



Human Security and Sustainable Development: The Role of Social Studies Education in Nigeria

AISHATU ZUBAIRU HABEEB

Federal University of Education, Kontagora, Niger State, Nigeria

Abstract. This study examines the role of Social Studies education in addressing human security challenges and achieving sustainable development in Nigeria. Despite various policy efforts by successive government and leaders, Nigeria continues to face widespread issues such as poverty, insecurity, environmental degradation, and civic apathy, all of which have threaten national development and social stability. These persistent problems highlight the inadequacy of current educational approaches in equipping citizens with the knowledge, values, and skills necessary to respond appropriately to complex societal challenges. Employing a qualitative research methodology, the study analyzes data from scholarly literature, curriculum documents, and policy reports. The theoretical framework combines Human Security Theory and Constructivist Learning Theory, providing insights into how education can empower individuals to contribute meaningfully to peace, security, and development. Findings reveal that Social Studies, when effectively delivered, can foster civic responsibility, critical thinking, environmental awareness, and tolerance which are core components of human security and sustainability. However, the study identifies gaps such as outdated curricula, lack of teacher training, and insufficient linkage between classroom content and real-world challenges. It recommends a reorientation of Social Studies curricula to directly address human security and sustainability themes, professional development for educators, and the integration of participatory, inquiry-based teaching methods. Additionally, policy support is needed to strengthen civic education as a pillar of national development. In conclusion, Social Studies education holds significant potential to shape responsible, informed citizens capable of advancing human security and sustainable development in Nigeria, but this potential can only be realized through

strategic reforms in content, pedagogy, and educational policy.

Keywords: Human Security, Sustainable Development, Social Sustainability, Environmental Sustainability, Pedagogy, Policy, Social Studies Education.

1. Introduction

Human security and sustainable development have become central issues in global and national policy discourse, particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria. Over the last two decades, Nigeria has experienced profound socio-economic and political challenges that undermine national stability and human well-being. These include rising insecurity, terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, farmers–herders’ conflict, unemployment, poverty, corruption, environmental degradation, and weak civic engagement. These challenges have threatened national cohesion and hindered efforts toward achieving meaningful and sustainable development (Adewumi & Olayinka, 2020).

Human security focuses on the protection of individuals rather than the state, provides a more comprehensive lens for understanding the multidimensional threats confronting Nigerian citizens. In this context, sustainable development is that development that does not compromise the needs of future generations; that cannot be achieved without addressing the root causes of insecurity, poverty, inequality, and ecological decline (United Nations, 2015).

Education remains a critical tool for transforming societies, shaping values, building capacities, and

equipping citizens with the knowledge and skills required to respond effectively to emerging societal challenges, such as Nigeria is faced with today. Among various school subjects, Social Studies education stands out due to its explicit mandate to prepare learners for responsible citizenship, social understanding, and positive participation in community and national affairs. As an interdisciplinary field drawing from sociology, economics, history, geography, political science, psychology, and civic education, Social Studies equips learners with civic competences, values, attitudes, and problem-solving skills needed to contribute to human security and sustainable development (Okam, 2020).

However, despite the potential of Social Studies education, its effectiveness in shaping socially responsible, security-conscious, and development-oriented citizens in Nigeria has been limited. This is due to outdated curriculum content, weak classroom delivery methods, insufficient teacher capacity, and inadequate integration of contemporary issues such as terrorism, climate change, youth radicalization, and human rights protection (Ibrahim & Musa, 2020).

This study therefore seeks to examine the role of Social Studies education in promoting human security and sustainable development in Nigeria, analyzing its contributions, limitations, and prospects for reform. By employing a quantitative research approach, the study draws insights from scholarly literature, opinions from concerned stakeholders, curriculum documents, policy reports, and theoretical frameworks to provide a holistic understanding of how Social Studies education can serve as a transformative tool for national development.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Despite Nigeria's numerous development policies and security interventions, the country continues to face alarming levels of insecurity, poverty, social inequality, youth radicalization, environmental degradation, and weak civic culture. These persistent challenges indicate that the existing educational system has not sufficiently equipped citizens with the cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies necessary to address complex societal issues. The failure to cultivate critical thinking, civic responsibility, social tolerance, and practical problem-solving skills contributes to Nigeria's deepening security and developmental crises (Nwankwo, 2019).

