



Content Analysis of English Language Textbooks for the Intermediate Stage Based on the Dimensions of Sustainable Development

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to analyze the content of English language textbooks for the intermediate stage levels in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in light of the three dimensions of sustainable development (social, economic, and environmental), within the framework of Saudi Vision 2030. The descriptive analytical approach was employed using the content analysis method, through an instrument consisting of (33) indicators applied to the seventh, eighth, and ninth grade textbooks. The findings revealed a low level of inclusion of sustainable development dimensions overall. The total inclusion rate reached (33.3%), representing (33) indicators out of (99). The ninth-grade textbook recorded the highest inclusion rate (42.4%), followed by the seventh grade (33.3%), and then the eighth grade (24.2%). The results also indicated an imbalance in the distribution of the dimensions, with greater emphasis on the social dimension compared to the environmental and economic dimensions. The study recommended enhancing the balanced integration of sustainable development dimensions and linking them to real-life issues to support the achievement of Saudi Vision 2030 goals.

Keywords: Sustainable Development, Dimensions of Sustainable Development, English Language Textbooks, Social Dimension, Environmental Dimension, Economic Dimension.



Introduction

All countries, both developed and developing, seek to build prosperous societies capable of keeping pace with rapid global changes and addressing contemporary challenges. Sustainable development has emerged as a comprehensive framework that aims to achieve balance between economic growth, social justice, and environmental protection while meeting present needs without compromising the rights of future generations. Education is widely recognized as a fundamental pillar in achieving sustainable development due to its vital role in preparing productive individuals who can contribute effectively to their societies.

In this context, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has adopted sustainable development as a core principle through Vision 2030, which emphasizes improving the quality of education and enhancing its role in serving national development goals. The Ministry of Education has therefore sought to integrate sustainable development concepts and skills into school curricula, including English language curricula, in line with global educational trends. International reports, such as those issued by UNESCO, stress the importance of directing education toward developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and lifelong learning skills to support sustainable development.

Content analysis is considered one of the most effective research methods for evaluating curricula and determining the extent to which they incorporate sustainable development dimensions. English language curricula provide a suitable platform for promoting awareness of social, environmental, and economic issues. The intermediate stage is especially important, as students at this level develop cognitive and social skills that enable them to understand and apply sustainable development concepts.

Accordingly, there is a clear need to analyze the content of English language curricula at the intermediate stage in light of sustainable development dimensions to determine their alignment with national and global orientations and to contribute to their improvement in preparing a generation capable of actively participating in achieving sustainable development goals.

Saudi Arabia's development plans have emphasized the need to review and revise educational curricula to align with the concept of sustainable development. Consequently, there has been an increasing need to analyse the content of educational materials to assess the extent to which curricula keep pace with environmental, social, and economic changes. This is essential for preparing generations capable of adapting to evolving trends, values, concepts, and lifestyles.

Research Question:

This study is guided by one main question: **“To what extent are the dimensions of sustainable development incorporated into the content of English language textbooks for the intermediate stage in Saudi Arabia?”**



Research Objectives

1. **To identify the extent to which the environmental dimension of sustainable development** is incorporated into the content of English language textbooks for the intermediate stage in Saudi Arabia.
2. **To identify the extent to which the social dimension of sustainable development** is incorporated into the content of English language textbooks for the intermediate stage in Saudi Arabia.
3. **To identify the extent to which the economic dimension of sustainable development** is incorporated into the content of English language textbooks for the intermediate stage in Saudi Arabia.
4. To inform curriculum designers of English language programs on how to develop textbook content that aligns with the dimensions of sustainable development across the intermediate stage.
5. To guide curriculum developers in identifying shortcomings in the current English language curricula for the intermediate stage and improving them accordingly.

