

SUSTAINABLE SCHOOLS NETWORK 2020 SUSTAINABILITY SYMPOSIUM INDUSTRY REPORT

June 2020



Image courtesy of the Sustainable Schools Network



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY - Exploring the impact of the Sustainable Schools Network in Education for Sustainability

This study documented the ‘Sustainable Schools Network 2020 Sustainability Symposium: *Igniting Souls, Inspiring Change*’ online event and considered the impacts of the partnerships, networking and mentoring opportunities such multi-stakeholder Education for Sustainability (EfS) events bring about, and their implications for local sustainable development. Participants were invited to complete an online survey and share their knowledge and perceptions on EfS, their perceptions around sustainability, as well as the applicability of the Sustainable Development Goals framework in Education for Sustainability. Finally, the survey reflected participants’ views on the impacts of the SSN 2020 Sustainability Symposium.

The findings form the basis of this report about the impacts of the symposium on supporting community in integrating EfS into practice. This research project was reviewed and approved by Griffith University in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (GU ref no: 2020/203).

The survey consisted of 9 main sections:

1. Demographics
2. EfS Practices
3. Motivations to attend the symposium
4. Perceptions around community connectedness during the symposium
5. Perceptions about sustainability
6. Understandings and perceptions around education for and about sustainability
7. Knowledge about sustainability
8. Knowledge about the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
9. Specific feedback about the event

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

1. Demographics

GENDER: 83.3% respondents were female

LOCATION: Queensland (52.4%) NSW (19%) (others Tasmania, SA, Victoria and the UK)

AGE: 79% respondents between 30-60 years of age

OCCUPATION: 19% were primary school teachers, 16.7% high school teachers, 11.9% parents and 9.5% government representatives.

2. EfS Practices

Among the *initiatives participants take on EfS*, the most salient were:

- 33.3% engage in recycling/upcycling activities

- 28.6% in waste reduction related actions
- 23.3% monitor energy and resources use
- 21.4% have educational programs/centres
- 21.4% have sustainability or environmental committees, teams or clubs
- 19% do gardening/growing and cooking-related actions
- 14.3% partner with the community
- 14.3% engage in actions to care for the environment and wildlife.

3. Motivations to attend the symposium

76.2% of respondents were motivated-highly motivated to [share educational resources](#) on sustainability education, [76.3% to share best practices](#) in sustainability education and [80.9% to solve problems or overcome barriers](#) to sustainability education

81% of respondents were motivated-highly motivated to [build partnerships](#) for sustainability education (38.1% very highly motivated) and [81% to foster collaboration](#) for sustainable future

71% of respondents were motivated-highly motivated to attend for [professional development reasons](#), and [85,8% to learn innovative approaches](#) to sustainability education

88.1% of respondents were motivated-highly motivated [to be empowered or inspired](#) (59.5% very highly motivated) and [90.5% to learn from local leaders on sustainability](#) (52.4% very highly motivated).

78.6% reported to have made *new connections* at the Symposium to follow up for their EfS practices.

4. Perceptions around community connectedness during the symposium

On a likert scale, [85.7%](#) of respondents reported to have [felt connected](#) during the symposium, with [54.7%](#) reporting to have felt [very connected or part of a community](#).

Participants rating on enjoyment of the symposium was overwhelming positive: 92.9%.

5. Perceptions about sustainability

An analysis of 5 words related to the concept of sustainability provided by each participant revealed a conceptualisation of sustainability with strong emphasis on a thriving community and hope for the future (83.3%), as well as an emphasis on environmental conservation and resource management (61.9%).

57.1% of respondents stated that their perceptions about sustainability had NOT changed after attending the symposium (only reinforced the definitions stated in the previous symposium) whereas 33.3% reported that it did (noting better understanding of the imbalances between what the environment can sustain and what is extracted and the need to move towards regeneration and to promote a greater focus on social justice).

62% of respondents reported their perceptions and practices of sustainability have changed during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly around reduced consumption patterns, and reflecting on the impact of the pandemic on disadvantaged communities and the opportunity to demand change and provide solutions.

Knowledge about sustainability before the symposium was medium to medium-high (almost 60%), increasing to medium high-high (almost 70%) post symposium.

Level of understanding about EfS in classroom context was medium-low to medium (52.4%), increasing to medium to medium-high (almost 57.2%) post symposium.

Level of confidence about engaging children in EfS was medium to medium-high (42.9%), increasing to medium to medium-high (almost 59.62%) post symposium.