Social Studies education was introduced into the Nigerian school system to address many of these issues by developing responsible, security-conscious, and sustainable citizens. However, significant gaps

exist between this curricular ideal and classroom reality. Several problems persist, including: outdated curriculum content that does not reflect contemporary security challenges such as terrorism, cybercrime, climate change, and political extremism; inadequate teacher preparation and professional development; dominance of teacher-centered methodologies that suppress creativity and critical thinking; poor integration of experiential and inquiry-based learning approaches; minimal linkage between classroom knowledge and real-life societal issues; weak policy support for civic and peace education.

These gaps undermine the capacity of Social Studies to nurture active citizens capable of contributing meaningfully to national development and societal security. Therefore, the central problem this study addresses is the growing mismatch between Nigeria's escalating human security and sustainable development challenges and the limited responsiveness of Social Studies education in addressing these issues. The study seeks to explore how Social Studies can be repositioned to play a more strategic and effective role in achieving the sustainable development goals in Nigeria.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

- To examine the relationship between Social Studies education and human security in Nigeria.
- To assess how Social Studies education contributes to the attainment of sustainable development goals.
- To identify challenges hindering the effectiveness of Social Studies education in promoting human security.
- To recommend strategies for improving Social Studies education for sustainability and security enhancement.

1.3 Research Questions

- How does Social Studies education influence human security awareness among Nigerian learners?
- In what ways does Social Studies education contribute to sustainable development goals?
- What are the challenges facing the integration of human security themes into Social Studies education?
- What strategies can strengthen the role of Social Studies in advancing human security and sustainability in Nigeria?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

Two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between Social Studies education and the promotion of human security in Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between Social Studies education and the achievement of sustainable development goals in Nigeria.

1.5 Research Methodology

Research Design: The study adopted combined methods of qualitative, from review of related literature and quantitative research design, particularly the use of questionnaires 100 teachers in Kontagora Local Government Area of Niger State. This design was appropriate because it allows for a deep understanding of educational content and policy trends without manipulation of variables (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Data were there collected from multiple secondary and primary sources, including Social Studies curriculum documents, academic journal articles, government policy papers (e.g., National Policy on Education, SDG reports), and international agency reports published between 2015 and 2024 and questionnaires.

Data Analysis: The study employed statistics 9.0 for analysis. This package allows data to be coded into categories and analyzed accordingly. Patterns and relationships among these variables were identified and analyzed to reveal insights about the role of Social Studies education in promoting human security and sustainability. The validity and reliability were achieved by triangulation of sources, peer debriefing, and cross-checking of interpretations to enhance the credibility and reliability of findings.

2. Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on two major theories: Human Security Theory and Constructivist Learning Theory. These frameworks provide conceptual lenses for understanding how Social Studies education can empower learners to contribute to human security and sustainable development.

2.1 Human Security Theory

Human Security Theory, developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1994 and further expanded in subsequent reports (UNDP, 2016), shifts the focus of security from the state to the individual. It emphasizes holistic protection and

empowerment of individuals against threats such as poverty, violence, disease, environmental degradation, and political repression.

The theory identifies seven key components of human security: Economic security, Food security, Health security, Environmental security, Personal security, Community security, Political security.

This framework aligns strongly with the goals of Social Studies education. Through teaching themes related to governance, human rights, peace education, environmental protection, and economic awareness, Social Studies can equip learners with the knowledge and values necessary for promoting human security.

2.2 Constructivist Learning Theory

Constructivist Learning Theory, associated with scholars such as Bruner (1966) and Vygotsky (1978), posits that learners actively construct knowledge based on their experiences and interactions with their environment. Learning is most effective when learners engage in inquiry, dialogue, reflection, and problem-solving. In the context of Social Studies education:

- learners construct meaning through interaction with real-world issues;
- inquiry-based projects deepen understanding of societal problems;
- collaborative learning enhances social and civic skills;
- experiential learning fosters environmental responsibility and peacebuilding

Constructivism therefore supports a learner-centered approach essential for developing security-conscious, environmentally responsible, and active citizens.

