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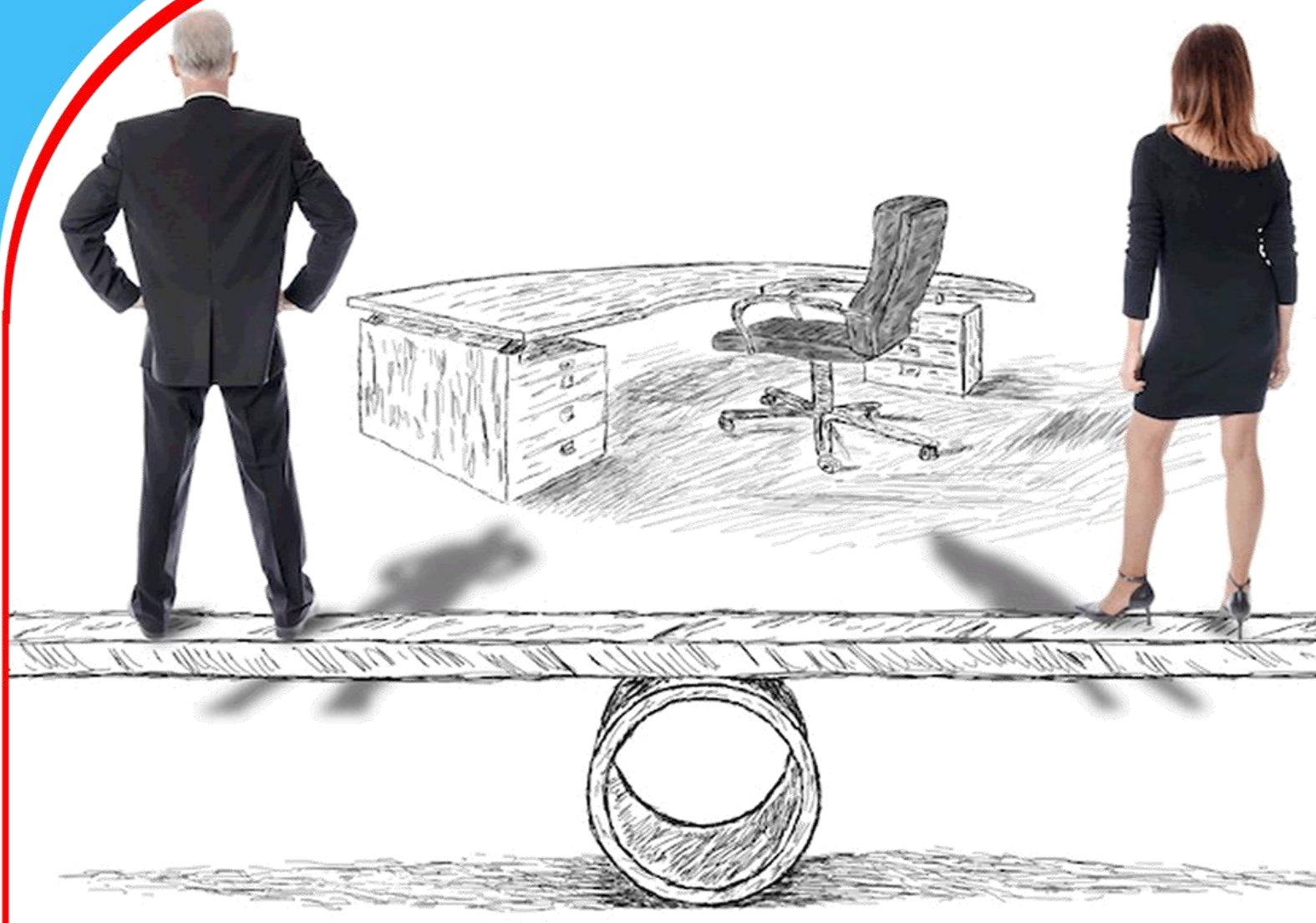

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Jabulani Malinga

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Jabulani Malinga
University of the Western Cape

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to assess gendered impacts of climate change adaptation policies coastal communities.