6. Understandings and perceptions around education for and about sustainability

- Level of understanding about education *about* sustainability (curriculum): medium (26.2%) to medium-high (31%).
- Level of confidence about engaging children in education *about* sustainability (curriculum): medium-high (21.4%) to very high (45.2%).
- Level of determination in engaging children in education *about* sustainability (curriculum): medium-high (21.4%) to very high (45.2%).
- Level of knowledge about education *for* sustainability (curriculum and pedagogy): medium (28.6%) to medium-high (21.4%).
- Level of confidence about engaging children in education *for* sustainability (curriculum): medium (14.3%) to medium-high (28.6%) to high (14.3%) or very high (14.3%).
- Level of determination in engaging children in education *for* sustainability (curriculum): high (11.9%) to very high (47.6%).

7. Knowledge about sustainability (based on confidence levels before attending the symposium)

- Consumption practices (food & waste): 19% was confident, 26.2% medium-high confident and 21.4% very confident.
- Student leadership: 38.1% was confident 16.7% medium-high confident and 9.5% very confident.
- Conservation: 19% was confident 26.2% medium-high confident and 19% very confident.
- Peace, equality & human rights: 14.3% was somewhat confident and 23.8% confident (17% medium to high levels of confidence).

8. Knowledge about the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

A high degree of variation was noted in participant's reported knowledge on the SDGs. The least known goals are SDG16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) and SDGS 17 (Partnerships for the goals), and those related to social and economic inequalities, such as SDG10 (Reducing inequality), SDG1 (No Poverty), SDG2 (Zero Hunger). The most known goals are those that relate to

environmental protection, including SDG7 (Affordable and Clean Energy), SDG6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), SDG12, (Responsible Production and Consumption) and SDG13 (Climate Action). Notably, SDG11 Sustainable Cities and Communities was also highly ranked. Finally SDG4 (Quality Education) and SDG5 (Gender equality) were ranked as 'medium knowledge' in the continuum.

9. Specific feedback about the event (open-ended responses)

With regards to implementing ideas and practice learnings from the Symposium, 33% indicated that they will take action towards sustainability and 27% that they will incorporate EfS into practice- 20% would share learning with colleagues, 20% will engage students in leadership, 20% will network with other attendees and 20% will engage with local communities.

34% reported they need practical examples to implement Efs in practice, such as lesson plans (9%) and best practice cases (16%). A focus on learning about sustainability rather than *unsustainability* was also noted.

The most valued aspects of the symposium were the learnings (45%), networking opportunities (23%) and speakers' knowledge (17%). The online format was applauded, along with the practicality and diversity of the sessions.

Suggestions for improvement included face-to-face opportunities, more examples of EfS in practice (16%) such as worksheets and more specificity in EfS topics (10%). Overall, 32% congratulated organisers and facilitators reporting high levels of satisfaction (no ideas for improvement).

METHODOLOGY

The Sustainable Schools Network 2020 Sustainability Symposium was held online via Zoom and brought together educators, parents, youth, administration staff and community and business interested in education for sustainability to foster the development of partnerships and initiatives for education for sustainability.

A total of 60 schools and 80 organisations participated in various ways in the online seminars, and a total of 345 adult registrations.

The broader project from which the data in this paper is sourced, investigates attendees perceptions of education for sustainability and served as an evaluation of the Sustainability Symposium. The research design consisted of an online survey combining quantitative (likert scale) and open-ended qualitative questions (Creswell, 2015)¹. As Morse and Niehaus (2009)² suggest, mixed methods research is useful for studies that are exploratory in nature and where the phenomenon to be studied is complex.

The online survey was addressed to the education community attending the symposium, including: teachers, school administrators, parents, sustainability education service providers, trainers and government officials and was administered online via SurveyMonkey. The survey took approximately 15 minutes to complete.

SAMPLE

A total of 46 Symposium attendees participated in the online survey. Of those, 4 respondents were removed because they were under 18 years of age. A total of 42 responses are analysed below. Participants included primary (n=8), high (n=6) and senior secondary teachers (n=2), teacher aides (n=3) Principals (n=1), School Business Service Managers (n=1), CEOs (n=1), Government representatives (n=4), University students (n=2), those engaged in sustainability businesses (n=6), university lecturers (n=1), volunteers (n=1) parents (n=5), and participants who chose not to respond to demographic information questions (n=4). The majority of participants were female (82%), aged between 30-59 (85%) and resided in Queensland, Australia. The average number of years that participants had been engaged in working with children was 15 years.

¹ Creswell, J. W. (2015). Revisiting mixed methods and advancing scientific practices. In *The Oxford handbook of multimethod and mixed methods research inquiry*.

² Morse, J. M., & Niehaus, L. (2009). *Principles and procedures of mixed methods design*. Walnut Creek, CA: Left.

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHICS

An overwhelming 83.3% of respondents were female, and 16.7% male. Most respondents were from Queensland (52.4%), followed by NSW (19%). Other respondents were from Tasmania, South Australia, Victoria and the UK.