2.3 Relevance to the Study

Combining Human Security Theory and Constructivist Learning Theory provides a robust framework for analyzing how Social Studies can contribute to security consciousness, civic participation, and sustainable behaviour. The theories highlight both what learners need to know (security dimensions) and how they should learn (constructive engagement).

3. Review of Related Literature

The literature reviewed spans conceptualization, empirical research, theoretical publications, curriculum analyses, and policy reports on Social Studies education, human security, and sustainable development.

3.1 Conceptual clarifications

The concept of human security refers to the protection of individuals from critical and pervasive threats to their safety, well-being, and dignity. The concept extends beyond traditional notions of national security focused on territorial defence, emphasizing instead the security of people in their daily lives. According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2016), human security encompasses seven core dimensions: Economic security, Food security, Health security, Environmental security, Personal security, Community security, Political security.

Human security is therefore multidimensional, addressing both freedom from fear and freedom from want. In the Nigerian context, growing insecurity, poverty, political instability, and environmental crises make human security an urgent national priority.

Sustainable development is defined by the United Nations (2015) as development that meets present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. The concept is grounded in three major pillars:

Economic sustainability – productive economic engagement and poverty reduction

Social Sustainability – equity, justice, inclusion, and human rights

Environmental sustainability – conservation, environmental protection, and climate resilience

Nigeria’s persistent developmental challenges reveal the need for an approach that balances economic progress with social and environmental responsibilities.

Social Studies Education is an integrated field that seeks to develop responsible, informed, and participatory citizens capable of contributing positively to their communities and nation. In Nigeria, Social Studies is designed to: foster civic responsibility, promote national consciousness, instil democratic values, enhance critical thinking, promote conflict resolution and peace-building, encourage environmental awareness, educate learners on rights and responsibilities. The Nigerian Social Studies curriculum incorporates themes related to governance, citizenship, human relationships, culture, economy, and the environment, making it a strategic platform for promoting human security and sustainable development (Okam, 2020).

Social Studies Education contributes to human security by promoting: civic awareness, peaceful coexistence, respect for diversity, personal and community safety and governance literacy environmental consciousness. Likewise, it fosters sustainable development by cultivating values and behaviours conducive to societal progress, resource conservation, and community cohesion. The alignment of these goals underscores Social Studies as a transformative tool for national development.

Adeyemi and Jekayinfa (2021), investigated “Social Studies Education and Peace-building among Nigerian Youths.” Their study was motivated by rising youth involvement in violent conflicts, cybercrime, and political thuggery, questioning whether Social Studies has achieved its civic and peace-building mandate. The population consisted of 2,440 upper-basic students in Oyo and Osun States; a sample of 240 was selected using stratified random sampling. Key Findings review that, Students exposed to participatory Social Studies methods showed higher peace-building attitudes; Social Studies significantly influenced tolerance, empathy, and conflict-resolution skills. Notwithstanding the study focused on only Southwestern Nigeria, limiting generalizability, It did not include teachers or administrators; hence, implementation challenges were not fully captured, the study did not explore broader human security dimensions such as environmental or economic security.

Yusuf (2022), examined “Civic Competence and National Security: The Role of Social Studies Education in Northern Nigeria.” The problem was declining civic responsibility and rising insecurity among young people. The study involved Social Studies teachers in Kaduna, Kano, and Katsina. A sample of 150 teachers participated. The study used a mixed-methods design consisting of a survey (questionnaire) and interviews. Key Findings show that: Teachers believed Social Studies can promote law-abiding behaviour and civic competence. However, 69% of teachers lacked updated knowledge of emerging security issues. Social Studies curriculum did not explicitly address terrorism, cybercrime, or radicalization. The study is therefore criticized because it did not test student outcomes directly. Interviews were limited to 12 teachers, reducing qualitative depth hence the gap.