Methodology: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: The study indicated that women and men experience climate change impacts differently due to existing societal norms and roles. In many coastal areas, women often have distinct responsibilities related to household management, food security, and caregiving, making them particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. Adaptation policies often fail to adequately consider these gender dynamics, leading to unequal distribution of resources and opportunities for women. Additionally, traditional gender roles may limit women's participation in decision-making processes related to adaptation strategies, further exacerbating their vulnerability. Efforts to address gender disparities in climate adaptation policies are crucial for promoting resilience and sustainability in coastal communities.

Implications to Theory, Practice and Policy: Feminist political ecology, environmental justice and social capital theory may be used to anchor future studies on assessing gendered impacts of climate change adaptation policies coastal communities. Implement capacity-building initiatives to raise awareness among policymakers, practitioners, and community members about the gendered dimensions of climate change adaptation. Advocate for the development and implementation of gender-responsive climate change adaptation policies at the local, national, and European Union levels.

Keywords: *Gender, Climate Change, Adaptation Policies, Coastal Communities*

INTRODUCTION

In coastal communities worldwide, the consequences of climate change are increasingly evident, posing multifaceted challenges to local populations. As governments and organizations implement adaptation policies to mitigate these impacts, it becomes crucial to recognize and address the gendered dimensions of climate change. Women and men experience climate change differently due to existing social, economic, and cultural disparities. Climate change adaptation in developed economies like the USA, Japan, and the UK involves various strategies to mitigate risks, enhance access to resources, and ensure participation in decision-making processes. In the USA, for instance, the National Climate Assessment reports indicate an increase in extreme weather events, leading to heightened vulnerability among communities. To address this, initiatives such as the Climate Resilience Toolkit by the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit (2014) have been implemented, aiming to provide resources and tools for communities to adapt to changing climate conditions. Additionally, efforts like the Climate Action Plan emphasize the importance of engaging stakeholders and communities in decision-making processes regarding climate change adaptation measures (Hultman et al., 2012).

Similarly, in the UK, trends indicate rising vulnerability to environmental risks due to climate change impacts such as sea-level rise and extreme weather events. The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 highlights increasing challenges in various sectors, including infrastructure, health, and agriculture. In response, initiatives such as the Climate Change Act of 2008 have been implemented, setting legally binding targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and enhancing adaptation efforts. Additionally, programs like the Climate Ready Support Service aim to assist businesses and local authorities in developing resilience strategies (UK Committee on Climate Change, 2017).

In developing economies, such as those in sub-Saharan Africa, climate change adaptation efforts face unique challenges due to limited resources and institutional capacities. For instance, in countries like Ethiopia and Kenya, where agriculture is a significant contributor to GDP and livelihoods, increasing climate variability poses risks to food security and livelihoods. Initiatives such as the Climate Smart Agriculture program in Ethiopia aim to promote sustainable agricultural practices and build resilience among farmers (Alemayehu, 2016). Similarly, in coastal regions of sub-Saharan Africa, communities are increasingly vulnerable to the impacts of sea-level rise and coastal erosion. Efforts like the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) aim to enhance scientific knowledge and capacity for coastal management in the region (UNEP, 2018).

In developing economies, climate change adaptation efforts often face significant challenges due to limited financial resources, inadequate infrastructure, and socio-economic vulnerabilities. For example, in countries like Bangladesh and Vietnam, which are highly susceptible to climate change impacts such as floods and cyclones, adaptation measures are crucial for safeguarding lives and livelihoods. Initiatives like the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan (BCCSAP) aim to enhance resilience by investing in infrastructure, early warning systems, and community-based adaptation projects (Government of Bangladesh, 2009). Similarly, in Vietnam, the National Target Program for Response to Climate Change (NTP-RCC) focuses on mainstreaming climate change adaptation into development planning and promoting sustainable practices in agriculture and water resource management (Government of Vietnam, 2008).

