

## **The LEVEL OF INCLUSION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT IN POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS' ARABIC RESEARCHES: SAUDI ARABIA AS A MODEL**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The present study aims to know the level of inclusion of the sustainable development concept in postgraduate students' Arabic studies, selecting Saudi Arabic ones as a model. Actually, descriptive and analytic methods are employed and the sample of the study includes Arabic studies from 2009 to 2018. In effect, the present study gets the following findings: (a) Studies that have tackled sustainable development are few, (b) MA and PhD theses that are handled herein focus on some dimensions (i.e. the social dimension and the environmental dimension), and (c) There is a scarcity of dealing with the economic dimension, with complete disregard for the political dimension. The study then concludes with recommendations for expanding the concept of sustainable development and its dimensions in order to attain human development.*

**KEYWORDS:** Human Development, Global Conservation, Education for Development, Environmental Security

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Sustainable development was defined for the first time in 1980 in a United Nations conference, within a national document entitled 'The Strategy for Global Conservation'. This document has been actually prepared by the collaboration of all of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). Seven years later, the term 'sustainable development' appeared in one of the documents of the United Nations, and it was widely accepted. That document was entitled 'Our Common Future' (cf. Al-Bareedi, 2004). As Yehia (2003), cited in Sobh (2015), states, sustainable development in all its fields aims to facilitate the establishment of networks and linkages to promote exchanges and interactions among the parties which have an influence on the field of education. In effect, this is for the sake of the promotion of the improvement of the quality of teaching and learning and it is to assist countries to progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and to provide new possibilities for countries to take education into account for the sake of their education reforms. It is also to encourage new partnerships with the private sector and media groups, for promoting research programs in the topic of education for sustainable development and for encouraging its follow-up and evaluation to give the curriculum new directions through paying attention to training courses provided to teachers to lead them to high levels of efficiency and skillfulness and to the ability to teach better for sustainable development (cf. Sobh 2015). The observer of the history of development at the global and regional levels notes a continuous and obvious development in its both concept and content. As a matter of fact, this development was as a virtual response to the nature of the problems faced by societies and as a reflection of the international experiences accumulated over time (cf. Nasr, 2004).

## **Questions of the Study**

The present study is to answer the following main question:

What is the level of inclusion of the sustainable development concept in postgraduate students' Arabic studies in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia?

## **Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to:

- 1) Identifying the level of inclusion of the sustainable development concept in postgraduate students' Arabic studies in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and
- 2) Identifying the level of inclusion of the sustainable development dimensions in postgraduate students' Arabic studies in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

## **Significance of the Study**

The concept of sustainable development has become one of the pillars of the global policies for investment of wealth and sustainability of natural capital. Therefore, the researchers hope that the study will achieve the following:

- 1) Highlighting the efforts of Arabic studies, specifically those in Saudi Arabia, to address the concept of sustainable development, and
- 2) Contributing, potentially, to the development of the field of sustainable development by reviewing the level of inclusion of the sustainable development concept in postgraduate students' Arabic studies, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as a model. By addressing this concept more deeply, this study would become the nucleus for future scientific researches.

## **LITERATURE UNDERPINNING**

The concept of sustainable development is relatively new. As Dani (2012) states, the concept of sustainable development has evolved from a somewhat ambiguous idea that is mostly qualitative to a concept that has specific characteristics determined from a quantitative perspective. Thus, sustainable development is now a multidimensional, social, and economic concept that reflects a global system of complex interactions and manifold levels (cf. Rashidi, 2016).

