

Development Strategy of Educational Institution which has International Competitive towards Sustainable Development of ASEAN Region

Abstract:

In this globalized age, any development without sustainability is not considered as development at all. Higher education institutions are not contrary to this as well. Sustainable development is all about the advancement that can be better suited in the present situation along with enabling the future generations to cope with the changing situation to meet human needs and aspirations, and this type of development is a continual process of improvement. The paper strives to find out the existing as well as the prospective strategies to ensure the Sustainable Development of Higher Education Institutions, especially in ASEAN Region. Internationalization of higher education institutions has also been considered as crucial in the study to ensure the sustainable development in real sense. Strategic alliance among universities of various countries within the region can also get momentum to become internationally competitive along with achieving the core objective to sustain in the long run which has been highlighted and focused in the paper. There are some challenges to ensure sustainable development of higher education which were identified to recommend some strategies or ways to remove or minimize those challenges.

Keywords:

Sustainable Development, Higher Education, Internationalization, Strategic Alliance, ASEAN, Competitiveness.

1.0

INTRODUCTION

The ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) is one of the three pillars of ASEAN Community. At the heart of the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community (ASCC) is the commitment to lift the quality of life of its peoples through cooperative activities that are people-oriented, people-centred, environmentally friendly, and geared towards the promotion of sustainable development to face new and emerging challenges in ASEAN.

For ensuring sustainable development in the ASEAN region, education underpins ASEAN community stronger. Education lies at the core of ASEAN's development process, creating a knowledge-based society and contributing to the enhancement of ASEAN competitiveness. ASEAN also views education as the vehicle to raise ASEAN awareness, inspire the "we feeling", and create a sense of belonging to the ASEAN Community and understanding of the richness of ASEAN's history, languages, culture and common values.

At the 11th Summit in December 2005, ASEAN Leaders set new directions for regional education collaboration when they welcomed the decision of the ASEAN Education Ministers to convene the ASEAN Education Ministers' Meetings (ASEM) on a regular basis. The Leaders also called for ASEAN Education Ministers to focus on enhancing regional cooperation in education.

As the collective entity to enhance regional cooperation in education, the ASEAN Education Ministers identified four priorities that ASEAN cooperation on education would address, namely: (i) Promoting ASEAN Awareness among ASEAN citizens, particularly youth; (ii) Strengthening ASEAN identity through education; (iii) Building ASEAN human resources in the field of education; and (iv) Strengthening ASEAN University Networking. To this end, various projects and activities have been/are being developed/organized to fulfil the directives.

In recognition of the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization's (SEAMEO) contribution to human resource development in the region since 1965, the Education Ministers agreed that the existing ASEAN and SEAMEO forums on education should integrate their respective programmes and activities in a complementary manner. The priorities of ASEAN cooperation on education would be undertaken through collaboration with SEAMEO.

ASEAN cooperation on education is overseen at the Ministerial level by an ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting - which meets annually - and the implementation of the programs and activities for education matters is carried out by the ASEAN Senior Officials on Education (SOM-ED), which reports to the ASEAN Education Ministers Meeting. SOM-ED also oversees cooperation on higher education, which is coordinated by the ASEAN University Network (AUN). The AUN was established to serve as an ASEAN mechanism to (i) Promote cooperation among ASEAN scholars, academicians, and scientists in the region; (ii) Develop academic and professional human resource in the region; (iii) Promote information dissemination among the ASEAN academic community; and, (iv) Enhance the awareness of regional identity and the sense of 'ASEANness' among members.

2.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGS) OF UN

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning

Obtaining a quality education is the foundation to improving people's lives and sustainable development. Major progress has been made towards increasing access to education at all levels and increasing enrolment rates in schools particularly for women and girls. Basic literacy skills have improved tremendously, yet bolder efforts are needed to make even greater strides for achieving universal education goals. For example, the world has achieved equality in primary education between girls and boys, but few countries have achieved that target at all levels of education.

2.1 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Sustainable education needs adoption of innovative and friendly ways of teaching-learning, knowledge sharing and research. The vocational and technical education also need to be considered equally important along with general education.

Areas of Emphasis for Ensuring Sustainability:

1. Real need-based Academic knowledge sharing
2. Ensuring Research collaboration
3. Industry-academia alliance
4. Employability (self-employment)
5. Eco-friendly Campus Operation with modern amenities
6. Public Service

3.0 CHALLENGES OF ENSURING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Barriers to Sustainability in Higher Education Implementing sustainability is not an easy task. It is complex, confusing and time consuming, and there are many uncertainties and various stakeholders should be involved. There is often resistance to change, evident through the large number of barriers to change, which should be identified, addressed and overcome.

