

SDGs Oriented Action

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Abstract :

In the context of the adoption of the Sustainable Development Agenda and its 17 (SDGs), it is important to promote intergenerational cooperation to achieve sustainable development. The aim of this article is to present the results of the SDGs Oriented Action research programme on activities undertaken by two generations: students and their parents in workplaces/faculties/residences. Respondents more often declare that they and their families live in a sustainable way, less often that the municipality, the country, the world in which they live is developing in a sustainable way. Majority of participants declare that the most benefiting from the implementation of the SD will be all citizens.

Keywords : SDGs, SDGs perception, intergenerational survey

SDGs Oriented Action

Introduction

Most research focuses on SDGs implementation on the global, international, national level. This article presents the knowledge and actions undertaken for the implementation of SDGs by individual students and their family members from Faculty of Management of University Warsaw (Poland) and Centre Européen Universitaire (CEU Nancy) of Université de Lorraine (France).

Progressive changes related to the depletion of natural resources, climate change, demographic changes, force the adjustment of the behavior of individuals, organizations and societies. Past and present events, but also anticipated future events can be a reactive response to challenges.

Decisions to change behaviour, to adapt one's actions in response to the challenges ahead affect individuals as well as societies, are not disconnected from other decisions, but occur in a demographic, cultural, economic context, and depend on access to and use of information (O'Brien and Leichenko, 2000).

In response to the challenges ahead, 193 heads of state and government signed the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets which showed the scale and ambitions of the new universal agenda. The targets

are based on MDGs and are complemented by what has not yet been achieved. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a globally accepted development agenda. The signing of the agreement by world leaders was a collective decision that is binding for all actors in the global social system.

SDGs set goals and challenges for all countries. Joint decision making is necessary in any situation where people have common goals to achieve and can be achieved more effectively, with the participation of others. This is referred to as joint production (Lindenberg and Foss 2011). Understanding what different social groups know and what SDGs activities they undertake can be a starting point for policy formulation for SDGs implementation. The perception and necessity of actions for the implementation of sustainable development objectives by the researcher can be characterized as potential actions that he or she undertakes.

This article presents selected results of research on perception and action for the benefit of SDGs. The results particularly emphasize how much more needs to be done in the area of information and then taking SDGs actions, they also reveal gaps in knowledge about the society and its relation to SDGs.

Methods

The survey was conducted at the Faculty of Management (FoM) at the University of Warsaw and at the European Centre of the University of Lorraine in France, on 14-31 January 2019.

Students and members of their families from two generations took part in the survey: 69 Polish students; 44 French students and 44 parents of Polish students.

The following comparative research was carried out:

1. comparative study between students of FoM UW and CEU Nancy;
2. comparative research between students of FoM UW and their parents regarding the knowledge, undertaking and evaluation of actions for the implementation of SDGs.

Results and Discussion

The answers of the group of Polish students were compared to responses of their parents and the group of French students.

The first question was about how often one encounter SD concept (Fig. 1). It is evident that French students (FRS) report more frequent contact with than concept.

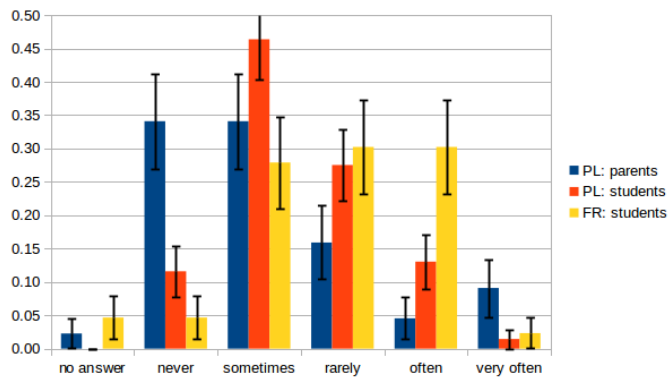


Figure 1. Data of: How often do you meet with the concept of sustainable development (SD)?