Okechukwu (2021) studied “Challenges of Social Studies Teachers in Addressing Contemporary Social Problems in Nigeria.” The problem identified was the mismatch between curriculum expectations and actual classroom practices. A population of 600 Social

Studies teachers in Southeast Nigeria; 120 were sampled using descriptive survey, teacher questionnaires and focus group discussions. Key Findings are that: Teachers lacked teaching aids such as maps, charts, and digital materials. 78% of teachers used lecture-based methods. Curriculum insufficiently covers climate change, human trafficking, and insecurity. The criticisms are that: Overrelied on self-reported data without classroom observation. Limited geographical scope (South-East only). It failed to examine effects on student learning outcomes.

Nwosu and Eze (2023) studied “Integrating Environmental Sustainability into the Social Studies Curriculum in Nigeria.” The problem centered on poor student awareness of climate change and sustainability issues. The population was Sampled from the upper basic school students in Rivers, Enugu, and Delta States; that is a sample of 300 students. Quasi-experimental design (control and experimental groups). The experimental group was taught using an environmentally enriched Social Studies curriculum. Key Findings reveal that students exposed to sustainability-focused lessons showed significantly higher environmental responsibility scores. Teachers demonstrated improved confidence in teaching climate-related topics after a training session. The study was however criticized for short duration (6 weeks), limiting long-term conclusions. Study excluded rural schools where environmental problems are more severe. Sample size small for a quasi-experiment.

Ogunyemi (2023) studied “Sustainability Literacy and the Role of Social Studies Education in Nigeria’s Secondary Schools” addressed poor sustainability behaviour among students (e.g., littering, poor waste management). Population of 2,100 junior secondary students across five states was used; 400 were sampled using multi-stage sampling. Survey using the Sustainability Literacy Assessment Scale (SLAS) and classroom observation was also adopted. Key Findings show students had moderate sustainability literacy but poor practical behaviour; Schools with active Social Studies clubs showed higher sustainability engagement; Teacher pedagogical skills predicted 47% of student sustainability outcomes. The criticisms of the study were that the study relied heavily on student self-reports, Insufficient analysis of teacher training programs and did not compare private vs. public school differences.

Afolabi and Hassan (2022) studied “Social Studies Education and Students’ Awareness of Human Rights and Responsibilities” assessed civic decline and youth involvement in anti-social behaviours. 350 students in

Federal Unity Schools were Sample. Survey design; data analyzed with chi-square and regression. The findings show Social Studies improved knowledge of human rights and civic duties, students demonstrated weak application of civic knowledge, lack of community-based learning reduced practical civic participation. However, the study was criticized because it focused strictly on human rights—ignoring environmental and economic security dimensions, Study setting not representative of average Nigerian public schools, Regression analysis lacked robust control variables.

Ibrahim (2020) studied “Teacher Competence and Effective Delivery of Social Studies Curriculum in North-Central Nigeria.” The study addressed poor learning outcomes and public complaints about declining civic morals. Teachers in Kwara, Kogi, Niger, and Plateau States were used with 200 teachers as sample. Quantitative survey using Teacher Competence Inventory (TCI). Reliability coefficient $\alpha = .92$. Findings indicate that 63% of Social Studies teachers lacked professional specialization; Teachers complained of insufficient training on security education and conflict prevention; Teacher competence strongly predicted student achievement. The work was criticized there was no triangulation with qualitative interviews. It focused only on teacher competence, not curriculum or pedagogy. Findings not linked directly to sustainable development issues.

Hassan & Bello (2024) carried out a study titled “Social Studies and Community Security Awareness among Junior Secondary Students in Northern Nigeria” examined growing insecurity and students’ limited understanding of safety practices. JSS students in Niger, Kebbi, and Zamfara States were used. 360 students sampled. Mixed-methods (survey and key informant interviews were used. Findings indicate that students taught by trained Social Studies teachers demonstrated higher community security awareness. Poor school–community collaboration weakened practical security education. Teachers lacked materials on drug abuse, kidnapping prevention, and cyber-safety. However, interviews were limited to school principals only. The study did not examine curriculum documents for accuracy. Sample excluded private schools.

