

Increasing Environmental Sustainability on Campus

A project for Bahria University Islamabad Campus

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Abstract

This project aims to assess the level of knowledge about environmental problems in the minds and conscience of the average youth in today's post-modern era. Several areas of environmental knowledge were examined including local and global environmental issues; possible solutions to environmental issues, and important environmental terms. Once environmental knowledge of students was gauged, the project went on to identifying gaps between the individual's every day behavior and their possession of environmental knowledge. Everyday behavior in terms of water conservation, energy efficient usage, recycling, and carbon footprint of this young population was also studied.

Using qualitative research techniques such as interviews, focus group sessions, and diary writing, data was collected from university students aged 18-24 years. It was learnt that the younger student population (mostly 1st year or 2nd year students) possessed low environmental knowledge and subsequently were far from environmentally friendly behavior, whereas the more senior students, i.e. MBA 1st year or 2nd year, were more environmentally aware yet they did not demonstrate environmentally friendly behavior and their carbon footprints were quite high as compared to national and international average.

As the project progresses, an environmental friendly policy is devised for Bahria University Islamabad Campus. The policy comprises of promoting energy efficient usage of resources, negative and positive re-enforcements, and a thorough framework mandated for the students to follow and observe in everyday campus life.

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Introduction

This project is being conducted for Bahria University, Islamabad campus. Bahria University is an educational institute established by the Pakistan Navy in the cities of Islamabad and Karachi in the late eighties. The purpose of setting up this institute was to provide uninterrupted education to the children of navy personnel as they transferred from one station to another. However, over the years, the university has transformed into one of the leading universities in Pakistan and creating fine professional serving in the top sectors of the economy. The university offers several programs for Undergrad and Postgrad levels including BBA (Hons), BCS (Hons) and MBA, and MCS Programs.

Bahria University Islamabad campus is home to thousands of students. It is spread over a vast area of land and stands at the foot of the Margalla Hills. As the population continues to increase around the city, it becomes the responsibility of every organization to guard the natural environment in which it operates. Such is the purpose of this project. This project aims at providing a framework to Bahria University so as to enable it to become a more environmentally friendly organization, home to pupils with a low carbon footprint.

Following are the research objectives of the project being undertaken:

- Level of environmental awareness among the modern youth (Sample: University students)
- Current youth practices in terms of water conservation, energy efficient usage of resources, recycling, carbon footprint, and land/air pollution.
- What gaps exist between the youth's level of understanding of environmental problems and their subsequent environmental behavior/action?
- Means of enhancing pro-environmental behavior among the youth.