

Education for Sustainable Development: A Review of SDG'S Addressing Equality Climate Change and Peace

Saba Parveen¹, Dr. Smita Srivastava²

¹Research Scholar, Faculty of Education, Integral University, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India

²Associate Professor, Department of Education, Integral University, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, India

ABSTRACT

Education has long been considered a important means of shaping societies, especially in the environment of sustainable and inclusive development envisaged under the United Nations' 2030 Agenda. Within this broader frame, the present review attempts to explore how the Sustainable Development pretensions are reflected in educational conversations, with specific attention to Urdu Subject Textbooks. Rather than treating Textbooks as neutral documents, this study approaches them as carriers of values, precedence's, and ideological direction. A aggregate of sixty exploration studies fastening on SDG's and text evaluation were examined in depth. For logical clarity, the literature was organized around five major themes Quality Education, Gender Equality, Reduced Inequalities, Climate Action, and Peace and Justice with a global citizenship perspective. This thematic grouping helped in relating recreating patterns as well as silences within being education. The review suggests that although education is constantly described as an agent of social metamorphosis, the factual content of academy Textbooks does not always reflect this transformative eventuality. References to sustainability, gender perceptivity, environmental responsibility, and peace education frequently appear scattered or laterally framed rather than totally bedded. In numerous cases, these themes are present at a face position without deeper critical engagement. thus, the study highlights the need for further deliberate curricular restructuring and clearer integration of SDG- related perspectives within language education accoutrements. It also identifies important gaps in empirical exploration concerning the alignment of secondary-position Urdu Textbooks with the broader objects of the Sustainable Development Goals.

INTRODUCTION

In 2015, the United Nations formally introduced the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), marking a global commitment to advancing social justice, equality, environmental protection, and peaceful coexistence. Within this international framework, education occupies a central position. SDG 4, in particular, calls for inclusive and equitable quality education, recognizing that learning is not merely about academic achievement but about shaping individuals who can participate responsibly in society. Education contributes to personal development, yet its significance extends beyond the individual it also supports the realization of other interconnected development goals.

Among the various components of formal Education, school textbooks hold a particularly influential role. They guide classroom instruction and significantly shape what students learn and how they interpret social realities. Textbooks do more than transmit subject knowledge; they implicitly communicate societal norms, cultural expectations, gender representations, environmental perspectives, and ideas related to justice and peace. In this regard, language textbooks deserve special attention. At the secondary level, they combine linguistic development with narratives that carry moral, cultural, and social meanings. Urdu textbooks are especially significant

How to cite this paper: Saba Parveen | Dr. Smita Srivastava "Education for Sustainable Development: A Review of SDG'S Addressing Equality Climate Change and Peace" Published in International

Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN:

2456-6470,

Volume-10 | Issue-2, April 2026, pp.319-325,

URL: www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd106979.pdf

Copyright © 2026 by author (s) and International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development Journal. This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License (CC BY 4.0) (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>)

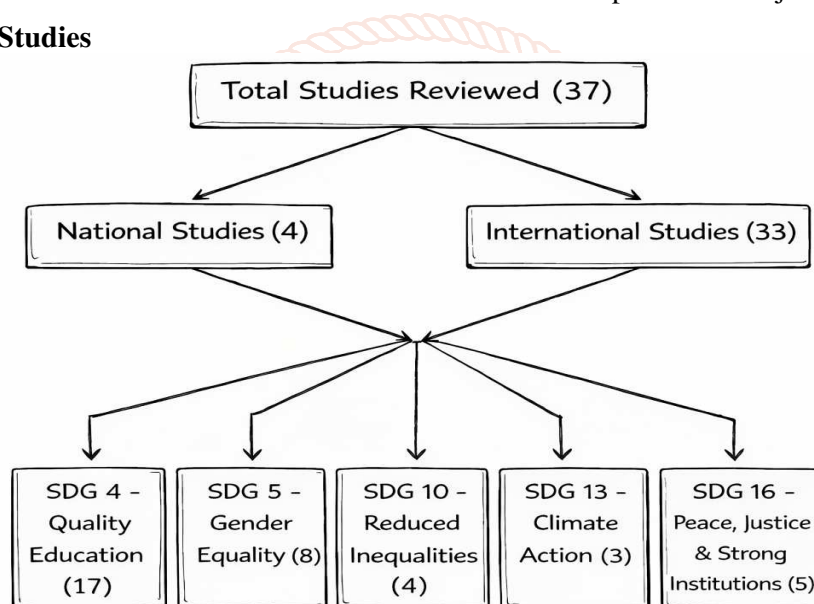
KEYWORDS: Sustainable Development Goals, SDG4-Quality Education, SDG5-Gender Equality, SDG10-Reduced Inequalities, SDG13-Climate Awareness, SDG16-Peace Education.



