

Project MYTHSE

Identifying, Understanding, and Challenging Myths in and about Sustainability Education

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Background & Relevance

- **Relevance:** Growing importance of the hot topics: *sustainability education* (e.g., Jones et al., 2010) and *educational myths* (e.g., Christodoulou, 2014; de Bruyckere et al., 2020)
- **Research Gaps:** The field and phenomenon of myths in and about sustainability education (MYTHSE) remain largely unexplored with multiple research gaps (Miles, 2017) unaddressed (Siegel, i.p.)
- **Object of Research:** MYTHSE, i.e., a) misconceptions b) about teaching and learning phenomena concerning sustainability that are c) widespread, d) often persistent, however e) not backed by research and (scientific) evidence (Lilienfeld et al., 2010; Sinatra & Jacobson, 2019; Siegel, i.P.)
- **Examples:**
 - Sustainability (education) has nothing to do with me and my subject area (e.g., refutation by Sterling, 2012)
 - The higher educated people are, the more they act sustainably (e.g., refutations by Berry, 1987; Orr, 1994)

Overall Aims:

- Developing a research agenda (Zawacki-Richter & Anderson, 2014) with multiple studies for generating evidence on the field and phenomenon of MYTHSE
- Effectively address MYTHSE by identifying, understanding, and challenging questionable beliefs using evidence-informed protocols and tools
- Create an SE-Mythology, i.e., a collection of MYTHSE and their refutations (e.g., Lilienfeld et al., 2010)

"Science must begin with myths and with the criticism of myths"
(Popper, 1963, 63)

Identifying, Understanding, and Challenging (Potential) MYTHSE is Crucial for an Evidence-informed, Effective, and Ethically-responsible Sustainability Education



Studies of the Project MYTHSE

Study 1

- Preregistered scoping review to map, describe, and understand the field, identifying key publications, authors, and misconceptions.

Study 2

- Preregistered qualitative interviews with experts to explore the concept of MYTHSE and establish the research strand, including a podcast for data collection and analysis.

Study 3

- Development of a MYTHSE inventory through surveys with university instructors to assess psychometric properties and explore relationships with critical thinking and other relevant factors.

From Insight to Impact

- Establishing a new strand of research, providing insights into the landscape of educational myths in sustainability, and informing evidence-based practices for educators, researchers, and policymakers.
- Push the boundaries of theorizing (sustainability) education and expand educational myth research.

More Information



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Selected References

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