



Future Managers' Perspective on Attaining the Sustainable Development Goals and Sustainability in India

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I INTRODUCTION

Though sustainability research has made substantial progress in many areas of global development policy and practice (Oktay & Hoskara, 2007), such as eco-friendly or green buildings (Figuroa et al., 2010/2016), planning and administration (Rahman et al., 2020), and efforts integrate environmental, social, and economic sciences (Spandau et al., 2012), further steps toward interdisciplinarity are needed as different disciplines can provide different perspectives and strategies in the areas of sustainability ethics and sustainability research (Becker, 2012).

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The term ‘sustainability’ is largely associated with sustainable development and sustainability science. Sustainability means to create and maintain the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony to support present and future generations. Further, Camarinha-Matos et al. (2010) discuss the spheres of sustainability and argue that there are three pillars of sustainable development—social, economic, and environmental.

Of all the complex problems that sustainability science and sustainability-related research tackle, the main challenge lies in integrating knowledge and methods from varied disciplines, which requires both a stakeholder-oriented approach and methodological innovation (Schoolman et al., 2012). The need to consider the three main pillars of sustainability calls for both a more holistic perspective of the problems and a tighter collaboration among a wide range of stakeholders (Camarinha-Matos et al., 2010). Further, the most pressing problems that sustainability science needs to solve should be defined by society, not by scientists; thus, involving stakeholders in the process is both a prerequisite for success as well as a key challenge (Jäger, 2009). The issues researched and presented by the scientist and the academic still lack the voice of the grassroot-level stakeholders. It should also be noted that sustainability is a value-loaded and socially charged discourse and the experiences of natural scientists lack self-reflectiveness as they understand the issues of sustainability only from the natural science perspective and not from the social perspective, that is, their operational definition of sustainability largely varies from that of the social scientists (Lele & Norgaard, 1996). It is essential to transform sustainability science into a transdisciplinary enterprise to generate positive social and environmental change globally, for which renewed communication strategies, research, and public policies for research and its grants, fund allocation, and so on are needed. Further, a need to engage society and to creatively employ all sources of knowledge is a must (Shrivastava et al., 2020).

Education serves the purpose of creating responsible citizens and encourages social welfare and national development (Chandra et al., 1996). Further, youth are seen as the force to bring change. Sustainability research should aim for a transformational and solution-driven research agenda (Miller et al., 2014). Despite the increasing number of professionals involved in sustainability, there is still a need for more trained specialists in higher education institutions in order to properly advance this research field. Another issue is the absence of proper collaboration, networking,

and coordination between different educational institutions (Jäger, 2009). A great acceleration is generated and sustained by powerful economic mechanisms such as globalization, marketization, and financialization, which are based on the mainstream model of doing business and promoting economic growth (Boda & Zsolnai, 2016). The global economy and the five earth systems—geosphere, biosphere, cryosphere, hydrosphere, and atmosphere—are on a collision course that will ultimately have dire consequences for humans and the biosphere (Shrivastava et al., 2020).

Sustainability research in the developing world is lagging behind the scholarship of more developed countries, creating knowledge gaps that need to be addressed (Mukhopadhyay et al., 2014). This is largely because even policy-level interventions are not researched at a level that identify need and consequence. While analyzing green growth policies, one is likely to ignore the way they can give advantage to domestic firms and industries. These policies have heterogeneous effects on economies in the Global South. The way the firms and industries react to green growth policies will further decide the outcomes of these policies, whether they will result in scaling up the economies of developing countries while maintaining a transition to low-carbon trajectories or not. However, most research studies are based on BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) and MINT (Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Turkey) economies, whereby it is seen that they have successfully deployed green growth policies. An example is China's effective usage of electric vehicles, becoming the lead market in electric vehicles. The problem, however, lies in the dearth of research on green growth in developing countries, which limits the overall understanding of the effect of green growth policies in Global South (Herman, 2021). Sady et al. (2019) and Puig et al. (2019) establish that universities play a key role in meeting the challenges of sustainability through education. As per the 2017–2018 All India Survey of Higher Education Data (AISHE), India's higher education system is considered the third largest in the world with about 36.6 million students enrolled in postsecondary educational institutions (Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, 2018). Despite being such a large sector, conversations about the integration of the SDGs in the operations of Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) are still few and far between. The National Associations of Higher Education have not seriously taken up the matter of sustainability and have hardly done any detailing with the role of educational institutions in sustainable development. The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry's (FICCI)

Higher Education Committee has been bringing private institutions together for the past two decades. Yet, it has not stressed to its members the importance of advancing the SDGs in HEIs. Also, NITI Aayog—the apex public policy think tank of the Government of India in its national approach to achieving the SDGs in India—makes no mention of HEIs, not even of their likely contributions to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, such as education and awareness building. The 2022 Times Higher Education (THE) ranking report on universities and SDGs shows that only a handful of Indian universities are working in this direction; this list does not include any elite public institutions like Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), nor are these even mentioned in the report (Bothwell, 2018). The report suggests that Indian policymakers should think about innovative ways that HEIs can support the achievement of the SDGs (Bothwell, 2018).

