Abstract

Climate change poses an existential threat to our planet, requiring comprehensive and effective education strategies to foster awareness, understanding, and action among the global population. This is particularly so in Africa, one of the continents most vulnerable to climate change. This paper examines the current state of climate change education in Africa, assessing the provisions available and the unmet needs. Drawing on a survey of academic staff and university administrators from several African countries and a structured review of climate change education initiatives in 20 African universities, this exploratory study identifies areas where climate change education is being integrated and documents examples of institutional practice. Respondents also report significant gaps and challenges, such as regional disparities, insufficient teacher training, lack of interdisciplinary approaches, and limited access to resources, particularly in rural communities. The study combines descriptive survey statistics, a thematic analysis of open-ended responses and a document-based review of institutional initiatives. Respondents perceive a growing inclusion of climate change topics in university curricula, but consider the depth and quality of provision to be uneven. Many respondents consider that programmes focus primarily on the scientific aspects of climate change, often neglecting its social, economic, and political dimensions. Such a narrow focus may limit students' ability to grasp the multifaceted nature of climate change and may hamper the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary for addressing this complex issue. The findings point to a need for professional development opportunities for African educators to enhance their understanding and teaching of climate change topics. It also calls for greater interdisciplinary collaboration to create holistic and relevant educational content. The paper concludes with recommendations for policymakers, educational institutions, and international organisations to strengthen climate change education, advocating for policies that support equitable access to high-quality resources and promote an integrated, action-oriented approach.