Significance of the Study

Theoretical and Practical Significance
This study aligns with global trends in educational reform and responds to the aspirations of the Saudi Ministry of Education to develop general education curricula in accordance with Vision 2030, ensuring that curricula reflect current and future developments and meet the recommendations of international organizations, conferences, and previous research that have emphasized the evaluation of educational content—particularly English language curricula—within the framework of sustainable development. The significance of the study also stems from the critical nature of the intermediate educational stage as a transitional phase between primary and secondary education, during which students' foundational thinking skills, values, and attitudes are formed in preparation for their future academic and professional pathways. In addition, the study provides a content analysis instrument based on sustainable development dimensions that may benefit researchers and graduate students in developing research tools, thereby saving time and effort, while its findings may open new avenues for future research and assist curriculum designers and decision-makers in identifying gaps and improving English language curricula in line with sustainable development goals.

Research Delimitations

Topical Delimitation:

The study is limited to the dimensions of sustainable development (social, environmental, and economic) that should be incorporated into the English language textbooks for the intermediate grade in Saudi Arabia.

Spatial Delimitation:

The English language textbook prescribed for the intermediate grade in Saudi Arabia.



Temporal Delimitation:

The analysis will be conducted on the textbook used during the first semester of the academic year 1447 -2025.

6. Research Terminology

Content Analysis

Content analysis is a systematic research method used in the fields of the humanities. It aims to provide an objective and organized description of the explicit content of texts, speeches, or images in order to extract the underlying meanings, ideas, and trends (Taima, 2004).

Operational Definition

In this study, content analysis is defined as the systematic method used to examine the English language textbooks for the intermediate stage in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the academic year 1447 AH, to identify the extent to which they incorporate the dimensions of sustainable development. This method involves identifying topics that contain the specified criteria, analyzing their frequency and representation, and drawing conclusions regarding the integration of these dimensions within the educational content.

Sustainable Development Dimensions:

Abdulqader (2020) defined them as "the foundations of sustainable development related to the means by which humans pursue development, whether in agriculture, industry, or other activities" (p. 464).

Operationally, the dimensions of sustainable development are defined as the **social, economic, and environmental dimensions** that constitute the foundation of sustainable development. These dimensions will be assessed through a content analysis tool applied to the English language textbooks for the intermediate grade.

English Language Textbooks for the Intermediate Stage:

The researcher defines the English language textbooks for the intermediate stage as the officially approved instructional materials issued by the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for teaching English to intermediate school students during the academic year 1447 AH. These textbooks are designed to enhance students' linguistic competence and communicative abilities in English, in alignment with the national curriculum standards and educational objectives that aim to promote comprehensive language learning and support the development of sustainable educational outcomes.

Literature Review

Content analysis

Content analysis is recognized as a systematic and objective research method employed to examine written, visual, or audio materials through clearly defined analytical procedures. It enables researchers to identify explicit and implicit themes, concepts, and values embedded within educational texts, while ensuring objectivity,



validity, and reliability through predetermined categories and coding rules. In educational research, content analysis is particularly valuable for curriculum and textbook evaluation, as it provides empirical evidence regarding the extent to which educational materials reflect intended educational goals and societal priorities. When applied to the analysis of textbooks in light of sustainable development, content analysis allows for the assessment of how educational content promotes awareness, values, and practices related to social responsibility, economic rationality, and environmental protection.

Sustainable development

Sustainable development is widely recognized as a multidimensional framework that seeks to balance economic growth, social equity, and environmental protection. These three dimensions—economic, social, and environmental—are often referred to as the “three pillars” of sustainability, emphasizing their interdependence in achieving long-term development. According to the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987), sustainable development is defined as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” This definition highlights the importance of adopting an integrated approach that harmonizes economic efficiency, social justice, and environmental responsibility.

