

## Exploring Sustainable Development Goals and Moral Values in the Oxford Social Studies Textbooks for Primary Classes

Qurratulain Rehan<sup>1,\*</sup>, Iffrah Hayat<sup>2</sup> and Dur-A-Nayab Farooq<sup>3</sup>

### Abstract

*Sustainable development and moral values have become an essential need of our society. We cannot expect our society to exist in the long run without having sufficient knowledge about moral values. This research study aimed to determine the extent to which Pakistan's social studies textbooks from grade 1 to 5 contained elements regarding sustainable development and moral values. A qualitative research design was preferred and adopted for this research. The data was gathered through content analysis of primary grade textbooks of social studies written by Nicholas Horsburgh and published by Oxford 2014. A checklist was developed depicting elements and themes of sustainable development and moral values. The checklists were approved by experts of the Education Department at Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore. The themes and elements were marked accordingly and aided the researchers to explore the findings regarding the contents of primary Oxford social studies textbooks. Major findings revealed that the textbooks of social studies have a sufficient amount of SD goals i.e. Peace and Justice, Highlighting the importance of Diversity, Integrity, Good Health and Well Being, and much more. As far as the moral values are concerned a few chapters contained a surplus number of moral values in them. In light of the findings of this study, it is recommended that the content of social studies textbooks needs to be updated. Similar topics should not be repeated in textbooks. Awareness about gender equality and environmental issues must be stressed in social studies textbooks.*

**Key Words: Sustainable Development Goals, Moral Values, Social Studies Textbook**

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<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Education, Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

<sup>2</sup> Student, Department of Education, Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

<sup>3</sup> Student, Department of Education, Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

\* **Corresponding Author:** qurratulain.rehan@kinnaird.edu.pk

## **1. Introduction**

**S**ustainable development is a way of reshaping, organizing, and transforming society to help it exist in the long run, and it aims to satisfy the needs of human beings (Fan *et al.*, 2019). The imperative elements of the present and the future are considered to assure sustainable development in societies. Sustainable development is all about meeting human needs, protecting natural capital, and balancing economic growth and development (Polasky *et al.*, 2019). Value education has always been an important aspect of education. It generally contains elements that are considered essential for a society to thrive as it is considered an economic and social tool (Madani, 2019). If compared, the people living in the past lived a better and more peaceful life in terms of extreme climate shifts and the utilization of resources. The present generation must constantly put thought into how to thrive in this ever-changing society, and these climate shifts are not relevant to temperature but beliefs, realities, knowledge, strategies, or stories (Brisman, 2019). If observed, everyone is racing or struggling for its survival due to the mismanagement of resources and facilities.

Children are like a blank canvas; they can be altered and shaped into whatever mold we desire. The drastic changes that are being made to our environment and our surroundings due to our lavish and careless lifestyle have put the future of our younger generations at stake, and it is believed that the younger generation is experiencing uncertain challenges due to severe climate changes (Karim, 2021). Therefore, enforcing values and ideas that highlight sustainable development and promote value education has become the need of the hour for attaining a sustainable planet (Mukhi & Quental, 2019). Sustainable development is an eco-friendly term that has been incorporated into our textbooks, yet people are unaware of its values and the benefits it brings along. They are unfamiliar with the values, beliefs, and principles that sustainable development highlights (Zhang & Gibson, 2021). People are unaware of the fact that sustainable development altogether focuses on the betterment of society and think of it as a rather intricate term that should not be concerned with a normal individual being, but for acquiring sustainable development organizations need to consider society for its decision-making practices (Rosenbloom, 2021). Sustainable development strives to draw an ecological balance and especially targets the coming generations as they are our only hope in making the world a better place for every human being. Sustainable development can be explained as the most productive term that focuses on long-term results e.g. equilibrium of environment and appropriate economic growth and shows concern about the depletion of resources (Mensah, 2019). It includes 17 goals that can help us lead to a

more sustainable future. Sustainable development cannot be achieved overnight; it requires continuous efforts and the will to change (Briceño & Santos, 2019). Only a nation dedicated to bringing change can contribute towards sustainable development. Noble values education cannot be neglected when talking about sustainable development. They both go side by side as guidance for a career relevant to social growth is crucial (Nota *et al.*, 2020).

