

**INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION ON STUDENTS' ATTITUDE
TOWARDS ENVIRONMENT CONSERVATION IN PUBLIC JUNIOR SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN EGOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF EDO STATE**

BY

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EDU2102163

DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

BENIN CITY, NIGERIA

OCOTOBER, 2025

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY, FACULTY OF
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CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned, hereby certify that this research work was carried out by Precious ODOGUN of the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Technology, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City.

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DEDICATION

The work is dedicated to God Almighty, the Beginning and the End. The work is also dedicated to my wonderful parents and siblings.

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I am immensely indebted to God Almighty for giving me the needed strength to complete this project work. My deepest gratitude goes to my project supervisor, Prof. John Egharevba whose invaluable insights greatly contributed to the success of this research.

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the influence of Social Studies education on students' attitude towards environment conservation in public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. To achieve the purpose of the study, four research questions were raised and answered.

The descriptive survey research method was adopted for the study. The population for this study was made of all the 5,109 public junior secondary school students in the 12 public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. The sample size for the study was made up of 120 respondents. For data analysis, mean and standard deviation were used to calculate the research findings.

The findings from the study include that there is a positive attitude of students towards environment conservation in public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. It was concluded that there is a significant influence of Social Studies on students' attitudes and behaviours towards protecting and preserving their immediate environment. The study recommended among others that teachers of Social Studies should be provided with regular training and workshops on modern methods of teaching environmental conservation, ensuring that lessons are both engaging and impactful.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

Environmental degradation has emerged as one of the most pressing global challenges in contemporary times. Deforestation, pollution, loss of biodiversity, desertification, and climate change have severely impacted ecosystems and human livelihoods, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria. The increasing deterioration of the environment demands urgent educational interventions aimed at raising awareness and promoting sustainable practices. Social Studies, as a multidisciplinary subject, offers a valuable platform to instill environmental awareness, promote critical thinking, and foster positive attitudes toward conservation practices among students (Emesi, 2023). Education, therefore, plays a critical role in equipping young minds with the knowledge, values, and skills needed to address environmental challenges and ensure sustainability.

Social Studies is an integrated academic discipline that draws upon various fields such as history, geography, political science, economics, sociology, and anthropology to equip learners with the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes necessary to function effectively in society. The primary aim of Social Studies is to foster civic competence by helping students understand human relationships, societal institutions, cultural diversity, and the responsibilities of citizenship (Ibrahim, 2020). It is not confined to the memorisation of historical facts or geographical features, but rather involves critical

thinking, problem-solving, and reflective inquiry into societal issues and human behaviour. Social Studies seeks to prepare individuals to participate actively and responsibly in a democratic society by promoting national unity, social justice, and tolerance for cultural differences. As a subject taught at various levels of education, it plays a pivotal role in nation-building by encouraging students to reflect on societal challenges and develop solutions for sustainable development.

The concept of Social Studies also encompasses the idea of curriculum integration, where different strands of the social sciences are merged to provide learners with a holistic understanding of their social environment. This integration is intended to help students perceive the interrelatedness of human experiences across time and space. Social Studies, therefore, moves beyond the theoretical frameworks of individual disciplines to explore practical, real-life problems such as governance, environmental degradation, gender inequality, and civic responsibilities. Social Studies as a subject encourages learners to question societal norms, analyze social issues, and make informed decisions that affect their personal and communal lives (Nwafor, 2022). It also promotes value orientation, patriotism, and ethical reasoning by instilling in students a sense of identity, empathy, and responsibility towards others. In this way, Social Studies is not just a body of knowledge but a transformative tool for shaping students' mind towards environmental conservation.

Environmental conservation refers to the responsible use and protection of the natural environment through sustainable practices. It encompasses a range of activities aimed at maintaining the health of the environment, such as tree planting, proper waste disposal, energy conservation, and water management (Ichippi, 2024). The success of these conservation efforts depends largely on public awareness and positive environmental attitudes. Studies have shown that early education is a key determinant of pro-environmental behaviour, as it shapes students' values, perceptions, and habits. In this regard, Social Studies education is strategically positioned to create a generation of environmentally conscious citizens who can contribute meaningfully to environmental sustainability in their communities.

Social Studies education plays a vital role in shaping students' attitudes towards environment conservation by fostering awareness, responsibility, and a sense of stewardship over natural resources. Through its interdisciplinary approach, Social Studies exposes students to the interactions between human activities and the environment, encouraging them to understand the consequences of deforestation, pollution, climate change, and other environmental issues (Ukobi, 2019). Lessons on geography, culture, and human development help students appreciate the importance of a balanced ecosystem and the need for sustainable practices. By examining how societies have historically managed or mismanaged natural resources, students learn to adopt positive behaviours such as tree planting, recycling, energy conservation, and the protection of wildlife. Social Studies also teaches students the value of environmental justice and equity,

showing how environmental degradation often disproportionately affects vulnerable communities. As students become more informed about these issues, they are likely to adopt more proactive and responsible attitudes towards protecting and preserving their environment.

Moreover, Social Studies education promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills that empower students to evaluate environmental challenges and contribute meaningfully to their solutions. Through classroom discussions, debates, and projects, students are encouraged to analyze real-world environmental problems and suggest actionable steps to address them within their communities. The subject helps instill values such as empathy, cooperation, and civic responsibility, all of which are crucial for effective environmental stewardship (Olawale, 2021). Students are often guided to recognise their roles as agents of change, both now and in the future, and are inspired to participate in environmental campaigns, school clean-up exercises, and community-based conservation initiatives. By cultivating a sense of belonging and duty to their immediate and global environment, Social Studies fosters a generation of environmentally conscious individuals. Ultimately, the subject helps bridge the gap between environmental knowledge and personal action, ensuring that students not only understand environmental issues but are also motivated to act in ways that support the health and sustainability of the planet.

Social Studies education serves as a bridge between theoretical knowledge and practical environmental engagement by integrating experiential learning activities into the curriculum. Field trips to nature reserves, recycling centres, and historical sites enable students to observe environmental issues first-hand and connect classroom knowledge with real-world contexts. These experiential opportunities deepen students' understanding of how human actions directly affect natural ecosystems and inspire them to take part in environmental protection. Furthermore, group projects and role-playing activities within Social Studies classes promote teamwork and communication skills while encouraging students to think collectively about sustainable solutions. By involving learners in community service projects such as tree planting and environmental awareness campaigns, Social Studies transforms abstract concepts into tangible actions that reinforce conservation values.

Another important contribution of Social Studies to environmental conservation is its role in fostering global awareness and intercultural understanding. In exploring how different cultures interact with their environments, students are exposed to traditional ecological knowledge and sustainable practices from around the world. This comparative approach broadens their perspectives, enabling them to see environmental stewardship as a shared human responsibility rather than a localised concern. Students learn that environmental problems such as climate change, ocean pollution, and biodiversity loss transcend national boundaries and require global cooperation for effective resolution. By promoting a sense of global citizenship, Social Studies empowers learners to support

international environmental agreements and participate in cross-border conservation initiatives. This broader worldview not only enhances students' knowledge but also strengthens their motivation to contribute to a sustainable future (Diodemise, 2023).

