

# The Role of Children's Literature in The Fight Against Climate Change: An Analysis of Selected Children's Art and Poems About Climate Change Around the World

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**Abstract-** *The role of children's literature in the fight against climate change: An analysis of selected children's art and poems about climate change around the world.*

*At this point in history, we are confronted with a cluster of crises, key among them is climate-based catastrophies courtesy of global climate change. It is thus worth noting that the physical world is in crisis. This crisis largely stems from environmental degradation due to modernity. The climate crisis is fundamentally and irreparably reshaping our world, with grave implications for the rights of current and future generations of children. This paper seeks to explore the role of children's art and poetry about climate change around the world. Using ecocriticism theory, the paper investigates the role of children's literature in environmental conservation. The findings of the study underscore the significance of children's art and poetry in conserving our environmental conserving our environment besides contributing knowledge to criticism of children's literature and the environmental conservation. In conclusion, children's literature particularly art and poetry is pivotal in restoring, preserving and conserving our environment.*

**Key words:** *Children's Literature, Restoring Preserving, Environment, Change.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

This paper focuses on the role of children's literature in the fight against climate change. Children's literature about the environment provide creative and imaginative scenarios and solutions that may stimulate young people to consider their own relationship with the environment. Children's literature plays a significant role in fostering environmental conservation by educating young people about nature promoting empathy, and inspiring action. This paper delves into the role of children's poetry and art in the fight against climate change guided by the ecocriticism theory. The study explores children's art and literature collection by

Save the Children. The study analyses poems and drawing dealing with climate change from Save the Children Global collections.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Children have got a significant role in environmental conservation. As a young generation, they have the impetus and the vigour to contribute towards solving global climatic tissues. They are anxious and ready to care for our home, the world as the future belongs to them.

Murphy (2024) records that the current climate crisis is at the top of children and young people's concerns and is being expressed in the form of grief. This statement implies that is quite catastrophic even on children's mind and Murphy seems to call for a concerted effort towards addressing it to avert global crisis related to climate change. Murphy's study relates to proposed study as both deal with the role of children's literature and art in climate change.

Marek and Lara (2021) assert that climate change is not a future threat that we are seeking to avert. Rather, it is a present-day crisis that is already drastically transferring and degrading environment and communities. He further notes that this must be reversible damage to natural ecosystems and the catastrophic exacerbation of existing global inequities.' This study relates to this paper in the sense that both study ways of mitigating devastating climate change. This is necessary to keep our planet habitable.

Arafah, Abbas and Nurul (2021) believe that children's literature is important because it gives readers an understanding of their own culture as it

help students develop emotional intelligence and creativity, it encourages and conveys important messages and themes. In their study, they highlight three environmental awareness for both children and adults.

Romona (2024) examined the role of children's literature in shaping societal values and cultural continuity across generations. His study delved into the evolution of children's literature from traditional tales to contemporary narratives, analysing how classic texts reinforce cultural norms and values. He concluded that children's literature is important on cultural continuity and transformation.

### III. THE ROLE OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AND THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE

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Children's literature has a significant impact on the fight against climate change. The climate crisis is fundamentally and irreparably reshaping our world, with grave implications for the rights of current and future generations of children. They have inherited a problem not of their own making.

This study is cognizant of the significance of children's literature in the fight against ecological disruption in the world. It thus analyses children's art and literature collections from Save the Children to ascertain their role in environmental restoration. To begin with, we take a look at a poem written by Justina, a fifteen-year-old from our collections entitled 'my soul'. In the poem, Justina expresses her disappointment in the manner in which the world treats the environment, our home. Human activities have had a destructive impact on the ecological disruption and change. She records 'my soul is so grieved, my heart so hurt because of the change obstruction, destruction.' The environmental destruction in lines 1, 2 and 3 has left Justina in 'pain'. This pain literary refers to the impacts of

environmental destruction on the lives of human beings and other living things in general. Justina further records that the world discuss climate change in various platforms but seemingly their discussions are mindful of the negative impact the change has on the environment. This is evident in line 3 when she says 'Oh! Climate change, how sweet and lovely is the melody and sound it has, yet the negative impact it has brought on the environment'.

Justina also notes that her generation will not 'seat back and watch' as the environment is damaged and assert that they should actively take a central role in this fight. She says in line 5 'I as a child of this generation, I want to voice out on the impact climate change has brought.'