because students at this stage are developing critical thinking abilities and forming lasting worldviews.

Understanding the contribution of textbooks to the broader SDG agenda therefore requires a careful and systematic examination of existing research. The present review engages with two major strands of scholarship: studies that employ content analysis to examine school textbooks and research that explores the integration of SDGs within educational systems. By focusing specifically on SDGs 4, 5, 10, 13, and 16, this review identifies prevailing patterns, conceptual limitations, and areas that remain underexplored. Ultimately, the analysis points to the need for a focused and context-sensitive content evaluation of Urdu textbooks in order to assess their alignment with the principles of inclusive, sustainable, and value-oriented Education envisioned in the 2030 Agenda.

Flow Chart of the Studies



Objective wise Analysis

Objective:1 To find out the research gap regarding integration of SDG 4 i.e. Quality Education in Urdu subject Text books.

Sterling (2016) investigated the relationship between education and the goals of sustainable development. The study made the case that transformative learning strategies, as opposed to conventional teaching techniques, are necessary to achieve SDG 4. It promoted learner-centered, holistic teaching methods that cultivate critical consciousness.

Laurie et al. (2016) investigated how Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) can help achieve SDG 4's goals for high-quality education. Based on global research, they discovered that incorporating sustainability into instruction improves students' critical thinking abilities, promotes value-oriented

Delimitation of the Study

This Review paper is delimited to only Urdu Subject Text Books

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the research gap regarding integration of SDG 4 i.e. Quality Education in Urdu subject Text books.
2. To find out the research gap regarding integration of SDG 5 i.e. Gender equality in Urdu subject Text books
3. To find out the research gap regarding integration of SDG 10 i.e. Reduce inequality in Urdu subject Text books
4. To find out the research gap regarding integration of SDG 13 i.e. Climate Actions in Urdu subject Text books
5. To find out the research gap regarding integration of SDG 16 i.e. Peace justice and global Citizenship in Urdu subject Text books.

learning, and raises their level of active involvement. According to their research, including sustainability ideas into curricula improves education's overall quality and relevance.

McGreal (2017) investigated how free educational resources contribute to high-quality instruction. According to the study, open-access digital resources increase learning opportunities and promote inclusivity. It acknowledged that digital education may help achieve SDG 4.

Webb et al. (2017) investigated the role of lifelong learning in achieving SDG 4. They made the case that chances for ongoing learning foster social inclusion and skill development using evidence from worldwide policies and educational analysis. The report underlined that in order to guarantee fair and high-quality education for people of all ages,

educational systems must go beyond formal schooling.

UNESCO (2017) presented a thorough global framework with learning objectives in line with SDG 4. The report placed a strong emphasis on inclusive and equitable lifelong learning, which is backed by curriculum reform and efficient teacher preparation. It emphasized how crucial it is to foster in students a sense of environmental responsibility, global citizenship, and moral behaviour.

Ali, Nazar, and Chaudhry (2018) examined curriculum development approaches and educational quality. According to their findings, learning outcomes are adversely affected by out-of-date and misaligned content. The study emphasized how crucial it is to update curricula to meet the demands of modern education and sustainability.

UNESCO (2019) examined how far the world has come in reaching SDG 4 through the Global Education Monitoring Report. It revealed enduring disparities in learning results, quality, and access, especially in poor nations. In order to raise educational standards globally, the research emphasized the necessity of curriculum harmonization and legislative changes.

Unterhalter (2019) conducted a critical analysis of the notion of "quality education" under the framework of SDG 4. The study made the case that social justice, equity, and gender sensitivity are all intertwined with quality through an analysis of policy and indicators. It brought attention to the ethical and political factors that go into determining and assessing the quality of education.