2 THE STUDY

Sustainable development is a collective responsibility. The indifferent and casual attitude of India toward attaining the SDGs and the lack of accountability of stakeholders, especially within the educational institutions, inspired our research. In this chapter, we explore the role of educational institutions in inspiring and affecting the perspectives of future managers, that is, the current management students who will be engaged in administrative roles in the future. It is clear that youth are the future of the nation. The study is undertaken to understand how emerging concepts like corporate greening, green HRM, green marketing, and green entrepreneurship will take shape in India in the future.

Applying the conceptual framework of Theory U, the quantitative cross-section exploratory research study is undertaken using a self-designed scale. Multistage sampling was used to select 536 management students using convenience sampling. At level 2, we employed purposive sampling to reach a sub-set of 310 management respondents who had prior knowledge of the SDGs. Smart PLS SEM 3.3.3 was used to apply regression analysis and Structural Equation Modeling. Our original hypothesis was that one's understanding of a subject and the importance they attach to that understanding has an impact on one's lifestyle. However, in the context of SDGs, our results show that although an understanding of the SDGs influences individual conceptualization of how SDGs are to be attained, our sample shows that this understanding is not significantly associated with lifestyle.

Our data also indicates that the importance one attaches to the SDGs does not influence one's lifestyle choices. Our research offers crucial insight into the psychology of youth and future business managers. It also indicates that we are still at the sensing stage of Theory U. Our findings are significant in the light of a much-needed behavioral nudge required to achieve the SDGs at both the societal and national levels, which will require individual initiatives. Further, the study indicates that a sync is needed between researchers, government, scientific communities, agencies working for sustainable development, and society at large.

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Lifestyle and Perceptions of the Sustainable Development Goals

According to Jensen (2007), lifestyle can be defined at many different levels—some define it as the way of living (Pulkkinen & Kokko, 2000), whereas others define it in terms of health-related factors (Bolt, 2002), while others define it as what one consumes (Poster, 2004). There are four levels at which lifestyle can be discussed—the global level, the structural/national level, the positional/sub-cultural level, and the individual level. Though we define them separately, these levels are all intertwined. Lifestyle depends on cultural qualities and has a time orientation, that is to say, lifestyle is a dynamic construct that varies with culture and time. It is defined by means of actions, communications, and beliefs (Fern, 2001). Mahatma Gandhi stated that individuals should “be the change you wish to see in the world” (*Mahatma Gandhi Quotes*, n.d.). Following this ideology, change is not limited to some of the big corporations, such as LG, Samsung India, Tata Consultancy Services, Oil and Natural Gas Company, ITC limited, and so on (Choudhary, 2017). Deloitte's 2017 report acknowledges that businesses (particularly the big corporations in India) can work toward achieving the SDGs in ways that benefit both the business and humanity. Still, there are very few corporations and businesses that have moved from a profit-making agenda toward the achievement of the SDGs. Concepts like ‘creating shared value’, that is, creating something that is held as significant by every stakeholder, as proposed by Porter and Kramer (2011), must be widely accepted by governments, corporations, and civil society to have a positive impact on change (Harvard Business Review, 2019). Torneire (2020) and Elder and King (2018)

further elaborate upon certain lifestyle practices that the government can promote, such as integrating the SDGs into national planning and creating implementation strategies to positively impact the fulfillment of the SDGs. Mantay (2019) denies the popular belief that the majority of inactive citizens, those who are least bothered of SDG attainment, are either not interested in the workings of society or believe that they, as individuals, are powerless to bring about change. Mantay (2019) suggests that placing partnership over competitiveness yields better results. So, if each stakeholder responsibly caters to their role in meeting the SDGs, attaining the SDGs by 2030 is certainly achievable.