### **The Concept of Sustainable Development**

For the World Bank, however, "Sustainable [D]evelopment recognizes that growth must be both inclusive and environmentally sound to reduce poverty and build shared prosperity for today's population, and to continue to meet the needs of future generations." Another definition presented by the Brundtland commission in its report to the United Nations in 1987 is that "sustainable development is a new mode of development that meets the needs of the present without risking the ability of future generations to meet their needs" (Al-Nasiaan, 2017). Deeb & Muhanna (2009) state the following definition: "Development that reconciles between environmental development, economic development and social development. Therefore, a valid circle among these three poles gets established. It is economically effective, socially

equitable and environmentally feasible. It is a development that respects natural resources and ecosystems and supports life on earth. It ensure the economic aspect without forgetting the social goal which is reflected in the fight against poverty, unemployment and inequality and which is embodied within the search for justice."

From the previous definitions, it is noted that sustainable development meets in the means and the goal, through the means of the development of the natural capital of the state, and the goal for the welfare of people (society). It includes the economic aspect and social one, which both are considered the two main axes of sustainable development. Also, the concept of sustainable development, as stated in Taweel (2013), combines between two basic dimensions the first of which is the development as a process of change while the second is sustainability as a time dimension. The motivation behind this emersion of this concept is the realization that the growth process *per se* is not enough to improve the level of individuals' sustenance in a manner that is fair regarding the distribution of the development fruits. Moreover, the concentration on the physical dimension of the growth process may decline; it may be substituted by the concentration on the human element—on the basis that the human being is the goal of both of the development process and its tools at the same time.

### **Dimensions of Sustainable Development**

Concerning the dimensions of sustainable development, four main dimensions for the evolution of the concept and content of sustainable development from the end of World War II to the present time. These dimensions are: 1) the economic dimension, which is reflected in the increase of the national production as a condition for achieving basic human goals, 2) the social dimension, which views that human beings are the true and essential wealth for nations; hereby, the criterion of development must include the variable 'health and education', in addition to the economic dimension. In effect, human development is a fundamental variable in sustainable development. Education should be the first dimension—with the health variable—and it includes: (a) empowerment in the educational process and it has numerous forms and levels as the psychological empowerment, the social empowerment, the behavioral empowerment, the productive empowerment, and (b) participation, which is highly manifested in, but not restricted to, political participation, 3) the political dimension, which is measured through political participation indicators on their multi-party diversity, freedom of expression and freedom of the press, and 4) the environmental dimension, which is through the use of the concept of sustainability, which means that the limitation of land potentials requires rational exploitation of natural resources, not to maximize profits but to serve the human community (Al-Colli, 2015).

In contrast, Al-Rashidi (2016) classifies sustainable development into three dimensions:

1) Sustainable economic development. It comes out of the principle of not harming the generations ability to meet their needs. Rather, it, as alluded by the UNEP in (2011), allows sustainability of natural resources, and prevents their depletion when current generations meet their needs. Consequently, the role of sustainable economic development is represented in the development of economic structures and management which are typical for environmental and social resources. It, therefore, has become a new project for peace in the world and also an alternative to capitalist and socialist ideologies and conflicts. No way is there to achieve this aspiration but only by the orientation toward and adoption of the so-called 'green economy'.

2) Sustainable environmental development. It is based on the fact that says that the depletion of natural resources, which are considered necessary for any agricultural or industrial activity, will have detrimental effects on the development and the economy in general. So that, the first item in the concept of sustainable development is to try to balance the economic system and the ecosystem without the depletion of Natural resources, taking into account environmental security.

3) Sustainable social development. It is based on the fact that human beings constitute the essence and ultimate goal of development through paying attention to social justice, fighting poverty, providing social services to all those in need, as well as ensuring democracy through the participation of peoples in decision-making in a transparent manner and through the sustainability of institutions and cultural variety.

It is noted that Al-Rashidi's classification is identical to that of Al-Colli (2015), where the political dimension is included within the social dimension. The vision of the Saudi Arabia Kingdom 2030 emphasizes the concept of sustainable development, including it as one of its three axes. From the perspective of this vision, a society is vibrant with a vibrant environment primarily through achieving environmental sustainability. As also stated, "Our preservation of our environment and natural resources is regarded as our religious, ethical and human duty and as our responsibility to future generations". By reducing pollution by raising the efficiency of waste management, combating the phenomenon of desertification, and working to invest the water wealth in an optimal manner (Kingdom Vision, 2030).

