
Diffusion or Infusion of Sustainability Development Practices in the Social Work Curriculum Kenya

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Abstract

The global agenda of sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) provide social workers with an opportunity to redefine their role in people empowerment, socio-economic development, human rights and environment. This is especially so for social workers in transitional societies whose roles have been narrowly defined in the past. Additionally, there is consensus among scholars that the most effective way to achieve Sustainable Development is by enhancing educational practices. This brings the focus on curriculum development and reviews to the core of sustainable development. Among various professions, social work carries specific importance, primarily because the competence of social work practitioners will have a direct impact on the pursuit of SDGs. Hence there has been a realization that curriculum planning and review for social work educators need to be suitably aligned with the requirements of Sustainable Development Goals. Social work institutions of higher learning are therefore considered as the avenue in ensuring the fulfilment of these development goals. Unfortunately, these social work institutions in many developing countries remain locked into the paradigm of being a mere supplier of skilled labour to industry and are thereby unable to respond effectively to the needs of the sustainable development strategies. There is a need, therefore, for social work professionals to be called upon to reorient their curricula towards sustainability. The objectives of this paper were to critically explore the role of social work institutions of learning as a catalyst for sustainable development, examine how Sustainable development goals can be successfully embedded across the entire curricula and suggest the appropriate model for the incorporation of Sustainable Development in the curricula. The study used content analysis to analyse the objectives. The findings showed that social work Institutions of learning have particularly adopted various approaches to achieve sustainable development through curricula shifts. The paper recommends that there is a need for social work institutions of learning to understand their key role as agents of Sustainability; integrate sustainability as a transversal theme rather than limiting it to specific parts of the curriculum and invent new models through which the concepts of Sustainable Development can be infused into the curricula.

Key Words: Sustainable Development, curriculum, sustainability, Institutions of higher learning, Infusion, Diffusion

