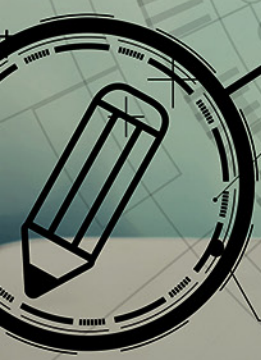
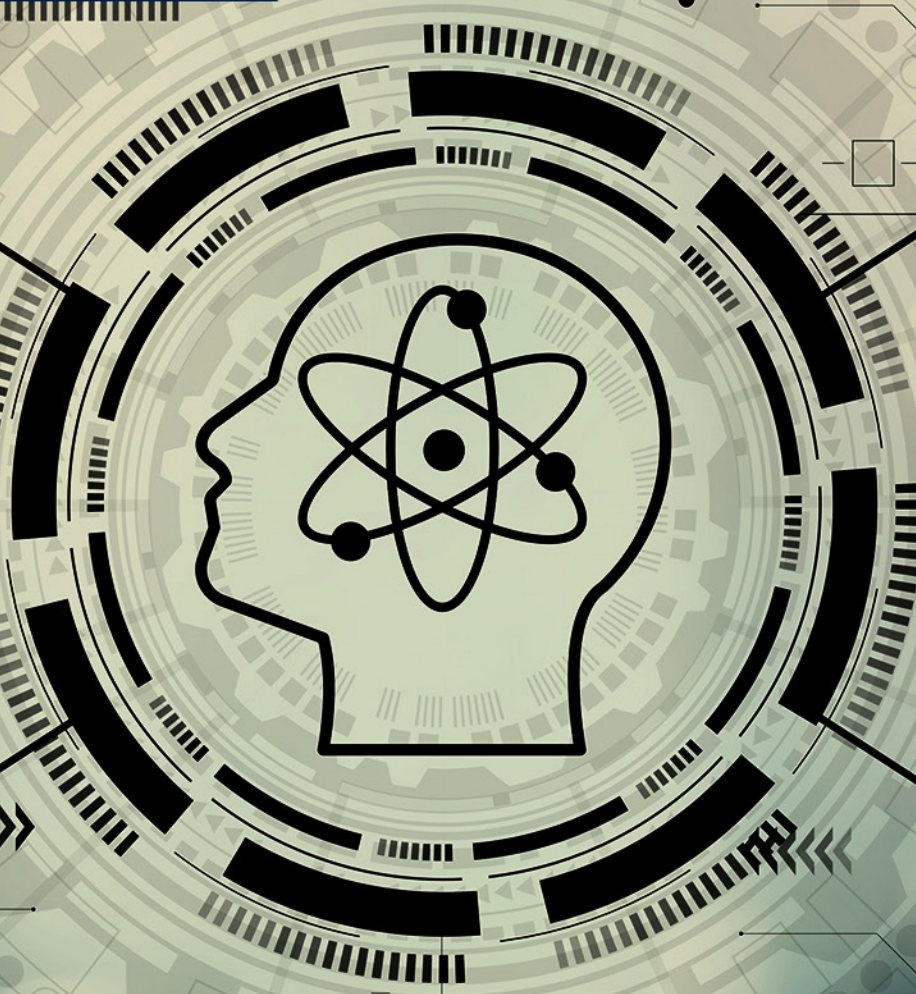




CIPRIANI COLLEGE
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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGY PEDAGOGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE: IMPACT ON EDUCATION IN THE CARIBBEAN

The climate crisis arguably represents the biggest existential problem facing the planet posing as it does, a significant risk to planetary sustainability and to human and non-human forms of life. The scale of the environmental crisis is magnified by global warming's interaction with a host of other social, economic, and political factors, thereby heightening or 'multiplying' the risk of poverty, disease, food insecurity, political instability, and conflict. Whereas some commentators controversially argue that a climate apocalypse is unavoidable, others maintain that there is still a small window of opportunity to act to avert total climate chaos and question the usefulness of so-called 'doomsday scenarios' where global warming is concerned.

My friends, climate change is here to stay because of greed and not need. The planet is weeping today because of man's indiscriminate use of fossil fuels. I am taking this short introduction, and my intention is to link it to psychology, education, pedagogy, and climate change. It is imperative that in the Caribbean, education is key to advancing sustainable development and human rights. Education has a critical role to play in ensuring climate change. Higher education curriculum forms part of a broader response to the global effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to prevent further catastrophic climate scenarios.

Despite the severity of the risks associated with the climate crisis, both personal and political responses to global warming have been wholly inadequate. Whereas some people are constructively channeling the difficult emotions that the ecological crisis arouses by participating in collective climate action, environmental degradation has met with complacency, apathy, indifference, and inertia amongst many others, particularly amongst those who have been shielded from its catastrophic effects.

The psychological and emotional challenges associated with enabling learners to apprehend their role in, and vulnerability to, the evolving climate crisis are daunting. Global warming is arguably one of the most cognitively as well as emotionally complex topics for learners or members of the public to comprehend. Given the emergent nature of climate change, many educators are unsure about how best to enable students and citizens to navigate the complex emotions that they experience in response to their proximity to, and responsibility for, a myriad of injustices and envi-

ronmental catastrophes associated with global warming.

Interactive social spaces including schools, the family, and social media platforms comprise emotional hotspots wherein strong affective responses to global warming are evoked. On social media, for example, aggression, rage, and hostility have been levelled against climate activists by conservative white males for whom any perceived threat to their traditional masculine identity, social position and 'fossil-soaked lifestyles' triggers a range of defensive behaviours such as against the LGBTQ community.

Socio-cultural, economic, and perceptual factors interact to shape people's engagement with the climate crisis. The psychological and emotional dynamics of the climate catastrophe and related injustices, as well as the possibilities that effective engagement with climate change afford, merit exploration considering the limitations associated with a purely knowledge-based approach to alleviating the climate crisis. While conscious of the limits of pedagogy including limits to teaching and to knowing- as well as the need to avoid positioning education as a panacea to social problems, we need to engage in conversation nationally, regionally and internationally as a means of trying to find effective solutions.

The conceptual framework advanced above has attempted to illuminate the circumstances under which Caribbean people can move beyond disabling emotions and psychological states that prevent them from taking climate-related action that is in their own interest and the long-term interest of planetary survival. At the heart of this conceptual framework learners must acknowledge their role as 'implicated subjects' in modes of violence and injustice that are often routine, insidious, or difficult to apprehend and that intersect with, and produce, a host of other global crises.

While conscious of the limits of pedagogy and the need to avoid positioning education as a panacea to social problems, we need to advance a psychosocial model that engages productively with climate-related emotions that might otherwise be disabling and that directly confronts socially sanctioned forms of denial and ignorance. This approach is vital to the broader public response to the climate crisis.

Traditional pedagogy postulated a desire for knowledge, and analytically-informed pedagogy has to reckon

on with 'the passion for ignorance'. Ignorance, in other words, is nothing other than a desire to ignore: its nature is less cognitive than performative and is not a simple lack of information, but the incapacity or the refusal to acknowledge one's own implication in the information. Teaching, like analysis, must deal not so much with a lack of knowledge as with resistance to such knowledge.

Pedagogically speaking, this demands that we confront socially sanctioned forms of denial and ignorance that are central to the human condition with a view to embedding self-reflexivity and emotional self-awareness within the pedagogical encounter. As such, 'the self-reflexivity of implicated subjects is not sufficient for the construction of durable solidarities, but it remains a necessary component of coalition building'.

Dr. V. Smith
Fellow, CCLCS