

Sustainability and Sustainable Development: A Discourse Analysis on Understandings and Perspectives of Educated Society Beyond Their Fields of Study

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Sustainability and Sustainable development should not always define with incomprehensible terminologies with restricted fields and disciplines. Despite the popularity of Sustainability as a concept in almost all the fields of study, research and debates, only a little is known about the understanding of public especially educated people who deals with it. The understanding cannot be a matter of the fields they belong to but a matter of their general knowledge. “Sustainability” encompasses all the disciplines as the understanding is wide and depends on the crisis in the world.

Accordingly, University of Peradeniya is selected to be the locale of study where haphazard (convenience) sampling method is used within each faculty of the university to collect data. Highly qualitative data is collected during the study. The data is analyzed using qualitative technique of critical discourse analyses using Microsoft office Macros and Microsoft office word.

“Sustainable” is a word used in most of the literatures on development after the setting of goals for future development by United Nations Organization. 2015 – 2030 is the period for implementing Sustainable Development Goals in order to gain sustainability in all the fields. Thus, sustainability is understood in different ways.

The understanding on sustainability and sustainable development of university staff and students is not more than their fields of study. Their discipline influences the way they have understood “Sustainability”. Rather than people who deal with wide range of disciplines others have restricted their understanding while less important is given to the fields with weak connection with sustainability concept. The educated society shows less common understanding thus creating gap in the understanding of less educated general public.

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