Pakistan is a developing state and to move ahead in the race for development it needs to address the needs of a sustainable future. The government of Pakistan has joined hands with several agencies and NGOs including UNESCO (it supports educational ideas regarding sustainable developments) to bridge this developmental gap (Khushik & Diemer, 2018). The United Nations has acted as an active body throughout. It has brought attention to sustainable development and its 17 goals in every way possible. In 2006, UNESCO made efforts to push countries to inculcate the values of sustainable development within their educational programs and system because education has proven to be the most successful mode in transferring the values of sustainable development in the youth as it promotes students mindfulness and thinking skills regarding surroundings (Zguir *et al.*, 2021). UNESCO (2006) has always stressed both the environmental and developmental aspects. It was suggested that higher education and educational initiatives will be the first and foremost weapon in promoting sustainable development (Semet, 2020). The youth needs to be empowered to instill within them the values and attributes necessary to promote a sustainable future. Value education and sustainable development are linked with one another and both contribute to a healthy society. For this reason, the ministry of education has stressed formulating the textbooks in such a manner that it promotes the perspectives of sustainable development and value education-as it is the Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals UN 2030 agenda (Kioupi & Voulvoulis, 2019).

Value education and sustainable development can only be implemented worldwide if their implementation is done at a local level. Education has always been regarded as a tool that has helped in shaping or making societies and communities better (Agbedahin, 2019). A standard curriculum can help in the achievement of sustainable development goals and values education. It can only be done when a nation agrees to embed the contents of sustainable development and value education within its textbooks based on key sustainability principles (Zguir *et al.*, 2021). Value education is said to target three aspects i.e. environment, society, and economics. They are often used in directing behavior. It can also act as an integral element when restoring the educational system of

any country and it plays a vital role in the development of a circular or sustainable economy (Sukiennik et al., 2021).

The textbooks of social studies have always been successful in incorporating and instilling nature-friendly values and have always shed light on issues like global warming, pollution, climate change, recycling, eco-friendly products, morals, ethics, and much more (Shah et al., 2021). The values that promote sustainability are incorporated in the social studies textbooks to spread awareness among the general youth and make them aware of the depletion of natural resources and how they can help attain ecological balance, for ensuring positive perspectives of students regarding environmental aspects (Rogayan Jr, 2019). The textbooks of social studies are also said to reflect the value of education within their content.

To the best of the researchers' knowledge, so far no study has been conducted in the Pakistani context on the exploration of the teaching of SDG and moral values through social studies books. Therefore, this research study aims to explore to what extent SD and values education are incorporated in the primary social studies textbooks of Pakistan. The objectives of the study are to analyze the inclusion of Sustainable development goals in the social studies textbooks for the primary level and explore the textbooks of social studies at the primary level to see whether moral value education is being promoted through them or not. The following research questions were formulated for this research study:

1. To what extent do Pakistan's social studies textbooks at the primary level contain elements regarding sustainable development goals?
2. What values are promoted in the textbooks of social studies in Pakistan at the primary level?

## **2. Literature Review**

### **2.1. Sustainable Development**

There is no proper definition of sustainable development, and the concept of sustainable development education is not fully integrated (Leal Filho et al., 2018). According to Verma (2019), sustainability means fulfilling the needs of the present generation without compromising the needs of future generations. Sustainable development emphasizes using natural resources carefully so that they can be preserved for future generations, and it would reduce the natural resources' stress many folds (Olabi et al., 2022). Purvis et al. (2019) demonstrated the details of sustainability and proposed that it has three pillars. And the pillars of sustainable development are social, economic, and environmental development. The concept of sustainable development is studied in detail, and it is revealed that sustainable development helps in creating a balance between