Giangrande et al. (2019) created a competency-based approach for evaluating education for sustainable development. They illustrated how sustainability-related competences enhance learning outcomes using case studies from higher education. The study highlighted problem-based learning and transdisciplinary methods as crucial tactics for accomplishing SDG 4.

Schendel, Oketch, and McCowan (2019) examined the body of research on the connection between development and education. Their results demonstrated that social mobility and economic growth are strongly correlated with high-quality education. The study emphasized how crucial equitable access and curricular relevance are to advancing SDG-oriented education.

Wals (2020) looked at learning that is focused on sustainability in educational settings. The study demonstrated through conceptual analysis how experiential and participatory teaching approaches

improve the quality of education. It came to the conclusion that teaching pupils about sustainability improves their capacity for critical thought and problem-solving.

Bonilla-Molina (2020) focused on the application of SDG 4 in poor nations. The study found that two major obstacles to high-quality education are socioeconomic inequality and legislative restrictions. It underlined the necessity of modifying curricula according to context in order to solve local issues.

Sharma and Desai (2020) investigated the relationship between sustainable development and educational quality using a conceptual framework. They maintained that fostering responsible citizenship is largely dependent on education. Value-based learning was recognized by the research as a key component of SDG 4.

Chalmeta and Ferrer-Estévez (2021) investigated how educational establishments incorporate the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into their administration and instructional strategies. Based on case studies, they came to the conclusion that institutional commitment positively impacts learning quality. Sustainability-oriented curriculum planning was emphasized as essential for achieving SDG 4.

Kpolovie, Iderima, and Ogochukwu (2021) examined the contribution of education to attaining sustainable development. Using a descriptive research approach, they discovered that economic stability and social change are fostered by high-quality education. The writers emphasized the significance of curriculum reform and teacher development in achieving SDG 4.

Haleem and Saeed (2022) looked at the difficulties in incorporating SDG ideas into the curriculum. Their results showed deficiencies in curriculum preparation, teacher readiness, and resource availability. The report recommended methodical and carefully thought-out approaches to raise the standard of education.

Chotikapanich and Adipat (2022) looked at measures of educational quality with an emphasis on learning outcomes. According to their findings, curriculum relevance and student involvement improve sustainability-focused instruction. The importance of outcome-based education in accomplishing SDG 4 was reiterated by the study.

SDG 4 i.e. Quality Education has concentrated on policy frameworks, conceptual discussions, global indicators, and practices in higher and institutional education, according to a survey of the literature. While these studies emphasize learner-centered approaches, fairness, diversity, and lifelong learning

as essential components of high-quality education, school-level textbooks, especially those at the secondary level, have received less attention. Furthermore, there are few empirical studies that use content analysis to look at how SDG 4 indicators-like equity, relevance, critical thinking, and value-based learning-are included into textbooks that are subject-specific. There is still much to learn about regional and language-specific textbooks, particularly Urdu textbooks. Therefore, there is a glaring research deficit in the systematic content analysis of Urdu textbooks to determine how well they match with SDG 4: Quality Education.

Objective:2 To find out the research gap regrading integration of SDG 5 i.e. Gender equality in Urdu subject Text books

Jabeen and Ilyas (2012) examined gender representation in school textbooks by doing a content analysis. According to the study, female characters were frequently restricted to traditional roles and were less visible. The writers stressed that in order to advance equality via education, gender-balanced content is essential.

Kumari Shavnam (2014) examined gender bias in school curricula. Women were underrepresented in leadership and professional positions, according to the research. The study stated that these representations have a detrimental effect on pupils' perspectives and emphasized curriculum reform to advance gender justice.

Ali and Hussain (2019) evaluated the gender sensitivity of secondary-level textbooks. According to their findings, women's accomplishments are underrepresented and male-centered narratives predominate. The study suggested updating textbooks to meet SDG 5's vision of gender equality.

Jubril et al. (2022) examined how gender is portrayed in educational resources. The study found that students' perceptions toward equality are positively impacted by balanced representation. It emphasized how curriculum design should incorporate gender equity ideas.

Saher, Mehmood, and Farhad (2023) used content analysis to examine how gender is portrayed in Urdu textbooks. The study found that female characters had less agency and were stereotyped. The writers stressed that textbook material should be in line with the objectives of gender equality.