Al-Takhaifi (2017) shows that Saudi Arabia has worked on two tracks to implement the Sustainable Development Goals Plan 2030 adopted by the United Nations. The first track is represented by imposing accurate governance to follow up the implementation of the Plan. On the one hand, the Ministry of Economy and Planning has been entrusted with the responsibility of managing this file, following it up, and coordinating with all government agencies. The General Authority for Census, on the other hand, is to build up the indicators, through the expansion in the implementation of statistical proceedings. The second track, however, is to develop their National Development Plans (Saudi Arabia Vision 2030) and to integrate them within the Global plans (Sustainable Development Goals). As a matter of fact, Saudi Arabia Vision 2030—with its programs that reach 13 programs, such as the National Transformation Program 2020, the Restructuring of Government Agencies Program, Project Management Program, among other programs—and its indicators have taken into account their compatibility with the goals of sustainable development.

## METHODOLOGY

The study at hand employs a descriptive analytical method, using one of the tools of the qualitative approach, namely, the analysis and induction of previous literature. It also uses the documentary approach based on documents, in a historical sequence from 2009 to 2018, through a review of the objectives and the results that have addressed the given concept. This is actually to get a clear perception of the themes and aspects concerning sustainable development tackled in the previous literature.

### Tools of the Study

The present study has used the content analysis tool to filter and select studies according to the following methodology:

**Table 1. Filtering Questions**

No.	Filtering Questions
	The number of studies restricted is 27.
1	Is the study published in the Saudi Studies Database, the Saudi Digital Library, the King Fahd National Library Information Base, the Saudi Universities Database?
2	Is the study between (2008-2018)?
3	Is the full text available?
4	Does the study address sustainable development in general?
	The number of studies available is 19.
1	Does it contain concepts of sustainable development?
2	Has it addressed the dimensions of sustainable development?
	The number of studies available is 19.
1	Has the main question addressed sustainable development?
	The number of studies available is 19.

### Society of the Study

The society of the study is represented by MA and PhD theses in Saudi universities which grant MA and PhD degrees according to the classification of Saudi universities (Ministry of Education, 2017). It is as follows:

**Table 2. Classification of Saudi Universities**

No.	University Name	City	Foundation Date	Degree Awarded by the University	
				MA	PhD
1	King Saud University	Mecca	1957	✓	✓
2	King Abdulaziz University	Riyadh	1971	✓	✓
3	Imam Mohammed Bin Saud University	Madina El-Monawara	1974	✓	✓
4	Umm Al-Qura	Riyadh	1979	✓	✓
5	Islamic University	Gaddah	1995	✓	✓
6	Princess Noura University	Riyadh	2008	✓ girls only	✓ girls only
7	King Fahd University for Petroleum and Minerals	Dammam	1975	✓	✗

8	King Faisal University	Hasa	1983	✓	✗
9	King Khalid University	Abha	1998	✓	✓
10	University of Taiba	Madina El-Monawara	2004	✓	✗
11	Al-Qussaim University	Qussaim	2004	✓	✗
12	Taif University	Taif	2005	✓	✗

### Sample of the Study

Returning to the databases of MA theses and PhD dissertations in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during the last decade, the sample of the study is limited to 8 MA theses and 10 PhD dissertations out of 27 ones. They are arranged in a chronological order, as shown as in the following table:

**Table 3: The Sample of the Study**

No.	University Name	Researcher	Type of the Study	Field of the Study	Date of the study
1	King Saud University	Al-Omeri, M. N. S.	unpublished MA thesis	Architectural Planning	2009
2	King Saud University	Dughriri, R. H.	MA thesis	Architectural Planning	2011
3	King Saud University	Duheim, A. F.	unpublished MA thesis	Education, Adult Education and Continuing Learning	2011
4	Princess Noura University	Al-Dawsari, A. H. M.	unpublished PhD thesis	Social Planning	2011
5	King Saud University	Al-Raashed, Y. O.	unpublished PhD thesis	Educational Policies	2012
6	King Saud University	Al-Shahri, F. Dh.	unpublished PhD thesis	Education, Adult Education and Continuing Learning	2013
7	Naaif Arab University for Security Sciences	Al-Qarani, B. Z. M.	unpublished PhD thesis	Administrative Sciences	2013
8	Naaif Arab University for Security Sciences	Aal-Rasheed, Al-J. M. Dh.	unpublished PhD thesis	Administrative Sciences	2016
9	Al-Qussaim University	Al-Hoshaani, M. M. S.	Unpublished MA thesis	Fundamentals of Education	2016

10	Islamic University	Ramdhaani, A. A. A.	Unpublished MA thesis	Islamic Economy	2016
11	Naaif Arab University for Security Sciences	Al-Rasheedi, A. Kh. M.	Unpublished PhD thesis	Administrative Sciences	2016
12	Naaif Arab University for Security Sciences	Al-Awdah, B. M.	Unpublished PhD thesis	Administrative Sciences	2016
13	Naaif Arab University for Security Sciences	Al-Harbi, T. M.	Unpublished MA thesis	Strategic Planning	2017
14	Al-Qussaim University	Al-Rabadi, I. S.	Unpublished MA thesis	Geography	2017
15	King Saud University	Zahraani, A. A.	Unpublished MA thesis	General Administration	2017
16	Islamic University	Al-Zahraani, M. A. M. A.	Unpublished PhD thesis	Da'wah (Calling to Islam) and Principles of Religion	2017
17	Imam Mohammed Bin Saud University	Al-Musaiteer, A. A.	Unpublished MA thesis	Educational Administration and Planning	2017
18	Naaif Arab University for Security Sciences	Al-Naisaan, A. M.	Unpublished PhD thesis	General Administration	2017
19	King Saud University	Al-Hubaaaji, Y. H. E.	Unpublished PhD thesis	Tourism and Antiquities	2018

## FINDINGS

From an education perspective, Duheim (2011) found that the positive role of the Deanship of Skills Development, at King Saud University, in the faculty teaching staff's professional development in the field of teaching skills, is at an average of 2.48, while its negative role in the field of research skills is at an average of 2.4. Also, Al-Dawsari (2011) focused on measuring the effectiveness of the development services and programs provided by King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Foundation for his parents for Developmental Housing which seeks to achieve sustainable development in the Saudi society. The most important results were that for the services provided by the King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Foundation for Developmental Housing for beneficiary families, self-reliance was achieved with an average of 19.2, followed by the families' acquisition of skills and knowledge.

Al-Qarani (2013) discussed the reality of knowledge management and its role in achieving sustainable development in the General Directorate of Border Guards in Riyadh. That is

primarily by discussing the main questions: 'What is the reality of knowledge management?' and 'What is its role in achieving sustainable administrative development in the General Directorate of Border Guards in Riyadh?'. The result of the first question was that the majority of the study respondents had an understanding of the importance of knowledge management as an important requirement for achieving sustainable development, with an average of 3.53. Also, the leadership believed in the need for knowledge orientation that is appropriate to their activities while the administration was concerned with information security and its development. The leadership paid its attention to the employees who search for knowledge.

There is a considerable emphasis on the development of knowledge management techniques and databases, but the degree of the utilization of the findings and recommendations related to the studies and knowledge available in achieving sustainable management development had the average of 3.07. Aal Rasheed (2016) turned to study the role of endowment in support of sustainable development. As a matter of fact, the results of the study clearly showed that Al-Rajhi endowment contributes to the support of social, economic and environmental fields of sustainable development with an average of 76.9%. The results also showed that there is a necessity to adopt sustainable economy concepts—such as the concept of the safety of the environment—in its projects.