social, economic, and environmental components of society, and this kind of development can only be achieved by giving awareness through policies (Mensah, 2019). Kioupi and Voulvoulis (2019) highlighted that it is vital to promote education regarding sustainable development as education is the most powerful weapon in today's world to teach the importance of sustainable development. Humans benefit from education because it allows them to better understand themselves. In contrast to that Weissberg (2017) demonstrated that education instills in students the importance of appreciating others and accepting differences (among various cultural or other aspects) or diversity. Büyüközkan et al. (2018) stated that the United Nations set up seventeen goals for sustainable development. Leal Filho et al. (2018) demonstrated all the sustainable development goals and stated that Quality education is the fourth goal of sustainable development; all other goals can be achieved through it therefore the United Nations pays stress on quality education. In contrast to that Wahyudin (2018) revealed that education can develop tolerance among people and develop a peaceful society based on a respectful environment. In contrast to that Aneel et al. (2019) evaluated that global sustainable development needs to be promoted in formal as well as non-formal systems to educate people and generate new ideas. All populations regardless of their cultures, education, and caste needs to be educated regarding these principles. According to Ferrer-Estévez & Chalmeta (2021), the goals of sustainable development address the issues; mankind is facing and has to achieve those goals for their survival. Human resources play a vital role in the implementation of sustainable development, so they need to work on the best sustainable development procedures for better sustainability outcomes.

## **2.2. Education for Sustainable Development**

According to Wamsler (2020), ESD is the theme, perspective, and vision that is based on the external ecosystem. ESD enables individuals to think about their values and traditions, so every nation is struggling to make sustainable transformations. The living standard of people can only be improved through quality education, which is based on the objectives of sustainable development as it has created critical thinking mindsets among people (Khushik & Diemer, 2020). Education for sustainable development (ESD) emphasizes catering to social, environmental, and economic problems through education and enables learners to make informed decisions (Taimur & Sattar, 2020). According to Jeronen (2022), education for sustainable development can help in improving the lifestyle of humans and transferring values and knowledge to the next generation. ESD should be promoted in informal education as well as in non-formal settings. Too many teachers are also willing to teach education for sustainable development and a vast knowledge of

this approach is vital for teachers (Varis et al., 2018). According to Kioupi and Voulvoulis (2019), ESD is the practice of involving the whole system, as it includes inclusion and pedagogical development. In contrast to that Wittmayer et al. (2019), ESD stresses that every individual should get equal opportunities to get an education for their social transformation. UNESCO aims that by the end of 2030 all individuals e.g. from both formal and non-formal settings will be able to access free primary education regardless of their color, caste, and creed in a safe environment (Mawonde & Togo, 2021).

### **2.3. Primary Education**

Primary education is the formal education given to children from age six to eleven, consisting of grades one to six usually this education is attained from the nearest schools (Varjo et al., 2019). The curriculum of primary education should be designed in a way that students can grasp complex concepts easily in their higher education. Primary education can shape the lives of students as they are in their growing phase e.g. school life (Maksymchuk et al., 2020). Textbooks are associated with the curriculum as they provide guidelines and content to achieve academic goals (Ayu & Inderawati, 2019). In contrast to that Shah (2020) highlighted that well-designed textbook help students in learning with fun and interest. Textbooks can visualize the concepts and interests, or attractive information formats should be used to develop curiosity and interest in children to learn and know.

### **2.4. Incorporating SD Goals in Curriculum**

According to Goodwin (2020), the curriculum focuses on and how to teach, it is a comprehensive term that revolves around teaching and learning, as the professional development of teachers is also vital for the best learning outcomes. The curriculum should be designed or updated in a way that caters to the needs of the 21st century as educational needs are also changing with time (Ahmad et al., 2019). To cope with globalization pupils (e.g. especially teachers or educators as they are responsible for teaching students) must learn knowledge and skills (Goodwin, 2021). Sustainable development should be introduced to children from the beginning of their education. It can only be promoted through curriculum if all stakeholders are involved, and a strategy is developed. The values and norms which will be taught in the course should be practiced through holistic and value-driven approaches relevant to sustainable development (Kroeger et al., 2022). According to Hays & Reinders (2020) The aim of adding the principle of sustainable development to the curriculum is to educate pupils about sustainability and to preserve natural resources for future generations. In contrast to that Schneider et al. (2018) highlighted that many educational institutions in the world integrate ESD into their curriculum and research it, meanwhile, sustainable concepts

have been added to the curriculum across the globe. It is mandatory in all countries e.g. Sweden to teach sustainable development in higher education. In the province of Manitoba and Finland sustainable education has been added to the curriculum (Finnveden et al., 2020). In the last few years, many types of research were conducted on sustainable development in Pakistan. According to Asif et al. (2020), sustainable development must be inculcated in the Pakistani education system for the sustainable future of the country. In Pakistan sustainable development has been reoriented in the curriculum to promote diversity and peace but not much appropriately, and moral education is being required for sustainable future developments as this knowledge would enhance critical and analytical thinking skills in children regarding this subject. According to Kalsoom and Qureshi (2021), in Pakistan only 5% of teaching contents or curriculum are based on sustainable development goals or sustainability, hence it is evaluated that this concept is not much focused.