Furthermore, Social Studies equips students with the civic engagement skills necessary to influence environmental policy and governance. Lessons on political systems, advocacy, and citizens' rights encourage students to understand how environmental laws are made, implemented, and enforced. Through this understanding, learners are empowered to hold leaders accountable, advocate for greener policies, and contribute to decision-making processes that affect the environment. Social Studies also highlights the importance of ethical leadership and transparency in managing natural resources, reinforcing the idea that sustainability is not just a technical challenge but also a moral imperative. By fostering informed and active citizens, Social Studies ensures that environmental protection becomes a collective responsibility upheld by both individuals and institutions.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the critical role that Social Studies education is expected to play in shaping students' attitudes towards environmental conservation, preliminary observation has revealed that many students in junior secondary schools appear to lack the necessary awareness, concern, and commitment to environmental protection. The researcher has observed instances where students openly engage in environmentally harmful practices

such as indiscriminate littering, bush burning, waste dumping, and destruction of school vegetation without understanding the long-term consequences of such actions. This behaviour persists even though environmental education is embedded in the Social Studies curriculum. It raises concerns about whether the subject is achieving its intended objective of promoting positive environmental attitudes and responsible behaviour among students. If students continue to exhibit indifference toward environmental conservation despite receiving Social Studies instruction, it suggests a gap between curriculum content and behavioural outcomes.

Furthermore, preliminary observation has shown that in many junior secondary schools, especially in public ones, Social Studies lessons are often theoretical and examination-driven, with little focus on the real-life application of environmental concepts. This may hinder students from internalising the values of sustainability and conservation. The researcher is troubled by this trend and therefore seeks to examine the influence of Social Studies education on students' attitude towards environment conservation in public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.

Research Questions

The following questions will guide the study:

1. What is the attitude of students towards environment conservation in public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State?

2. To what extent does Social Studies promote environmental conservation awareness among students in Egor Local Government Area?
3. What is the influence of Social Studies on students' attitudes and behaviours towards protecting and preserving their immediate environment?
4. What challenges do students face in developing positive attitudes towards environmental conservation through Social Studies education?

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of Social Studies education on students' attitude towards environment conservation in public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. However, the specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Examine the attitude of students towards environment conservation in public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State;
2. Ascertain the extent Social Studies promote environmental conservation awareness among students in Egor Local Government Area;
3. Find out the influence of Social Studies on students' attitudes and behaviours towards protecting and preserving their immediate environment; and
4. Highlight the challenges do students face in developing positive attitudes towards environmental conservation through Social Studies education.

Significance of the Study

This study will be of great importance to students, teachers, school administrators, curriculum developers, policymakers, the Ministry of Education, and future researchers. For students, the study will help them understand how Social Studies education contributes to their awareness and attitudes toward environmental conservation. By exploring the environmental content within Social Studies, students may become more conscious of their role in protecting the environment and be motivated to adopt eco-friendly behaviours both within and outside school.

For teachers, the study will offer useful insights into how effectively their instruction in Social Studies is influencing students' environmental attitudes. It will help teachers assess the strengths and limitations of their teaching strategies in fostering environmental responsibility. In doing so, teachers may be encouraged to adopt more interactive and practical teaching methods that can positively shape students' behaviour towards environmental preservation.

For school administrators, the study will highlight the importance of supporting and promoting environmentally focused learning activities through Social Studies. Administrators will better understand the need to create a school environment that encourages sustainability through initiatives such as environmental clubs, tree-planting exercises, and recycling programmes. This may help them make informed decisions about school policies and support programmes that promote environmental consciousness.

This study will also benefit curriculum developers, policymakers, and the Ministry of Education by providing empirical data on the effectiveness of Social Studies in fostering positive attitudes toward the environment. The findings could inform curriculum reviews to include more practical, engaging, and locally relevant environmental content. It may also support the development of training programmes for teachers to enhance their capacity to deliver environmental education through Social Studies effectively.

The study will serve as a valuable reference for future researchers interested in education, environmental conservation, and behavioural studies. It will contribute to existing literature and provide a foundation for further investigations into how educational programmes can be used to shape students' values and actions in relation to the environment. Future researchers may expand on this study to explore similar influences in other subjects or educational levels, helping to promote sustainable development through education.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study focuses on the influence of Social Studies education on students' attitude towards environment conservation in public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.

The study will be delimited to public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.

Definition of Terms

Attitude: Attitude refers to a learner's consistent feelings, beliefs, and behavioural tendencies toward a particular idea, object, or situation. In the context of this study, it relates to students' disposition, interest, and willingness to engage in actions that support environmental conservation.

Environmental Conservation: Environmental conservation is the practice of protecting, preserving, and managing the natural environment and its resources responsibly. It includes actions such as recycling, reforestation, proper waste disposal, and the sustainable use of natural resources to ensure the wellbeing of future generations.

Social Studies Education: Social Studies education refers to an integrated subject taught at the junior secondary school level that focuses on the study of human society and relationships. It aims to equip students with the knowledge, values, and skills necessary for responsible citizenship, national development, and understanding of the environment.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the review of related literature is discussed under the following sub-headings:

- Theoretical Framework
- Concept of Social Studies
- Concept of Environmental Conservation
- Role of Social Studies in Promoting Environmental Conservation Awareness Among Students
- Influence of Social Studies on Students' Attitudes and Behaviours Towards Protecting and Preserving their Immediate Environment
- Challenges Students Face in Developing Positive Attitudes Towards Environmental Conservation Through Social Studies education
- Summary of Literature Reviewed

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework adopted for the study is the Environmental Education Theory formally conceptualized through the Belgrade Charter by UNESCO and UNEP in

1975. The Environmental Education Theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how awareness, attitudes, skills, and values relating to the environment are cultivated through structured learning experiences. It argues that education is essential in equipping individuals with the capacity to make informed decisions and take responsible actions for environmental sustainability. In the context of Social Studies, this theory supports embedding environmental themes such as sustainable resource use, climate change awareness, and biodiversity preservation into the curriculum to foster a strong sense of environmental stewardship. It stresses that students' attitudes towards conservation are significantly shaped by their exposure to relevant knowledge within formal education. By learning about environmental challenges and their socio-economic implications, students begin to recognise the importance of protecting natural resources. This aligns with the theory's central claim that education, when purposefully structured, is a potent driver of positive environmental attitudes and responsible ecological behaviours.

Environmental Education Theory places strong emphasis on experiential and participatory learning as a means of shaping students' environmental attitudes and actions. In Social Studies classrooms, teachers can implement interactive activities such as debates, case studies, role-playing, and project work to make environmental topics more relatable and engaging. Field excursions to conservation areas, wildlife reserves, or waste recycling plants provide students with direct exposure to environmental realities, reinforcing classroom learning. The theory suggests that genuine attitude change emerges

not only from acquiring theoretical knowledge but also from active involvement in environmental initiatives. Practical experiences such as tree planting, community clean-up exercises, or waste segregation projects create opportunities for students to internalise conservation values. These hands-on engagements transform abstract environmental ideas into lived experiences, strengthening students' personal commitment to sustainability and making conservation a personal as well as collective responsibility within their communities.