Most respondents were between 40-60 years of age (65%), with some being 30-39 years of age (14%), 5% being 60 or older and 2.3% being 18-29 years old.

When asked about the capacity in which respondents were participating in the survey, the majority reported being primary and high school teachers (19% and 16.7% respectively) or parents (11.9%) and government representatives (9.5%). Other respondents reported to be university students, teacher aids, school officers for outdoor and environmental projects, sustainability educators, university lecturers, regenerative education ambassadors, sustainable small business owners, sustainability coordinators, chaplains, senior secondary teachers, principals, CEOs, volunteers, Teachers of English as a foreign language, and school business service managers.

When asked about how many years participants have been working/caring for children, 24% reported to have done it for more than 15 years, with 16.7% reporting to have done it for up to 5 years, with 14.3% reporting to have done it for between 20-30 years, and 14.3% between 5-10 years, and 7% for less than 5 years. 14.3% did not respond to this question.

SECTION 2: EfS PRACTICES

An analysis of open-ended responses to the question 'What initiatives that the school / centre / family / local community undertakes that are focused on education for sustainability (EfS)?' revealed that 33.3% of respondents engage in recycling/upcycling activities, 28.6% in other waste reduction related actions, 23.3% monitor energy and resources use and 19% do gardening/growing and cooking-related actions. Moreover, 21.4% have educational programs/centres, 21.4% have sustainability or environmental committees, teams or clubs and also 14.3% partner with the community (primarily local but also international) in EfS. Similarly, 14.3% engage in actions to care for the environment and wildlife, such as beach cleanups. 9.5% reported hosting events to promote sustainability, 7.1% reported using renewable energies and 7.1% to contribute to projects on sustainability with financial or labour support. 9.5% are interested in including EfS in the curriculum, 4.8% engaged in media activities to promote sustainability, 4.7% practice sustainability at home, 4.8% use sustainable materials and 4.8% reported having sustainability policies. A further 2.4% practice activism.

SECTION 3: MOTIVATIONS TO ATTEND THE SYMPOSIUM

When asked what was their motivations to attend the 2020 Sustainability symposium, participants chose the following:

	Not for this reason	Slightly motivated	Somewhat motivated	Motivated	Highly motivated	Very highly motivated
To share educational resources on sustainability education	7.1%	4.8%	9.5%	26.2%	23.8%	26.2%
To share best practices in sustainability education	4.8%	9.5%	7.1%	16.7%	31%	28.6%
To solve problems or overcome barriers to sustainability education in my school / organisation / community / family	0%	2.4%	9.5%	19%	33.3%	28.6%
To build partnerships for sustainability education	7.1%	2.4%	2.4%	14.3%	28.6%	38.1%
To learn from local leaders on sustainability	2.4%	0%	0%	9.5%	28.6%	52.4%
For professional development reasons	4.8%	4.8%	11.9%	14.3%	26.2%	31%
To be empowered / Inspired	2.4%	0%	2.4%	11.9%	16.7%	59.5%
To foster collaboration for sustainable futures	2.4%	0%	9.5%	16.7%	26.2%	38.1%
To learn innovative approaches to sustainability education	2.4%	0%	4.8%	4.8%	26.2%	54.8%

When asked whether respondents had made any new connections at the 2020 Sustainability Symposium that they intended on following up on afterwards for the benefit of their EfS practice, 78.6% responded Yes, while 14.3% reported not having made any connections they intended to follow up afterwards. 4.8% did not respond to this question.

SECTION 4: PERCEPTIONS AROUND COMMUNITY CONNECTEDNESS DURING THE SYMPOSIUM

When asked about rating their sense of community connectedness from participating in the 2020 Sustainability Symposium, participants reported the following:

1	2	3	4	5	Really felt a part of a community	NA
0%	7.1%	4.8%	26.2%	21.4%	33.3%	7.1%

When asked whether the online space inhibited their sense of community, 47.6% of respondents indicated that it did, whereas 45.2% indicated that it didn't (with 4.8% not responding to this question). Of those reporting their sense of community was inhibited, reasons included: the difficulty of new entrants to feel part of the community, as there were limited opportunities to meet and greet participants. To the reduced opportunities to connect or chat to other people over breaks, common sessions or meals, participants highlighted that smaller groups (breakout sessions) did facilitate engagement a bit more, whereas bigger events like masterclasses or the dinner had limitations in terms of engagement. Many respondents congratulated the SSN for holding the symposium despite the challenges of moving the event online. For others, especially those that were not from Queensland, the online format allowed them to be part of the symposium, which added the potential

to reach EfS in other parts of Australia. Anecdotally, a participant noted that the symposium was focused primarily on teachers, and not so much parents or the wider community.