## **2.5. Social Studies**

Social studies promote a civic sense of responsibility in students. Social studies textbooks have been related to the daily life events of an individual, textbooks-based learnings enable students to learn about social and personal experiences (Mohammed & Kinyó, 2020). Social studies are one of the main courses in primary education. Social studies at the beginning level enable young learners in assessing issues and making valuable and thoughtful judgments (Russell & Waters, 2021). Children in early education face many social issues and may find it difficult to cope with those issues. While Social studies education helps children in understanding themselves as well as the people around them as school education plays a vital role in children's development (Epstein, 2019). Sustainable development and social studies education are correlated as they both promote values. From 2005-2014, the ministry of education and the ministry of environment collaborated with UNESCO to promote sustainable development in Pakistan. The first regional plan was developed by the district government in Badin, district Sindh in which it was decided to integrate SD into the primary and tertiary curriculum, and the rationale of these practices is the promotion of sustainable development education (Chohan, 2015).

## **2.6. Value Education**

As the standard of living is increasing through materialistic things, people nowadays often lack values. Value education is important to find adequate solutions to current-day problems. Value education helps students in making personal and social choices with responsibility and reduces educational issues too (White et al., 2020). Value education is given at home and in a formal educational setting. Value education should

be taught in existing courses and it must develop positive behavior and a sense of empathy in children, and transform children's negative attitudes into positive ones (Ntabajyana et al., 2021). Activities must be designed for primary-grade students through which they can feel valued. To promote value education, values should be harmonious in society. Value education helps individuals to distinguish between right and wrong as values are the standards of behavior, and enable them to modify their behaviors. Direct instructions and argumentation-based activities can help in the promotion of value education. In Pakistan, values have been changed and evolved in the name of modernization, which has both positive as well as negative impacts. Women and men can work together and there is no sociocultural barrier in the value system as in the modern era norms and values are changed (Rashid & Sadaf, 2015). According to Jurs, Samusevica, and Lidaka (2017), education can help in an individual's well-being. Parents, as well as teachers, develop the personality of children by instilling values in them. An individual can only be successful if their values don't contradict society. Value education is very important for the development and promotion of positive behavior in society not only for children's personality development but also provides opportunities for sustainable development too.

## **2.7. Moral Values**

Every society has its set of moral values, good and bad, right or wrong. Truth, justice, and forgiveness are those moral values that are also known as the golden rule-plays a vital role in individual progress (Fox, 2019). Primary education is a basic education and whatever is learned in these years of education can lead to lifelong learning. Moral values are the true reflection of society. Schools can groom children and prepare them for their life (Tabassum, 2021). Children have higher moral values than any other value because moral values are taught at home and they are part of children's formal education as well. Moral values can be taught in school through the teachers' behavior and curriculum based on standards or ethics of conduct (Chowdhury, 2018). Instead of forcing students to learn moral values through textbooks, they should learn them through their observations. Students can imitate well they can do what they see their elders doing. Accordingly, it was reported that when teachers will behave in a certain way students may copy that behavior, so teachers need to consider moral values in their teaching or learning practices (Asif et al., 2020).

There are certain gaps in the literature findings that are considered for this research study e.g. a particular single school or course outlines are not being considered to evaluate the outline of the social studies textbooks content. Another literature gap is that the importance of sustainable development goals is discussed in general by many



authors while no one demonstrated its importance for a child's personal growth to social studies books is not demonstrated appropriately. Thirdly, various previous studies are being reviewed and the grade-based implications of sustainable development goals are not discussed e.g. evaluating the contents of all the grades is not done in a single research. In these ways, it is analyzed that certain concepts are lacking in previous studies. Hence, to demonstrate appropriate findings and results regarding sustainable development goals' importance in social studies, the document analysis is selected for this research.