Education, Understanding, and Perceptions of the Sustainable Development Goals

The SDGs encompass an extensive range of multifarious social, economic, and environmental challenges. The need to meet these goals and to ensure meaningful transformations prompts all sectors to operate in more collaborative, networked, universal, and responsible ways (Sachs et al., 2019). Though there are many stakeholders that can play a vital role in achieving the SDGs, the Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) (2020) identifies universities as a unit that can be instrumental in the implementation of every SDG through teaching and learning, research, organizational governance, culture, operations, and external leadership; as such, universities are a critical partner for the realization of the SDGs (Kestin et al., 2017). The role of universities in education, research, and innovation, as well as their contribution to civic, societal, and community-level leadership, suggests that they should be held accountable in helping society to be educated, sensitized, and responsive toward the attainment of the SDGs. Education should aim to provide individuals, communities, and HEIs themselves with the ability to comprehend, adapt, and respond to the challenges of sustainable development (UNESCO, 2015). Further, Zhou et al. (2020) find that students' satisfaction with curricula increases with the introduction of sustainability-related content, which in turn educates them about socioeconomic and environmental sustainability issues at the global level. Universities can certainly play a role in educating stakeholders, but still a problem persists, which can be explained using the GI Joe fallacy. The GI Joe fallacy was introduced by Laurie Santos and Tamar Gendler and is inspired by the TV cartoon G. I. Joe, known for the famous epithet "Now you know. And knowing is half the battle" (YouTube [Tanix

Kington], 2009). Though this suggests that knowing something helps win the battle, in reality, knowledge, unless put to action, changes nothing. Also, this idea of knowledge as victory is not based on how one's mind works because the thought process is generally affected by implicit biases, which at times stops one from taking action. Thus, according to the GI Joe Fallacy, there lies a serious disconnect between knowing and doing (Santos & Gendler, 2014). The problem lies in “the disconnect,” that is, the knowing–doing gap, the disconnect that lies between our collective consciousness and collective actions.

Actions Related to and Perceptions of the Sustainable Development Goals

Scharmer (2017) describes that in most societal systems, we collectively create results that are undesirable as depicted in Table 1.

These disconnects create results that are generally unwanted. To work on these disconnects, universities and schools can play a vital role, but the absence of vertical literacy about sustainability and sustainable development primarily limits the functioning of educational institutions in contributing toward attainment of the SDGs. Our learners and our societal

Table 1 Three divides between action and perception regarding the Sustainable Development Goals

<i>Sr. no.</i>	<i>Undesirable result</i>	<i>Description</i>
1	Ecological divide	The self–Nature disconnect. The ecological divide makes oneself feel separated from Nature. Human activities have resulted in environmental problems like pollution, global warming, natural disasters, hole in the ozone layer, climate change, etc. In order to overcome these problems, individuals must feel connected to Nature.
2	Social divide	The self–other disconnect. The social allows oneself to relate to some while distinguish one from others. It is an us vs. them scenario which results in cynicism and intolerance. In order to work on global issues such as sustainable development, this must be addressed.
3	Self–self-disconnect	The disconnection between one's current and emerging future self. The present, unless it is connected to the emerging future, will pose serious limitation in attainment of the SDGs by 2030. This disconnect will seriously jeopardize the very essence of sustainability itself.

systems are largely missing from conversations about making systems more responsive to environmental needs, particularly in terms of upgrading the operations of the educational system with respect to the student community (Scharmer, 2019). “What’s In It For Me (WIIFM)?” becomes the question behind action for most people. Becoming aware of a concern is just the beginning; validating and supporting the journey becomes more important. Proper communication and honest dialogue will break silos and prepare people for the change (Tsaousides, 2020).

From the literature, it becomes clear that an individual’s lifestyle is affected by one’s own beliefs that emerge from the cultural framework in which one is born and raised. Lifestyle has a time and space orientation. Educational institutions can place value and importance on the SDGs, imbuing a sense of responsibility on its students that could contribute to significant lifestyle changes that would be impactful and incorporated in various business and corporate settings. Though there are multiple stakeholders, and some of them are taking steps toward the attainment of the SDGs, it is still a collective responsibility in which the educational institutions can play a significant role. However, it is not yet happening, and the accountability of educational institutions in the realm of environment sustainability is not being discussed broadly enough. The literature also suggests that introducing topics related to sustainability into educational curricula increases student satisfaction and thus, has the dual benefit of enriching their knowledge and keeping them satisfied. In turn, educating students on sustainability is also expected to equip them to face future environmental challenges. By strategizing the steps, one can ensure that each one gets the sense of WIIFM and cooperates in the direction of fulfilling the SDGs. This will help in bringing much needed behavioral changes and will serve a step toward pro-environmental behavior.