Participants rated their enjoyment on a likert scale in an overwhelming positive scale as 'highly enjoyable' (52.4%), 5 points on the scale (23.8%) or 4 points in the likert scale (16.7%).

SECTION 5: PERCEPTIONS ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY

In order to understand participants' understanding of sustainability we asked them to list five words they think of when considering the word 'sustainability'. A word cloud of the raw words provided by participants is provided, followed by a thematic analysis in Table form:

Thematic groupings	Words in category	%
NA	-	9.5
Aspiration/Hope/Future/Goals/Better/thriving	35	83.3
Environmental: conservation, environment/recycling, waste	26	61.9
Humanity/Collective/global/interdependent/systems thinking	11	26.2
Resource management/reuse	11	26.2
Change	10	23.8
Social/justice	10	23.8
Balance/wellbeing/natural	10	23.8
Innovation / technology/ Creativity/ability	9	21.4
Collaboration/sharing	7	16.7
Choice/action/empower	6	14.3
Help/care	6	14.3
Long-term/longevity/sustain	5	11.9
Economic (equity, circular)	4	9.5
Consumption	4	9.5
Education	4	9.5
Individual/consciousness/responsibility	4	9.5
Community/connections	4	9.5
Realistic, attainable	3	7.1
Challenging, complex	3	7.1
Regeneration	3	7.1
Reflection	2	4.8
Government/governance	2	4.8
Partnerships/cooperation	2	4.8
intergenerational/children	2	4.8
Persistence	1	2.4

The table indicates a strong emphasis on a thriving community and hope for the future, as well as an emphasis on environmental conservation and resource management. The interdependent nature of sustainability, a willingness to change and enhance social justice and wellbeing were also highlighted.

Similarly, there was an emphasis on the need for innovative and creative collaborative approaches and action to care for the environment.



In order to better understand the effect that the symposium had in participants' ideas around sustainability, we asked participants if their perception of sustainability had changed from their attendance and interactions during the symposium. The majority (57.1%) reported that it had not, with 33.3% reporting that it did (7.1% did not respond to this question). They were also invited to provide further feedback in an open-ended question about why their perceptions did or did not change. Among the reasons for it to stay the same, participants highlighted that the symposium reinforced their definitions of sustainability, particularly the one developed in the previous symposium, and that it was great to see the 'movement' growing. Among the ones that noted their definition of sustainability changed, they noted that they now understand better the imbalances between what we extract from the environment and what it can sustain (our 'ability' to 'sustain' or 'capability to thrive over time'). Some others supported a move from sustainability to regeneration, more consideration of social justice aspects, the need for intergenerational approaches and the need to focus on positive action (i.e. sustainability vs unsustainability).

The current global pandemic also impacted participants' conceptions of sustainability, with 62% reporting they perceptions and practices of sustainability have changed during the pandemic and 26.2% stating that they have not (9.5% did not respond to this question). This question was followed by an open-ended question inviting further feedback on why that was the case. Only participants with changed conceptions of sustainability due to the impacts of COVID-19 responded to this question, some stated driving and consuming less and not travelling overseas. Others highlighted a focus on physical and mental wellbeing, as well as increased acts of kindness towards others. Many reported

being more inspired to act and use this ‘reflective’ opportunity to demand change and provide solutions. Some stated that they have realised how COVID-19 is affecting different countries and emphasised its effects in the poorest communities.

	LOW	2	3	4	5	HIGH	NA
Before the symposium level of content knowledge about sustainability	0% 0	7.1% 3	11.9% 5	28.6% 12	31% 13	9.5% 4	11.9% 5
Before the symposium level of understanding about education for sustainability in classroom contexts (EFS)	0% 0	11.9% 5	23.8% 10	28.6% 12	11.9% 5	14.3% 6	9.5% 4
Before the symposium level of confidence about engaging children in education for sustainability	2.4% 1	14.3% 6	19% 8	16.7% 7	26.2% 11	9.5% 4	11.9% 5
After the symposium level of content knowledge about sustainability	0% 0	4.8% 2	11.9% 5	14.3% 6	42.9% 18	16.7% 7	9.5% 4
After the symposium level of understanding about education for sustainability in classroom contexts (EFS)	0% 0	11.9% 5	11.9% 5	26.2% 11	31% 13	4.8% 2	11.9% 5
After the symposium level of confidence about engaging children in education for sustainability	0% 0	7.1% 3	9.5% 4	28.6% 12	31% 13	9.5% 4	11.9% 5

SECTION 6: UNDERSTANDINGS AND PERCEPTIONS AROUND EDUCATION *FOR* AND *ABOUT* SUSTAINABILITY

The next section explored participants’ understandings of education *about* and *for* sustainability.

