

Comparative Assessment of Sustainable Practices Among Students and Staff of the University of Maiduguri, Borno State

¹. Umar Jiddum Jidda; ². Sa Ala Yakubu Sa Ala; ³. Abba Jato Ibrahim;
⁴. Ishaq Iliyas Ishaq; ⁵. Aliyu Hassan Muhammad

Integral University Lucknow

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Abstract: This study presents a comparative assessment of sustainable practices between students and staff at the University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria. The research evaluates their awareness of sustainability initiatives, personal engagement in sustainable behaviors, perceptions of institutional support, and attitudes towards sustainability. The results reveal that while students generally exhibit higher levels of engagement and awareness, staff members perceive sustainability as a collective responsibility. The findings highlight the need for improved communication and collaboration to enhance sustainability practices within the university community.

Keywords: Sustainability, University of Maiduguri, Students, Staff, Environmental Practices, Institutional Support.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable practices in higher education are crucial for advancing environmental, social, and economic goals. Universities play a pivotal role in fostering sustainability through research, education, and direct campus operations. The University of Maiduguri (UNIMAID), located in Borno State, Nigeria, has undertaken several sustainability initiatives aimed at reducing its ecological footprint and promoting environmental conservation. However, the level of engagement in these practices may vary among different segments of the university community.

This study seeks to assess and compare the sustainability practices among students and staff at UNIMAID. It investigates their awareness, engagement in sustainable behaviors, and the role of institutional support in promoting sustainability.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. Study Design

A descriptive cross-sectional survey was used to assess sustainable practices among students and staff of the University of Maiduguri. The survey collected data on participants' awareness of sustainability initiatives, their personal engagement in sustainable behaviors, and their perceptions of institutional support for sustainability.

B. Sample

A total of 200 participants were surveyed, comprising 120 students and 80 staff members from various departments across the university. The respondents were selected through a stratified random sampling technique to ensure representation from different faculties and administrative roles.

C. Data Collection

The data was collected using a structured questionnaire, which included both closed and open-ended questions. The questionnaire covered four key areas:

- Awareness of university sustainability initiatives
- Engagement in sustainable practices (e.g., waste management, energy conservation)
- Perception of institutional support for sustainability
- Attitudes towards sustainability

D. Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions, means, and standard deviations. The responses were also categorized based on participant demographics such as faculty, age, and role (student vs. staff).

III. RESULTS

A. Awareness of Sustainability Initiatives

The survey revealed that 72% of students were highly aware of sustainability initiatives at the University of Maiduguri, compared to 56% of staff members. Students were more likely to engage with sustainability-related content through academic programs, student organizations, and campus campaigns.

B. Personal Engagement in Sustainable Practices

A significant majority of students (70%) reported regularly participating in sustainable practices such as recycling, reducing water and energy consumption, and using eco-friendly products. In contrast, only 48% of staff members engaged consistently in these behaviors. The staff's participation was more varied, with administrative staff showing lower levels of engagement compared to academic staff.

C. Perception of Institutional Support

Both students and staff generally viewed the university as partially supportive of sustainability efforts. 80% of students believed that the university provided adequate resources (e.g., recycling bins, energy-efficient infrastructure) and encouragement for sustainable behaviors. However, staff members expressed mixed perceptions, with 55% acknowledging the university's efforts and 45% citing a lack of sufficient resources or initiatives directed towards staff.

D. Attitudes Towards Sustainability

Both students and staff held strong positive attitudes towards the importance of sustainability. However, there was a difference in how sustainability was perceived. Students tended to view it as an individual responsibility, often integrating it into their daily lives. Staff members, on the other hand, perceived sustainability as a collective or institutional responsibility, emphasizing the need for university-wide policies and initiatives.

IV. DISCUSSION

A. Key Findings

The study reveals that students at the University of Maiduguri are generally more engaged and aware of sustainability initiatives than staff members. This could be attributed to the active involvement of students in sustainability education, peer-led campaigns, and extracurricular activities. On the other hand, staff members displayed lower levels of awareness and engagement, likely due to limited exposure to sustainability-related training or programs.

The positive perceptions of institutional support reflect the university's ongoing efforts to implement sustainability measures, such as energy-saving infrastructure and waste management programs. However, the mixed feedback from staff suggests that more targeted efforts are needed to increase staff engagement and support for sustainability.

B. Implications for Policy and Practice

To foster a more inclusive sustainability culture at the University of Maiduguri, the following strategies are recommended:

➤ Enhanced Communication:

The university should improve communication about sustainability initiatives, ensuring that both students and staff are informed about ongoing programs and available resources.

➤ Targeted Awareness Programs:

Specific sustainability awareness programs should be developed for staff, particularly non-academic staff, who may not have the same exposure to sustainability education.

➤ Collaboration Between Students and Staff:

Joint sustainability projects and initiatives can foster a sense of shared responsibility and encourage greater participation from both groups.

➤ Increased Institutional Support:

The university should allocate more resources towards sustainability efforts, including professional development opportunities for staff to engage with sustainability practices.

V. CONCLUSION

This study highlights important differences in the sustainability practices and awareness between students and staff at the University of Maiduguri. While students demonstrate higher engagement and awareness, staff members perceive sustainability as an institutional responsibility. Moving forward, the university should focus on bridging this gap by enhancing communication, increasing institutional support, and fostering greater collaboration between students and staff. By doing so, the University of Maiduguri can strengthen its sustainability efforts and create a more environmentally responsible campus.

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