On the contrary, 34% of parents of Polish students (PLP) answered that have never heard about SD. The most popular answer (46%) of Polish students (PLS) was “sometimes”.

Next two questions were about reality (Fig. 2) and necessity (Fig. 3) of the SD goals. These goals were enumerated in the survey form itself. Conditional yes was the most popular answer inside all three surveyed groups as far as the reachability of SD goals (Fig. 2).

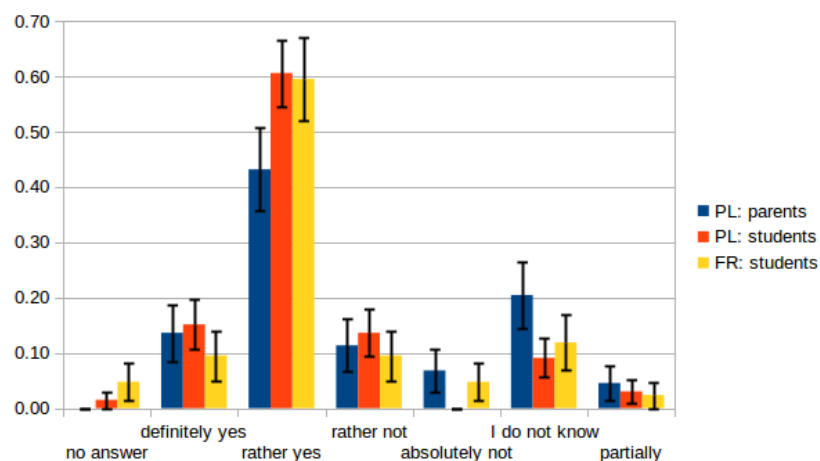


Figure 2. Do you think that SD goals are achievable?

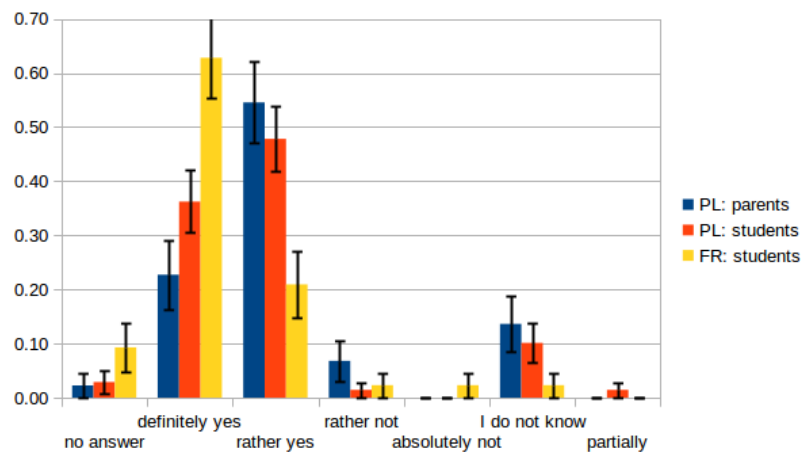


Figure 3. Do you think that we need SD goals?

For the question of their necessity the answers shifts towards “definitely yes”. The effect is the most pronounced for the FRS group and the weaker for the PLP one. It looks like surveyed persons appreciate slightly more the SD goals than believe in a possibility of their realization.

Two consecutive (multiple choice) questions were about who should care about realization of the SD goals (Fig. 4) and who will benefit the most from their implementation (Fig. 5). For the question about responsibility the answers were scattered. The parents of Polish students (PLP) indicate the most state and local authorities, whereas French students (FRS) point to UE and rise responsibility of all citizens more than other groups. Polish students (PLS) indicate entrepreneurs and employers a bit more often than surveyed form other groups but more frequent were answers “state” and “EU”.