1. We asked participants to rate their level of understanding about education *about* sustainability (curriculum):

	LOW LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	2	3	4	5	HIGH LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	NA
Education about sustainability in curriculum	0% 0	11.9% 5	11.9% 5	26.2% 11	31% 13	4.8% 2	11.9% 5

2. We asked participants to rate their level of confidence about engaging children (or your target audience) in education *about* sustainability (curriculum):

	LOW LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE	2	3	4	5	HIGH LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE	NA
EfS	0% 0	2.4% 1	4.8% 2	9.5% 4	21.4% 9	45.2% 19	14.3% 6

3. We asked participants to rate their level of determination in engaging children (or your target audience) in education about sustainability (curriculum)

	LOW LEVEL OF DETERMINATION	2	3	4	5	HIGH LEVEL OF DETERMINATION	NA
EfS	0% 0	2.4% 1	4.8% 2	9.5% 4	21.4% 9	45.2% 19	14.3% 6

4. We asked participants to rate their knowledge about education *for* sustainability (curriculum and pedagogy):

	LOW LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	2	3	4	5	HIGH LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE	NA
EfS	4.8% 2	11.9% 5	11.9% 5	28.6% 12	21.4% 9	7.1% 3	19% 8

5. We asked participants to indicate their level of confidence in engaging children in education *for* sustainability (curriculum and pedagogy):

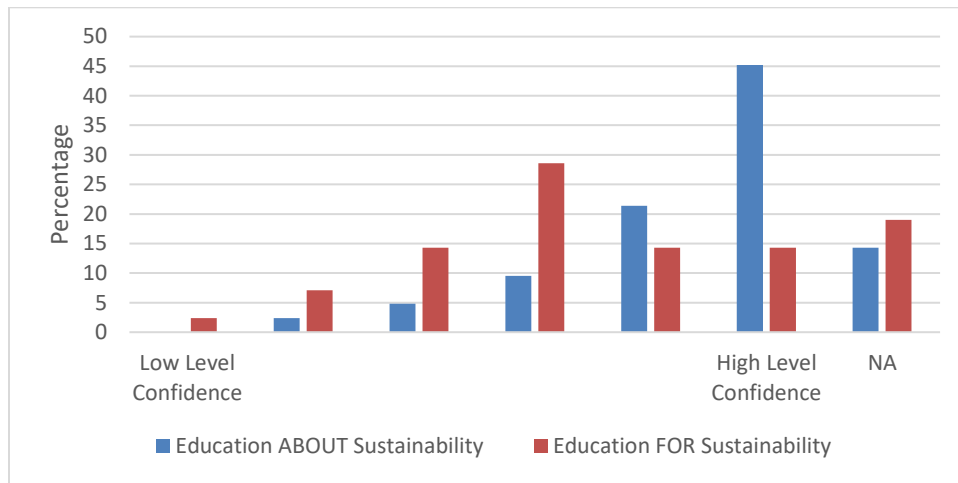
	LOW LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE	2	3	4	5	HIGH LEVEL OF CONFIDENCE	NA
EfS	2.4% 1	7.1% 3	14.3% 6	28.6% 12	14.3% 6	14.3% 6	19% 8

6. We asked participants to indicate their level of determination in engaging children (or their target audience) in education for sustainability (curriculum and pedagogy)

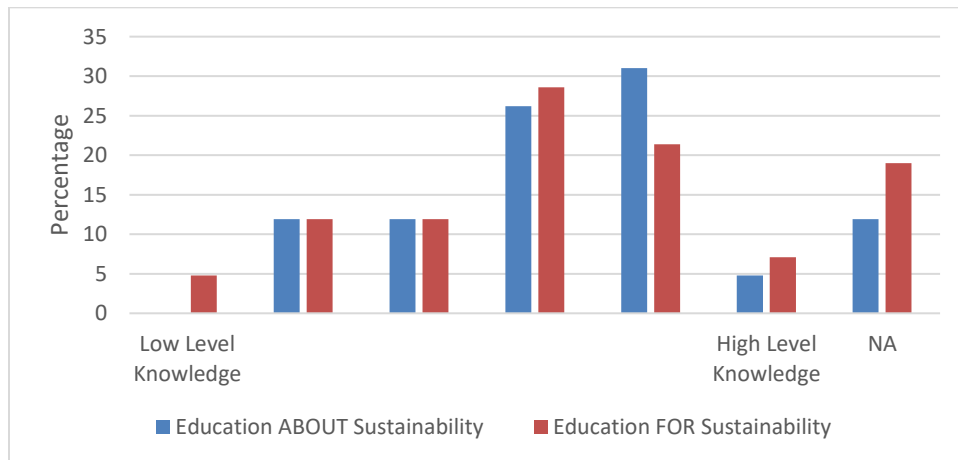
	LOW LEVEL OF2 DETERMINATION		3	4	5	HIGH LEVEL OFNA DETERMINATION	
EfS	0%	7.1%	9.5%	9.5%	11.9%	47.6%	14.3%
	0	3	4	4	5	20	6