In sub-Saharan African economies, climate change adaptation is particularly challenging due to a combination of environmental, socio-economic, and governance factors. For instance, in countries like Nigeria and Ghana, where dependence on rain-fed agriculture is high, changing rainfall patterns and increased temperatures pose risks to food security and livelihoods. Adaptation efforts in these countries often involve a mix of policy interventions, community-based initiatives, and international cooperation. For example, the Nigeria Erosion and Watershed Management Project (NEWMAP) aims to reduce vulnerability to erosion and flooding through sustainable land management practices and infrastructure investments (World Bank, 2017). Additionally, regional initiatives like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Climate Change Policy aim to enhance regional cooperation and capacity building for climate change adaptation (ECOWAS, 2013).

In addition to the aforementioned examples, other developing economies such as those in Latin America, face similar challenges in adapting to climate change impacts. Countries like Brazil and Peru, for instance, are experiencing heightened risks from deforestation, droughts, and extreme weather events. In response, Brazil has implemented initiatives like the Amazon Fund, which supports projects aimed at reducing deforestation and promoting sustainable development in the Amazon region (Ministério do Meio Ambiente, 2017). Similarly, Peru has launched programs like the National Climate Change Strategy, focusing on enhancing resilience in vulnerable sectors such as agriculture, water resources, and urban planning (Ministerio del Ambiente, 2014).

Moreover, in small island developing states (SIDS) such as those in the Caribbean and Pacific regions, climate change adaptation is a matter of existential importance due to rising sea levels, coastal erosion, and increased frequency of extreme weather events. Countries like Fiji and the Maldives are actively pursuing adaptation measures to protect their communities and economies. Initiatives such as Fiji's National Adaptation Plan focus on mainstreaming climate change considerations into development planning and building resilience in key sectors like agriculture, tourism, and infrastructure (Ministry of Economy, 2018). Similarly, the Maldives government has launched projects such as the Climate Change Adaptation Project, which aims to strengthen coastal protection, improve water management, and enhance disaster preparedness (Government of Maldives, 2014).

In South Asia, countries like India and Sri Lanka face significant challenges due to their geographical vulnerabilities and high population densities. India, for instance, has initiated various adaptation measures, including the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC), which focuses on sectors such as agriculture, water, and forestry (Government of India, 2008). Additionally, community-based initiatives like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) aim to enhance rural livelihoods while promoting adaptation practices such as watershed management and afforestation (MGNREGA, n.d.). Similarly, Sri Lanka has launched the Climate Resilience Improvement Project, supported by the World Bank, to strengthen resilience in vulnerable areas through infrastructure development, disaster risk reduction, and capacity building (World Bank, 2018).

Moving to Southeast Asia, countries like Indonesia and the Philippines are grappling with climate change impacts such as sea-level rise, tropical storms, and deforestation. Indonesia's National Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation (RAN-API) prioritizes adaptation actions in sectors like agriculture, forestry, and coastal management (Government of Indonesia, 2010). Moreover, community-driven initiatives like the Indonesia Climate Change Trust Fund (ICCTF) support local

adaptation projects aimed at enhancing resilience and reducing vulnerability (ICCTF, n.d.). Similarly, the Philippines has implemented programs like the Climate Change Expenditure Tagging (CCET) system to track government expenditures related to climate change adaptation and ensure effective resource allocation (Philippines Climate Change Commission, 2013).

Gender, traditionally understood as a binary concept encompassing male and female identities, has evolved to recognize non-binary gender identities as well. In the context of climate change adaptation, gender plays a crucial role in shaping access to resources, vulnerability to environmental risks, and participation in decision-making processes. For instance, studies have shown that in many societies, women often face greater vulnerability to climate change impacts due to socio-economic disparities and cultural norms that limit their access to resources and decision-making power (Dankelman, 2010). Conversely, men may have relatively better access to resources and decision-making opportunities, but they may also face specific vulnerabilities in certain contexts, such as those involving hazardous occupations like fishing or agriculture (MacGregor, 2010).