A key feature of Environmental Education Theory is its focus on linking local environmental realities to global concerns. In Social Studies education, teachers can connect local issues such as soil erosion, deforestation, and water pollution to wider global challenges like climate change, desertification, and loss of biodiversity. This approach encourages students to understand the interconnectedness of environmental systems and human actions. When learners recognise that small-scale community practices, whether positive or negative, can contribute to global environmental outcomes, they are more likely to adopt sustainable habits. The theory also promotes critical thinking, encouraging students to analyse policies, practices, and cultural habits that impact the environment. By integrating these concepts into Social Studies lessons, educators can develop informed, proactive students who view themselves as active participants in global environmental stewardship. This global-local perspective is essential in nurturing environmentally responsible citizenship among young learners.

The theory is relevant to the study as it help provides a strong conceptual foundation for understanding how Social Studies can influence students' attitudes towards environmental conservation. By integrating knowledge, practical engagement, and the connection between local and global environmental issues, the theory shows how education can inspire lasting behavioural change. Within the Social Studies curriculum, educators can design lessons that move beyond the transfer of facts to foster values and attitudes that support sustainable living. The theory also underscores the need for participatory teaching approaches that encourage active involvement and personal responsibility. When students are equipped with both the intellectual understanding and the practical skills to address environmental issues, they are more likely to become lifelong advocates for conservation. Ultimately, this theory reinforces the idea that developing environmentally conscious citizens begins in the classroom, where attitudes are shaped, values are nurtured, and a sense of ecological responsibility is cultivated.

Concept of Social Studies

Social Studies is an interdisciplinary subject that integrates concepts from the social sciences to help learners understand human society and their roles within it. Edeki (2023) asserted that the subject draws knowledge from disciplines such as history, geography, economics, and political science, blending them to create a holistic understanding of social life. The essence of Social Studies lies in its ability to promote informed citizenship and social responsibility among learners, enabling them to contribute positively to their communities. It focuses on building awareness of societal

problems and developing practical solutions that promote harmony and sustainable growth. Social Studies in Nigerian schools is designed to nurture patriotism, civic values, and responsible decision-making in young people. Through its content, the subject aims to produce citizens who are socially aware, critically minded, and committed to the welfare of society (Ibrahim, 2021).

Social Studies, as a concept, encompasses the acquisition of knowledge as well as the development of attitudes, values, and skills necessary for effective participation in society. Okonkwo (2022) explained that it goes beyond theoretical understanding, extending to practical engagement with contemporary social issues, which makes it a responsive and evolving subject. In the Nigerian context, Social Studies plays an important role in fostering unity among diverse ethnic and cultural groups by promoting tolerance, cooperation, and peaceful coexistence. Its curriculum reflects modern realities, covering topics such as democratic governance, environmental stewardship, conflict resolution, and human rights awareness. This blend of cognitive learning and value formation ensures that students develop both intellectual competence and moral responsibility. Consequently, Social Studies equips learners with the ability to respond to social challenges with reasoned judgement, empathy, and a commitment to positive change (Olowe, 2023).

The meaning of Social Studies can also be understood through its function as a tool for citizenship education and national development. Adebayo (2021) noted that the

subject prepares learners to play active roles in political, social, and economic life, while also fostering a sense of belonging and loyalty to the nation. It encourages knowledge of democratic principles, historical heritage, and the responsibilities of citizenship. In Nigeria, Social Studies addresses pressing societal issues such as corruption, poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation, enabling learners to become proactive problem-solvers. The subject also instils values such as justice, fairness, and social accountability, which are essential for national progress. By engaging with real-life scenarios and debates, students learn to critically evaluate challenges and propose viable solutions that align with societal needs, thus contributing meaningfully to sustainable national development (Eze, 2022)

The concept of Social Studies also reflects a dedication to shaping learners who can think both locally and globally. Musa (2023) pointed out that the subject allows students to appreciate their cultural heritage while also learning to respect the traditions of other societies, thereby fostering global citizenship. In today's interconnected world, Social Studies highlights how local actions can influence global issues such as climate change, migration, trade, and peacebuilding. This global perspective helps Nigerian students understand their country's role in international affairs while strengthening their responsibility towards a more equitable and sustainable world. The subject encourages skills such as critical thinking, comparative analysis, and problem-solving, which are crucial in the 21st century. By combining global awareness with local knowledge, Social

Studies ensures learners can function effectively within Nigeria and as part of the wider international community (Abdullahi, 2020).

Social Studies is not just a school subject but a vital educational approach aimed at producing socially responsible and well-rounded individuals. Bello (2022) affirmed that its interdisciplinary design enables learners to draw connections between different aspects of human life, fostering a deeper understanding of society's complexities. By promoting values such as equality, justice, respect, and empathy, Social Studies serves as a catalyst for peacebuilding and social harmony. Within the Nigerian education system, it addresses the country's social challenges by equipping young people with knowledge, critical thinking skills, and moral guidance. This empowers them to actively contribute to their communities while also understanding broader societal dynamics. Through reflective thinking, collaborative learning, and active engagement with social realities, Social Studies ensures that learners are prepared for both personal growth and the collective advancement of the nation (Ogunleye, 2023).

Concept of Environmental Conservation

Environmental conservation refers to the deliberate actions taken to protect, preserve, and manage the natural environment for present and future generations. Wamako (2023) asserted that it involves strategies aimed at preventing the degradation of ecosystems and maintaining ecological balance. This includes preserving forests, safeguarding wildlife, preventing pollution, and ensuring the sustainable use of natural

resources. The concept stems from the recognition that human survival depends on a healthy environment, as natural systems provide essential resources like water, food, and clean air. Conservation also helps mitigate climate change, combat desertification, and restore degraded areas. Without these efforts, environmental damage could undermine development and public health. Thus, environmental conservation is not only a scientific necessity but also a moral responsibility to protect the planet and ensure the continuity of life for future generations (Okolie, 2021).

The concept of environmental conservation centres on the sustainable use of the earth's resources to maintain ecological stability and meet human needs. Bello (2022) explained that it is based on the principle of sustainability, ensuring current demands are fulfilled without jeopardising future generations. Conservation practices include afforestation, sustainable agriculture, renewable energy adoption, and reducing industrial waste. It is not limited to wildlife protection but also covers preserving soil fertility, water purity, and clean air. The approach promotes responsible consumption and production, encouraging communities to reduce, reuse, and recycle. By integrating environmental education into schools and policies, societies can foster greater ecological awareness. Conservation, therefore, is a shared responsibility among governments, organisations, and individuals. It provides a framework for balancing development with environmental integrity, ensuring that economic growth does not lead to irreversible ecological harm (Lawal, 2023).

Environmental conservation is also recognised as a shared moral and ethical duty to safeguard the planet's resources. Jakande and Adekunle (2020) noted that environmental conservation reflects the awareness that the environment is a common heritage whose destruction affects all living things. It involves laws controlling pollution, campaigns promoting clean energy, and community-based initiatives like tree planting. The concept values inclusiveness, requiring active participation from all societal levels to address environmental issues. Indigenous knowledge is often incorporated into conservation strategies because it offers time-tested, sustainable methods of interacting with nature. Ethical conservation emphasises that natural resources have intrinsic value beyond their economic benefits to humans. It also encourages equitable access to resources, ensuring no group suffers from environmental neglect or exploitation. Ultimately, this view of conservation fosters responsibility, fairness, and stewardship over the environment for the collective good of humanity (Nwosu, 2022).