The graphs below show the difference in participants levels of confidence, knowledge and determination in education *about* and education *for* sustainability, based on the responses to the six questions above:

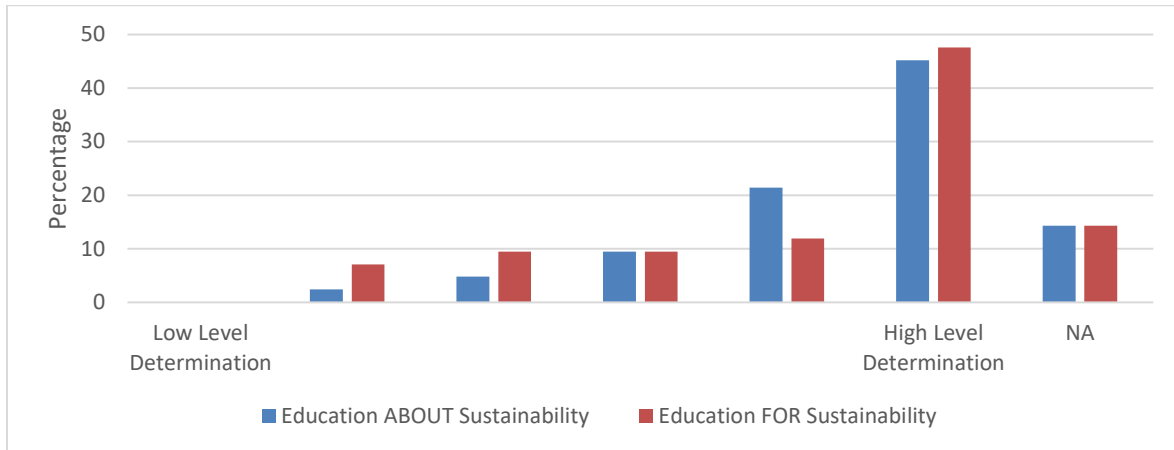
CONFIDENCE



KNOWLEDGE



DETERMINATION



SECTION 7: KNOWLEDGE ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY

BEFORE attending the 2020 Sustainability Symposium, in terms of your level of content knowledge about sustainability where would you place yourself on this continuum?

	NOT CONFIDENT	2	3	4	5	VERY CONFIDENT	NA
Consumption practices (food & waste)	0% 0	11.9% 5	9.5% 4	19% 8	26.2% 11	21.4% 9	11.9% 5
Student leadership	1% 2.4%	11.9% 5	9.5% 4	38.1% 16	16.7% 7	9.5% 4	11.9% 5
Conservation	0% 0	7.1% 3	16.7% 7	19% 8	26.2% 11	19% 8	11.9% 5
Peace, equality & human rights	0% 0	7.1% 3	14.3% 6	23.8% 10	4.8% 2	11.9% 5	11.9% 5

SECTION 8: KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Participants were asked about their level of familiarity with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

	LITTLE KNOWN	1	2	3	4	5	VERY GOOD KNOWN	NO KNOWN	TOTAL RESPONSES
SDG 1 No Poverty	17.86 % 5	10.71 % 3	10.71 % 3	17.86 % 5	10.71 % 3	7.14% 2	17.86 % 5	7.14% 2	28
SDG 2 Zero Hunger	14.29 % 4	14.29 % 4	14.29 % 4	17.86 % 5	10.71 % 3	10.71 % 3	10.71 % 3	7.14% 2	28
SDG 3 Good Health and Well-being	10.34 % 3	13.79 % 4	6.90% 2	31.03 % 9	13.79 % 4	10.34 % 3	10.34 % 3	3.45% 1	29
SDG 4 Quality Education	10.34 % 3	3.45% 1	3.45% 1	20.69 % 6	27.59 % 8	10.34 % 3	13.79 % 4	10.34 % 3	29
SDG 5 Gender Equality	13.79 % 4	6.90% 2	3.45% 1	20.69 % 6	17.24 % 5	10.34 % 3	20.69 % 6	6.90% 2	29
SDG 6 Clean Water and Sanitation	10.34 % 3	10.34 % 3	10.34 % 3	13.79 % 4	20.69 % 6	6.90% 2	20.69 % 6	6.90% 2	29
SDG 7 Affordable and Clean Energy	6.90% 2	6.90% 2	13.79 % 4	27.59 % 8	13.79 % 4	3.45% 1	20.69 % 6	6.90% 2	29
SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth	10.71 % 3	7.14% 2	32.14 % 9	10.71 % 3	10.71 % 3	10.71 % 3	10.71 % 3	7.14% 2	28
SDG 9 Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure	13.79 % 4	10.34 % 3	31.03 % 9	6.90% 2	3.45% 1	10.34 % 3	17.24 % 5	6.90% 2	29
SDG 10 Reducing Inequality	10.34 % 3	13.79 % 4	20.69 % 6	13.79 % 4	10.34 % 3	17.24 % 5	6.90% 2	6.90% 2	29
SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities	7.14% 2	14.29 % 4	17.86 % 5	14.29 % 4	7.14% 2	17.86 % 5	17.86 % 5	3.57% 1	28
SDG 12 Responsible Consumption and Production	3.45% 1	6.90% 2	27.59 % 8	10.34 % 3	10.34 % 3	10.34 % 3	24.14 % 7	6.90% 2	29