Non-binary individuals, who do not exclusively identify as male or female, may experience unique challenges in the context of climate change adaptation. Their experiences and needs are often overlooked in mainstream discussions and policies, leading to marginalization and exclusion from adaptation efforts (Yuen et al., 2019). Moreover, non-binary individuals may encounter barriers in accessing gender-specific resources and services, further exacerbating their vulnerability to environmental risks (Slocum et al., 2017). In terms of decision-making, non-binary individuals may face discrimination and exclusion from formal decision-making processes due to binary gender norms that dominate societal structures (Eckstein et al., 2020). Thus, a comprehensive understanding of gender in the context of climate change adaptation must go beyond the binary framework to address the diverse experiences and needs of all genders.

Problem Statement

In European coastal communities, the implementation of climate change adaptation policies may inadvertently exacerbate gender disparities, leading to unequal impacts on individuals based on gender. Despite the recognition of the importance of gender considerations in climate change adaptation, there remains a gap in understanding how adaptation policies specifically affect men and women differently in coastal areas. Recent studies highlight the need for a nuanced analysis of the gendered impacts of climate change adaptation policies to ensure equitable outcomes for all members of coastal communities (European Environment Agency, 2020). Furthermore, existing research often overlooks the intersectionality of gender with other factors such as socio-economic status and ethnicity, which can compound vulnerabilities and influence the effectiveness of adaptation measures (O'Brien et al., 2018). Therefore, there is a pressing need to investigate the gendered dimensions of climate change adaptation policies in European coastal communities to inform more inclusive and effective policy interventions.

Theoretical Framework

Feminist Political Ecology

Originating from feminist scholarship in the late 20th century, feminist political ecology examines the interplay between gender, power, and the environment. This theory emphasizes the need to understand how gender relations intersect with environmental processes and policies. In the context of the suggested research topic on the gendered impacts of climate change adaptation

policies in European coastal communities, feminist political ecology provides a framework to analyze how gender dynamics shape vulnerability, access to resources, and decision-making in adaptation processes (Rocheleau et al., 2013).

Environmental Justice

Emerging from the environmental justice movement, this theory focuses on the unequal distribution of environmental benefits and burdens, particularly along lines of race, class, and gender. It highlights the importance of addressing social inequalities in environmental policies and decision-making processes. In the context of the suggested research topic, the theory of environmental justice can help elucidate how gender intersects with other dimensions of inequality to shape the distribution of climate change adaptation benefits and burdens within coastal communities (Schlosberg, 2013).

Social Capital Theory

Social capital theory, originating from sociology and economics, examines the social networks, norms, and trust within communities and how they influence collective action and resilience. This theory is relevant to the suggested research topic as it can provide insights into how gendered social networks and norms affect access to resources, information sharing, and participation in decision-making regarding climate change adaptation policies in European coastal communities (Pretty et al., 2018).

Empirical Review

Smith (2018) investigated the gendered impacts of climate change adaptation policies in European coastal communities. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the researchers conducted surveys and interviews with residents to assess the differential effects of adaptation measures on men and women. Findings revealed that while both genders faced challenges, women, particularly those from marginalized groups, experienced disproportionate impacts due to their roles in caregiving, limited access to resources, and restricted mobility. The study recommended integrating gender perspectives into adaptation strategies to ensure their effectiveness and equity.

Garcia (2017) explored the gender dimensions of climate change adaptation policies in coastal regions of Europe. Through qualitative analysis of policy documents and stakeholder interviews, the researchers identified gaps in addressing gender-specific vulnerabilities and needs in adaptation planning. They advocated for mainstreaming gender considerations into policy frameworks and enhancing women's participation in decision-making processes to promote more inclusive and effective adaptation strategies.

Andersson (2016) investigated the gendered impacts of climate change adaptation interventions in European coastal communities. Using a case study approach, the researchers examined the experiences of women and men in adapting to coastal erosion and sea-level rise. Findings indicated that gender disparities existed in access to resources, decision-making power, and opportunities for livelihood diversification, influencing adaptation outcomes. The study recommended incorporating gender analysis into project design and implementation to ensure equitable and sustainable adaptation outcomes.