4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Scharmer (2018) posits Theory U, which presents five processes that underpin change: co-initiating, co-sensing, presencing, co-creating, and co-evolving. Any change, whether it be in a tangible product or an intangible phenomena, has to undergo certain steps and cannot be institutionalized otherwise. Theory U suggests the development of change as follows: downloading from the past patterns, breaking them gradually, and then progressing toward embodying and performing. Theory U encourages one to step into the emerging future (see Fig. 1).

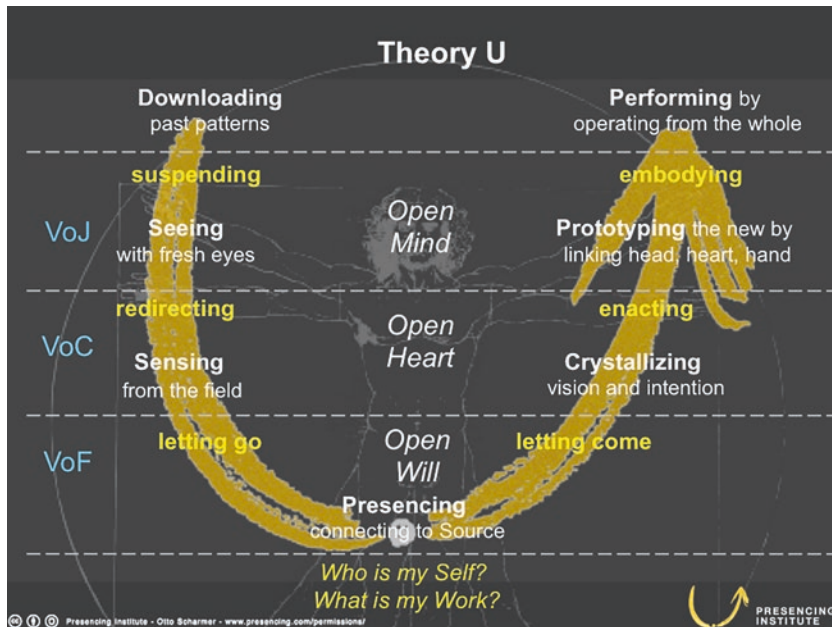


Fig. 1 Theory U

Shukla et al. (2019) suggest that perception shapes the cognitive processes that help humans interpret these life experiences from the given social environment and produce relevant response strategies. Perception has been defined as the process of receiving, selecting, organizing, interpreting, checking, and reacting to sensory stimuli or data (Pareek et al., 1981). Freeman et al. (2011) find a dynamic continuity between a person’s perception and their actions. Thus, if action is to take place, perception needs to be studied. Forehand and Von Haller (1964) describe perception as the process of becoming aware of salient situations and adding meaningful associations to the sensations. Asch’s experiments, performed in the 1950s on a group of participants to compare the length of the lines drawn on chart paper for the experiment, also suggest that people may willingly ignore reality and conform to the group. The experiments further imply that conformity increases with a rise in the number of people accepting a particular view, if the task is of a complex nature, and if it is in the presence of influential people (Asch, 1955). There have been many

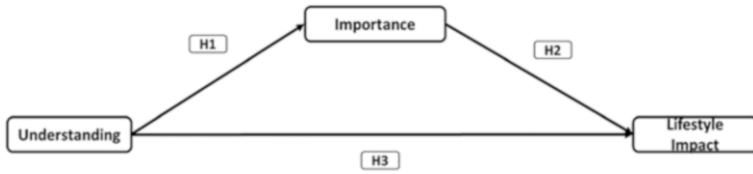


Fig. 2 Conceptual framework of presencing

studies performed to test the correlation between perception, willingness, and behavior, the results of which show a strong relationship between these constructs (Caniato & Gasparella, 2019).

Based on Theory U, we propose the following conceptual framework. This research study undertakes three constructs: (1) Lifestyle impact on the SDGs; (2) understanding of the SDGs; and (3) the impact of lifestyle on the SDGs. The variable of importance attached to SDGs is taken as a mediator. Presencing, which is a combination of sensing + presence, is the capacity to connect to the deepest source of one's self. It then allows the future to emerge from the whole self rather than from meager interest (Scharmer, 2018). It is only in the post-presencing stage, that is, after sensing and letting go of the current practices, that change can happen and be anticipated. In this chapter, we have used the construct of understanding to seeing and importance to sensing, which are essential to achieve presencing (see Fig. 2). Understanding and importance can create a lifestyle impact, which is essential to inspire oneself toward a Proactive Environment Behavior. This also ensures accountability toward the accomplishment of the SDGs.