### **3. Research Methodology**

The research design adopted for this study is qualitative. Qualitative research design is an approach adopted for analyzing, evaluating, interpreting, and collecting information when conducting a research study. A qualitative research design helps collect deeper insight into an embedded knowledge, event, or phenomenon (Mihas, 2019).

#### **3.1. Document Analysis**

Document analysis is used for data collection as it enables researchers to analyze resources and choose the most appropriate studies for their research strategies. Document analysis is beneficial as it would enable researchers to organize or categorize non-numerical detailed data (Longo, 2019). The content of Oxford's social studies textbooks for the Primary classes from grades 1 to 5 was critically analyzed by using the document analysis technique and the reason behind the selection of Oxford textbooks is that they are developed on basis of the National Curriculum of Pakistan (Jahanzaib et al., 2021). Documents are a source of data or information while content analysis is used to analyze the contents of documents appropriately. Content analysis is a technique that has helped researchers to explore the existence of certain words and themes in the text. It has made it easy for the researchers to understand and code textual information which eventually aided the researchers in the formation of the themes of the research. In this research study documented analysis or content analysis is used (as both the terms are much similar or interchangeable) to demonstrate the content of Oxford social studies textbooks appropriately. Document analysis is a highly applicable technique for generating valid and replicable results from the data (Selvi, 2019). The time duration for collecting the data was not specified but the entire research is done in a short period. Document analysis has also helped in maintaining the objectivity of the research study. A checklist was developed keeping in view the elements of sustainable development goals and moral values after reviewing various research papers and surfing the internet. After developing the checklist, it was shown to experts of the Department of Education at the Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore for examination. After its face validity (which

is often used for equipment validations in research studies) it was used in the research to run the content analysis.

### **3.2. Data Analysis**

The data were analyzed through content analysis which is considered the most appropriate technique to evaluate or categorize detailed data (Lindgren et al., 2020). In document analysis, only written document is analyzed whereas content analysis is used to determine the presence of certain words, themes, or concepts within some given qualitative data (i.e. text). Therefore, content analysis was used so that researchers could quantify and analyze the presence, meanings, and relationships of certain words, themes, or concepts. The researchers reviewed the content of the social studies textbooks taught at the primary classes in Pakistan and drew themes from them. The researchers used the technique of document analysis. They made a coding scheme and followed it to mark items through the social studies textbooks. Both researchers read the textbooks and marked items according to the coding scheme to avoid any element of subjectivity. Then both documents were analyzed to see if both the researchers have marked the same items or not. If the marked items were dissimilar, they were reviewed again by the researchers. Colored pencils were used to mark the items that were related to sustainable development and moral values by the researchers. Different colors were assigned to each theme of sustainable development and moral values to draw a clear or strong comparison between them. The items were marked according to a frequency assigned to them; if an element of sustainable development or moral value was depicted via content, pictures, or worksheet it received the highest frequency and was marked to a great extent; if it was depicted via content and pictures/ activities it was marked to some extent; if it was depicted only through text or content it was marked to a little extent, and if the element was not present at all in any of the categories i.e. content, pictures, and worksheet it was marked not at all.

## **4. Main Findings**

### **4.1 Sustainable Development Goals**

It is analyzed that the Oxford Social Studies Books that are studied at primary or secondary levels in Pakistan are published in 2004 and are considered the latest publication of Oxford Social Studies boo (Badshah et al., 2020). According to the author, the following is the content relevant to the Sustainable Development Goals in Primary Oxford Social Studies books.

In the Class 1 book of Oxford Social Studies, “Highlighting the Importance of Diversity”, “Good Health and Well-Being” and “Life on Land” are the most covered goals in this textbook whereas the least covered goals are “Energy Conservation” and “Political

Values". The goal of diversity was highlighted through text and images related to the provinces of Pakistan whereas political values were promoted through the text regarding the power of the vote and elections.

In the Class 2 book of Oxford Social Studies, "Highlighting the Importance of Diversity" is the most covered goal in this book whereas the least covered goals are "Clean Water and Sanitation" and "Political Values". The topics like clean water and sanitation were emphasized through images and text about the importance and need for clean water and sanitary systems.

In the Class 3 book of Oxford Social Studies, "Highlighting the Importance of Diversity" and "Types of Profession" are the most covered goals in this book whereas the least covered goals are "Gender Equality" and "Clean Water and Sanitation". The importance of types of the profession was promoted via images and text about different professions and their importance in society.