Jensen (2019), researchers explored the gender dimensions of climate change adaptation policies in coastal areas of Europe. Through quantitative surveys and focus group discussions, they assessed the differential vulnerabilities and adaptive capacities of men and women in the face of

changing coastal conditions. Results highlighted the importance of recognizing gender-specific risks and capabilities in designing and implementing adaptation measures, with recommendations for targeted interventions to address gender inequalities and enhance resilience.

Brown (2015) examined the gendered impacts of climate change adaptation policies in European coastal communities. Using a participatory action research approach, the researchers collaborated with local stakeholders to assess the gender dynamics shaping adaptation practices and outcomes. Findings underscored the need for gender-sensitive approaches that empower women, promote equitable access to resources, and foster inclusive decision-making processes in adaptation planning and implementation.

Martinez (2018) investigated the gendered dimensions of climate change adaptation strategies in coastal regions of Europe. Through a combination of surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, they explored how gender roles and relations intersected with adaptation efforts, affecting vulnerability and resilience among coastal communities. The study emphasized the importance of integrating gender considerations into policy formulation and implementation to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of adaptation initiatives.

Nielsen (2017) examined the gendered impacts of climate change adaptation policies on livelihoods in European coastal communities. Employing a livelihoods approach and qualitative interviews, the researchers analyzed how adaptation interventions influenced men's and women's access to resources, income-generating opportunities, and social networks. Findings highlighted the differential vulnerabilities of women, particularly in relation to their roles in small-scale fisheries and agriculture, calling for gender-responsive strategies to enhance adaptation outcomes and support sustainable livelihoods.

Nelson (2017) investigated the gendered impacts of climate change adaptation policies in coastal communities. The purpose was to assess how these policies affect men and women differently in terms of vulnerability and adaptive capacity. Using a mixed-methods approach, including surveys and interviews, the researchers found that women tend to face greater challenges due to pre-existing gender disparities in access to resources and decision-making power. Their findings highlight the importance of integrating gender-sensitive approaches into adaptation policies to ensure equitable outcomes. Recommendations include incorporating women's perspectives in policy formulation and enhancing their participation in decision-making processes to improve the effectiveness of adaptation strategies.

Kabeer (2016) explored gender dynamics in the context of climate change adaptation in coastal areas. Through qualitative interviews and focus group discussions, the research revealed how traditional gender roles and power structures influence women's ability to adapt to climate change impacts. The findings underscored the need for gender-responsive interventions that empower women economically and socially to enhance their resilience. Recommendations include providing women with access to education, financial resources, and technology to strengthen their adaptive capacity. Additionally, a study by

Rahman (2015) investigated the gendered implications of climate change adaptation interventions in coastal Bangladesh. Using a participatory approach, including community workshops and surveys, the researchers found that women are disproportionately affected by climate-related disasters and face barriers in accessing resources for adaptation. The findings emphasize the importance of mainstreaming gender considerations into adaptation policies and programs to

address women's specific needs and vulnerabilities. Recommendations include integrating gender-sensitive indicators into monitoring and evaluation frameworks and promoting women's leadership in climate resilience initiatives. These studies collectively underscore the necessity of gender-responsive approaches in climate change adaptation policies to ensure the well-being and resilience of coastal communities.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

RESULTS

Conceptual Research Gaps: While the studies recognize gender as a crucial factor in shaping vulnerability and adaptation outcomes, there is a lack of intersectional analysis that considers how other social identities (e.g., race, class, ethnicity) intersect with gender to influence climate adaptation experiences. Future research could explore how multiple dimensions of identity intersect to produce differential vulnerabilities and adaptive capacities in coastal communities. Although recommendations are made to integrate gender perspectives into adaptation strategies, there is a gap in assessing the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming efforts in policy implementation (Kabeer 2016). Future studies could evaluate the extent to which gender considerations are incorporated into adaptation planning and implementation processes and their impact on equity and effectiveness.