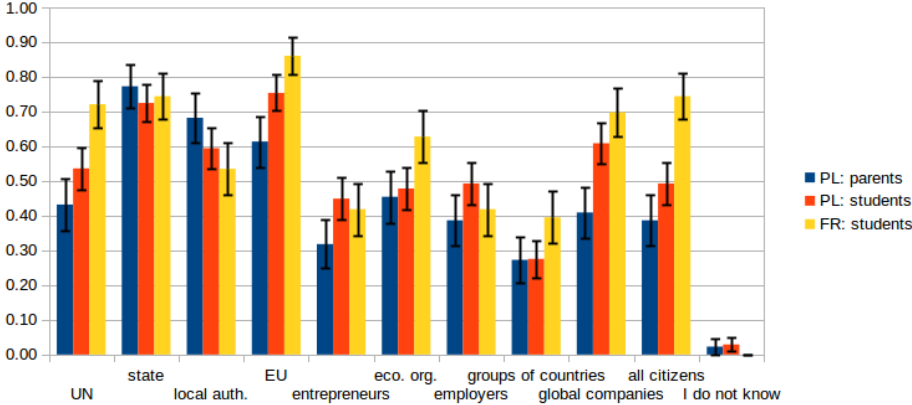


Figure 4. Who should care or be responsible for the implementation of the SD goals?

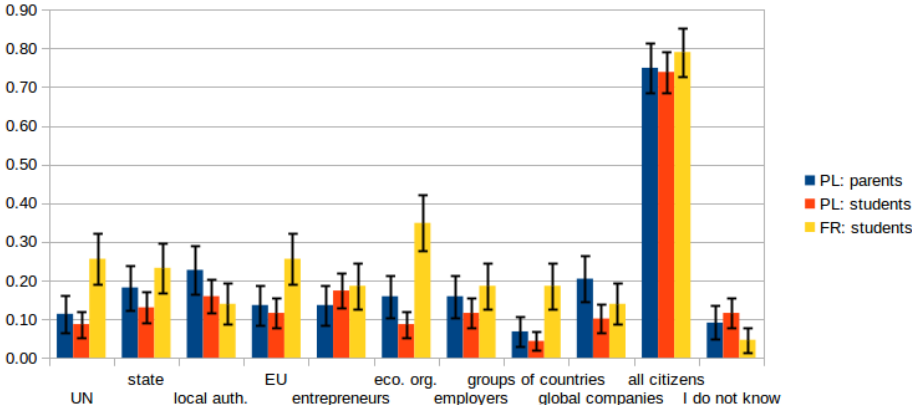


Figure 5. Who will benefit the most from the implementation of the SD goals?

As far as potential beneficiaries are concerned by far the most popular answer was “all citizens” in all three surveyed groups (around 75% answers in each of them). Other possibilities were less popular by more than factor of two. One could spot, however, significant difference in

indication of ecological organizations by French (35%) and Polish (9%) students.

Next five question were about opinion about concordance of the development of the world (Fig. 6), country (Fig. 7), the place of leaving (Fig. 8) as well as family (Fig. 9) and self (Fig. 10) behavior with the SD goals.

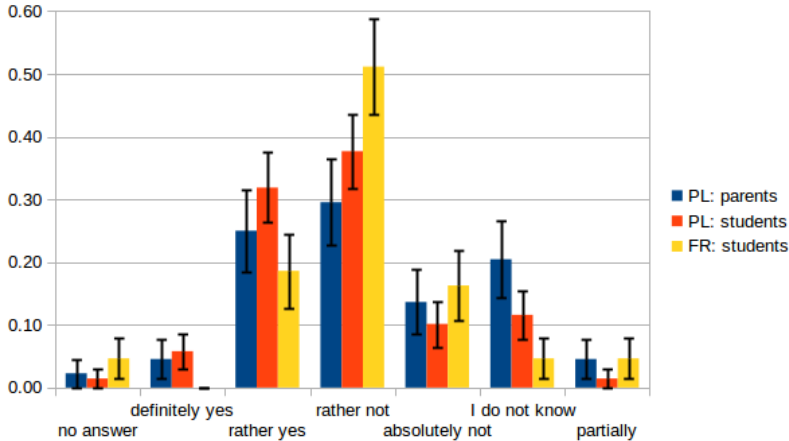


Figure 6. Do you think that today's world is developing based on the SD goals?

