the importance of sustainable development, but they are not convinced about the impact of the classes on the knowledge and awareness of students on this issue. Most academic teachers are willing to conduct their classes using the principles of sustainable development when the specificity of their classes allows it. The respondents do not know the opinion of the participants of their classes about the way they are conducted. In this case, getting feedback from students should be considered a compulsory part of the course. In addition, it would be recommended to modify the classes conducted using green chemistry or small scale chemistry. Future teachers and decision-makers in their future workplaces are educated at the Institute of Biology. Education with an emphasis on the conscious use of the principles of sustainable development could develop good practices of these ideas among students.

References

- Felgendreher, S., Löfgren, Å. (2018) Higher education for sustainability: can education affect moral perceptions? *Environmental Education Research*. 24:4, 479-491.

Keywords

sustainability; education; teachers' education