5 METHODOLOGY

Our exploratory research design is based on a quantitative research approach commonly adopted in the social sciences (Sekaran et al., 2001). Adopting a cross-sectional research design (Kumar et al., 2013), we use data collected during the first two weeks of August 2021, compiled from a structured questionnaire (see Appendix). Three constructs are studied using the three-part framework of Theory U detailed above. Literature suggests that partnership over competitiveness results in better change prospects (Mantay, 2019). Further, as suggested by UNESCO (2015), universities are a key stakeholder in materializing SDGs, thus,

management students were selected for the survey. Further inspired from Scharmer’s work, we use the construct of understanding as synonymous to seeing and importance as synonymous to sensing as depicted in Theory U, which are essential to achieve the presencing stage, that is, lifestyle impact, of Theory U (Scharmer, 2018).

The questionnaire consisted of four parts aimed specifically at exploring the levels of understanding and importance attached to the SDGs and the perceived impact of lifestyle on attainment of the SDGs (see Table 2).

The data was collected through Google forms and the survey targeted business management students. The sample initially included students who had both heard of the SDGs as well as those who had not. The analysis is based on the responses of students who were aware of the SDGs. Total of 310 valid samples were drawn from the youth of the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh and were analyzed; incomplete forms and those responses which indicated that they had never heard of the SDGs were

Table 2 Description of the tool used for exploring the level of understanding of and the importance attached to the SDGs and the perceived impact of lifestyle on the attainment of the SDGs

<i>Parts</i>	<i>Description</i>
Part A—Demographic details	This section consisted of questions related to age, gender, area of residence, and whether they had heard about the SDGs. The Google form then led the respondents to the next section if their response confirmed an awareness of the SDGs.
Part B—Understanding of the SDGs	The respondents were asked to what extent they understand the current situation of each goal. A five-point Likert scale was used with scale ranging from “Fully Understand” to “Not understand at all,” where 5 was “Fully Understand” and 1 was “Not understand at all.”
Part C—Impact of lifestyle on attainment of the SDGs	The perception of participants toward impact of lifestyle on the SDG attainment was studied. A five-point Likert scale was used with scale ranging from “Strongly Agree” to “Strongly Disagree,” where 5 was “Strongly Agree” and 1 was “Strongly Disagree.”
Part D—Importance	Participant’s level of importance attached to the SDGs was studied. A five-point Likert scale was used with scale ranging from “Very Important” to “Not Important,” where 5 was “Very Important” and 1 was “Not Important.”

One open-ended question regarding how the respondents think HEIs can help in achieving the SDGs was included.

removed. Out of a total of 536 respondents, 226 acknowledged being unaware of the SDGs; therefore, they were not directed to the next section of questions. Finally, we employ Smart PLS SEM (3.3.2) following the procedure set by Ringle et al. (2014).

6 RESULTS

We measured the three reflective constructs for reliability and validity in the software, taking the set limits by earlier research studies into consideration (Fig. 3; Hair et al., 2017). The set criteria are elaborated below.

The results are given below.

Table 3 presents the reliability of the constructs. The first measure was Cronbach’s Alpha. It is a commonly used method of analyzing reliability, which should be more than 0.7. Regarding reliability assessed through Cronbach’s Alpha, a value of more than 0.7 is considered as reliable and all three of our constructs have a value of more than 0.7. All the constructs have a score of more than 0.9, meeting the set parameter. The approach of Dijkstra and Henseler’s rho_A for assessing composite construct dependability was used, the values must be more than 0.6 (Dijkstra & Henseler, 2015; Schubert et al., 2018). The results of Dijkstra and Henseler’s rho_A analysis are also higher than 0.6 and are considered reliable (Schubert et al., 2018). If Composite reliability and Average Variance