The economic dimension of sustainable development focuses on promoting sustained and inclusive economic growth that creates employment opportunities, reduces poverty, and ensures the efficient use of resources. The social dimension emphasizes fairness, human rights, education, and the improvement of living standards for all, fostering social cohesion and inclusiveness (Rogers, Jalal, & Boyd, 2007). Meanwhile, the environmental dimension centers on conserving natural ecosystems, reducing pollution, and promoting the responsible management of natural resources to maintain the planet’s ecological balance (Nica, Charita, & Georgescu, 2025).

Achieving genuine sustainability requires these three pillars to function in harmony rather than in isolation. Economic advancement must occur within the limits of environmental capacity and be guided by the principles of social equity. Therefore, understanding the interrelationships among these dimensions is essential for formulating effective policies that promote balanced and sustainable growth.

The Concept of Sustainable Development

Sustainable development has been defined in multiple ways. (Nabila and Yasmin ,2020) describe it as a deliberate process that aims to stimulate rapid growth through a structured framework designed to achieve equilibrium among economic, social, and environmental resources.

According to Webster’s Dictionary, sustainable development refers to a form of development that utilizes natural resources without depleting or destroying them, stressing the importance of rational and responsible consumption. Webster further elaborates that sustainable development extends beyond the prudent use of natural resources to include social and economic aspects, encompassing human activities that



enhance social welfare within the limits imposed by available resources while minimizing environmental harm.

Similarly, W. Ruchelshans conceptualizes sustainable development as an integrated rather than fragmented process, which seeks to establish harmony between economic growth and the preservation of the environment and natural resources. It ensures that current needs are met without undermining the capacity of future generations to satisfy theirs. This definition underscores the interdependence between economic progress and environmental protection on one hand, and the attainment of social well-being on the other.

The Brundtland Commission Report (Schaefer & Crane, 2005) defines sustainable development as a process aimed at fulfilling the needs of the present generation while safeguarding the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Edward Barbier similarly argues that sustainable development represents an activity directed toward maximizing social welfare while maintaining the integrity of available natural resources. He highlights that this concept transcends traditional development by being more comprehensive and interconnected, integrating economic, social, and environmental spheres.

The United Nations defines sustainable development as a developmental path that harmonizes the economic, social, and environmental dimensions, ensuring that the needs of the present generation are met without jeopardizing the capacity of future generations to meet their own.

Drawing upon the definitions, sustainable development can thus be regarded as a holistic concept that integrates economic, social, and environmental dimensions to promote human welfare in the present while preserving the rights and opportunities of future generations. It entails the sound management and conservation of natural resources to ensure the continuous fulfillment of human needs, thereby safeguarding these resources for both present and future societies.

Sustainable development is considered one of the modern concepts that has gained wide attention at both academic and practical levels, due to the major challenges humanity faces amid rapid economic, social, and environmental changes. This concept was highlighted in the 1987 Brundtland Commission Report, which defined sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” Since then, it has become a central theme in development policies and strategies worldwide.

Sustainable development rests on three interrelated and complementary dimensions: society, the economy, and the environment. Understanding these dimensions is essential for the effective implementation of sustainable development, as any imbalance in one dimension will inevitably affect the others, hindering the achievement of comprehensive development



Vision 2030 and Sustainable Development in Education and intermediate stage:

Vision 2030 represents a comprehensive national framework that aligns educational reform with sustainable development goals. The Vision highlights curriculum development, quality education, environmental awareness, and social responsibility as essential components for building a sustainable future. Accordingly, educational curricula are expected to reflect sustainability principles and contribute to developing learners who are capable of informed decision-making and active participation in societal development.

The intermediate stage occupies a pivotal position within the educational system, as it coincides with early adolescence—a period characterized by rapid cognitive, emotional, and social development. At this stage, students demonstrate growing capacity for abstract thinking, value formation, and critical reflection, which enhances their readiness to engage with complex global issues such as sustainable development. English language textbooks, in particular, provide rich opportunities for integrating sustainability concepts through global themes, cultural texts, and communicative activities. Therefore, examining the extent to which sustainable development dimensions are incorporated into intermediate-level English language textbooks is both educationally and developmentally significant.