Al-Rashidi (2016) compared between King Saud University and Imam Mohammed Bin Saud University in Riyadh, with regard to the role of strategic management in achieving sustainable administrative development in Saudi universities. The results showed that King Saud University has the characteristics of strategic management with an average of 4.17 and Imam Mohammed Bin Saud University an average of 3.70. The results also manifested that there is a positive correlation, with a statistical significance, with a level of 0.91, between the scores of the first axis (i.e. the availability of the strategic management characteristics) and the scores of the second axis (viz. the features of sustainable administrative development) in the sample members of King Saud University in correlation coefficient 0.77.

In addition, Al-Zahraani (2017) tackled the economy dimension of sustainable development. He discussed the indicators of sustainable development in government institutions; the study, in effect, was applied on the General Institution for Technical and Vocational Training. The results showed that the indicators of the economic category in the General Institution for Technical and Vocational Training were realized to a large extent. They reached 78%, whereby 7 indicators out of 9 were realized. The realized indicators focused on the economic performance, the presence in the market and the indirect economic effects. The degree of their realization actually ranges between 'very high realization' and 'high realization'. The results, however, showed that the aspect of purchasing practice was not realized.

Concerning the environmental dimension of sustainable development, Al-Rabadi (2017) handled the reality of the management of solid household waste and its role in achieving sustainable development in Buraidah city taken as a model. In effect, that was through knowing the characteristics of household waste in Buraidah city and the methods of collecting it, and also through evaluating the services provided by the Secretariat for Waste Management. The result was that the level of the organic materials, in comparison with the inorganic ones, was 53.47%. The average production of the individual was 1.15 km and the annual increase in the rate of waste production was 5%. The study also showed investment opportunities and economic benefits related to the good management of household waste, including the extraction of recyclable materials, energy production and agricultural fertilizers. Effectively, the study

found that the environmental dimension of sustainable development was not realized that 87% of the waste generated got buried.

Al-Musaitir (2017) addressed the research role of Imam Mohammed Bin Saud Islamic University in achieving sustainable development. The results showed that the general average of the degree of approval of the role of Imam Mohammed Bin Saud Islamic University in research to achieve sustainable development through the three dimensions (namely, the administrative, social and physical dimensions) was with an average grade of 3.46. It was in the second category of the fivefold scale, with a standard deviation of 0.69. The physical dimension obtained the highest mean of 3.53 and fell in the second category of the fivefold scale that indicates an OK estimate with a standard deviation of 0.71. Some of the most prominent phrases that got an Agree estimate were: a) The University allocates rewards for distinction in researches, b) The University provides counselling services for both public and private sectors, and c) The University seeks to increase the financial allocations for scientific researches.

## DISCUSSION

Al-Omari (2009) has dealt with how to activate the role of tourism and tourism development and how to support the social and economic spheres of Al-Dera'iya city. He has emphasized the close reciprocal relations between tourism activity and environment. That is to say, the natural environment, on the one hand, provides the basic requirements for tourism activities, while tourism, on the other hand, is an important factor for preserving and improving the environment. Dughriri (2011), however, has presented the opportunities for sustainable tourism development in Jazan region. He has highlighted the region's sufferance in the field of tourism development, represented by the presence of various tourist resources—throughout the region—which have not been exploited well. So that, development in Jazan region is not that accelerated though this region enjoys environmental, social and urban factors that are attractive to development in general and to tourism development in particular. Rather, due to the nature elements the most significant of which is the marine islands area—specially Fursaan Islands—which is characterized with picturesque and rare nature elements, development there must be in a sustainable framework.

