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INVESTIGATING HOW GEOGRAPHY EDUCATION CAN FOSTER ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING SKILLS IN STUDENTS, PARTICULARLY IN THE CONTEXT OF ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIAL ISSUES

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Abstract

Geography education plays a vital role in shaping students' capacity to confront pressing environmental and social challenges through ethical reasoning and responsible decision-making. By examining spatial interconnections, human-environment dynamics, and sustainability concerns, geography encourages learners to reflect on the moral dimensions of real-world issues. Ethical decision-making in this context involves evaluating competing interests, anticipating long-term consequences, and considering justice, equity, and sustainability. This paper investigates how geography education can cultivate these ethical skills, particularly in addressing environmental social issues such as climate change, land degradation, waste management, urban sprawl, and resource exploitation. Drawing on insights from environmental education, geography pedagogy, and ethical theory, the study highlights how geographical inquiry fosters empathy, critical thinking, value-based judgment, and civic responsibility. Ultimately, geography emerges not only as a tool for understanding the world but also as a discipline that equips learners with the ethical competencies necessary for building sustainable futures.

Keywords: *geography education, ethical decision-making, environmental social issues, sustainability, environmental ethics*

Introduction

The world today faces profound and interlinked environmental and social challenges, climate change, deforestation, biodiversity loss, rapid urbanization, pollution, and resource depletion all of which raise pressing ethical questions about justice, equity, and sustainability. These issues demand responses that are not only scientific and technical but also moral and value-driven. As such, education must extend beyond the transmission of knowledge to the cultivation of ethical reasoning and responsible citizenship. Within this context, geography as a discipline assumes a unique and strategic role. Its focus on spatial thinking, place-based analysis, and human-environment relationships enables learners to develop a holistic perspective on the moral consequences of human actions. Geography education provides opportunities for students to examine how decisions regarding land use, urban planning, industrialization, and resource exploitation affect people, places, and ecosystems differently. By integrating knowledge of physical systems with an understanding of cultural, economic, and political processes, geography fosters a type of ethical awareness that is grounded in real-world contexts. For example, teaching about deforestation in the Amazon or desertification in northern Nigeria is not merely about ecological processes; it also involves grappling with questions of livelihood, indigenous rights, intergenerational equity, and global responsibility. Importantly, geography employs pedagogical strategies such as inquiry-based learning, fieldwork, simulations, and case studies, which encourage learners to critically evaluate evidence, consider multiple perspectives, and anticipate the consequences of decisions. This process nurtures ethical decision-making skills by requiring students to weigh competing values, such as economic development versus environmental protection, or individual freedom versus community well-being. It also promotes empathy by helping learners appreciate diverse cultural viewpoints and the uneven impacts of environmental change. This paper therefore investigates the ways geography education fosters ethical decision-making, with a particular focus on environmental social issues. It draws attention to the pedagogical and theoretical underpinnings that allow geography to bridge the cognitive (knowledge), affective (values and emotions), and moral (ethics and responsibility) dimensions of learning. By situating geography at the intersection of environmental science and moral education, the paper argues that geography classrooms can serve as transformative spaces where learners acquire not only intellectual competence but also the ethical sensibilities needed to navigate the complexities of a rapidly changing world.

Conceptualizing Ethical Decision-Making in Geography Education

Ethical decision-making in education goes beyond personal morality; it involves cultivating the intellectual, emotional, and value-driven capacities necessary to make informed and responsible choices in complex contexts. Within geography education, ethical decision-making requires students to critically engage with issues that cut across space, environment, society, and future generations. Rest (1986), describes ethical decision-making as a process that involves moral sensitivity (recognizing ethical issues), moral judgment (evaluating what is right), moral motivation (prioritizing ethical values over personal gain), and moral character

(the courage to act on ethical decisions). Applied to geography, this framework translates into how learners perceive, analyze, and respond to environmental and social dilemmas.