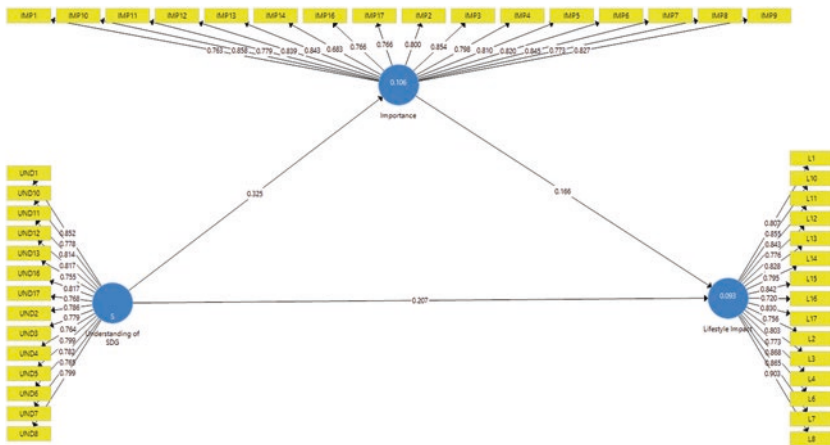


Fig. 3 Measurement model

Table 3 Reliability of the three constructs of the study

	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>	<i>rho_A</i>	<i>Composite reliability</i>	<i>Average variance extracted (AVE)</i>
Importance	0.963	0.970	0.967	0.644
Lifestyle	0.966	0.976	0.968	0.671
Understanding of SDG	0.954	0.965	0.959	0.626

Table 4 Validity of the three constructs of the study (Fornell–Larcker Criterion)

	<i>Importance</i>	<i>Lifestyle impact</i>	<i>Understanding of SDG</i>
Importance	0.803		
Lifestyle impact	0.234	0.819	
Understanding of SDG	0.341	0.267	0.791

Extracted (AVE) cross the threshold, loadings between 0.4 and 0.7 are considered acceptable (Hair et al., 2017). *Composite reliability* measures the internal consistency.

The results confirm that composite reliability is established, as all the constructs have loadings above 0.9 (Hair et al., 2017). AVE analyzes whether the constructs under study measure what was intended by their use. All the figures are above the accepted criteria of 0.5 (Hair et al., 2017). As such, we conclude that convergent validity exists.

For analyzing *discriminant validity*, we use Fornell and Larker’s criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations. In Fornell and Larker’s (1981) criterion, the diagonal values should be greater than other constructs. Table 4 shows that the set criteria is met by the constructs under study. Per the HTMT ratio, the value of each construct should be lower than 0.9 (Henseler et al., 2015) to ensure discriminant validity.

As per these measures, the measurement model is reliable and valid and as such further analysis of hypothesis testing can be undertaken.

Tables 4 and 5 show the results of discriminant validity analysis by Fornell-Larcker (1981) and HTMT criterion, respectively, indicating that the set parameters are met.

Table 5 Validity of the three constructs of the study (Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio)

	<i>Importance</i>	<i>Lifestyle impact</i>	<i>Understanding of SDG</i>
Importance			
Lifestyle impact	0.215		
Understanding of SDG	0.323	0.235	

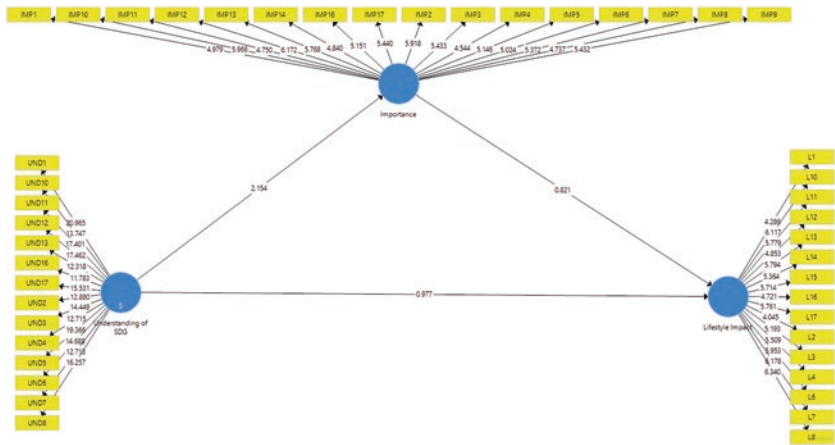


Fig. 4 Structural model

Discriminant Validity

The measurement model that PLS SEM analyzes indicates that all the constructs adopted in the study meet the benchmarks. The standardized loadings, composite reliability, and the average variance extracted indicate the reliability of the constructs as well as content validity, convergent, and discriminant validity (see Tables 3, 4, and 5).

Mediation Analysis: We examine the structural model using 5000 bootstraps (Hair et al., 2017) (Fig. 4; Table 6).

