Alumni Perception on the Reference of the Mainstreamed Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Principles and Practices in Bachelor of Science Education (BSE) Programme at Busitema University

Edward Andama & Ujeyo Margret Suubi
Busitema University
Uganda

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are instrumental in promoting and supporting sustainable development (SD) through incorporating sustainability principles into university curricula, which provides avenues for transferring knowledge to society and preparing graduates to play vital future roles in their society, thus acting as local knowledge hubs for sustainability. This case examined the role played by Busitema University in promoting education for sustainable development (ESD) through developing an ESD as a core cross-cutting course for all students enrolled in a three-year undergraduate Bachelor of Science Education (BSE) degree program at the Faculty of Science and Education. The course focused on the social, environmental, political, and economic factors that underpin sustainable development to give students a critical understanding of the ESD debate, practices, and principles. The case study (I) assessed the graduate's technological, pedagogical, and content knowledge and (II) confirmed if the knowledge gained was relevant in equipping the candidates for "in-the-field" applications, focusing on the implementation of the ESD pedagogical knowledge in their teaching career. Alumni perception was collected using a questionnaire administered to two cohorts and analysed qualitatively. The preliminary results suggest that the graduates gained sufficient ESD knowledge and could use it to approach problems to get sustainable solutions. They also gained competence in applying pedagogical skills and using opportunities to learn new technologies to solve problems. Further, they adopted an improved pedagogical approach to support student learning using diverse teaching styles and approaches, improved classroom management, and assessed student performance. They were able to identify sustainable development issues, technologies, and teaching approaches, which enhanced their selection of technologies for lessons, content and approaches, and strengthened leadership skills in helping others to coordinate the use of content, technologies, and teaching approaches. The case study provides a learning experience that can be used to develop models for mainstreaming ESD in pre-service and post-service training programs.