In the Class 4 book of Oxford Social Studies, "Highlighting the Importance of Diversity" is the most covered goal in the textbook whereas the least covered goals are "Life on Land" and "Climate Action". The effect of Climate action was taught through descriptions of maps, valleys, hills, and mountains.

In the Class 5 book of Oxford Social Studies, "Highlighting the Importance of Diversity", "Good Health, Well-Being" and "Political Values" are the most covered goals in this book whereas the least covered goals are "Types of Profession" and "Life Below Water". The importance of good health and well-being was promoted through text and illustrations about cleanliness and basic etiquette.

For each class or grade, appropriate content as per students' understanding levels is published. For example, while comparing Grade 1 to Grade 5 contents- it is evaluated that the content of Grade 1 is much simpler and basic as compared to Grade 5.

#### **4.2. Moral Values**

Based on Horsburgh (2014), the following is the content of Primary Oxford Social Studies books relevant to moral Values.

In the Class 1 book of Oxford Social Studies, Mutual Respect, Kindheartedness, and Cleanliness of Body and Mind are the most covered values in this book whereas the least covered values are Obedience and Freedom. The element of kindheartedness was highlighted through various pictures and cleanliness of body and mind via instructions that emphasized our overall hygiene.

In the Class 2 book of Oxford Social Studies, Cooperation and Empathy are the most covered values in this book whereas the least covered values are Courage and Modesty. Both elements were emphasized via a series of images that showed people working together towards a general and common cause. They were also highlighted through thought-provoking statements that contributed to this cause.

In the Class 3 book of Oxford Social Studies, Mutual Respect, Freedom, and Courage are the most covered values in this book whereas the least covered values are Obedience and Public Spiritedness. In this book, the elements of mutual respect, freedom, and courage were highlighted by stressing gender equality issues that are prevailing in our society through textual information and images.

In the Class 4 book of Oxford Social Studies, "Freedom" is the most covered value in this book whereas the least covered values are "Kindheartedness" and "Courage." In book 4 the element of freedom was highlighted altogether through a mixture of textual information, imagery, and exercise statements.

In the Class 5 book of Oxford Social Studies, "Freedom", "Honesty", "Public Spiritedness" and "Cooperation" are the most covered goals in this book whereas the least covered goals are "Modesty" and "Humility." In book 5 apart from freedom, the elements of honesty, public spiritedness, and cooperation were highlighted by showing people working together as a single unit and promoting unity and cooperation. On a few occasions, it was highlighted mostly through images, but it was also stressed via textual information.

By evaluating the moral values and comparing them based on the different Grades, it is evaluated that the moral conducts are simplest for Grade 1 and are getting slightly harder for senior primary classes e.g. 2,3,4,5 Grades.

## **5. Discussion**

The first research question was to determine the extent that Pakistan's social studies textbooks at the primary level contain elements regarding sustainable development contents or topics. After analyzing the textbooks with the help of a checklist through content analysis the findings showed that "Highlighting the Importance of Diversity, Integrity, Good Health, and Well Being" was the main focus of attention in the textbooks that have been explored. These elements were quite dominant in the textbooks that were analyzed and are focused on most at schools. There were multiple occasions where these elements were depicted one way or another i.e. through textual information, pictures, and activities relevant to those topics (making the book attractive). Even these elements of sustainable development were able to score the highest frequencies that were

set by the researchers. These findings were in line with the findings of the research conducted by Cuenca (2021). These findings also revealed that most of the portion of the social studies curriculum is composed of elements like diversity and integrity.

Moving on the findings revealed that the other sustainable development goals were present to a mere extent. Even if they were present they were very hard to be identified and distinguished from the content of the primary-grade textbooks. Elements of Peace and Justice, and Political Values were mostly present in the higher classes i.e. 5th grade. Whereas themes like Energy Conservation, Environmental Issues, and Climate Action were present but not prominently within the chapters. They were not given due importance and were mostly neglected (demonstrating that vital aspects are missing). The themes of Addressing Poverty and Types of Professions were mentioned several times within the textbooks. The findings further revealed that the elements of Gender Equality and Clean Water and Sanitation are present in almost all the textbooks but unfortunately not much was done to slash the gender discrimination traits that are arising in the younger generations and are somehow vital to study. Moreover, themes like Life on Land and Life Below Water were hard to find in the textbooks. These findings are different from the findings of the research conducted by Jan et al. (2021). Their investigation revealed that the textbooks of social studies are rich in terms of depicting and channelizing sustainable development goals.