Ethical Reasoning in Spatial Contexts

In geography, ethical reasoning often involves examining spatial inequalities and power relations. For instance, the unequal distribution of resources between urban and rural areas, or between developed and developing countries, raises moral questions about justice, fairness, and responsibility. Students learn to consider how climate change disproportionately affects poorer communities or how industrial activities in one region may generate environmental costs for another. Geography thereby provides a lens through which learners see the global implications of local actions, emphasizing interconnectedness and shared responsibility.

Powerful Knowledge and Ethical Competence

Lambert and Hopkin (2014), emphasize the role of geography in delivering "powerful knowledge," which extends beyond surface-level facts to include conceptual tools for analyzing and questioning the world. In this sense, geography education develops students' ability to:

- Critically interrogate environmental and social dilemmas.
- Balance economic, social, and ecological considerations when assessing human actions.
- Envision alternative, more sustainable futures.

Through this framework, students acquire not only cognitive skills but also ethical dispositions such as empathy, fairness, and accountability. These skills empower them to question dominant narratives, recognize marginalized voices, and act responsibly in both local and global contexts.

Responsibility to Future Generations

A key aspect of ethical decision-making in geography education is intergenerational responsibility. Students are encouraged to think about the long-term impacts of today's choices on future societies and ecosystems. For example, decisions about land use, urban planning, or energy production are not only immediate technical concerns but also moral questions about sustainability and equity across time. By situating ethical inquiry within temporal as well as spatial dimensions, geography fosters a sense of stewardship that extends beyond the present generation.

Geography Education and Environmental Social Issues

Environmental social issues provide practical, real-world contexts where ethical reasoning is both necessary and unavoidable. By engaging with these issues, geography students learn to see environmental challenges not simply as scientific or technical problems, but as deeply moral dilemmas involving competing interests, justice, and human well-being.

Key Environmental Social Issues in Geography Education

Some of the recurring issues in geography curricula that demand ethical engagement include:

- **Deforestation**: Raising questions about biodiversity conservation, indigenous rights, and economic development.
- **Desertification**: Highlighting the vulnerability of communities in arid and semi-arid regions, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.
- **Urbanization**: Raising ethical debates about housing, social inequality, and environmental sustainability in rapidly growing cities.
- **Waste Management**: Addressing issues of environmental justice, such as the disproportionate siting of landfills in poor neighborhoods.
- **Resource Conflicts**: Exploring disputes over water, land, oil, and minerals, which often involve questions of fairness, equity, and peace.

Each of these themes provides fertile ground for integrating ethical inquiry into geographical learning.

Climate Justice and Equity

One of the most significant ethical debates embedded in geography education is climate justice. Climate change has global consequences, but its impacts are unevenly distributed, disproportionately affecting vulnerable populations in the Global South. For example, rising sea levels threaten coastal communities in Nigeria and Bangladesh, while prolonged droughts devastate agricultural livelihoods in the Sahel. As O'Brien and Selboe (2015) argue, teaching about climate change must go hand in hand with discussing justice, fairness, and shared responsibility. Geography classrooms therefore encourage students to examine the ethical implications of climate policies, international agreements, and adaptation strategies.

Case Studies as Ethical Learning Tools

Case studies are an effective pedagogical tool for situating abstract ethical concepts in concrete realities. For instance:

- **Water Scarcity in Sub-Saharan Africa**: Students are tasked with considering the competing needs of agriculture, industry, and households, weighing the principles of fairness, sustainability, and efficiency (Raworth, 2017).
- **Oil Exploration in the Niger Delta**: Learners examine the environmental degradation, economic benefits, and social injustices associated with oil extraction, prompting reflection on the trade-offs between development and environmental responsibility.
- **Urban Waste in Lagos or Nairobi**: Students explore how poor waste management exacerbates health risks in marginalized communities, raising questions of environmental justice and governance.

Such case studies not only provide factual knowledge but also demand that learners grapple with ethical trade-offs, question power dynamics, and propose solutions that balance human needs with environmental sustainability.

