

## THE IMPACT OF CLIMATE CHANGE ON EDUCATION

by:

**Jerald C. Calma**

*Teacher III, Morong National High School*

A major worldwide concern, climate change has far-reaching effects that go beyond environmental deterioration. Education is one of the most important but frequently disregarded sectors impacted by climate change. Disruptions to education, curriculum modifications, and issues with educational fairness are just a few of the ways that climate change and education interact. With the help of pertinent research, this essay examines the complex effects of climate change on schooling.

The disruption brought on by extreme weather events is one of the most direct consequences of climate change on education. Natural catastrophes like hurricanes, floods, and wildfires can cause schools to close temporarily or permanently, which has a big impact on the educational experiences of the children. An estimated 75 million children and youth around the world are currently not receiving an education because of crises, particularly those made worse by climate change, according to a research published by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2021). These interruptions can have long-term psychological and social repercussions on pupils in addition to impeding their academic achievement.

Educational systems are progressively incorporating climate education into their curricula in response to the growing urgency of climate change. The goal of this change is to give students the information and abilities they need to comprehend and address climate concerns. According to a National Education Association (NEA) research, including climate change subjects in the curriculum promotes critical thinking and equips students to be informed citizens, underscoring the significance of environmental

education (NEA, 2020). However, there are regional differences in the implementation of climate education, which frequently reflect socioeconomic inequities.

Disenfranchised populations are disproportionately impacted by climate change, which exacerbates already-existing educational disparities. Because they are more likely to attend schools in vulnerable places, students from low-income households or under-resourced areas are more vulnerable to disruptions caused by climate change. According to a Brookings Institution analysis, students in underprivileged communities frequently encounter obstacles while trying to obtain high-quality education and the tools they need to adapt to climate change (Brookings Institution, 2019). The accomplishment gap may therefore increase as a result of climate change's ongoing effects on schooling, solidifying socioeconomic inequality.

It is impossible to ignore how climate change affects pupils psychologically. According to research, young people are becoming more and more stressed and anxious about climate change; this is known as "eco-anxiety" (Clayton et al., 2017). Students' focus, drive, and general academic performance may be impacted by this mental health crisis. In the midst of climate-related issues, educators must support students' emotional well-being in addition to academic material.

There are chances for creativity in education despite the difficulties caused by climate change. Communities and schools are working together more and more to create resilience strategies, integrating community service and experiential learning into the curriculum. In addition to improving kids' educational experiences, programs that involve students in neighborhood sustainability projects also help them develop a feeling of agency and environmental responsibility. Building students' and teachers' adaptive capacities requires community engagement, according to a study by the Global Education Monitoring Report (UNESCO, 2020).

Climate change has a significant and complex effect on education, influencing curriculum, equality, and students' mental health in addition to the physical facilities of schools. Policymakers, educators, and communities must prioritize climate education and modify learning environments as the climate crisis worsens in order to guarantee that all students have access to high-quality education. In order to overcome these obstacles, a determined effort must be made to promote adaptation and resilience in the face of uncertainty.

## *References:*

Brookings Institution. (2019). The effects of climate change on education.

Clayton, S., Manning, C., Krygsman, K., & Parris, T. (2017). Mental health and our changing climate: impacts, implications, and guidance. American Psychological Association.

National Education Association (NEA). (2020). Preparing for climate change: A role for educators.

UNESCO. (2020). Global Education Monitoring Report: Inclusion and education.

UNESCO. (2021). Education and climate change: The case for action.