From a developmental perspective, environmental conservation is essential for long-term socio-economic stability and resilience. Mustapha (2021) stated that healthy ecosystems underpin sectors like agriculture, tourism, and manufacturing. For example, conserving forests prevents soil erosion, maintains rainfall patterns, and supports biodiversity, which in turn sustains farming and fishing industries. Ecosystems such as wetlands and mangroves act as natural defences against floods, reducing disaster risks and protecting communities. In Nigeria, incorporating environmental conservation into development planning ensures that resource exploitation does not lead to irreversible

damage. It also enhances climate adaptation strategies, allowing communities to better cope with droughts, desertification, and flooding. By protecting natural assets, nations can secure sustainable livelihoods and promote green economic growth. Environmental conservation, therefore, serves as a vital link between environmental health, economic prosperity, and societal well-being (Eze, 2023).

Environmental conservation extends beyond protecting nature to include sustainable living, ethical responsibility, and economic resilience. Ibrahim (2022) stressed that it represents a long-term commitment to harmonising human needs with the planet's ecological limits. Achieving this requires cooperation among governments, communities, businesses, and individuals, each playing a role in reducing environmental degradation. Policy measures, environmental education, and sustainable technologies all contribute to conservation success. The concept also encourages lifestyle changes, such as reducing waste, conserving water, and adopting renewable energy sources. By integrating environmental conservation into everyday decision-making, societies can address climate change, resource scarcity, and biodiversity loss. Its ultimate goal is to secure a healthy planet where both humans and nature can thrive in mutual benefit, ensuring sustainability for present and future generations (Onyema, 2021).

Olawale (2021) assessed students' attitudes towards environmental conservation in public junior secondary schools in Ekiti State. The study population was 2,740 students across 22 schools, with 260 participants selected through stratified random

sampling. A descriptive survey design was adopted, using the Students' Environmental Attitude Inventory ($\alpha = 0.82$). Data were analysed with mean scores and percentages. Results showed that a majority of students demonstrated positive attitudes towards conservation practices such as waste recycling, tree planting, and water preservation, with mean scores exceeding the acceptance benchmark of 2.50. The study found that consistent integration of conservation topics in Social Studies and participation in school-based environmental clubs contributed to these positive attitudes. The study concluded that structured environmental activities within schools enhance students' conservation mindset and recommended strengthening extracurricular environmental programmes.

Nwosu and Danjuma (2022) investigated students' attitudes towards environmental conservation in public junior secondary schools in Plateau State. The target population consisted of 3,050 students from 25 schools, with 300 sampled via simple random sampling. Using a descriptive survey design, data were collected through the Environmental Attitude Scale ($\alpha = 0.79$) and analysed using mean scores and standard deviations. Findings indicated generally negative attitudes, with students showing low interest in waste management, afforestation, and pollution control activities, reflected in mean scores below the 2.50 acceptance level. Interviews with selected students revealed that lack of practical exposure, poor teaching approaches, and minimal parental influence contributed to the apathy. The study concluded that without engaging, hands-on learning experiences, students are unlikely to develop strong pro-environmental attitudes, recommending curriculum reforms to address these gaps.

Role of Social Studies in Promoting Environmental Conservation Awareness among Students

Social Studies serves as a vital platform for promoting environmental conservation awareness among students. Salihu (2023) asserted that the subject combines elements of geography, civic education, and environmental studies to equip learners with an understanding of the natural world and its preservation. By covering topics such as waste management, deforestation, desertification, and climate change, Social Studies helps students recognise the impact of human actions on the environment. Lessons often involve activities such as group discussions, environmental clubs, and participation in awareness campaigns, which deepen students' interest in sustainability. Through continuous exposure to these concepts, students gradually internalise the importance of protecting their environment. They begin to see conservation not only as a scientific concern but also as a civic responsibility crucial to community well-being and national development (Nakpodia, 2021).

Social Studies develops students' awareness of environmental conservation by introducing them to environmental ethics and sustainability values. Makuola (2022) emphasised that lessons on environmental responsibility cultivate a moral obligation to preserve natural resources for present and future generations. The subject uses real-life case studies of environmental damage to help learners connect theoretical concepts with practical implications. This connection encourages empathy for affected communities and fosters a sense of stewardship towards nature. Teaching methods such as debates, role

plays, and simulations allow students to critically examine conservation issues from different perspectives. By engaging in these interactive activities, they develop a deeper appreciation for nature's value and fragility. Over time, the ethical foundation gained through Social Studies creates environmentally conscious individuals who are better prepared to contribute positively to environmental preservation efforts in their communities (Kumuyi, 2023).

The Social Studies curriculum strengthens environmental conservation awareness by showing students the economic, social, and health benefits of protecting natural resources. Bello (2020) explained that topics such as sustainable development and resource management highlight the links between environmental health, agricultural productivity, and community welfare. This perspective enables students to see conservation as a necessity for long-term growth rather than an optional activity. Classroom learning is often complemented with field trips to parks, conservation sites, and waste recycling facilities, where students witness conservation in action. Such experiences make the subject matter more tangible and reinforce theoretical knowledge. These combined approaches help students understand that preserving the environment has both immediate and long-term rewards, including improved quality of life and economic stability. They are therefore encouraged to support and participate in environmental initiatives within and beyond school settings (Ezeji, 2021).

Social Studies promotes active civic engagement in environmental conservation by linking protection efforts to students' roles as responsible citizens. Bamidele (2023) noted that classroom projects often require learners to identify environmental challenges within their communities and propose practical solutions. Activities such as tree planting, neighbourhood clean-up drives, and recycling competitions help students apply classroom knowledge to real-world problems. These initiatives not only increase awareness but also build confidence in their ability to effect change. Teachers further encourage collaboration with local environmental groups, allowing students to participate in larger-scale projects. By experiencing first-hand the positive outcomes of their efforts, students develop a stronger commitment to environmental protection. The emphasis on action-oriented learning ensures that conservation awareness is reinforced through practice, making it a lasting part of students' personal and civic identities (Idigun, 2022).

Social Studies also promotes environmental awareness by integrating indigenous knowledge and cultural practices into conservation education. Umeh (2021) observed that many traditional Nigerian societies have customs that support environmental preservation, such as the protection of sacred forests, seasonal fishing restrictions, and sustainable farming techniques. When teachers highlight these cultural practices in lessons, students begin to see conservation as part of their heritage rather than a foreign concept. This approach makes environmental education relatable, fostering both cultural pride and ecological responsibility. It also encourages students to blend traditional wisdom with modern scientific methods for more effective conservation strategies. By linking heritage

with environmental responsibility, Social Studies strengthens students' motivation to safeguard their surroundings. This holistic teaching strategy ensures that environmental awareness is deeply rooted in both cultural identity and scientific understanding (Abdullahi, 2020).

Ikwuni (2021) examined the role of Social Studies in promoting environmental conservation awareness among junior secondary school students in Oyo State. The study targeted 5,120 students from 40 public schools, with a sample of 360 selected using stratified random sampling. A quasi-experimental design with pre-test and post-test control groups was adopted, supported by semi-structured interviews. The Environmental Awareness Questionnaire ($\alpha = 0.82$) measured awareness levels, while qualitative data were thematically analysed. ANCOVA revealed that students taught with enquiry-based Social Studies incorporating local conservation projects scored significantly higher in awareness ($p < 0.01$) than those taught traditionally. Interviews confirmed that students developed stronger environmental responsibility and could relate global concepts to local issues. The study concluded that context-based Social Studies pedagogy enhances conservation awareness and recommended integrating community projects into the curriculum.