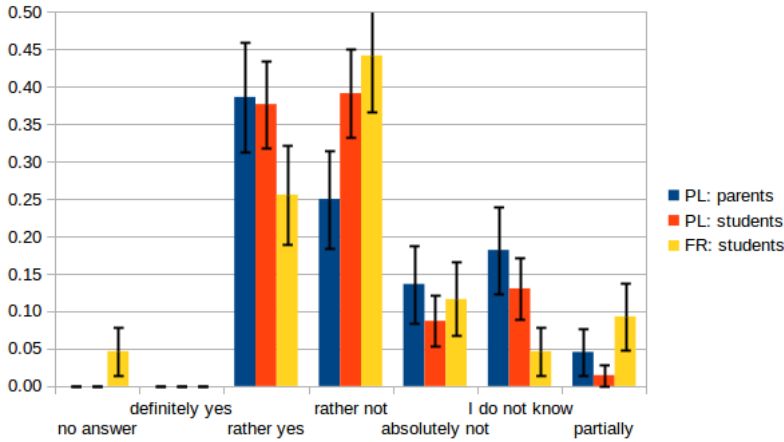


Figure 7. Do you think that your country is developing based on the SD goals?

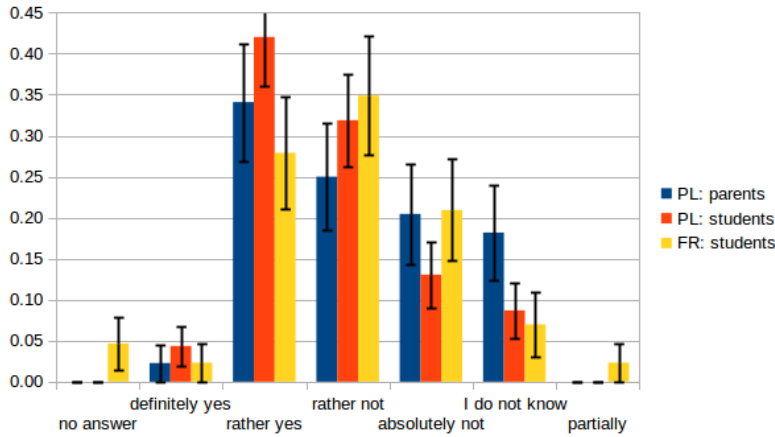


Figure 8. Do you think that the place you live is developing based on the SD goals?

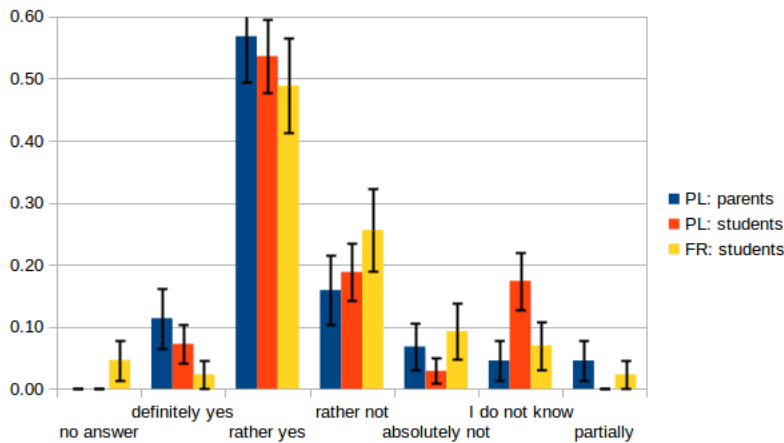


Figure 9. Do you think that your family is functioning based on SD goals?