Literature Review

There are many Studies that focus on Sustainable Development in School Curricula.

Al-Hleel (2025) conducted a study to identify the dimensions of sustainable development that should be included in the sixth-grade Social Studies curriculum in Saudi Arabia and to examine the degree of their inclusion. Using the Delphi technique and content analysis, the study identified four main dimensions; however, the findings revealed a very low level of inclusion overall, with the social dimension appearing most frequently and the economic and technological dimensions entirely absent.

Al-Malki and Al-Qarni (2025) examined the extent to which sustainable development concepts were integrated into the Islamic Studies curriculum for the third intermediate grade. The results showed noticeable variation among the dimensions, with dominance of the social dimension and limited representation of the environmental dimension, indicating an imbalance in curriculum content.

Al-Suhaim (2025) analyzed the Digital Technology textbook for the common first year in Saudi Arabia in light of sustainable development dimensions. The study reported a low overall level of inclusion, with the social dimension ranking first, followed by the economic dimension, while the environmental dimension received the least attention.



Al-Muzaini (2024) investigated the presence of sustainable development dimensions in Saudi high school biology textbooks. The findings indicated a moderate level of inclusion, with strong emphasis on the social dimension and weak representation of the economic dimension, reflecting partial integration of sustainability concepts.

Al-Asiri (2023) assessed the Life and Family Skills textbook for the third intermediate grade to determine the extent of sustainable development inclusion. The results demonstrated moderate inclusion, with the social dimension most prominent and the environmental dimension least represented.

Al-Bisher (2022) proposed a framework for integrating sustainable development domains into the sixth-grade Arabic language textbook. The analysis revealed substantial variation in inclusion levels across the three dimensions, highlighting inconsistencies in curriculum design.

Al-Saeed and Al-Olaiwi (2022) analyzed the Hadith and Biography curriculum for the fifth grade and found a clear imbalance in the inclusion of sustainable development dimensions, with a strong focus on the social dimension and marginal attention to the environmental dimension.

Studies on Sustainable Development in English Language Curricula

ElGourari and Edd-dali (2024) explored the representation of the Sustainable Development Goals in high school English language curricula and textbooks. The findings indicated limited engagement with SDGs, with an emphasis on health-related themes and a predominance of cognitive learning outcomes, while socio-emotional and behavioral dimensions were largely overlooked.

Mohammadi and Moghadam (2019) examined English language textbooks in Iran to determine the extent to which Education for Sustainable Development concepts were integrated. Although sustainability themes were present, their distribution was uneven, and the study emphasized the teacher's mediating role in facilitating sustainability-related learning.

Alqiawi (2016) analyzed Saudi English language textbooks in light of Education for Sustainable Development concepts and found significant disparities in the inclusion of sustainability themes, with several essential sub-themes entirely absent from the content.

Discussion of Previous Studies:

An examination of previous studies reveals a high degree of convergence in their findings, despite differences in educational stages, subject areas, and analytical tools.



Most studies consistently reported a low to moderate level of inclusion of sustainable development dimensions in school curricula, accompanied by a clear imbalance among the three dimensions. The social dimension emerged as the most frequently represented across curricula, while the economic and environmental dimensions received comparatively limited attention.

Methodologically, the reviewed studies largely relied on the descriptive analytical approach using content analysis, underscoring its effectiveness and suitability for evaluating textbook content in light of sustainable development frameworks. Some studies employed internationally recognized references, such as UNESCO documents and the Sustainable Development Goals, while others developed localized indicators aligned with national educational contexts.

Studies focusing on English language education specifically indicated that sustainability concepts are often presented implicitly and confined primarily to the cognitive domain, with insufficient emphasis on affective and behavioural learning outcomes. This pattern limits the potential of English language textbooks to foster comprehensive sustainability awareness and responsible action among learners.