From the reviewed studies, the following persistent gaps remain: Limited focus on holistic human security—most studies focus on civic or peace-building dimensions only; Insufficient empirical linkage between Social Studies and sustainable development outcomes; Few studies examine curriculum content, pedagogy, and teacher

competence simultaneously; Most studies rely on self-reported data; few use mixed or experimental designs; Little research has been conducted in North-Central and Northwest Nigeria despite high insecurity levels;

These gaps justify the present study’s comprehensive investigation of Social Studies’ role in fostering human security and sustainable development.

4. Results

Question 1: How does social studies education influences human security awareness among Nigeria learners

Table 1: Relationship between Social Studies Education and Human Security Awareness

| S/N | ITEMS | Mean SD (±) | AGREE | STRONGLY AGREE | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE |
|-----|---|-------------|-------|----------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | Social studies lessons help me understand issues of peace and conflict | 3.07 (1.15) | 9.0% | 18.0% | 52.0% | 21.0% |
| 2 | I have learned how poverty and insecurity affect national development | 2.44 (1.19) | 21.0% | 31.0% | 27.0% | 21.0% |
| 3 | Social studies promotes tolerances and peaceful coexistences among students | 2.16 (2.18) | 27% | 37% | 17.0% | 19.0% |
| 4 | Social studies enables students to identify causes of insecurity in their communities | 2.18 (1.68) | 25.0% | 37.0% | 17.0% | 21.0% |
| 5 | Social studies enhances awareness of human right and civic duties | 1.68 0.(96) | 19.0% | 60% | 7.0% | 19.0% |
| 6 | Grand total of weighted mean | | 2.29 | | | |

Fieldwork, 2025

Results presented in tables 1, reveal detailed insights into the role and challenges of social studies education in Nigeria concerning human security awareness and sustainable development. Social studies lessons are very effective in helping students understand peace, conflict, poverty, and insecurity issues, though perception varies. The subject promotes tolerance and peaceful coexistence and heightens awareness of human rights and civic duties, where stronger agreement was noted. Overall, the influence on human security awareness is moderate, suggesting room for improvement. The results detail buttressed social studies lessons in understanding peace and conflict scored a mean of 3.07, indicating moderate agreement, but 52% disagreed or strongly disagreed, suggesting mixed perceptions. Learning about poverty and insecurity's effects on national development had a mean of 2.44, with stronger agreement (21% agree, 31% strongly agree). Promotion of tolerance and peaceful coexistence showed a lower mean of 2.16, with 27% agree and 37% strongly agree, indicating positive impact. Identification of insecurity causes in communities had a mean of 2.18, with similar agreement levels as above, showing social studies helps here. Enhancement of awareness of human rights and civic duties had a lower mean of 1.68 but very strong agreements (60% strongly agree), showing strong perceived impact. Overall weighted mean was 2.29, showing moderate influence of social studies on human security awareness Table 1. This implies rooms for more policy actions.

Table 2: Assessment of Social Studies education contribution to the attainment of sustainable development goals in Nigeria

Question 2: Ways Social Studies Education contribute to Sustainable Developments Goals

| S/N | ITEMS | Mean SD (±) | AGREE | STRONGLY AGREE | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE |
|-----|---|-------------|-------|----------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | The subjects encourage students to protect the environment | 2.13 (0.96) | 50.0% | 24.0% | 15% | 11.0% |
| 2 | Social studies helps students to understand the importance of sustainable resources | 2.17 (0.82) | 50.0% | 20.0% | 7.0% | 23.0% |
| 3 | Social studies promotes values of responsibility and accountability | 2.28 (1.01) | 41.0% | 24.0% | 17.0% | 18.0% |
| 4 | Students learn about the link between human actions and environmental degradation | 2.16 (0.96) | 51.0% | 24.0% | 15.0% | 10.0% |
| 5 | The subjects teaches ways to contribute to community development | 2.60 (0.88) | 46.0% | 7.0% | 20.0% | 27.0% |
| 6 | Grand total of weighted mean | | 2.26 | | | |