Linking Knowledge with Action

Ultimately, geography education does more than expose students to environmental social issues, it empowers them to envision and pursue ethical action. By combining critical thinking with empathy and civic responsibility, learners can apply classroom knowledge to real-world problem-solving, whether through community projects, advocacy, or personal lifestyle choices. In this way, geography becomes a transformative discipline that equips learners not only to understand the world but also to shape it ethically and sustainably.

Pedagogical Approaches to Fostering Ethical Skills in Geography

Teaching ethics within geography requires more than delivering factual content about environmental and social issues; it demands intentional pedagogical strategies that stimulate critical reflection, empathy, and value-based reasoning. Geography educators employ diverse methods ranging from fieldwork to critical pedagogy and the explicit integration of environmental ethics to ensure students move beyond abstract knowledge into practical and moral engagement.

Fieldwork and Experiential Learning

Fieldwork is a cornerstone of geography education because it situates learning in authentic contexts where ethical dilemmas are visible and tangible. As Fuller et al. (2006) note, outdoor experiential activities enable learners to connect theory with lived realities. For instance, when students examine the causes and impacts of river pollution in their locality, they are not only collecting data but also confronting ethical questions about accountability, justice, and the right to a clean environment.

Experiential learning allows students to:

- Observe how environmental degradation disproportionately affects marginalized groups.
- Analyze competing land-use priorities such as agriculture, housing, and industrial expansion.
- Reflect on their personal roles and responsibilities as community members.

In this way, fieldwork transforms abstract ethical principles into lived experiences, sharpening students' awareness of how decisions impact both society and the environment.

Critical Pedagogy and Inquiry-Based Learning

Another powerful strategy is **critical pedagogy**, which emphasizes questioning dominant narratives, uncovering hidden power structures, and engaging learners in transformative

dialogue (Giroux, 2011). Geography lends itself well to this approach because environmental and social issues are inherently shaped by politics, economics, and power relations.

Through debates, role-play, and inquiry-based projects, students are encouraged to:

- Examine who benefits and who suffers from environmental policies or land-use decisions.
- Weigh the ethical implications of development versus conservation.
- Consider the perspectives of vulnerable groups such as farmers, slum dwellers, or indigenous peoples.

For example, a classroom debate on urban expansion could assign students roles as government officials, local residents, environmental activists, and business investors. Such exercises challenge learners to grapple with multiple perspectives, practice empathy, and recognize the ethical trade-offs inherent in policy-making.

Integration of Environmental Ethics into Curriculum

A deliberate integration of **environmental ethics** within geography curricula helps students bridge cognitive knowledge with moral responsibility. Sterling (2010), argues for transformative learning that links ecological awareness with moral values, enabling learners to rethink the purposes of education in light of sustainability. By embedding principles such as stewardship, intergenerational justice, and ecological balance into classroom discussions, geography educators empower students to see themselves as moral agents capable of shaping sustainable futures. For instance:

- Lessons on renewable energy can incorporate ethical debates about equity in access to clean technologies.
- Teaching about deforestation can include discussions on indigenous rights and biodiversity preservation.
- Climate change modules can highlight responsibilities toward future generations and non-human life forms.

Such integration ensures that ethical reasoning is not treated as an optional add-on but as a central component of geographical understanding and decision-making.

The Role of Geography in Building Responsible Citizenship

The ultimate goal of fostering ethical decision-making in geography education is to prepare students for **responsible global and local citizenship**. Geography, by its very nature, situates learners in a web of spatial and social interconnections, encouraging them to think critically about their responsibilities within local communities as well as the wider global society.

Linking Ethics to Citizenship Education

Ethical reasoning in geography extends beyond classroom exercises into the cultivation of civic values. Students learn that environmental and social challenges are not isolated but interconnected, requiring cooperation, fairness, and solidarity. For example, understanding the global dynamics of climate change also reveals responsibilities for local actions such as reducing waste, conserving water, or engaging in community-based environmental initiatives. UNESCO (2017), underscores the importance of **Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)** in equipping learners with the knowledge, values, and skills to contribute to more just and sustainable societies. Geography aligns strongly with ESD by combining critical inquiry with ethical reflection, thereby preparing learners to act responsibly as informed citizens (Obizue, Enomah & Onyebu, 2025).