Nsima and Obi (2019) investigated the effectiveness of Social Studies in enhancing conservation behaviour among senior secondary students in Rivers State. The population consisted of 2,780 students from 20 schools, with 240 selected through multi-

stage sampling. Using a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, the researchers employed a Knowledge-Attitude-Practice (KAP) survey ($\alpha = 0.79$) and focus group discussions. Quantitative data were analysed with descriptive statistics and multiple regression, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. Findings revealed that frequent, high-quality Social Studies lessons using local case studies significantly predicted positive conservation practices ($\beta = 0.34$, $p < 0.05$). Teacher competence and availability of local instructional materials strengthened this effect. Focus group results highlighted barriers such as large class sizes and limited community support. The study recommended teacher training and inclusion of experiential community activities in Social Studies to sustain environmental awareness.

Influence of Social Studies on Students' Attitudes and Behaviours Towards Protecting and Preserving their Immediate Environment

Social Studies plays a transformative role in shaping students' attitudes towards environmental protection and preservation. Echebiri (2023) asserted that the subject instils a sense of personal responsibility by emphasising the close relationship between human survival and environmental health. Lessons on waste management, forest preservation, and soil protection help students understand that the environment is a shared resource requiring collective care. By using examples from students' immediate surroundings, teachers make the content relatable and practical. This relevance encourages learners to translate classroom knowledge into everyday habits, such as proper waste disposal, water conservation, and avoidance of harmful practices like bush

burning. Over time, these habits contribute to a lifestyle centred on sustainability. Ultimately, Social Studies not only imparts knowledge but also inspires students to become active agents of change in protecting their communities' natural resources (Kikelomo, 2022).

Social Studies influences behavioural change by promoting practical environmental practices among students. Nwifiru (2021) noted that lessons on conservation and pollution control are often reinforced through activities like school clean-up drives, recycling initiatives, and community tree planting campaigns. These activities provide students with hands-on experiences that strengthen their sense of environmental responsibility. By participating in these programmes, students begin to feel pride and ownership over their surroundings, which encourages continued care and protection. Moreover, repeated engagement in such projects fosters habits that extend beyond the classroom, influencing family members and peers. Social Studies thereby bridges the gap between learning and practice, ensuring that conservation is integrated into students' everyday routines. This approach not only boosts environmental awareness but also nurtures a generation that values preservation as a personal and communal duty (Hadiza, 2020).

The subject also shapes students' attitudes by cultivating environmental empathy and highlighting the consequences of environmental neglect. Weyinmi (2022) observed that Social Studies employs real-life examples, such as erosion from deforestation or

flooding from blocked drainage systems, to show the dangers of poor environmental practices. These scenarios generate emotional connections, motivating students to take preventive actions like proper refuse disposal and participation in clean-up campaigns. This awareness makes them more sensitive to the needs of their communities and the broader ecosystem. Furthermore, discussions and assignments that explore the human cost of environmental problems deepen their sense of moral responsibility. Over time, this blend of emotional engagement and practical knowledge builds lasting behavioural changes that prioritise the health and sustainability of their surroundings (Adamu, 2023).

Another way Social Studies influences students' behaviour is by linking environmental stewardship to civic duty and legal responsibility. Lateef (2023) explained that teaching students about environmental laws and community regulations helps them recognise that preservation is a shared obligation. When students see themselves as stakeholders in community well-being, they are more willing to adopt eco-friendly behaviours and report harmful practices. Schools often incorporate group projects where students research local environmental challenges and develop feasible solutions, fostering teamwork and accountability. These collaborative exercises strengthen a sense of ownership and commitment to sustainable practices. By engaging in advocacy and action, students come to understand that protecting the environment is part of being a responsible citizen. This connection between civic duty and environmental care ensures long-term positive behaviour (Dokunbor, 2021).

Social Studies influences students by embedding environmental consciousness into their personal values. Idjerhe (2020) stated that when conservation is presented as a moral obligation and part of cultural heritage, students are more likely to view it as integral to their identity. Lessons often draw from indigenous practices such as rotational farming, protection of sacred groves, and regulated fishing, which highlight sustainable living principles. This cultural relevance reinforces pride in heritage while encouraging environmentally responsible behaviour. Students begin to see conservation not merely as a school topic but as a way of life that benefits both their community and future generations. By merging traditional wisdom with modern scientific approaches, Social Studies nurtures a balanced understanding of environmental protection. This ensures that eco-friendly attitudes and behaviours are sustained well beyond the school years (Salako, 2022).

Chigbuzor (2020) investigated how Social Studies influences students' attitudes towards environmental protection in Enugu State. The study involved 3,450 junior secondary students from 25 public schools, with 300 sampled using simple random sampling. A descriptive survey design was adopted, utilising a validated Environmental Attitude Scale ($\alpha = 0.81$). Data were analysed using mean scores, standard deviations, and Pearson's correlation. Results indicated a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.01$) between exposure to Social Studies lessons and students' willingness to engage in practices such as tree planting, waste segregation, and water conservation. Students who frequently participated in Social Studies activities displayed higher levels of

environmental responsibility than those with minimal exposure. The study concluded that well-delivered Social Studies significantly fosters positive environmental attitudes and recommended integrating more practical conservation activities into the curriculum.

Adamu and Ibrahim (2022) explored the impact of Social Studies on students' behaviours towards preserving their immediate environment in Kano State. The population comprised 2,960 junior secondary students, with 280 respondents selected through stratified random sampling. A mixed-methods approach was used, combining a Behavioural Practice Questionnaire ($\alpha = 0.84$) with focus group discussions. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression, while qualitative responses were thematically interpreted. Findings revealed that students who engaged in Social Studies lessons incorporating role plays, debates, and community clean-up projects demonstrated more consistent environmental preservation behaviours than those who only received lecture-based teaching ($\beta = 0.39$, $p < 0.05$). Focus groups further showed that such activities built a sense of personal responsibility and community pride. The study recommended experiential teaching methods to strengthen environmental protection habits.

Challenges Students Face in Developing Positive Attitudes towards Environmental Conservation through Social Studies education

Many students encounter significant difficulties in developing positive attitudes towards environmental conservation due to limited practical exposure in Social Studies

learning. Madueke (2023) asserted that classroom teaching in many Nigerian schools remains heavily theoretical, with few opportunities for students to engage in hands-on conservation activities such as tree planting, community clean-ups, or visits to protected natural reserves. Without these real-life experiences, learners often find it hard to relate classroom knowledge to actual environmental problems. This lack of experiential learning reduces the emotional connection needed to inspire long-term behavioural change. Additionally, inadequate funding and insufficient instructional materials make it difficult for teachers to integrate conservation projects into the school curriculum. Consequently, Social Studies lessons sometimes become abstract, failing to connect concepts with students' immediate surroundings, and ultimately limiting the development of personal responsibility towards the environment (Edigwe, 2022).