Fieldwork, 2025

Regarding sustainable development, social studies contribute positively to encouraging environmental protection and understanding sustainable resource use. The curriculum promotes values like responsibility and links human

actions to environmental degradation, while also teaching community development—though some students show disagreement on its effectiveness. These findings indicate that social studies somewhat foster sustainability goals but with varying impact across topics. From the results it was clear that, encouraging environmental protection had a mean of 2.13, with half agreeing and 24% strongly agreeing, indicating positive influence. Understanding sustainable resources scored 2.17 mean, again with 50% agreeing and 20% strongly agreeing. Promotion of responsibility and accountability values had a mean of 2.28, with about 41% agreeing. Learning the link between human actions and environmental degradation scored 2.16 with over half agreeing, showing decent awareness created. Teaching ways to contribute to community development showed the highest mean at 2.60, but with some disagreement. The overall weighted mean was 2.26, indicating moderate contribution to sustainability goals Table 2

Table 3: challenges hindering the effectiveness of social media education in promoting human security

Question 3: Challenging facing the Integrations of Human Security Theme into Social Studies Education

| S/N | ITEMS | Mean SD (±) | AGREE | STRONGLY AGREE | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE |
|-----|---|-------------|-------|----------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | The social studies curriculum is outdated and lack human security content | 2.25 (1.10) | 15.0% | 37.0% | 14.0% | 34.0% |
| 2 | Teachers are not adequately trained to teach human security concepts | 2.05 (1.24) | 10.0% | 53.0% | 21.0% | 16.0% |
| 3 | There is insufficient instructional materials for effective teaching | 2.51 (0.90) | 61.0% | 22.0% | 6.0% | 11.0% |
| 4 | Students find social studies lessons unreliable to real life issues | 2.71 (0.94) | 3.0% | 20.0% | 14.0% | 63.0% |
| 5 | Schools administrators give low priority to social studies | 1.73 (0.44) | 27.0% | 73.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| 6 | Grand total of weighted mean | | | | | 3.01 |

Fieldwork, 2025

Significant challenges impede social studies effectiveness, including an outdated curriculum lacking human security content, insufficient teacher training on these concepts, and a lack of instructional materials. While some students question the relevance of lessons to real life, school administrators' low prioritization of social studies is a widely acknowledged hurdle. These barriers hinder the subject's role in promoting human security and sustainability. Teachers' inadequate training had a mean of 2.05 and 63% agreement, highlighting a significant barrier. Insufficient teaching materials scored the highest mean 2.51 with 83% agreement, a major challenge. Students finding lessons unreliable to real life issues had a 2.71 mean, but majority (63%) strongly disagreed, indicating divided perceptions. School administrators giving low priority scored lowest mean (1.73) but with

Table 4: Strategies for improving social studies education for sustainability and security enhancement

Question 4: Strategies to strengthen the role of Social Studies in Advancing Human Security and Sustainability in Nigeria

| S/N | ITEMS | Mean SD (±) | AGREE | STRONGLY AGREE | DISAGREE | STRONGLY DISAGREE |
|-----|---|-------------|-------|----------------|----------|-------------------|
| 1 | The social studies curriculum is outdated and lack human security content | 1.99 (0.82) | 27.0% | 56.0% | 9.0% | 8.0% |
| 2 | Teachers are not adequately trained to teach human security concepts | 1.62 (0.69) | 17.0% | 63.0% | 12.0% | 8.0% |
| 3 | There is insufficient instructional materials for effective teaching | 1.93 (0.97) | 54.0% | 46.0% | 3.0% | 2.0% |
| 4 | Students find social studies lessons unreliable to real life issues | 1.81 (0.83) | 47.0% | 33.0% | 19.0% | 11.0% |
| 5 | Schools administrators give low priority to social studies | 1.89 (0.88) | 59.0% | 21.0% | 12.0% | 8.0% |
| 6 | Grand total of weighted mean | | | | | 2.11 |

Fieldwork, 2025

To strengthen social studies education, there is strong consensus on updating the curriculum to incorporate human security themes adequately. Training teachers better and providing sufficient materials are seen as crucial strategies. Enhancing lesson relevancy to real-life issues and elevating the administrative priority for social studies are also important. Implementing these measures could improve education outcomes in human security awareness and sustainable development knowledge. Addressing the outdated curriculum scores 1.99 mean, with 83% agreement, seen as a key strategy. Training teachers better had a mean of 1.62, with 80% agreement, stressing importance. Increasing instructional materials to enhance teaching scored 1.93 mean with nearly 100% agreement. Making lessons more relevant to real life issues had a mean of 1.81, with 80% agreement. Giving social studies more priority

from administrators had a mean of 1.89 with 80% agreement. Overall weighted mean of 2.11 shows good consensus around these strategies Table 4.