Hashmi (2023) revealed that patriarchal attitudes were ingrained in textual narratives when examining gender inclusion in language textbooks. In order to fulfill SDG 5 through education, the study recommended promoting progressive gender viewpoints.

Merma-Molina et al. (2024) studied topics of gender equality in educational materials. According to the study, inclusive material encourages equitable participation and raises awareness. It emphasized how important education is to achieving SDG 5.

Thalho (2025) examined the material in textbooks from a feminist standpoint. The results demonstrated gender role imbalance and underrepresentation of women in academic and social spheres. Gender-sensitive curricular planning was suggested by the study.

Studies that have already been done on **SDG 5** mainly point out gender bias in school textbooks, but they are mainly descriptive and provide little information about how it affects students' gender perceptions and values. There is a dearth of subject-specific research on Urdu Subject textbooks. Additionally, there is a dearth of systematic alignment between textbook content and SDG 5 targets and indicators. Urdu textbooks' cultural and linguistic context has not been sufficiently examined, especially the harmony between conventional norms and progressive gender perspectives. There is little focus on crucial aspects like female agency, leadership, and decision-making roles. Analytical depth is further limited by the sparse application of mixed-method and quantitative approaches. Furthermore, the viewpoints of educators and students are rarely taken into account. To address these issues, a targeted and SDG 5-oriented content analysis is necessary.

Objective:3 To find out the research gap regrading integration of SDG 10 i.e. Reduce inequality in Urdu subject Text books

McAuley et al. (2016) used policy analysis to look at educational access disparity. The study emphasized the structural obstacles that underprivileged groups face. It placed a strong emphasis on education as a means of fostering social inclusion.

Gulab and Khokhar (2018) examined how children with impairments are portrayed in textbooks. The results showed a lack of sensitivity and little inclusion. In order to lessen inequality, the study focused on inclusive education.

Oketch et al. (2019) stated that socioeconomic gaps are sustained by unequal access to high-quality education. Curriculum relevance and inclusive policies were highlighted in their review. The study made a direct connection between sustainable development and educational equity.

Panda (2023) investigated how educational establishments might lessen inequality. According to the study, inclusion is enhanced by fair access to educational materials. It emphasized SDG 10-aligned policy changes.

Previous research on **SDG 10** focuses mostly on access, policy, and institutional views to reduce inequality, but it pays little attention to how textbook content affects or perpetuates inequality. Topic-specific and grade-specific textbooks are rarely the topic of research, particularly at the secondary level. Furthermore, there is not enough research done on how curriculum narratives directly relate to SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities. Textbook portrayals of culture, socioeconomic status, and disability are frequently disregarded. Therefore, in order to comprehend how educational resources might assist inclusive and equitable education in accordance with SDG 10, a targeted content study of textbooks is required.

Objective:4 To find out the research gap regarding integration of SDG 13 i.e. Climate Actions in Urdu subject Text books

Fuso Nerini et al. (2019) investigated the role of education in tackling climate concerns. The study made clear that education based on awareness promotes climate action. The integration of environmental education with SDG 13 was underlined.

Katila et al. (2019) investigated educational transitions to sustainability. According to the study, learning about the environment improves responsible conduct. Curriculum connection with climate goals was emphasized.

Sharma (2019) examined the information in school textbooks about environmental education. The study discovered that climate awareness was not given enough attention. In order to support SDG 13, it suggested bolstering sustainability themes.

Studies that have already been done on **SDG 13** i.e. Climate Action highlight the significance of environmental Education and curriculum conformity with climate goals, although their scope is still mostly broad. The integration of climate action themes in school textbooks, especially in language textbooks, has not received much subject-specific and grade-specific analysis. The depth, continuity, and pedagogical structuring of climate-related content are not critically examined in the majority of research, which instead concentrate on raising awareness. Furthermore, there is not enough research done on how textbook narratives relate to the particular goals of SDG 13. Therefore, a targeted content analysis is needed to evaluate how well textbooks encourage students to take responsible action and be aware of climate change.