Table 6 Hypothesis testing

	<i>Original sample (O)</i>	<i>Sample mean (M)</i>	<i>Standard deviation (STDEV)</i>	<i>T Statistics (O/STDEV)</i>	<i>P Values</i>
H1 Understanding of SDG -> Importance	0.341	0.383	0.142	2.403	0.016
H2 Importance -> Lifestyle Impact	0.162	0.204	0.196	0.828	0.408
H3 Understanding of SDG -> Lifestyle Impact	0.211	0.204	0.211	1.002	0.317

7 DISCUSSIONS, SUGGESTIONS, AND CONCLUSION

Youth greatly influence the future of a nation, and 65%, that is, 5.06 billion, of the world population is youth. India as a country has 939,787,340 people between the ages of 15 and 64 years (World Bank, 2020). There is a lot of hope for an improved future. This study analyzes the research model based on Theory U and investigates the influence of perception of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the priority given to their achievement on the lifestyle of Business Management students from the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. Further, it also presents the role of educational institutes as perceived by these management students in attainment of the SDGs.

The mediation results show that perception regarding the importance of the SDGs does not mediate the relationship between an understanding of, and the perception of the impact of lifestyle on, the SDGs. As such, only H1 (that is, an understanding about the SDGs as significantly and positively related to a perception of the importance of the SDGs) is accepted. We expected that this perception of the importance of the SDGs would in turn significantly affect the type of lifestyle that is compliant with accomplishing the SDGs with adoption of pro-environmental behavior such as car-pooling, switching off electrical appliances when not in use, avoiding food and energy wastage, switching to eco-friendly products, reduction in usage of refrigerator and air conditioners to control CFCs, and so on. However, the results countered our expectations. Further, an understanding of the SDGs is also not significantly associated with perception regarding the impact of lifestyle on attaining the SDGs. The results

signify the need to increase society's capacity to resolve intricate challenges urgently, with less than ten years left until the 2030 deadline. Specifically, the SDG's 4.7 target indicates that all learners should acquire essential knowledge and skills to promote sustainable development. When interpreted in the context of Theory U, our results suggest that the future managers who have an awareness of the SDGs are currently in the open-minded zone (see Fig. 1), that is, as the future managers can perceive the SDGs, they are at the seeing stage of Theory U, but they do not understand them and hence attach less importance to them. Being at the second stage, they have to go a long way in order to reach the performing stage where individuals will be determined to take actions toward environmental concerns on their own.

A sample of 384 is considered as representative (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) and the valid sample for our study is slightly less than that, and so the findings cannot be generalized. Still, the findings of the study indicate that students are not particularly aware of the SDGs, which further implies that HEIs should actively increase the SDG-related courses/topics in curricula for the management graduates in Madhya Pradesh so that they include policy-level intervention and promote strategies like green HRM, corporate greening, and so on. This inclusion of the SDG-related content across different domains at a global level will further improve the collective responsibility in accomplishing the SDGs. The respondents suggested the following measures as responses to the qualitative question asked in the questionnaire to ensure accountability of HEIs in accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals. A summary of the suggestions is presented here:

1. Promoting research in the field of environment and sustainability
2. Organizing workshops for encouraging sustainability and informing participants about the role that they can play
3. Sharing relevant information by means of publications
4. Sensitization activities like rallies, street plays, and dialogue with government and scientific communities
5. Collaborating and networking with agencies working for environment sustainability
6. Competitions to sensitize student community

We propose the following suggestions for HEIs to help accomplish the SDGs by 2030:

Promoting research in the field of environment and sustainability

Research in the areas of sustainability can be promoted by educational institutions by directly acknowledging studies on sustainability issues and concerns. Further, they can be tied to funding agencies which will further motivate other students to take up research in the domain of environment and sustainability.

Organizing workshops for encouraging sustainability and informing participants about the role that they can play.

Taking action leads to better results and thus, involving students with hands-on initiatives and workshops where students can learn their role in, and strategies for, environmental protection by including representatives from agencies working toward environmental concerns would be beneficial. Some small-scale initiatives like plastic free zones can be promoted and such initiatives can even be rewarded.

Sharing relevant information by means of publications

Research studies and case studies pertaining to environment and sustainability should be promoted in the form of publications. Further, educational institutions can introduce a separate page on their website specially dedicated to the green initiatives taken by them. Publications such as research articles, chapters, books, blog entries, and websites should be made open-access and should be readily made available to be read by the general masses.

Sensitization activities like rallies, street plays, and dialogue with government and scientific communities

The role of the educational institution must not be limited to internal systems when it comes to accomplishment of the SDGs. As agents of change, the future managers should be trained to sensitize the public at large. This will not only increase the awareness of the general public but also create a positive public image of the educational institutions working toward these goals. Further, dialogue between government and scientific communities will try to bring stakeholders into the discussion, and thus help in developing common understanding between government, scientists, universities, and society.