Another major challenge lies in the conflicting socio-cultural practices that undermine conservation messages taught in Social Studies classrooms. Tajudeen (2021) noted that in many Nigerian communities, harmful environmental behaviours such as indiscriminate tree felling, open burning of waste, and unsustainable hunting are often passed down as normal practices. When students witness respected elders and community leaders engaging in these acts, it creates a direct contradiction to what they are taught in school, leading to confusion or apathy towards conservation principles. This dissonance between school instruction and community realities makes it difficult for students to adopt positive environmental values. Moreover, some traditional beliefs downplay the urgency of modern environmental issues, thereby weakening the influence of Social

Studies education. For effective attitude change, schools need to actively involve communities in promoting sustainable practices and aligning local customs with conservation goals (Bikoro, 2023).

Poor access to relevant environmental information and modern educational resources limits students' ability to develop strong conservation-oriented mindsets. Okonkwo and Idisi (2022) emphasised that many schools, especially in rural areas, lack updated textbooks, visual aids, and digital tools that could make environmental topics more engaging and relatable. Without adequate teaching materials, issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution may seem distant or irrelevant to students. The absence of interactive platforms, such as school environmental clubs or online learning programmes, further prevents students from exploring global conservation trends and local solutions. Exposure to case studies, documentaries, and fieldwork could help students appreciate the urgency of environmental problems. Unfortunately, the resource gap continues to leave many learners with a narrow understanding of environmental challenges, which reduces their motivation to actively participate in conservation initiatives (Yakubu, 2020).

Students' perceptions of the economic implications of environmental sustainability also present a challenge to attitude formation. Timilehin (2020) observed that in low-income communities, environmental protection is sometimes seen as a costly or secondary priority compared to meeting immediate economic needs. For example,

waste recycling may be perceived as labour-intensive with little financial reward, while switching to eco-friendly farming techniques might require expenses that many families cannot afford. These attitudes are often passed on to children, shaping their views during Social Studies lessons. Without clear education on the potential economic benefits of conservation—such as green jobs, eco-tourism opportunities, and long-term cost savings—students may prioritise short-term gains over sustainable practices. Addressing these misconceptions requires integrating economic and environmental education so that conservation is understood not as a burden, but as an opportunity for community development (Abiola & Eseike, 2021).

Limited teacher training in environmental education remains a critical barrier to fostering positive conservation attitudes among students. Adeyemi and Okobo (2022) argued that many Social Studies teachers have not received adequate professional development in modern environmental issues or effective pedagogical strategies for sustainability education. Consequently, lessons may lack depth, creativity, and real-life relevance, leading to reduced student engagement. Some teachers rely heavily on rote memorisation instead of experiential learning, which does little to inspire action or personal responsibility towards the environment. Furthermore, the absence of policy-driven support for teacher capacity building means that innovative teaching methods—such as project-based learning, debates, and outdoor classes—are underutilised. To make a real impact, there must be continuous training opportunities and institutional

encouragement for teachers to integrate environmental conservation effectively into Social Studies instruction (Nwaneri, 2023).

Eze and Adebayo (2021) examined challenges hindering students' development of positive attitudes towards environmental conservation through Social Studies in Lagos State. The study targeted 4,200 junior secondary students from 35 schools, selecting 320 participants via stratified random sampling. A descriptive survey design was adopted, using a validated Challenges to Environmental Attitude Scale ($\alpha = 0.80$). Data were analysed with mean scores and standard deviations. Findings revealed that lack of practical conservation activities, inadequate instructional materials, and overcrowded classrooms significantly limited students' ability to internalise pro-environmental values. Many students reported that lessons were overly theoretical, making it difficult to relate concepts to daily experiences. The study concluded that insufficient resources and lack of experiential learning opportunities hinder effective attitude formation and recommended field-based projects to complement classroom instruction.

Umar and Okeke (2023) investigated barriers to fostering environmental conservation attitudes through Social Studies in Benue State. The population comprised 3,100 junior secondary students from 28 schools, with 300 chosen using simple random sampling. A mixed-methods design was employed, using a Student Environmental Challenges Questionnaire ($\alpha = 0.83$) and focus group discussions. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative responses underwent thematic

analysis. Results indicated that students faced challenges such as insufficient teacher training in environmental education, poor linkage of Social Studies topics to local issues, and minimal parental or community involvement in conservation activities. Focus group discussions revealed that without community reinforcement, classroom lessons failed to translate into sustained behaviours. The study recommended capacity building for teachers and school-community partnerships to address these challenges.

Summary of Literature Reviewed

The literature review critically examined the concepts of Social Studies and environmental conservation. As seen from the reviewed of literature, Social Studies education refers to an integrated subject taught at the junior secondary school level that focuses on the study of human society and relationships. It aims to equip students with the knowledge, values, and skills necessary for responsible citizenship, national development, and understanding of the environment. Environmental conservation on the other hand is the practice of protecting, preserving, and managing the natural environment and its resources responsibly.

The literature review also examined the role of Social Studies in promoting environmental conservation awareness among students. It could be seen from the review of literature that Social Studies combines elements of geography, civic education, and environmental studies to equip learners with an understanding of the natural world and its preservation. By covering topics such as waste management, deforestation, desertification,

and climate change, Social Studies helps students recognise the impact of human actions on the environment.

The literature review further examined the influence of Social Studies on students' attitudes and behaviours towards protecting and preserving their immediate environment. The reviewed literature shows that Social Studies instils a sense of personal responsibility by emphasising the close relationship between human survival and environmental health. Lessons on waste management, forest preservation, and soil protection help students understand that the environment is a shared resource requiring collective care.

The literature review was concluded with an examination on the challenges students face in developing positive attitudes towards environmental conservation through Social Studies education. Some of these challenges as seen from the review of literature include lack of practical conservation activities, inadequate instructional materials, overcrowded classrooms, insufficient teacher training in environmental education, poor linkage of Social Studies topics to local issues, and minimal parental or community involvement in conservation activities.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the processes and procedures that was followed in carrying out the study was discussed under the following sub-headings:

- Research Design
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Techniques
- Research Instrument
- Validity of the Instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument

- Method of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

Research Design

The research design adopted for this study is the descriptive survey research design. The descriptive survey design involves observing and collecting data on a given topic without manipulating variables. Descriptive survey is a quantitative research approach that allows researchers to thoroughly investigate on the background of a research problem. The design is considered suitable because it will allow the researcher to effectively probe into the influence of Social Studies education on students' attitude towards environment conservation in public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.

Population of the Study

The population for this study consists of all the 5,109 public junior secondary school students in the 12 public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. (Source: Ministry of Education, Edo State, 2025).

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample size for the study consist of 120 students. With the aid of the simple random sampling technique, ten (10) students were selected from each of the 12 public junior secondary schools in the local government area, thus making a total sample size of

120 respondents. The simple random sampling technique will be used to select the respondents.

Research Instrument

The instrument that used for the data collection was a structured questionnaire by the researcher titled: “Influence of Social Studies Education on Students’ Attitude Towards Environment Conservation Questionnaire (ISSESATECQ)”. The questionnaire was divided into two section A and B. Section “A” comprised of personal data of respondents such as age, class and sex while section “B” comprised of 20 questions bothering on the influence of Social Studies education on students’ attitude towards environment conservation in public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. The questionnaire consists of 4-point Likert scale response of Strongly agree (SA), Agreed (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

Validity of the Instrument

The constructed questionnaire for the study was presented to the project supervisor and two other experts to confirm its content validity. Corrections made by them were incorporated into the final draft of the work before administration.