Objective:5 To find out the research gap regarding integration of SDG 16 i.e. Peace justice and global Citizenship in Urdu subject Text books

Ashraf and Huma (2018) examined themes of peace in textbooks. The study discovered that harmony and tolerance were not given enough attention. It suggested enhancing curriculum content for peace education.

Hunzai and Shah (2021) looked at textbook values related to citizenship and peace. Their research exposed deficiencies in the advancement of moral and democratic principles. The importance of education in promoting peaceful communities was highlighted in the study.

Hina and Ahmad (2024) studied narratives related to nationalism and justice in textbooks. The study found an imbalance in representation of peace-oriented themes. It recommended integrating justice and harmony-focused content.

Bashir and Akbar (2024) examined social justice-related textbook speech. The report emphasized that democratic values are not given enough attention. Curriculum conformity with SDG 16 was emphasized.

Kowkas, Shayeb, and Bransi (2024) studied peace education in conflict-sensitive environments. According to their research, inclusive tales foster social cohesiveness. The study focused on curriculum changes that are peace-oriented.

The limited inclusion of peace, tolerance, citizenship, and democratic ideals in school textbooks is the primary focus of current research on **SDG 16** i.e. Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions; yet, their methodology is still broad and dispersed. Systematic, grade-specific, and subject-specific analysis of the ways in which textbook narratives incorporate themes of justice and peace is lacking. The majority of studies point out shortcomings but fail to evaluate the coherence, depth, and consistency of peace education across lessons. Additionally, there is not enough research done on how textbook content aligns with the particular SDG 16 aims. Additionally, understudied are cultural sensitivity, inclusion, and students' involvement with peace-oriented curriculum. Therefore, to comprehend how textbooks can effectively contribute to just and peaceful societies, a focused content study in line with SDG 16 is required.

Conclusion

The literature study shows that while many studies have looked at SDGs and education, there is a dearth of specific research on Urdu Subject textbooks and SDGs. The majority of current research either focuses on topics other than language textbooks or addresses overall curriculum difficulties. Furthermore, only a small amount of study thoroughly examines how

several SDGs especially SDGs 4, 5, 10, 13, and 16 are included into a single textbook. This disparity highlights the necessity of doing a thorough content analysis of Urdu Subject textbooks in order to assess how well they match with sustainable development goals and pinpoint areas where the curriculum needs to be improved. The present review highlights education's critical role in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals. While existing studies recognize the importance of SDG integration in education, textbook content—especially in language subjects—often falls short of promoting inclusivity, equality, sustainability, and peace. The review underscores the necessity of revising Urdu textbooks to align them with SDG principles, thereby enabling education to function as a powerful instrument for sustainable and inclusive development.