However, despite her resolve, it has been noted through her poetry that children are given less participation in matters of climate change. The change is brought by human activities leading to catastrophic occurrences such as flooding. This leads to poor concentration on lessons and attendance of school-by-school going children. Arafah and Hasyim (2019) contends that people's intense activities have considerably changed the natural environment due to their intimate relationship to science and technology which can be felt and seen in the era of the industrial revolution. These changes have led to global climatic change that are destructive as evident in lines 6-12. 'This has given children less participation in this nation...poor rains causing drought leading to food shortage...causing hunger on children ...leads to less concentration on lessons on their education...excess rains leading to load shedding giving people, no option but to practice deforestation for charcoal use in the name supplementing electricity.'

In response to the destructive impacts of environment change outlined in the excerpt from the poem above, a strong need is urgently required to encourage people's awareness of the environment. This should be done through offering environmental education. Arafah et al (2020) assert that the works of literature and other disciplines should also take apart to encourage individual's responsibility for the natural environment through the use of existing motifs, themes, and values available in such works. It thus the aforementioned reason that Justina offers

environmental education through his poem as evident in the lines cited.

Justina challenges us that if we are the causers of all the outlined problems, we can be the solvers. To proof his assertion, he passionately appeals for decision makers to take afforestation into consideration as well as raising awareness on climate change and children's participation to the inaction, because it is part of their responsibility. Evidently, lines 14-20 substantiates the above school of thought as seen in this excerpt. 'If we can be causers, we can be solvers..take afforestation into consideration..raise awareness on climate change on climate change and children's participation to the nation.' Conclusively, Justina implores everyone to take an active role in providing solutions to the global environmental problems.

In the poem 'Protect me with green' by Neha, the poet fondly remembers the happy times she ones witnessed while growing up in the greeny mountain, a mountain once covered with shady thick forest. These were times when food for survival was in plenty and the poet giggled with joy whenever she saw a toddler running after a butterfly.

The poet cautions that the joyous time could soon become a treasured memory very soon if no one bothers to protect the environment. This can only be realized if more trees are planted to make the environment green. Andi and Arafah (2017) while commenting on environmental issue note that a strong need is urgently required to encourage people's awareness of the environment. Cognizant of this, the poet in the poem 'protect me with green' calls for urgent intervention to save the environment by planting trees to keep the environment green.

In art work, 'Today 's world' a drawing by Anum portrays two faces of earth in the universe, how it is and how it should be. The drawing shows Earth's condition due to toxic gases polluted water and industrial waste is shown in contrast to the beauty of nature along with better living for all beings, with fresh air, pure water and greenery.' According to Arafah et al (2019), art and literature can be employed as reliable instruments to foster environmental responsibility and awareness among

individuals. This school of thought is applied by Anum in educating individuals on the need to keep the universal safe, free from pollution as evident in the drawing 1.

In art work 2, 'Global Heating' a drawing by Yurisha creates awareness about pollution, climate change and encourage people to Save the earth by decreasing pollution. Arafah et al (2021: 1) people's activities have considerably changed the natural environment due to their intimate relationship to science and technology which can mainly be felt and seen in the era of industrial revolution. Yurisha in art work 2 painting creates awareness about global warming due to industrial waste released into the atmosphere encouraging people to protect the environment by avoiding release of the gases.

In art work 3 'Climate change and life of a royal Bengal Tiger' a painting by Mustofa notes that global climate change is causing environmental pollution and the effects of climate change are being felt in nature. In the painting, a Royal Bengal Tiger is in prison-bound frame, it is caged. The Sunderbans of Bangladesh is the home to the Royal Bengal Tiger. The greenery 'the trees of the Sunderbans are being damaged to meet human's needs. This reduces the amount of oxygen produced and the amount of carbon dioxide in the air increases. The lives of the Royal Bengal Tiger, a precious part of our heritage, is under threat. In this picture, the Bengal Tiger is looking for greenery, wanting to get out of the prison bound frame because he cannot live there if anything continues as they are the royal Bengal Tiger species will be lost from earth.

#### IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

A comparative study on the role of children's literature versus adult literature on environmental conservation is recommended.

#### V. CONCLUSION

Children's literature and art are vital in the fight against climate change. They convey many environmental lessons to increase awareness of environmental issues in both children and adults. The findings of this study is not only places faith in the

Child to restore, preserve or heal the damage done to the Earth, but also reflects the contemporary positioning of young people as global climate activists. Evidently, the findings underscore the rationale behind the role of children's literature and art in the fight against climate change their age notwithstanding. From the findings, we realize that art and literature especially poetry can be employed as reliable instruments to foster environmental responsibility and awareness among children and adults.

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