Result of hypothesis

Considering the value of the statistic in table 5 and 6, since the P. value shows significant level of 0.00 which is less than 0.05 we therefore accept the null hypothesis

H₀₁ There is no significant relationship between social studies education and the promotion of human security in Nigeria

Table 5: Decision Table

| Social Studies Education & Promotion of human security | Mean | SD | DF | Pair T Test | P. Value | Decision |
|--|-------|------|----|-------------|----------|----------|
| | 0.910 | 0.15 | 99 | 5.94 | 0.00 | Accepted |

H₀₂ there is no significant relationship between social studies education and the achievement of sustainable development goals in Nigeria

Table 6: Decision Table

| Social Studies Education & Sustainable Development | Mean | SD | DF | Pair T. test | P. Value | Decision |
|--|------|-------|----|--------------|----------|----------|
| | 0.25 | 0.052 | 99 | 4.81 | 0.00 | Accepted |

5. Results and Discussion of Findings

Social Studies and Civic Responsibility: Findings indicate that Social Studies education promotes civic knowledge and awareness of democratic rights and duties. Learners are introduced to themes like social norms, values, and conflict resolution (Ajayi, 2020). However, rote learning and exam-oriented teaching limit opportunities for critical reflection and civic participation. The findings affirm that Social Studies education can significantly contribute to peace-building, civic engagement, and sustainable development when appropriately structured. The absence of participatory learning methods and inadequate teacher preparation undermines these outcomes.

Environmental Education and Sustainability: The curriculum contains environmental components such as resource management, sanitation, and climate change. Yet, these are treated theoretically with little experiential learning (Nwafor, 2022). Students rarely engage in practical environmental projects that reinforce sustainable living. Constructivist principles call for experiential approaches that connect learners with community issues. This method enhances critical thinking and social responsibility (Amadi, 2019). Human Security Theory also emphasizes empowerment, implying that education must build resilience against threats to peace and welfare.

Human Security Awareness: There is weak integration of human security topics, such as gender

equality, health literacy, and poverty eradication. As Oni (2021) observed, the absence of these themes creates a disconnect between classroom instruction and national security realities. The findings also align with SDG 4 (quality education) and SDG 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions). Thus, a reform-oriented Social Studies curriculum can act as a catalyst for achieving sustainable development in Nigeria.

Teacher Competence and Pedagogy: Teacher competence remains a major challenge. Many educators lack training in integrating SDG concepts and security education into classroom practice (Adeniran & Oke, 2021). Additionally, large class sizes and insufficient teaching materials hinder interactive learning.

6. Conclusion

The study concludes that Social Studies education holds great potential for promoting human security and sustainable development in Nigeria. It can instil civic virtues, encourage environmental stewardship, and enhance social cohesion. However, achieving this potential requires curriculum reforms, capacity building for teachers, and the adoption of participatory pedagogy. Education must move beyond mere knowledge transmission to a process of social transformation and empowerment.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings the following are recommended:

Curriculum Reformation: Revise Social Studies curricula to include human security and sustainability topics such as climate resilience, peace education, and social inclusion.

Teacher Development: Provide continuous professional development for Social Studies teachers to equip them with skills for integrating global citizenship and SDG-based learning.

Participatory Pedagogy: Adopt inquiry-based, problem-solving, and project-based teaching methods that promote learner engagement and social responsibility.

Policy Support: Strengthen educational policies that link classroom content to national development goals and human security objectives.

Community Engagement: Encourage schools to collaborate with local communities in implementing sustainability and peace-oriented projects.

