

## Chapter 4

# Importance of Gender Inclusiveness in Sustainable Climate Change Education

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This study investigates the importance of gender-inclusive climate change education programs and the challenges involved with designing such curriculum in rural Sindh, Pakistan. The study addresses three research areas: (1) perspectives and consequences of gender inclusivity in climate change education, (2) gender inclusivity's effect the efficacy and success of Sindh's rural climate change education initiatives, and (3) the hurdles to attaining gender equality in sustainable climate change education and its effect on the overall effectiveness of such initiatives. The qualitative research method was applied, and interviews were conducted from eight leading educationist in Pakistan. The findings show that women face various hurdles in climate change education, including restricted access to education, societal norms, and cultural barriers. However, research identifies various tactics and recommendations to improve gender inclusion, such as the promotion of female role models from best practices, the incorporation of gender viewpoints in curricula, as well as programs to empower women.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Despite the growing acknowledgment of the crucial role that education plays in addressing the challenges presented by climate change, the education sector remains underutilized as a strategic resource for effectively tackling and adapting to climate change. Many education stakeholders in various countries have yet to establish a unified and comprehensive framework for climate change education (Anderson, 2012). In order to advance climate change education within the broader context of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) or Climate Change Education for Sustainable Development (CCESD), it becomes imperative to enhance learners' comprehension of the causes and consequences of climate change, as well as foster their willingness to take proactive measures to mitigate its impacts (Gerrard, 2008). Education is widely acknowledged as a vital instrument for achieving sustainability-related goals. As a result, the concepts of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and climate change education have gained significant prominence in academic and policy discourse.

Over the past decade, there has been a substantial surge in interest in climate education. This noteworthy growth can be credited to various factors, including the spreading of increased knowledge and support by leaders involved in climate education programs, as well as the growing awareness of the far-reaching global impacts of climate change across diverse regions. However, climate change education presents a complex and challenging domain, leading researchers to engage in ongoing debates regarding its effectiveness within different operational contexts and populations (Denton et al., 2019).

Despite the growing interest in climate education, misconceptions about the causes and impacts of climate change continue to persist. The level of climate change awareness and understanding varies and is influenced by several factors, such as socio-economic conditions, gender, age, and educational background. According to Chigwanda (2016), education emerges as the most influential predictor of climate change awareness. Therefore, educators play a pivotal role in cultivating this knowledge and promoting climate literacy.

However, it is crucial to recognize that many primary and secondary level educators tend to prioritize the delivery of information rather than focusing on the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which are vital for individuals to effectively address climate change. This neglect of crucial skill-building aspects postures a significant interference to meaningful action and engagement in climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts (Brownlee, Robert, & Jeffery, 2013).

Scholars agree that climate education should be approached differently from teaching techniques employed in other life sciences. This emphasizes the necessity for careful consideration and tailored approaches to ensure the effectiveness of climate

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