	LITTLE KNOWLEDGE	1	2	3	4	5	VERY GOOD KNOWLEDGE	NO KNOWLEDGE	TOTAL RESPONSES
SDG 13 Climate Action	6.90% 2	10.34 % 3	10.34 % 3	13.79 % 4	24.14 % 7	10.34 % 3	17.24 % 5	6.90% 2	29
SDG 14 Life with Water	10.34 % 3	6.90% 2	20.69 % 6	13.79 % 4	10.34 % 3	13.79 % 4	17.24 % 5	6.90% 2	29
SDG 15 Life On Land	14.29 % 4	10.71 % 3	14.29 % 4	14.29 % 4	17.86 % 5	7.14% 2	14.29 % 4	7.14% 2	28
SDG 16 Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions	13.79 % 4	10.34 % 3	13.79 % 4	10.34 % 3	20.69 % 6	6.90% 2	17.24 % 5	6.90% 2	29
SDG 17 Partnership s for the Goals	10.34 % 3	17.24 % 5	20.69 % 6	13.79 % 4	3.45% 1	10.34 % 3	17.24 % 5	6.90% 2	29

SECTION 9: SPECIFIC FEEDBACK ABOUT THE EVENT

Implementing Ideas and Practice from the Symposium

Participants were asked in an open-ended question to indicate what ideas or practices they intended to act upon as a result of participating in the Sustainability Symposium. There were 15 responses, of which, 33% indicated that they would take up actions for sustainability, including personal behaviour change (20%) such as “consuming less” and action in their work context (20%), including a focus on “waste management and upcycling”. There were 27% of respondents indicating they will be incorporating EfS into their practice through, “having a closer look at mental models”; and using “waste exercises similar to the fish game”. Others were inspired to embed practice in other ways, one respondent saying: “It is time to be bold, encourage teachers at my College to imbed sustainability passions into their teaching. Take risks and explore things they don't know yet. Connect with the Indigenous community, connect with the local environment, create my own totem.” Sharing learnings with colleagues (20%); involve students through student leadership initiatives (20%); network with other attendees of the symposium (20%) were also mentioned, as well as engaging with local communities to promote positive change.

EfS Professional Learning and Development Needs

Participants were asked in an open-ended question to indicate what they perceived were their professional learning and development needs with regards to education for sustainability (EFS). There were 34 responses to this question. There were 34% of respondents who indicated that they needed practical examples of implementing education for sustainability in classroom/learning environments. Of these respondents, lesson plans (9%) and ways to implement meaningful cross-

curriculum engagement (3%) were mentioned and the senior secondary (3%) and higher education (3%) sectors were mentioned specifically. Respondents indicated that they would benefit from having a list of EfS resources available (16%), more communication about best practice in EfS (16%) and having opportunities to connect into a sustainability educators' community to network and share ideas and information (13%). Professional learning to build confidence to educate others, namely colleagues, about EfS was noted (9%), as well as professional learning about how to embed sustainability strategically into school decision-making (9%). A few respondents (6%) also indicated that professional learning on Indigenous EfS connections would be valuable, for example, "Indigenous totems, storytelling..." and "Greater knowledge and connection with the local Indigenous culture". Some respondents (6%) indicated further clarification on the goals of EfS and how they should be working towards these in classroom/learning contexts was also noted. Specific topics or themes mentioned included how to: create behavior change; change thinking; move EfS learning outdoors; embed renewable energy learning; and embed circular economy learning. Some respondents (6%) also indicated that professional learning that focused on sustainability rather than *unsustainability* is beneficial, calling for more emphasis on positive examples, i.e. "Need to know how to get away from the negative current situation, without lying. Need to learn how to really inspire creativity when it's becoming less valued".

