

PARTICIPATION OF MALAYSIAN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS IN
INTEGRATED CAMPUS SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK

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ABSTRACT

This study presents findings on the extent of sustainable development implementation in Malaysian Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Since not the entire of HEIs in Malaysia in coordinated framework on the sustainable development, it is very crucial to execute real interpretation of sustainable elements in HEIs. The need to have integrated campus sustainability framework is necessary so that present sustainability efforts in HEIs is known, and provide mechanism in achieving sustainable elements on the education level. In this study, three methods are introduced to achieve objectives needed in order to find out current condition of sustainability implementation in HEIs, Gibbs Reflective Cycle analysis were adopted. Meanwhile, level of students' knowledge regarding the sustainable elements in campuses, were accessed through questionnaire distributions. Furthermore, to determine suggestion on best sustainable practices in Malaysian HEIs, establishment of interview questions were constructed using desired 5-Dimension Model. The analyses made required the presence of selected 8 representatives from HEIs by region in Malaysia as respondents, students from 32 public and private universities in Malaysia and lastly through 6 decision makers from selected HEIs by region in Malaysia. The results eventually shows that only several HEIs in Malaysia are moving forward with sustainable efforts such as accomplishments of green initiatives in campuses, absence of specific sustainable elements in university's policies and also lacking of knowledge among students on sustainability. Further discussion on desired action plans for further excellent integration of sustainability framework is expected in this study.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini membentangkan penemuan sejauh mana pelaksanaan pembangunan lestari di Institusi Pengajian Tinggi Malaysia (IPT). Oleh kerana tidak kesemua IPT di Malaysia berada dalam kerangka yang bersepadu dalam pembangunan lestari, pelaksanaan penafsiran sebenar elemen lestari di IPT dilihat sangat penting. Keperluan untuk mempunyai rangka yang bersepadu adalah perlu agar usaha keberlanjutan yang ada di IPT diketahui, selain melestarikan pengurusan persekitaran yang diinginkan. Tambahan pula, IPT adalah satu mekanisme penting dalam mencapai elemen lestari di peringkat pendidikan. Dalam kajian ini, tiga kaedah diperkenalkan untuk mencapai objektif yang diperlukan. Dengan analisis data untuk mengetahui keadaan pelaksanaan kelestarian di IPT, Gibbs Reflective Cycle analisis telah digunakan. Untuk mengenal pasti tahap pengetahuan pelajar mengenai elemen lestari di kampus, pengedaran borang soal selidik dibuat dan untuk menentukan cadangan amalan lestari terbaik di IPT Malaysia, pembentukan soalan juga dibuat menggunakan Model 5-Dimensi yang diinginkan untuk membina soalan yang berkaitan. Analisis yang dibuat melibatkan kehadiran 8 wakil dari IPT terpilih mengikut keberadaan IPT di Malaysia sebagai responden, pelajar dari 32 universiti awam dan swasta di Malaysia dan yang terakhir sekali ialah melalui 6 pembuat keputusan dari IPT terpilih mengikut wilayah di Malaysia. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa hanya beberapa IPT di Malaysia yang bergerak maju dengan usaha berterusan dengan sekurang-kurangnya melalui usaha melaksanakan inisiatif lestari, selain ketiadaan elemen lestari tertentu dalam dasar utama universiti dan juga kekurangan pengetahuan mengenai kelestarian dalam kalangan pelajar. Perbincangan lebih lanjut mengenai rancangan tindakan yang diinginkan untuk integrasi kerangka bersepadu kelestarian yang lebih baik diharapkan dalam kajian ini.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Sustainability is defined as the ability to meet the needs of present consent without ignoring the future generation needs, which consists of three main elements which are economic, social and also environmental aspects. The need to fulfil these three elements is very crucial in determining current practices done without compromising negative impacts that might occur if the implementation of sustainability is neglected. Furthermore, Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are the one that is important in achieving sustainable elements in education stage. As a fundamental pillar of society, HEIs must take necessary steps to promote efficiencies of the existing natural resources and sustainability measures at university level, as well as among their local sphere. In addition, the government does understand that one of the keys to achieve sustainable development is through education system and introduction of these values at all levels should also be in this education system.