With regard to the educational side, Duheim (2011) has focused on the role of the Deanship of Skills Development programs in the sustainable development of faculty teaching staff at King Saud University, as viewed by the faculty teaching staff themselves. Evidently, there is a need to activate the role of the Deanship in the faculty teaching staff's professional development in the field of research skills. In the social and cultural dimensions, however, Al-Zahrani (2012) has addressed sustainable development in Islamic Education and its educational applications in the secondary stage. It has also presented a proposal. The results therein have confirmed the ambiguity of sustainable development concepts in their definitions and their multiple uses. They have also affirmed that Islam is the first in defining sustainable development, in establishing its pillars and in calling for it. Moreover, it has been found that education for sustainable development requires humans having access to lifelong education and training, and this is mainly by reorienting educational programs and building cultural awareness and social understanding regarding such development. Through the educational applications of sustainable development in the secondary stage, it has been shown that sustainability in education has achieved many advantages. This is actually through the development of self-

learning and cooperative education, and through providing students with the skills and methods of scientific and experimental research and with diverse thinking skills. It is also by showing them the ways to solve problems and training them to do that. The proposal that Al-Zahrani put forward showed that elevating the methods of models-giving, dialogues, educational and practical practices and capabilities orientation do have a pivotal role in instilling and promoting the values of sustainable development.

Furthermore, Al-Dawsari (2012) examined sustainable professional development in Saudi indigenous society institutions in the Eastern Region in the light of their professional needs, and this was to present a proposed vision. The results showed the great importance of sustainable development in indigenous society institutions, for both individuals and institutions. They also showed that the institutions did this role in a moderate way. Further, Al-Shahri (2013) tackled the proposed formulation of sustainable professional development of faculty teaching staff in Saudi universities, in the light of their professional roles. This study got a number of results, the most important of which is that, in the light of the contemporary global trends, the academic professional roles of the faculty teaching staff in Saudi universities are represented by teaching, scientific research, community service, the technical role, the role of knowledge, the global role, the selective role, the administrative role and self-development. The study found also that the basic requirements of sustainable development in the field of teaching, scientific research and community service were very high.

Ramdhaani (2016) examined the nature and trends of the financing policy adopted by the Islamic Development Bank, and studied the mechanisms through which the financing policy of the Islamic Development Bank implements. It also traced the extent to which this financing policy is implemented for the Bank's objectives associated with the achievement of sustainable development. Actually, this study was an analytical study carried out during the period (2005-2013). The results showed that the Bank's financing policy significantly has a major role in achieving the Bank's objectives that seek the fulfillment of sustainable development.

Al-Awdah (2016), too, compared between postgraduate programs at King Saud University and those at Imam Mohammed Bin Saud University in Riyadh, concerning the establishment of the culture of sustainable development from the point of view of their students. The results showed that the total sustainable values that postgraduate programs seek to promote were generally at a similar level in both universities with an acceptable level. The two universities were similar in their attempts to establish the culture of sustainable development. They were similar through the similarity of their instruction plans and their practices of postgraduate programs. In addition, they agreed on the order of sustainable environmental values. On the other hand, the two universities differed in their programs' attempts to promote sustainable values, in terms of paying attention to their dimensions. That is to say, King Saud University was primarily concerned with sustainable administrative values, while Imam Mohammed Bin Saud University was mostly concerned with sustainable economic values.

Further, Al-Hawshaani (2016) examined the cultural dimension of sustainable development, by presenting a proposed scenario for activating the cultural role of the (female) teacher in the light of the education trends for sustainable development. The results showed that the degree of the teacher's practice of the cultural role in each of the knowledge aspects, skills and attitudes, was moderate. It also showed that one of the main obstacles to the cultural role of the teacher was the teacher's lack of preparation, training and cultural qualification in teacher preparation programs in the Faculties of Education.

Also, Al-Harbi (2017) discussed the role of the knowledge economy in achieving the sustainable development in Saudi Arabia. As shown in the study, education with all of its levels in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia achieved a rapid development in infrastructure and class capacity for the students and the level of expenditure. That development was found also in the Information Communication Technology sector during the study period. The study however showed that the results of the Technical and Vocational Training sector in the Kingdom was below the prospective level. Somehow similar, Al-Rabadi (2017) stressed on the issue of the consumption reduction since it is linked to the increasing demand for goods and to the increase of agricultural production which, in turn, increases the industrial activity for the processing of goods and services and the production of more waste that produces harmful gases.