Reliability of the Instrument

The Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. The questionnaire was administered to a group of 20 respondents which were

not part of the study but were part of the population. A Cronbach coefficient of .837 was obtained. This shows that the instrument is reliable.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to the respondents. To ensure a high response rate, all administered questionnaires were collected immediately on the spot.

Method of Data Analysis

The researcher made use of descriptive statistics such as mean scores and standard deviation as the method of data analysis. Scores above the mean of 2.50 was considered high, while scores below the mean of 2.50 was considered low.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the analysis of data and the presentation of results. The data are presented in tables and are arranged according to the order of the research questions raised in the study.

Research Question 1: What is the attitude of students towards environment conservation in public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State?

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Attitude of Students towards Environment Conservation in Public Junior Secondary Schools in Egor Local Government Area

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Keeping my school surroundings clean is an important personal responsibility	3.47	.903	Positive
2.	Disposing of waste properly will help maintain a clean environment around me	3.88	.887	Positive
3.	I feel concerned when I see people polluting the school or community environment	3.79	.729	Positive
4.	I love engaging in community activities that promote cleanliness of the environment	3.57	.816	Positive
5.	Safeguarding the environment is crucial for ensuring a sustainable future for all	3.59	.615	Positive
Cluster Mean		3.66	.790	Positive
N = 120, Criterion Mean = 2.50				

Table 1 revealed the responses of the respondents on all the items presented at a mean score of 3.47, 3.88, 3.79, 3.57 and 3.59 respectively. The cluster mean of 3.66 is above the criterion mean score of 2.50 which implies that there is a positive attitude of students towards environment conservation in public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.

Research Question 2: To what extent does Social Studies promote environmental conservation awareness among students in Egor Local Government Area?

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Extent Social Studies Promote Environmental Conservation Awareness among Students in Egor Local Government Area

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Social Studies lessons help students to understand the importance of conserving their environment	3.63	.802	Agreed

2.	Our attitude of non-maintenance culture affects the environment	3.81	.678	Agreed
3.	The study of Social Studies has help in creating of awareness about waste management and pollution control in communities	3.84	.812	Agreed
4.	With the help of Social Studies, I understand the dangers of deforestation and soil erosion	3.58	.722	Agreed
5.	Social Studies has taught me how to protect water sources from pollution and waste dumping	3.22	.599	Agreed
Cluster Mean		3.62	.723	Agreed
N = 120, Criterion Mean = 2.50				

Table 2 revealed the responses of the respondents on all the items presented at a mean score of 3.63, 3.81, 3.84, 3.58 and 3.22 respectively. The cluster mean of 3.62 is above the criterion mean score of 2.50 which implies that there is a high extent through which Social Studies promote environmental conservation awareness among students in Egor Local Government Area.

Research Question 3: What is the influence of Social Studies on students' attitudes and behaviours towards protecting and preserving their immediate environment?

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on Influence of Social Studies on Students' Attitudes and Behaviours towards Protecting and Preserving their Immediate Environment

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Social Studies encourages me to take active steps towards protecting my surroundings daily	3.36	.626	Agreed
2.	I now speak to friends and family about caring for the	3.61	.831	Agreed

	environment after lessons			
3.	I feel more responsible for keeping public places clean after learning Social Studies topics	3.78	.667	Agreed
4.	Social Studies has motivated me to join environmental clubs or school cleanliness campaigns	3.66	.592	Agreed
5.	My behaviour towards waste disposal changed positively because of what I learnt in Social Studies	3.42	.861	Agreed
Cluster Mean		3.57	.715	Agreed
N = 120, Criterion Mean = 2.50				

Table 3 revealed the responses of the respondents on all the items presented at a mean score of 3.36, 3.61, 3.78, 3.66 and 3.42 respectively. The cluster mean of 3.57 is above the criterion mean score of 2.50 which implies that there is a significant influence of Social Studies on students' attitudes and behaviours towards protecting and preserving their immediate environment.

Research Question 4: What challenges do students face in developing positive attitudes towards environmental conservation through Social Studies education?

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics on Challenges Students Face in Developing Positive Attitudes towards Environmental Conservation through Social Studies Education

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Sometimes materials or facilities needed to practise what I learnt about conservation is not available	3.89	.937	Agreed

2.	I find it difficult to convince my friends to follow environmental cleanliness rules	3.92	.642	Agreed
3.	Poor waste management systems in my community make it hard to practise environmental protection	3.81	.816	Agreed
4.	Environmental topics are not taught regularly enough in my Social Studies lessons	3.73	.621	Agreed
5.	I face challenges in understanding some Social Studies lessons about environmental conservation issues	3.79	.586	Agreed
Cluster Mean		3.83	.720	Agreed
N = 120, Criterion Mean = 2.50				

Table 4 revealed the responses of the respondents on all the items presented at a mean score of 3.89, 3.92, 3.81, 3.73 and 3.79 respectively. The cluster mean of 3.83 is above the criterion mean score of 2.50 which implies that some of the challenges students face in developing positive attitudes towards environmental conservation through Social Studies education include lack of resources, difficulty in following environmental cleanliness rules, poor waste management systems, lack of emphasis on topics bothering on environmental conservation and difficulty in understanding some Social Studies lessons about environmental conservation issues.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from the study in research question one shows that there is a positive attitude of students towards environment conservation in public junior secondary schools

in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. This finding may be attributed to the growing awareness among students about the importance of environmental protection, which is often reinforced through school-based programs, community campaigns, and media sensitization. The integration of environmental education into the curriculum, coupled with the efforts of teachers, NGOs, and government agencies promoting eco-friendly practices, has likely shaped students' perceptions and attitudes positively. Additionally, the visible environmental challenges in their communities, such as flooding, erosion, and waste management issues, may have further heightened their consciousness and motivated them to value conservation efforts. This findings is in line with Olawale (2021) who found out in his study that majority of students demonstrated positive attitudes towards conservation practices such as waste recycling, tree planting, and water preservation.

Findings from the study in research question two shows that there is a high extent through which Social Studies promote environmental conservation awareness among students in Egor Local Government Area. This finding can be explained by the fact that Social Studies as a subject is designed to equip students with knowledge, values, and attitudes that foster responsible citizenship and environmental stewardship. Through topics such as human–environment interaction, resource management, and the consequences of environmental degradation, students are exposed to practical lessons that emphasize the importance of conservation. The participatory teaching methods often used in Social Studies, such as discussions, projects, and case studies, further enhance

students' engagement and understanding, thereby promoting a high level of environmental conservation awareness among them. This findings is in agreement with Salihu (2023) who asserted that Social Studies combines elements of geography, civic education, and environmental studies to equip learners with an understanding of the natural world and its preservation.

Findings from the study in research question three revealed that there is a significant influence of Social Studies on students' attitudes and behaviours towards protecting and preserving their immediate environment. This finding may be due to the fact that Social Studies not only imparts knowledge but also shapes values, attitudes, and behaviours by encouraging students to translate what they learn into practical actions. The subject emphasizes responsible use of resources, respect for nature, and community participation, which directly influence how students perceive and respond to environmental issues. By linking classroom lessons to real-life environmental challenges within their communities, Social Studies helps students internalize conservation principles and adopt positive behaviours such as proper waste disposal, tree planting, and discouraging practices that harm the environment. This findings is in consonance with Echebiri (2023) who asserted that Social Studies instils a sense of personal responsibility by emphasising the close relationship between human survival and environmental health.