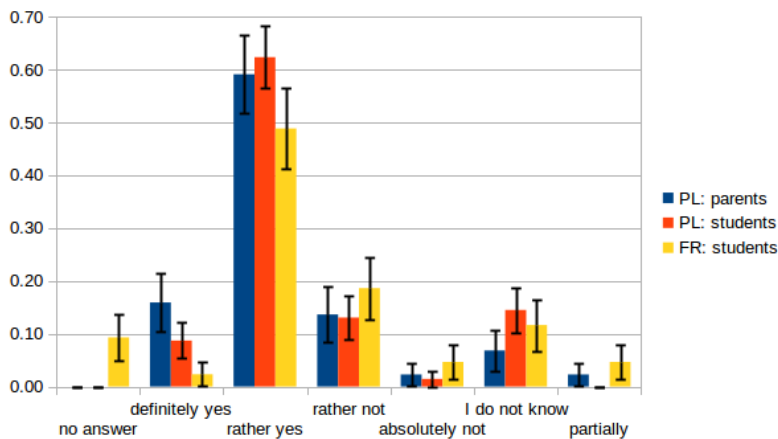


Figure 10. Do you think that you live based on SD goals?

One could observe that the closest the subject of question to the surveyed the more positive is the answer. The most skeptical were surveyed from the FRS group, whereas more optimistic (or less self judged) were the members of the PLP and the PLS groups.

For the question about the world the answer “rather not” prevail in all groups (but only for FRS the difference is significant), whereas for the self behavior the “rather yes” collects 59%, 62% and 49% of votes respectively for PLP, PLS and FRS groups.

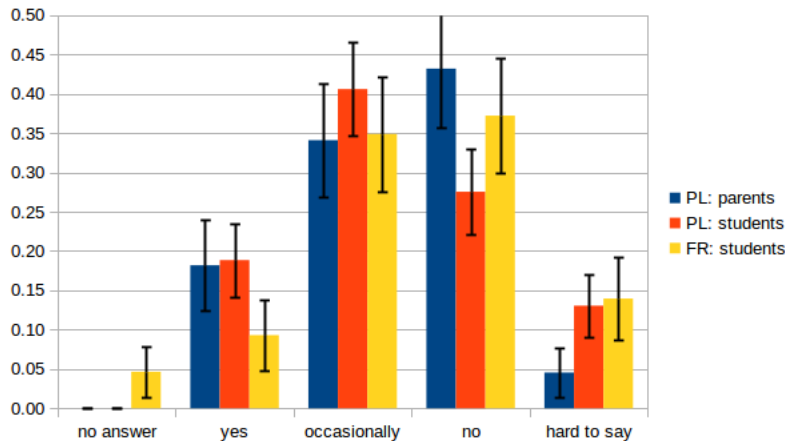


Figure 11. Do you engage in pro-social or pro-environmental initiatives?

As regards involvement in pro-social or pro-environmental initiatives 18% of Polish parents, 19% of Polish students, and 9% of French students replied positively to this question; but 43% of PLP; 28% of PLS; 37% of FRS does not engage in such actions at all.

Conclusions

This article presents some of the results of the research conducted within the SDGs Action Oriented project. The study allowed, among other things, to observe a cause-and-effect relationship between knowledge about sustainable development and the actions taken. The concept of SD is better known to French students than to Polish ones, 34% of parents of Polish students (PLP) answered that have never heard about SD. Respondents more often declare that they and their families live in a sustainable way, less often that the municipality, the country in which they live is developing in a sustainable way. Less than 20% of the surveyed population participates in pro-social or pro-environmental initiatives. It was also found that respondents who perceive sustainable development positively are more likely to declare taking action in favour of SD.

Majority of participants declare that the most benefiting from the implementation of the SD will be all citizens.

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