Multiple elements of sustainable development were absent because of the repetition that was made in the chapters throughout the curriculum. Each textbook made a repetition of a chapter that was already present in the previous textbooks. A teacher that doesn't have sufficient knowledge regarding sustainable development would not be able to pinpoint or stress areas that were quite important and would contribute towards sustainable development (Ifegbesan, Isaac & Rampedi, 2017). Similar to the findings of this research, Glavič (2020) findings also revealed that the curriculum of social studies as well as teachers' training needs to be improved as it lacks the basic elements of sustainable development.

The findings further revealed that the components of Energy Conservation, Environmental Issues, and Climate Action were mostly absent and neglected in the textbooks and these findings are opposite to the findings of (Mathetsa et al., 2022) whose findings made these elements the center or core of the social studies textbooks- containing all the vital aspects.

The second research question was about the values that were promoted in the textbooks of social studies in Pakistan at the primary level. Based on the findings as far as moral values are considered they were quite dominant in the social studies textbooks.

There were only a few chapters that were not able to illustrate or depict any moral values among youth that are vital for their personal development. Only a few themes like Honesty, Courage, and Humility were hard to find but apart from that, the textbooks of social studies are overflowing with themes that fall into the domain of moral values. A teacher that has appropriate knowledge about moral values shall be able to instill these values in the youth very easily. These findings are in line with the findings of (Ifegbesan et al., 2017) they also researched the social studies textbooks of Nigeria to explore sustainable development goals. Their findings revealed that the social studies textbooks have a surplus amount of moral values or ethics as well as regarding environmental condition demonstrations.

The findings of the study revealed that in some textbooks moral values were inculcated to a greater extent as compared to sustainable development goals. Although there was a link in both the terms i.e. sustainable development and moral values which means one element leads to another. Similarly, Armstrong (2020) findings depicted that there is a strong connection between moral values and SDG and they indeed work as a ladder for one another, as ethical decision-making practices enable people to analyze SDG goals. Hence, both the learnings regarding ethical or moral values as well as sustainable development goals are essential.

## **6. Conclusion**

The findings revealed that the goals of SD like highlighting the importance of diversity, integrity, and good health and well-being have been promoted in the Social Studies textbook whereas the goals like energy conservation, environmental issues, climate action, and gender discrimination are not discussed in the textbooks. This research also indicates that social studies textbooks include themes such as diversity and honesty. Elements of peace and justice, as well as political values, were primarily prevalent in the textbooks of upper grades. The findings also revealed that textbooks of Social Studies need improvement as gender discrimination and environmental issues are not discussed in detail. Moral values have been promoted in Social Studies textbooks; only a few values such as honesty, courage, and humility were hard to be found but other moral values were present in the textbooks. Sustainable development and moral values can bring evident changes in an individual and push them to go beyond their potential and try their best to act as responsible citizens in their society. These aspects help individuals empathize with the coming generations. Hence, it is concluded that certain essential aspects relevant to sustainable development goals and moral values are still missing so it is vital to modify the social studies books as per advanced era needs as without appropriate education sustainable goals might not be attained. It is revealed that

the students should be taught more about environmental outcomes or sustainability goals as the present curriculum does not contain appropriate or required sustainability or moral values content.

## **7. Implications for Future Research**

This study is based on the importance of integrating SD goals in social studies books as the facts such as integrity or factors relevant to good health are usually discussed. The findings from this research are effective for future research studies based on a similar subject of interest. Moreover, this research study can be further conducted in the future by analyzing certain other aspects relevant to the subject of interest e.g. environmental issues acting as a barrier to sustainable development, etc. This research study has quite a broad scope as the sustainable development goals and moral values are being demonstrated concerning each class e.g. from class 1-5 social studies course books. Board consideration of all the aspects e.g. starting from the importance of learning sustainable development goals till the development of the course outline is making this research study worth implicating in future research.

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