Findings from the study in research question four also revealed that some of the challenges students face in developing positive attitudes towards environmental

conservation through Social Studies education include lack of resources, difficulty in following environmental cleanliness rules, poor waste management systems, lack of emphasis on topics bothering on environmental conservation and difficulty in understanding some Social Studies lessons about environmental conservation issues. This finding could be attributed to several contextual and systemic barriers that hinder the effective translation of Social Studies education into positive environmental attitudes and practices. Limited availability of instructional resources such as teaching aids, posters, and practical projects reduces students' ability to connect theory with practice. Similarly, weak enforcement of environmental cleanliness rules and the prevalence of poor waste management systems in schools and communities make it difficult for students to consistently practice what they are taught. In addition, insufficient emphasis on environmental conservation topics within the curriculum, coupled with the complexity of certain lessons, may limit students' comprehension and interest, thereby posing challenges to the development of sustainable attitudes and behaviours. In support of the findings, Umar and Okeke (2023) found out in their study that students faced challenges such as insufficient teacher training in environmental education, poor linkage of Social Studies topics to local issues, and minimal parental or community involvement in conservation activities.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter dealt with the summary of the study, the conclusions drawn, results obtained and recommendations offered.

Summary

The study investigated the influence of Social Studies education on students' attitude towards environment conservation in public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. To achieve the purpose of the study, four research questions were raised and answered. The population for this study was made of all the 5,109 public junior secondary school students in the 12 public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. The sample size for the study was made up of 120 respondents. With the aid of the simple random sampling technique, ten (10) students were selected from each of the 12 public junior secondary schools in the local government area, thus making a total sample size of 120 respondents.

The instrument that was used for the data collection is a structured questionnaire titled "Influence of Social Studies Education on Students' Attitude Towards Environment Conservation Questionnaire (ISSESATECQ)". The constructed questionnaire for the study was presented to the project supervisor and two experts to confirm for content validity. Necessary corrections were made and after which it was re-written before it was administered by the researcher. The questionnaire was the instrument for data collection. The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The researcher made use of descriptive statistics such as mean score and standard deviation as the method of data analysis. The scores above mean of 2.50 was considered high, while scores below mean of 2.50 was considered low.

Findings of the research

Findings from the study include:

- That there is a positive attitude of students towards environment conservation in public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.
- That there is a high extent through which Social Studies promote environmental conservation awareness among students in Egor Local Government Area.
- That there is a significant influence of Social Studies on students' attitudes and behaviours towards protecting and preserving their immediate environment.
- That some of the challenges students face in developing positive attitudes towards environmental conservation through Social Studies education include lack of resources, difficulty in following environmental cleanliness rules, poor waste management systems, lack of emphasis on topics bothering on environmental conservation and difficulty in understanding some Social Studies lessons about environmental conservation issues.

Conclusion

This study examined the influence of Social Studies education on students' attitudes toward environmental conservation in public junior secondary schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State. The findings revealed that Social Studies plays a pivotal role in shaping students' understanding, perception, and sense of responsibility toward the environment. It was established that the subject not only imparts theoretical knowledge but also cultivates practical awareness of the need for environmental

preservation. Students demonstrated a notable improvement in their attitudes and behaviours toward issues such as proper waste disposal, tree planting, and safeguarding natural resources, highlighting the subject's capacity to foster sustainable practices. By integrating environmental themes into its curriculum, Social Studies has proven effective in equipping students with the knowledge and values necessary to address environmental challenges in their communities.

Furthermore, the study concluded that Social Studies significantly promotes environmental conservation awareness among junior secondary school students in Egor Local Government Area. The high extent of its influence underscores the subject's importance in instilling environmental consciousness at an early stage of learning. Students' positive behavioural changes toward their surroundings indicate that Social Studies serves as a transformative tool for building environmentally responsible citizens. The emphasis on environmental education within Social Studies has encouraged learners to take personal and collective action to protect and preserve their immediate environment, thereby contributing to a culture of sustainability. These findings demonstrate that Social Studies education is instrumental in achieving long-term environmental stewardship among young learners.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion drawn, the following recommendations were put forward:

1. Social Studies curriculum should be further enriched with practical activities and case studies on environmental conservation to strengthen students' awareness and participation.
2. Teachers of Social Studies should be provided with regular training and workshops on modern methods of teaching environmental conservation, ensuring that lessons are both engaging and impactful.
3. Schools should introduce environmental conservation projects such as tree planting, recycling programs, and sanitation exercises to give students hands-on experience in protecting their environment.
4. Schools should collaborate with community leaders and organizations to create platforms where students can participate in community-based environmental conservation initiatives.
5. Government and education stakeholders should provide schools with adequate resources, such as instructional materials, posters, and audio-visual aids, to enhance teaching and learning of environmental conservation within Social Studies.

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FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

Dear Respondent,

The questionnaire is designed to investigate the “**Influence of Social Studies Education on Students’ Attitude Towards Environment Conservation in Public Junior Secondary Schools in Egor Local Government Area of Edo State.**” Please fill it out appropriately. Your responses will be kept confidential. Thank you for your time.

Section A: Demographic Data

Sex: Male () Female ()

SECTION B: Data on Questionnaire

Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

Key: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD)

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
	Attitude of Students Towards Environmental Conservation				
1.	Keeping my school surroundings clean is an important personal responsibility				
2.	Disposing of waste properly will help maintain a clean environment around me				
3.	I feel concerned when I see people polluting the school or community environment				
4.	I love engaging in community activities that promote cleanliness of the environment				
5.	Safeguarding the environment is crucial for ensuring a sustainable future for all				
	Role of Social Studies in Promoting Environmental Conservation Awareness Among Students				

6.	Social Studies lessons help students to understand the importance of conserving their environment				
7.	Our attitude of non-maintenance culture affects the environment				
8.	The study of Social Studies has help in creating of awareness about waste management and pollution control in communities				
9.	With the help of Social Studies, I understand the dangers of deforestation and soil erosion				
10.	Social Studies has taught me how to protect water sources from pollution and waste dumping				
	Influence of Social Studies on Students' Attitudes and Behaviours Towards Protecting and Preserving their Immediate Environment				
11.	Social Studies encourages me to take active steps towards protecting my surroundings daily				
12.	I now speak to friends and family about caring for the environment after lessons				
13.	I feel more responsible for keeping public places clean after learning Social Studies topics				
14.	Social Studies has motivated me to join environmental clubs or school cleanliness campaigns				
15.	My behaviour towards waste disposal changed positively because of what I learnt in Social Studies				
	Challenges Students Face in Developing Positive Attitudes Towards Environmental Conservation Through Social Studies education				
16.	Sometimes materials or facilities needed to practise what I learnt about conservation is not available				
17.	I find it difficult to convince my friends to follow environmental cleanliness rules				

18.	Poor waste management systems in my community make it hard to practise environmental protection				
19.	Environmental topics are not taught regularly enough in my Social Studies lessons				
20.	I face challenges in understanding some Social Studies lessons about environmental conservation issues				