



**THIRD WORLD SYMPOSIUM
ON SUSTAINABILITY
SCIENCE AND RESEARCH**

Sustainability Futures: Challenges
and Opportunities Towards a More
Sustainable World

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Education for Sustainable Development – Is There a Way to Catch Up With the Front Runners?

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OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER

- How can higher education promote a more sustainable future?
- Swedish National Defense University as a representative for a smaller and specialized university but identifies general lessons that are applicable to other universities.
- Identifies lessons from current pedagogical research in higher education, highlights success factors taken from three other universities that have received high ratings for their sustainability work.

APPROACH USED

- A general analysis of sustainable development pedagogical research in higher education
- Text analysis of an evaluation made by the Swedish Higher Education Authority that began in 2016 where 47 higher education institutions, based on a self-assessment, described their work with sustainability issues.
- Self evaluation by the Swedish Defence University prior to the Swedish higher education authority's review. Together with 3 top ranking Universities, KTH - Royal Institute of Technology, Linnaeus university, and the university of Manchester
- Compared with results found in pedagogical research, in order to identify succesfactors and a way forward

KEY RESULTS

Three identified dimensions of SD education

1. The diversity of perspectives required exemplified by economic, ecological and social sustainability or UN's 17 goals for sustainable development.
2. A need for both education *in* sustainable development and education *for* sustainable development.
3. A need for several different scientific disciplines as well as an inter-disciplinary approach.

Three organizational SD factors

1. The management present must be dedicated to integrating sustainability goals into the organization and oversee that these issues are being prioritized.
2. This approach must be interdisciplinary and take place from a broad front
3. Employees should be encouraged to embrace this perspective based on their own circumstances.

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

Both an outside and inside perspective is important. SD should both be generated by the organization itself, but must also be added to the organization from the outside, that is, both education on SD and education for sustainable development, is required.

An interdisciplinary approach is essential! Different disciplines must actively seek new paths and partly reformulate old identities

Successful universities have initially focused on education *in* sustainable development and then gradually developed education and research *for* sustainable development.

SD is primarily not about individual behaviour, but a shared practice!

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