The critical part in implementing sustainability elements into campuses is due to some constraints that limits the coordination of the implementation itself. The need of this implementation is very important to keep Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) be adopted for full implementation currently by year 2030, in addition to promote good concern on the environmental practices. Moreover, development of sustainability approach at education level is necessary to be more sustainable together in economic development, other than reducing the reliance onto limited natural resources that highly possible diminish them entirely in the future.

1.2 Problem Statement

In Malaysia, priority on issues regarding sustainability implementation, preservation of natural resources, environmental concerns are already discussed to work on sustainable development at all level. Enforcements have been set to increase awareness on sustainability issues at all society's levels and some measures taken by the government to improve the understanding and practicality of this implementation in this country (Noranida & Khairulmaini, 2014). However, efforts were made to prove the implementation of sustainable goals and several issues arise as the stated goals should be implemented at all levels, for example the efforts to be made in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). In addition, many other countries already enforced the requirement of sustainability in HEIs levels including in education, research and practices in campuses.

Up until now, the issues on sustainability approaches are influenced by the uncoordinated framework to be implemented in HEIs in Malaysia (Posner & Ralph Stuart, 2013). Availability of integrated sustainability framework for these HEIs is crucial as if sustainability features are not recognized well, not every programs managed by the university's management relies on sustainable development in an excellent integrated manner and prioritized on consideration for the environmental side.

Thus, without a great framework planned to work on the sustainability features in a campus, programs conducted by the management of campuses can be vary and not achieving the objective to successfully obtain positive outcomes of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by year 2030, which is an urgent actions needed to be achieved and provided by the United Nations towards resolving quality education and environmental ability to be sustained.

In this study, current practices and adaptation of sustainability implementation in HEIs campuses are going to be identified based on level of knowledge on sustainability

features in selected campuses in Malaysia. In addition, action plans to enhance the successful implementation into HEIs in Malaysia concerning sustainable development efforts, are planned accordingly to achieve the objectives stated in this study.

1.3 Research Objectives

In order to achieve and prove the problems stated previously, the objectives of this research are as follow:

- (a) To determine current condition of sustainability implementation in HEIs in Malaysia.
- (b) To identify level of knowledge on sustainability features in HEIs among students in Malaysia.
- (c) To suggest best practices in improving sustainability features in campuses in Malaysia.

1.4 Scope of Study

This study consists of different scopes in order to interpret each objectives needed. Limitation of this study scopes include 8 representatives from public and private universities selected by region in Malaysia, and also limits to students from 32 both public and private universities in Malaysia. Then, the limitation would also include selected 6 decision makers from 6 selected HEIs by region in Malaysia, with respect to relevant data involved as response to this research's objectives. These restraints were decided based on previous three objectives to be achieved as stated above. The selected HEIs may come from various backgrounds including education status, depending on that individual type of HEIs available in Malaysia. So, there are methods that are going to be used to get this research done, which are observation through survey report of 'Campus Sustainability and Policies' made by 8 selected participants from HEIs by region in Malaysia, whose background in academic field,

also preparation and distribution of the questionnaires for students, and lastly is the interview questions for representative from selected HEIs in Malaysia in sharing their campus sustainability best practices to be advocated in campus sustainability integrated framework plan specifically for campuses in Malaysia.

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The critical part in implementing sustainability elements into campuses is due to some constraints that limits the coordination of the implementation itself. The need of this implementation is very important to keep Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) be adopted for full implementation currently by year 2030, in addition to promote good concern on the environmental practices. Moreover, development of sustainability approach at education level is necessary to be more sustainable together in economic development, other than reducing the reliance onto limited natural resources that highly possible diminish them entirely in the future.

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