

HOW CLIMATE CHANGE IS SHAPING EDUCATION'S FUTURE

by:

Lea Jean A. Espinosa
Teacher I, Pita Elementary School

Climate change has transformed from a far-off danger into a present-day reality affecting our world, particularly in the field of education. With rising temperatures, extreme weather occurrences increase, ecosystems face disruption, and the effects are being felt by schools and students worldwide. From infrastructure issues to changing learning contexts, climate change is having a lasting impact on educational systems, especially in at-risk areas.

A major result is the harm to educational infrastructure. Schools located in regions at risk of flooding, hurricanes, or wildfires frequently face interruptions due to buildings being destroyed or made uninhabitable. For example, in 2020, Cyclone Amphan destroyed numerous schools in India and Bangladesh, causing students to miss vital weeks of education. In the same way, heatwaves and droughts have resulted in reduced school hours or temporary shutdowns, as classrooms turn unsafe or intolerable for students and teachers alike. These disruptions disproportionately impact marginalized groups, worsening existing disparities in access to quality education.

In addition to physical infrastructure, the well-being of students and teachers is also in jeopardy. Stress and anxiety linked to climate issues, commonly called "eco-anxiety," are increasingly common among young students. Research shows that children who experience climate-related disasters might develop post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, or ongoing anxiety, potentially hindering their academic success and emotional health. Moreover, as families encounter financial difficulties from climate

changes, children frequently leave school to contribute to household income, continuing cycles of poverty and restricting future educational prospects.

To address these issues, governments and educational bodies need to emphasize climate resilience in education. This involves creating school buildings that can withstand disasters, incorporating climate change topics into educational programs, and offering mental health assistance to students and teachers. Additionally, creative approaches like e-learning platforms can guarantee the continuation of education during climate crises. Although progress demands considerable investment and teamwork, it is both critical and pressing to equip the upcoming generation for a world affected by climate change. Education is not merely affected by climate change – it can serve as a strong weapon in the struggle for a sustainable future.

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WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EDUCATION AND CLIMATE CHANGE?

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