Most Valued Aspect of the Symposium

Participants were asked in an open-ended question to indicate what they valued most from the symposium. There were 35 responses to this question. 45% of respondents indicated that learning something new was most valued; mental models (11%), ecological literacy (3%) and the Q&A session (3%) were mentioned specifically. The second most noted valued aspect of the symposium was the inspiration respondents felt through participating (23%), for example, "It's reignited my passion for wanting to implement sustainable practices into the school". Respondents equally valued the networking opportunity (23%) enabled through the symposium, for example, one said "Seeing/meeting other educators. Hopefully, continuing to be part of an ongoing network of sustainability educators". Speakers (17%) were also mentioned as valued attributes, specifically Jaimie from New York and Judy. Another item noted by 11% of respondents was the opportunity to meet, and be among, likeminded people; for example, "meeting so many likeminded educators for whom sustainability is a way of life". A number of respondents noted the format and execution (11%) of the symposium as a valued attribute, specifically the engagement with a 'collective thinking platform' and technology (9%). Respondents also valued the practical strategies and ideas for practice (11%) they gained through participating, as well as the diverse perspectives included in sessions (9%).

Improving the Symposium

Participants were asked in an open-ended question; how the Sustainability Symposium could be improved in the future. Of the 31 respondents, 16% commented on the modality of the symposium and technical challenges, related to their lack of skills (6%). Some respondents indicated that the online format worked well, appreciating the recordings (3%), though would like a "mixture of online, face-to-face and interactive elements", while 10% indicated they were looking forward to a symposium in person. A further 16% of respondents indicated they would appreciate more practical

examples of EfS and practical strategies, suggesting “workbooks”; “worksheets”; “practical strategies that work, programs and resources”; “more positive examples and initiatives being carried out in learning environments” and “Practical workshops in which groups are assigned tasks and go through the process to focus on solutions from own experiences...”. More specificity on EfS topics (10%) was also suggested, for example: “Perhaps we could have additional targeted workshops (after the first Jaimie Cloud symposium). Targeted to our interests and needs.” Other suggestions included having more panels (3%), more material for non-teacher audiences (3%) and for any student-based activities (i.e. in break-out rooms), for an older student or adult to be present to facilitate discussion (3%).

One respondent made a detailed suggestion regarding a future program:

“The speakers were excellent. Perhaps consider including in a future symposium: Speakers who have successfully incorporated ecological literacy and SDGs into their education programs; Speakers who have successfully implemented cross-curriculum programs of education that address sustainability and the SDGs; Speakers who have successfully introduced philosophical and ethical approaches of thinking and problem identification and solving to their students and colleagues; School administrators who have successfully incorporated forward, futuristic focus and ethical thinking about sustainability into their schools' priorities and agendas; A speaker like Peter Singer to present on living an ethical life and how to incorporate philosophical thinking into programs of education. University professors and leaders (Ali was great!) to speak about how their programs of education and environmental management/science aim to prepare students to lead us forward into a sustainable future; Speakers who have successfully embedded nature into the curriculum and student experiences; Speakers who have successfully taught students leadership, empowerment, meeting facilitation, project development and management skills. If the youth are going to drive change, they need to develop a specific skill set that will ensure their enthusiasm and vision can engage others and produce results. For student programs, include sessions where youth present to youth.”

Overall, 32% congratulated organisers and facilitators and had no suggestions for improvement, e.g. “no suggestions – it was great!” and “I found it highly engaging and inspiring.”

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings from this study indicate the valuable contribution of the Symposium made to the development and practice of Education for Sustainability. The study reflects on the importance of underlying perceptions and knowledge about sustainability. In particular, the analysis reveals that participants' knowledge of sustainability is primarily focused on environmental sustainability and especially consumption patterns, energy and waste management and reduction. A triple-bottom-line approach to sustainability, including social, environmental and economic aspects would require a close look at the narratives underpinning EfS. Research in EfS has emphasised the importance of the three pillars approach to sustainability and the applicability of the UN's SDG framework in EfS³. However, the implementation of the framework in practice poses several challenges to educators. In this respect, we explored the level of knowledge across the different SDGs to ascertain which areas to focus on in the development of EfS materials to provide holistic approaches to learning about sustainable development.

Finally, the analysis reveals the importance of fostering partnerships in communities around EfS where exchanges of information and knowledge can lead to practical outcomes, as well as learning outcomes and the development of alternative pedagogies for the development of the critical skills our children need to design a sustainable future for all, together.

We hope that the findings of this report will be useful to inform policymakers and school managers' decisions towards more sustainable practices and the development of Education for Sustainability models. It is also our wish to inspire and empower the wider education community, including our children, to continue to collectively develop strong and robust educational frameworks for Education for Sustainability.

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³ Annan-Diab, F., & Molinari, C. (2017). Interdisciplinarity: Practical approach to advancing education for sustainability and for the Sustainable Development Goals. *The International Journal of Management Education*, 15(2), 73-83.