Collaborating and networking with agencies working for environmental sustainability

The agencies working in the area of environmental sustainability can contribute in terms of hosting lectures and even provide internships and practical exposure which will help inspire young minds to come up with new initiatives. Such initiatives should be funded and supported by the

educational institution internally or through some external agency for getting due support.

Competitions to sensitize student community

Competitions like debates, poster making, video making, logo making, exhibitions, and so on can all help in sensitizing the student community. These competitions can be organized at local, state, national, or even global levels for a greater impact and also for a better inter-cultural effect.

The findings of this study imply the much-needed pro-environmental behavioral push required to achieve the SDGs can emerge at individual and collective levels with proper education, dialogue initiatives, and networking. This chapter discusses the ramifications of these findings for higher education institutions in India specifically, which can even be projected to the global level. It outlines how educational institutions can implement policies and support activities that might aid students in gaining and bringing essential behavioral changes required to attain the Sustainable Development Goals. Though sustainability research has made significant progress in a variety of fields and attempts have been made to combine environmental, social, and economic sciences, it still has a long way to go toward interdisciplinarity. This chapter adds to the current body of knowledge in this regard by introducing the role of educational institutions in the accomplishment of the SDGs. Moreover, the present research can become a crucial base for future research as it gives critical insight into youth's perception and behavior toward sustainability, sustainable development, and the role of educational institutions in achieving the SDGs.

APPENDIX

Opinion survey on sustainability

Dear respondents, we are conducting an opinion survey on sustainability. The collected data will be used purely for research purpose. Confidentiality will be maintained; therefore, please be candid in your response.

Thank you for your participation.

Sustainability means “The ability to keep going, as an action or process, without giving way or yielding under a burden or experience,” and “the ability of the environment to maintain all its vital natural functions despite the damage and degradation caused by human activity.”)

Age

15–20

21–25

(continued)

(continued)

Opinion survey on sustainability

- 26–30
- 31–35
- Other...
- Gender
- Question Type
- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Area of residence
- Question Type
- Urban
- Rural

Have you heard about Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

YES

NO

Understanding of SDGs

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by the United Nations in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure that by 2030 all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

Please read the questions and select the option that best suits your choice—To what extent do you understand the current situation of each goal?	Fully Understand	Understand	Neither	Merely Understand	Not understand at all
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1	No poverty
2	Zero hunger
3	Good health and well-being
4	Quality education
5	Gender equality
6	Clean water and sanitation
7	Affordable and clean energy

(continued)

(continued)

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8	Decent work and economic growth
9	Industry, innovation, and infrastructure
10	Reduced inequality
11	Sustainable cities and communities
12	Responsible consumption and production
13	Climate action
14	Life below water
15	Peace, justice, and strong institutions
16	Life on land
17	Partnerships for the goals

Impact of Lifestyle on the Below-Given Social Concerns

Please read the questions and select the option that best suits your choice—I think my lifestyle has an impact on the following aspects:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Poverty reduction				
2	Hunger reduction				
3	Health care and wellness				
4	Quality education				
5	Gender equality				

(continued)

(continued)

Opinion survey on sustainability

-
- | | |
|----|--|
| 6 | Access to clean water and Sewerage |
| 7 | Accessible and non-polluting energy |
| 8 | Decent work and economic growth |
| 9 | Industry, innovation, and infrastructure |
| 10 | Reducing inequalities |
| 11 | Creating sustainable cities and communities |
| 12 | Responsible consumption and production |
| 13 | Weather care |
| 14 | Care of underwater life |
| 15 | Care for life in terrestrial ecosystems |
| 16 | Peacebuilding, justice, and corruption-free institutions |
| 17 | Building alliances to achieve the above goals |
-

(continued)

(continued)

Opinion survey on sustainability

Importance of the Below-Given Social Concerns

Please read the questions and select the option that best suits your choice—To what extent do you think each goal is important for your daily life?

		Very Important	Important	Neutral	Rarely Important	Not Important
1	No poverty					
2	Zero hunger					
3	Good health and well-being					
4	Quality education					
5	Gender equality					
6	Clean water and sanitation					
7	Affordable and clean energy					
8	Decent work and economic growth					
9	Industry, innovation, and infrastructure					
10	Reduced inequality					
11	Sustainable cities and communities					
12	Responsible consumption and production					
13	Climate action					
14	Life below water					
15	Peace, justice, and strong institutions					
16	Life on land					
17	Partnerships for the goals					

How do you think higher educational institutions can help in achieving SDGs?

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