References

- Adebayo, A. M., & Omotola, J. S. (2020). Human Security and National Development in Africa: Rethinking security beyond the state. *African Security Review*, 29(3), 215–229.
- Adeniran, T., & Oke, M. (2021). Teachers' preparedness for integrating sustainable development in Social Studies education in Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Society*, 18(2), 55–67.
- Adeyemi, T. O., & Onanuga, A. A. (2016). Social Studies education and value reorientation for sustainable development in Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(12), 55–62.
- Agboola, B. M., & Olaoye, D. A. (2021). Civic education, youth engagement and democratic sustainability in Nigeria. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Review*, 11(2), 28–39.
- Agwu, M. (2021). Human security and education for peace in Africa. *African Review of Development and Education*, 7(1), 33–49.
- Ajayi, K. (2020). Repositioning Social Studies for sustainable peace and national development in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Social Studies*, 23(1), 88–103.
- Akinwale, A. A. (2018). Environmental insecurity and human development challenges in Nigeria. *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, 20(1), 45–62.
- Amadi, C. (2019). Constructivist Pedagogy and Social Responsibility among Social Studies Learners in Nigeria. *Journal of Educational Practice*, 10(4), 45–56.
- Amadi, L., & Alapiki, H. E. (2020). Human Security and Underdevelopment in the Niger Delta: A critical examination. *Global Journal of Human-Social Science*, 20(4), 12–24.
- Asimeng-Boahene, L. (2019). Using constructivist approaches in Social Studies classrooms for critical thinking and problem solving. *Social Studies Research and Practice*, 14(2), 145–160.
- Bello, K. A., & Yusuf, H. T. (2017). Social Studies education as a tool for promoting peace and national security in Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Social Studies*, 20(1), 95–110.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (4th ed.). Sage.
- Ede, V. O. (2019). Education, human security and sustainable development in Nigeria. *International Journal of Development and Sustainability*, 8(7), 469–483.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN). (2018). National Policy on Education (6th ed.). NERDC Press.
- Ikuomola, A. D., & Dada, O. A. (2021). Rethinking Human Security in Nigeria: The Role of Education. *Journal of African Social Sciences and Humanities Studies*, 4(1), 87–103.
- Nwafor, C. (2022). Environmental education and sustainable development in Nigerian schools: The Role of Social Studies. *International Journal of Environmental Education*, 11(4), 215–230.
- Nwosu, C. N., & Ogbodo, C. S. (2019). Curriculum relevance and the challenge of sustainable development in Nigerian schools. *Journal of Curriculum and Instruction*, 12(3), 72–88.
- Obi, C. I. (2015). Rethinking the crisis of the Nigerian state: Human Security and Sustainable Development Perspectives. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 33(4), 387–405.
- Odey, J., & Achor, P. (2023). Enhancing Human Security through Social Studies Education: Challenges and prospects in Nigeria. *African Journal of Educational Research*, 28(2), 61–77.
- Ogunyemi, B. (2020). Social Studies Education and Sustainable Development: Emerging Issues and Prospects in Nigeria. *African Journal of Educational Management*, 18(2), 101–120.
- Ojo, E. O., & Adebayo, P. F. (2022). Human Security Challenges and the Imperative of Civic

- Education in Nigeria. *Journal of Political Science and Leadership Research*, 8(1), 66–79.
- Okorie, N. (2017). Civic Apathy and Democratic Development in Nigeria: Educational Implications. *African Research Review*, 11(4), 96–110.
- Oni, B. (2021). Security Challenges and the Reorientation of Civic Education in Nigeria. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 39(3), 301–317.
- UNESCO. (2017). Education for Sustainable Development Goals: Learning Objectives. UNESCO Publishing.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2020). Human Development Report 2020: The Next Frontier—Human Development and the Anthropocene. UNDP.
- United Nations Development Programme. (2016). Human Development Report 2016: Human Development for Everyone. UNDP.
- United Nations Development Programme. (2020). Human Security and the New Global Environment. UNDP.
- United Nations. (2015). Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. United Nations Publications.
- World Bank. (2020). Nigeria Development Update: Rising to the Challenge. World Bank Publications.