- There are many barriers that higher education encounters in working toward sustainability.
- Disciplinary organizational structure hindering integrative thinking and interdisciplinary cooperation and learning
- SD is perceived as an "add-on", not a built-in aspect of higher education
- Lack of vision and prioritization /leadership of SD among higher education leaders

- Lack of awareness, common understanding and knowledge of sustainability in higher education and its consequences
- Perceived lack of scientific basis of sustainability
- Confusion about SD
- Broadness of SD
- Lack of coordination and vision to change sustainability policies and education at government level
- Little or no motivation or realism
- Sustainability is considered to be radical
- Changes into curricula are translated into budget claims
- Overcrowded curricula
- Sustainability is considered to have little or no relevance to the discipline, its courses and research
- Lack of (financial) resources and uncertainty about the required efforts/resources to engage and implement sustainability
- Threat to academic credibility of scholars and teachers

4.0 PROSPECTIVE STRATEGIES

Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI)

The Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI), a partnership between United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNESCO, United Nations Environment, UN Global Compact's Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) initiative, United Nations University (UNU), UN-HABITAT and UNCTAD, was created in 2012 in the run-up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20). With commitments from over 300 universities from around the world, HESI accounted for more than one-third of all the voluntary commitments that were launched at Rio+20. Through its strong association with the United Nations, HESI provides higher education institutions with a unique interface between higher education, science, and policy making.

Innovative Teaching-Learning: The innovativeness in teaching and learning process is one of the key drivers of sustainable development of higher education institutions. Various HEIs around the world have been trying to adopt and practice innovative mechanism of teaching-learning. So, innovative practices in HEIs among ASEAN countries should be replicated by each-other. Emphasizing and keeping this in mind, Daffodil Education Network (DEN) organized a two-day long Innovative Teaching & Learning Expo-2017 (ITLE-2017), which was first of its kind in Bangladesh for encouraging and ensuring innovative teaching and lifelong learning.

Others:

- Utilizing Technology in Education
- Curriculum upgradation and development of other resources to teach the SDGs to students
- Exploring the opportunities by HEIs to highlight SDGs in various platforms
- Encouraging teachers and students towards extensive research on SDGs, specially related to higher education and employment
- Exchange programs, both academic and cultural (for both teachers and students) with other universities of the region, at first, and then rest of the world
- Research collaboration with foreign and local universities to connect with the research environment on other universities
- Adopting and replicating the best quality practices by various higher education institutions of the globe to ensure quality in everywhere in the institution
- Shaping the curricula, as per requirement of the industry and future employment market and as per predicted future research requirements based on advanced technological development
- Promoting and ensuring skills-based (both IT and others) higher education as well as secondary education
- Putting more emphasis on industry-academia alliance (specially for research collaboration)
- Working seriously for fruitful internationalization of the HEIs
- Measurable and demonstrable assessment mechanism and indicators to monitor the progress of sustainability initiatives of HEIs should be developed at institutional, national, regional and international level. Government authority along with HEIs and educationists should work closely to develop such mechanism and indicators.
- Publication of sustainability report regularly to stakeholders for receiving feedback for further improvement and modification of mechanism.
- Vision and Mission and strategic plan of the HEI should be modified based on the significance of sustainable development to be internationally competitive and implement the same
- There is a need to include sustainable development criteria in pedagogical quality assurance mechanism.
- Emphasizing entrepreneurial initiatives by the HEIs: Daffodil International University along with Daffodil Family has been striving to encourage the educated youths of Bangladesh to become entrepreneur and has taken a number of initiatives in this regard. Some of these initiatives are:

- ❖ 'Are You the Next Startup?' Ptv., Primax Home Appliances
- ❖ Daffodil Startup Market Service, Oval Furniture,
- ❖ DIU Social Business Design Lab GreenShade)
- ❖ InnovationHub ❖ Innovation & Incubation Centre
- ❖ Bangladesh Venture Capital Ltd. (IIC)
- (Apnare.com, BD Souvenir, Econ ❖ Industry Academia Lecture Series

- ❖ Global Entrepreneurship Summer Program
- ❖ Global Youth Entrepreneurship Summit
- ❖ Global Entrepreneurs Week
- ❖ Book Publications on entrepreneurship (a. Handbook of Entrepreneurship b. A journey towards entrepreneurship c. Uddokta Unnayon Nirdeshika)
- ❖ Academic journal publication
- ❖ “The Entrepreneurs” publication
- ❖ Yunus Social Business Centre
- ❖ Get in the Ring (GITR) Bangladesh
- ❖ Entrepreneur Guidance Program (EGP)
- ❖ Entrepreneurship & Innovation Expo
- ❖ Entrepreneurs MeetUp
- ❖ Enterprise Competitiveness Institute
- ❖ Daffodil Business Incubator (DBI)
- ❖ My-eKids
- ❖ Affiliated course “Kauffman FastTrack: Planning the Entrepreneurial Venture”
- ❖ Frequent industry visit
- ❖ Real project work to develop business plan, financing model and starting and running the business
- ❖ Organizing different events like: training, workshops through engaging students
- ❖ Entrepreneurship Library
- United Nations may like to extend collaboration with higher education institutions of countries where quality of higher education is not up to the international standard through its UN Programmes like: The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), UNESCO, The UN Global Compact (UNGC), The UN-supported Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), United Nations University (UNU).

To emphasize the role of sustainable and competitive higher education as a catalyst of sustainable development of a country as well as the regional development, ASEAN member countries should take the initiative to integrate other developing countries, vigorously. They should also focus the development of other developing countries of South Asia as regional integration, now, becomes an important driver in global economies.