References

- [1] Jabeen, T., & Ilyas, M. (2012). Gender representation in Pakistani school textbooks. *Pakistan Journal of Gender Studies*, 5(1), 1–15.
- [2] Kumari Shavnam. (2014). Gender bias in school curricula. *International Journal of Educational Studies*, 6(2), 95–108.
- [3] Laurie, R., Nonoyama-Tarumi, Y., McKeown, R., & Hopkins, C. (2016). Contributions of education for sustainable development to quality education. *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*, 10(2), 226–242.
- [4] McAuley, A., et al. (2016). Education inequality and development. *International Journal of Educational Policy*, 11(3), 201–215.
- [5] Sterling, S. (2016). A commentary on education and sustainable development goals. *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*, 10(2), 208–213.
- [6] McGreal, R. (2017). Open educational resources and SDG 4. *International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, 18(7), 292–305.
- [7] UNESCO. (2017). Education for sustainable development goals: Learning objectives. UNESCO.
- [8] Webb, P., Holford, J., Hodge, S., Milana, M., & Waller, R. (2017). Lifelong learning and SDG 4. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 36(5), 509–523.
- [9] Ashraf, M., & Huma, Z. (2018). Peace education and value orientation in school textbooks. *Journal of Peace Education*, 15(2), 145–160.
- [10] Gulab, F., & Khokhar, A. J. (2018). Disability representation and inclusive education. *Journal of Inclusive Education*, 6(1), 21–34.
- [11] Nazar, R., Chaudhry, A. Q., & Ali, M. (2018). Curriculum development and quality education. *Pakistan Journal of Education*, 35(2), 23–37.
- [12] Ahmed, S., & Khan, R. (2018). Curriculum–textbook alignment in Urdu language teaching at secondary level: A content analysis study. *International Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, 6(2), 73–84.
- [13] Fuso Nerini, F., et al. (2019). Connecting climate action and education for sustainable development. *Nature Sustainability*, 2(8), 674–680.
- [14] Giangrande, N., White, R. M., East, M., Jackson, R., Clarke, T., & Saloff Coste, M. (2019). A competency framework for education for sustainable development. *Sustainability*, 11(10), 2832.
- [15] Katila, P., et al. (2019). Sustainability transitions and education. *Sustainability Science*, 14(3), 675–689.
- [16] Oketch, M., McCowan, T., & Schendel, R. (2019). The impact of education on development outcomes. *World Development*, 122, 405–421.
- [17] Talabi, F. O., Adaja, T. A., & Sanusi, B. O. (2019). Media coverage of sustainable development goals. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 11(2), 217–234.
- [18] UNESCO. (2019). Global education monitoring report. UNESCO.
- [19] Unterhalter, E. (2019). The politics of quality education in SDG 4. *Global Policy*, 10(S1), 39–51.
- [20] Bonilla-Molina, L. (2020). Education and SDG 4 in the Global South. *Policy Futures in Education*, 18(7), 933–948.
- [21] Sharma, R., & Desai, N. (2020). Educational quality and sustainable development. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 11(15), 1–8.
- [22] Wals, A. E. J. (2020). Sustainability-oriented learning in higher education. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 21(1), 1–8.
- [23] Ferrer-Estévez, M., & Chalmeta, R. (2021). Integrating sustainable development goals into educational institutions. *Sustainability*, 13(7), 3667.

- [24] Hunzai, Z., & Shah, N. (2021). Citizenship education and peace values in textbooks. *Journal of Peace and Development*, 14(2), 39–54.
- [25] Ogochukwu, O. C., Kpolovie, P. J., & Iderima, C. E. (2021). Education as a tool for achieving sustainable development goals. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 81, 102337.
- [26] Rehfeld, A., et al. (2021). Governance, inequality, and sustainable development. *Sustainable Development*, 29(4), 602–615.
- [27] Adipat, S., & Chotikapanich, D. (2022). Educational quality indicators and sustainable learning outcomes. *Sustainability*, 14(6), 3495.
- [28] Haleem, A., & Saeed, M. (2022). Challenges in integrating sustainable development goals in curriculum. *Journal of Educational Research*, 25(3), 45–58.
- [29] Jubril, A., et al. (2022). Gender representation in educational materials. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 88, 102510.
- [30] Nylund, M., et al. (2022). Inequality and education policies in the SDG framework. *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, 20(3), 321–336.
- [31] Hashmi, S. (2023). Gender inclusion in language textbooks. *International Journal of Gender Studies*, 9(2), 112–126.
- [32] Panda, S. (2023). Educational institutions and social inclusion. *Journal of Educational Planning*, 17(1), 55–69.
- [33] Saher, N., Mehmood, S., & Farhad, A. (2023). Gender portrayal in Urdu textbooks. *Journal of Language and Society*, 7(2), 134–148.
- [34] Bashir, S., & Akbar, R. (2024). Social justice and democratic values in school curricula. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 56(1), 88–103.
- [35] Zubair, M., Natarajan, R., & Awan, M. S. (2024). Linguistic and phonological aspects of Urdu language assessment: Implications for language teaching and testing. *Journal of Asian Linguistics*, 13(2), 112–128.
- [36] Hina, R., & Ahmad, S. (2024). Nationalism, justice, and peace in school textbooks. *Journal of Social Education*, 18(1), 67–81.
- [37] Kowkas, M., Shayeb, A., & Bransi, M. (2024). Peace education in conflict-sensitive contexts. *Journal of Peacebuilding & Development*, 19(1), 25–40.
- [38] Merma-Molina, G., et al. (2024). Gender equality and education for sustainability. *Sustainability*, 16(2), 911.
- [39] Venkatesh, S. (2024). Education for sustainable communities. *Journal of Urban Education*, 12(2), 101–116.
- [40] Thalho, M. (2025). Feminist perspectives on textbook analysis. *Gender and Education*, 37(1), 77–92.