Finally, in the environmental dimension, Al-Hapaji (2018) dealt with the management of heritage sites and their role in sustainable tourism development. It studied the case of the historical city of Zabeed, by employing the analytic method SWOT which demonstrated the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges faced by the city, based on the analysis of the various dimensions involved. One of the prominent results of the study could be the presence of a proposed strategic plan for the management of heritage sites, that it achieved sustainable touristic development in the historic city of Zabeed.

### **Implication to Research and Practice**

This study can contribute to the increasing of the level of inclusion of the concept and dimensions of sustainable development within the faculty teaching staff's researches in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The study turns the faces of researches towards the importance of the concept of sustainable development which should be expanded in research studies and it, along with its dimensions, should be incorporated within the curriculum. The teachers should be encouraged to conduct procedural researches in public education, and that research studies on sustainable development should be supported with a special budget. Practically, taking the results and recommendations of this study into consideration by the concerned authorities and institutions can contribute to the sustainable development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

### **CONCLUSION**

From the review of the studies on sustainable development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, it has been demonstrated that 1) sustainable development is somewhat modern, that the first appearance of the concept was in 2009. Studies on this topic are also few that only 18 were available. One of the studies pursued the historical approach, and another study pursued the descriptive correlative approach while all the remaining others followed the descriptive analytical approach. 2) In the environmental dimension, the studies focused on the tourism aspect, by linking tourism to sustainable environmental development, neglecting other aspects of the environmental dimension which are, in fact, the other natural resources of the state. 3) In the educational social field, there is ambiguity in the concept of sustainable development. Also, there is a lack of educational applications that underpin this concept. Moreover, there is a general weakness of teacher practices in the light of the education trends which are for sustainable development. From the perspective of education, the studies focused on higher education and the role of both the faculty teaching staff and the university's researches in achieving sustainable development. 4) In the professional development social field, institutional practices are still moderately active. The reason may be that sustainable

development is new in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and has not become a culture of employment in social institutions. 5) There is scarcity of studies in the economic dimension that only one study has handled only one institution of the state, and it has revealed the weakness of purchasing practices that achieve sustainable economic development. 6) The political dimension has not been addressed, and this is, from the viewpoint of the researchers, due to the state's lack of political parties under the monarchy. However, freedom of expression in political institutions, which reflects the reality as it is for decision makers, could be one of the fields that have not been addressed. Actually, freedom of expression is an aspect needed by the state for the processes of development.

Noteworthy stating that participation in decision-making in those institutions, at the institutional level, is one of the fields that should be discussed in future sustainable development studies. Along with the other dimensions, human development, which emerged as a post-World War II term, is still ambiguous in many institutional practices. As described by the United Nations, human development is a process that involves expanding people's choices, by expanding human capacities at all levels of development. In effect, the three basic capacities of human development are: 1) to live a long and healthy life, to have knowledge and to have a decent standard of living, 2) to vary among the political, economic and social opportunities, and 3) to be creative and productive to the extent of self-respect and empowerment and to have a sense of belonging to a certain community.

According to the Rio de Janeiro Conference (2012), the document—that shows the commitment of higher education institutions to sustainability practices, that the leaders of these institutions were asked to sign the document and lobby for political support—got announced. It necessitated the adoption of the Education Sustainable Development (ESD), stressing on ESD to be one of the main curriculum in all scientific specializations. Effectively, this is to enable graduates to acquire skills that activate sustainability in the work environment, and this in turn would positively reflect on the good use of the available resources, leading to the common good of society and the preservation of the environment (cf. Al-Rabadi, 2014).

## **FUTURE RESEARCH**

The study at hand suggests that future researches could investigate the following:

- 1) The level of community participation in activating environmental sustainability in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and
- 2) The level of inclusion of the concept and dimensions of sustainable development within the faculty teaching staff's researches in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

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