

Exploring SDG Awareness: Insights from Secondary Education Teaching Master's Students

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Abstract:

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by the United Nations in 2015, encompass 17 global objectives aimed at addressing critical challenges such as poverty, climate change, and inequality. Education plays a pivotal role in fostering a citizenry committed to achieving the goals outlined in the 2030 Agenda. This study focuses on evaluating the knowledge and perceptions of SDGs among students enrolled in the Master's Degree in Secondary Education Teaching.

To achieve this, a custom survey divided into four thematic blocks was administered to 726 students from various Spanish universities during the 2022-2023 academic year. The study employed voluntary non-probabilistic sampling, with data collection carried out via Google Forms. Results indicate that the integration of SDGs into educational programs at compulsory education levels and higher education remains limited, despite the growing emphasis on these goals within the education sector. However, students reported better curricular integration of SDGs during their university studies compared to earlier educational stages.

Regarding demographic variables, no significant differences were found between gender groups or across different age categories. Notably, individuals under 30 demonstrated greater awareness and knowledge of the SDGs, likely reflecting recent efforts to incorporate these objectives transversally into academic curricula.

The findings highlight a pressing need to strengthen the inclusion of SDGs in initial teacher training programs. Master's students in secondary education exhibit a lack of robust prior training in this area, underscoring the necessity of rethinking university educational policies. Enhancing SDG-related knowledge and competencies among future teachers is critical, as they are instrumental in promoting and disseminating these goals in classrooms.

In conclusion, universities must reinforce their third mission, which involves the transfer of knowledge to society, by fostering political and collective impacts through SDG-focused teacher education. Empowering teaching professionals to integrate and advocate for SDGs in their pedagogical practices is essential to driving meaningful societal transformation.

Keywords:

SDG, Competencies, Teacher training, University.