In light of these findings, the present study contributes to the existing body of literature by providing a contemporary analysis of intermediate-level English language textbooks in Saudi Arabia, aligned with the orientations of Saudi Vision 2030. It addresses an identified research gap by examining the balance and depth of sustainable development dimensions within English language content, thereby offering insights that may inform future curriculum development and educational.

Research Methodology

To address the research question and achieve the stated objectives, the researcher employed the descriptive analytical method, specifically the content analysis approach. This approach was deemed appropriate due to its relevance to the aims of the study, which seeks to investigate the extent to which the dimensions of sustainable development are integrated into the English language textbooks prescribed for middle school (Grades 7, 8, and 9) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Research Community and Sample

The research community consists of the English language textbooks prescribed for Middle School students (Grade 7 – First Year, Grade 8 – Second Year, and Grade 9 – Third Year) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. These textbooks constitute the study sample, as the analysis was conducted on the Student's Books for the three grades, edition 1447 AH / 2025 AD. Each textbook comprises a set of instructional units that include a variety of topics, activities, exercises, illustrations, and dialogues. Table (1) below presents the distribution of units and pages across the textbooks.



Table (1): Number of Units and Pages in Middle School English Language Textbooks

| Grade Level | Number of Units | Number of Pages |
|-------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Grade 7 | 16 | 155 |
| Grade 8 | 16 | 153 |
| Grade 9 | 12 | 145 |

Research Instrument

1. Research Instrument

To achieve the objectives of the present study, which aims to examine the extent to which the dimensions of sustainable development are incorporated into the English language textbooks prescribed for middle school in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the researcher adopted a content analysis card as the primary research instrument. This instrument was developed after a comprehensive review of relevant previous studies on sustainable development education, including those conducted by Al-Muzaini (2024), Asiri (2023), Al-Saeed and Al-Olaiwi (2022), and El Gourari and Edd-Dali (2024). These studies provided valuable insights and theoretical foundations that guided the identification of the main dimensions and indicators of sustainable development reflected in the content analysis tool used in this study.

2- Source of the Instrument

The instrument was adapted from the study of Al-Muzaini and Al-Maamari (2024), who developed a comprehensive framework for analyzing the inclusion of sustainable development dimensions in curriculum content. As the present study employs the same instrument in its final validated form, there was no need to conduct additional procedures of validity and reliability.

3- The Final Form of the Research Instrument

The final form of the analysis instrument consists of three main dimensions of sustainable development—environmental, social, and economic—under which fall thirty-three (33) sub-criteria that represent specific indicators used to evaluate the extent to which the principles and goals of sustainable development are reflected in the content of the English language textbooks prescribed for Middle School in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The framework of these dimensions and sub-criteria was adopted from the validated instrument developed by Al-Muzaini and Al-Maamari (2024), who proposed a comprehensive model for analyzing the integration of sustainable development dimensions within educational curricula. **Table (2)** below presents the three dimensions of sustainable development and their corresponding thirty-three (33) criteria.

Table (2) The Three Dimensions of Sustainable Development and Their Criteria

| No. | Dimension | Criterion |
|-----|------------------|--|
| 1 | Social Dimension | The content instills faith in God through reflection on His creations. |
| 2 | | The content emphasizes responsible citizenship. |