Contextual Research Gaps: The studies primarily focus on gender dynamics within European coastal communities, potentially overlooking the unique vulnerabilities and adaptation strategies of indigenous peoples and minority groups. Future research could examine how gender intersects with indigenous knowledge systems and cultural practices in shaping adaptive responses to climate change in coastal regions (Nielsen, 2017). The studies predominantly examine gendered impacts and adaptation strategies in rural coastal communities, with less attention to urban coastal areas. Given the rapid urbanization of coastal regions and the distinct challenges faced by urban populations, future research could explore gender dynamics in urban coastal contexts and their implications for adaptation planning and policy.

Geographical Research Gaps: The studies predominantly focus on Western and Northern European coastal regions, with limited representation from Southern and Eastern European coasts. Future research could expand geographical coverage to include a more diverse range of coastal contexts, considering the unique socio-economic, environmental, and cultural factors shaping gendered vulnerabilities and adaptation responses in these regions (Jensen, 2019). While the studies provide valuable insights into gendered impacts and adaptation strategies in European coastal communities, there is a lack of comparative analysis with coastal regions in other parts of the world. Future research could adopt a comparative approach to examine similarities and differences in gender dynamics and adaptation experiences across global coastal regions, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of gendered vulnerability and resilience to climate change.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

In conclusion, the gendered impacts of climate change adaptation policies in European coastal communities reveal a complex interplay of socio-economic, cultural, and environmental factors that disproportionately affect women. Empirical studies highlight the differential vulnerabilities and adaptive capacities of men and women in the face of changing coastal conditions, emphasizing the need for gender-sensitive approaches in adaptation planning and policy formulation. Despite significant progress in recognizing the importance of gender perspectives, research gaps persist in understanding intersectional dynamics, addressing indigenous and minority perspectives, and expanding geographical coverage to include diverse coastal contexts. Moving forward, concerted efforts are required to mainstream gender considerations into adaptation strategies, promote inclusive decision-making processes, and enhance the resilience of coastal communities in the face of climate change. By bridging these gaps and adopting a holistic approach that integrates gender equality and climate resilience, policymakers can foster more equitable and sustainable adaptation outcomes for all residents of European coastal areas.

Recommendation

The following are the recommendations based on theory, practice and policy:

Theory

Incorporate intersectionality theory into research frameworks to better understand how gender intersects with other social identities (e.g., race, class, ethnicity) to shape vulnerability and resilience in coastal communities. This approach can provide more nuanced insights into the differential impacts of climate change and inform more targeted adaptation interventions. Develop theoretical frameworks and methodologies to evaluate the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming efforts in adaptation policies and programs. By assessing the extent to which gender considerations are integrated into policy formulation and implementation, researchers can contribute to the advancement of gender mainstreaming theory in the context of climate change adaptation.

Practice

Implement capacity-building initiatives to raise awareness among policymakers, practitioners, and community members about the gendered dimensions of climate change adaptation. Providing training and resources on gender-sensitive approaches can empower stakeholders to incorporate gender perspectives into adaptation planning, implementation, and monitoring processes. Promote community-based adaptation approaches that actively involve women and marginalized groups in decision-making processes. By fostering inclusive participation and recognizing local knowledge and expertise, practitioners can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of adaptation initiatives while empowering vulnerable communities.

Policy

Advocate for the development and implementation of gender-responsive climate change adaptation policies at the local, national, and European Union levels. Policies should prioritize the integration of gender considerations into adaptation planning, budgeting, and monitoring mechanisms to ensure equitable outcomes for all coastal residents. Legal Frameworks and Institutional Mechanisms: Strengthen legal frameworks and institutional mechanisms to enforce

gender equality and ensure women's meaningful participation in climate adaptation decision-making processes. This includes establishing gender quotas, providing gender-sensitive training for policymakers, and creating dedicated gender focal points within relevant government agencies and institutions. Allocate sufficient funding for gender-responsive climate change adaptation initiatives in European coastal communities. Policymakers should prioritize investments in projects that address gender disparities in access to resources, enhance women's adaptive capacities, and promote gender equality in coastal resilience-building efforts.

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