| | | |
|----|--------------------------------|---|
| 3 | | The content promotes a culture of tolerance. |
| 4 | | The content covers diverse topics. |
| 5 | | The content addresses various social issues. |
| 6 | | The content highlights the role of Saudi Arabia in providing health services to society. |
| 7 | | The content highlights the role of Saudi Arabia in supporting educational services for society. |
| 8 | | The content stresses the importance of solidarity and compassion. |
| 9 | | The content encourages the preservation of public health. |
| 10 | | The content includes discoveries in the field of English language |
| 11 | | The content emphasizes the importance of teamwork. |
| 12 | | The content stresses the importance of caring for individuals with special needs. |
| 13 | Environmental Dimension | The content shows the importance of environmental balance. |
| 14 | | The content emphasizes sustainable development. |
| 15 | | The content highlights the dangers of activities that harm the environment. |
| 16 | | The content explains the types of pollution. |
| 17 | | The content guides towards combating desertification. |
| 18 | | The content discusses the issue of climate change. |
| 19 | | The content addresses various methods of disaster prevention. |
| 20 | | The content clarifies the uses of natural resources. |
| 21 | | The content guides towards the preservation of natural resources. |
| 22 | | The content discusses the importance of clean technology. |
| 23 | | The content explains the dangers of biological weapons. |
| 24 | | The content highlights the role of media in environmental awareness. |
| 25 | Economic Dimension | The content includes major economic concepts. |
| 26 | | The content encourages positive attitudes towards others. |
| 27 | | The content promotes the generation of innovative ideas. |
| 28 | | The content promotes optimal investment in natural resources. |
| 29 | | The content emphasizes the efficient use of technology. |
| 30 | | The content highlights the role of agriculture in achieving economic development. |
| 31 | | The content highlights the role of industry in achieving economic development. |



| | | |
|----|--|--|
| 32 | | The content emphasizes skills required for the labor market. |
| 33 | | The content encourages investment in recycling solid waste. |

4- Research Instrument Application Procedures

To implement the research procedures, the researcher followed the following steps:

- **Defining the unit of analysis:** The researcher adopted the paragraph as the unit of analysis due to its suitability for the research objectives. The paragraph is neither as small as a single word nor as broad as an entire topic; rather, it encompasses all the statements, information, and meanings related to the issue either directly or indirectly, explicitly or implicitly (Lafi, 2006).
- **Defining the categories of analysis:** The categories of analysis in the current research were determined in three main dimensions of sustainable development — social, environmental, and economic — which are further divided into thirty-three (33) sub-indicators, as shown in Table (3).

Table (3) Main Dimensions and Number of Sub-Indicators of the Content Analysis Tool for Middle School English Language Textbooks

| Main Dimensions of Sustainable Development | Number of Sub-Indicators |
|--|--------------------------|
| Social Dimension | 12 |
| Environmental Dimension | 12 |
| Economic Dimension | 9 |
| Total | 33 |

- **Transforming the content analysis card into a quantitative form** in order to record frequencies.
- **Determining the elements of the textbook content to be analyzed**, which included Scientific Content (Information), Illustrations, Activities, Enrichment Materials and Evaluation Questions.
- Reading each topic of the textbook carefully, after which the researcher identified the paragraphs on each page by framing them and assigning each paragraph a number, starting from (1).
- **Statistical processing of the obtained data.**
- **Determining** the criteria for judging the degree of inclusion of Sustainable Development dimensions: Based on previous studies such as Al-Muzaini and Al-Maamari (2024), the levels of judgment for the degree of inclusion of Sustainable Development dimensions in Middle School English language textbooks in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were established, as illustrated in Table (4).

Table (4) Criteria for Judging the Degree of Inclusion of Sustainable Development Dimensions in Middle School English Language Textbooks

| Degree of Inclusion | Percentage Range |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Not Included | From 0% to less than 1% |
| Very Low Inclusion | From 1% to less than 20% |



| | |
|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Low Inclusion | From 20% to less than 40% |
| Moderate Inclusion | From 40% to less than 60% |
| High Inclusion | From 60% to less than 80% |
| Very High Inclusion | From 80% to 100% |

5- Statistical Treatment Methods

The data were statistically processed by calculating frequencies and percentages in order to answer the study questions.

Results and Discussion

To answer this question, the study instrument — the content analysis form — was applied to analyze the textbooks and identify the number of main and sub-dimensions of Sustainable Development incorporated in their content. This is illustrated in Table (5) below.

Table (5) The Percentage of Criteria Reflecting the Dimensions of Sustainable Development in the Textbooks

| Textbook | Total Number of Criteria | Number of Included Criteria | Percentage (%) | Degree of Inclusion |
|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Grade 7 | 33 | 11 | 33.3% | Low inclusion |
| Grade 8 | 33 | 8 | 24.2% | Low inclusion |
| Grade 9 | 33 | 14 | 42.4% | Medium inclusion |
| Total | 99 | 33 | 33.3% | Low inclusion |

It is evident from Table (5) that the degree of inclusion of Sustainable Development dimensions in the English language textbooks prescribed for Middle School in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is generally low. The analysis shows that the Grade 9 textbook achieved the highest level of inclusion, with 14 criteria out of 33 (representing 42.4%), followed by the Grade 7 textbook, which included 11 criteria (representing 33.3%). Meanwhile, the Grade 8 textbook recorded the lowest level of inclusion, with only 8 criteria (representing 24.2%). These results indicate that while the textbooks contain some references to Sustainable Development, the overall integration of its three dimensions and corresponding sub-criteria remains limited, suggesting the need for greater emphasis on Sustainable Development concepts in future curriculum development.

Discussion

Based on the findings of the present study, a set of academically grounded recommendations can be articulated to enhance the integration of sustainable development dimensions within middle-school English language textbooks. Foremost, there is a pressing need to systematically strengthen the incorporation of sustainability dimensions by enriching both textual content and pedagogical activities in a manner that deepens students' environmental, social, and economic awareness. Particular



emphasis should be placed on reinforcing the economic dimension—especially in Grade 8 textbooks—to cultivate learners’ financial literacy and promote responsible economic behavior. Furthermore, ensuring a balanced and equitable representation of the three dimensions of sustainable development across all grade levels is essential for fostering a comprehensive and coherent conceptualization of sustainability among students.

Equally important is the necessity of achieving vertical alignment and curricular coherence in the presentation of sustainability-related content across Grades 7 to 9. Such alignment would facilitate the progressive development of students’ knowledge, skills, and values, thereby enhancing learning continuity and depth. In this context, integrating pedagogical activities that explicitly target the development of twenty-first-century skills—such as critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and problem-solving—through sustainability-oriented themes is highly recommended. Additionally, the enrichment of both visual and linguistic components of the textbooks with authentic, real-world sustainability issues aligned with national priorities would significantly enhance the relevance, contextualization, and engagement of the learning experience.

In light of the identified gaps and in alignment with the strategic objectives of Vision 2030, the study further proposes several avenues for future research and curricular development. These include the design of integrated instructional units that systematically embed sustainable development dimensions within English language curricula, as well as the implementation of comparative studies across different educational stages to monitor and evaluate the progression of sustainability integration. Moreover, expanding the scope of analysis to include textbooks from other subject areas is recommended to assess the extent of interdisciplinary integration of sustainability concepts. Investigating teachers’ awareness, perceptions, and classroom practices related to sustainable development is also of critical importance, given their pivotal role in curriculum enactment. Finally, the study underscores the need for conducting experimental research to examine the effectiveness of sustainability-based instructional approaches in enhancing students’ competencies, alongside the development of robust and advanced assessment tools capable of accurately evaluating the degree of sustainability integration within educational curricula.

In conclusion, the findings of this study highlight the importance of integrating the dimensions of sustainable development—environmental, social, and economic—into middle school English language textbooks. Although some progress is evident, the representation of these dimensions remains uneven across grade levels, with particular gaps in the economic aspect. This indicates a need for more balanced and systematic inclusion of sustainability concepts to ensure that students develop comprehensive awareness and responsible attitudes toward sustainable development. Therefore, revising and enriching textbook content, alongside ensuring continuity and coherence across grades, is essential to align educational outcomes with the goals of Saudi Vision 2030 and to prepare learners to actively contribute to a sustainable future.



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