Justice, Solidarity, and Stewardship

Through geographical inquiry, students are introduced to three key dimensions of responsible citizenship:

- **Justice**: Recognizing inequalities in environmental impacts and advocating for fairness in the distribution of resources.
- **Solidarity**: Developing empathy and cooperation with both local and global communities affected by environmental change.
- **Stewardship**: Accepting responsibility for the care and sustainable management of natural resources for present and future generations.

For example, studying water scarcity in sub-Saharan Africa invites learners to appreciate not only the technical aspects of water management but also the ethical duty of global solidarity in addressing shared challenges.

Active Participation and Civic Engagement

Geography also encourages learners to translate ethical awareness into action. Civic engagement activities such as community mapping projects, environmental campaigns, or local clean-up initiatives allow students to apply classroom learning in practical ways. Such activities nurture agency, demonstrating that ethical decision-making is not abstract but grounded in everyday choices and collective action. By linking local responsibilities with global concerns, geography fosters a **sense of global citizenship**, where students recognize that their actions, however small, are part of a broader effort toward environmental justice and sustainability.

Implications

The integration of ethical decision-making into geography education has far-reaching implications for pedagogy, policy, and society. This section discusses how geography classrooms can serve as transformative spaces for ethical learning, the challenges and tensions

that may arise, and the broader implications for sustainable development and citizenship education.

Geography as a Moral and Intellectual Discipline

Traditionally, geography has been seen as a subject concerned with places, spaces, and environmental processes. However, when viewed through the lens of ethics, geography emerges as both a **moral** and an **intellectual discipline**. Its focus on interconnectedness allows learners to see the consequences of human actions across different scales; local, national, and global. This spatial awareness fosters empathy and responsibility, which are essential for ethical reasoning. For instance, studying the effects of industrial pollution in Port Harcourt's Niger Delta not only teaches about environmental degradation but also compels students to question corporate accountability, government regulation, and the rights of local communities. Thus, geography education extends beyond knowledge acquisition to ethical interrogation and value-based judgment.

Implications for Pedagogical Practice

Embedding ethics into geography has significant implications for how teachers design and deliver lessons. Pedagogy must be:

- **Participatory**: Involving learners actively through debates, simulations, and projects where they encounter ethical dilemmas.
- **Critical**: Encouraging students to challenge dominant discourses about development, globalization, or environmental management.
- **Interdisciplinary**: Drawing from philosophy, sociology, economics, and environmental studies to enrich ethical perspectives.

For example, teaching about climate change cannot stop at the science of greenhouse gases; it must also interrogate who contributes most to emissions, who suffers most from its impacts, and what justice means in global climate agreements. This creates a more holistic and transformative classroom experience.

Building Ethical Competencies for Sustainable Development

One of the most important implications is the alignment of geography education with the global agenda of **sustainable development**. Ethical decision-making is central to achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly goals related to climate action, reduced inequalities, sustainable cities, and responsible consumption. By engaging with real-world dilemmas, geography education develops competencies such as:

- **Critical Thinking**: The ability to analyze environmental issues from multiple perspectives.
- **Empathy**: Understanding the experiences of vulnerable populations affected by environmental change.

- **Value-Based Reasoning**: Balancing economic, ecological, and social priorities in decision-making.
- **Agency**: Empowering students to translate ethical reasoning into action at community and policy levels.

These competencies prepare learners to be not only knowledgeable but also morally responsible actors in society.

Tensions and Dilemmas in Practice

Despite its potential, the integration of ethics into geography education is not without challenges. Teachers and students often confront dilemmas such as:

- **Balancing Objectivity and Values**: While geography aims to remain a scientific discipline, ethical discussions inevitably involve subjective judgments and cultural values. Teachers must navigate this tension carefully.
- **Conflicting Perspectives**: Students may bring diverse cultural, religious, or political viewpoints into the classroom, making consensus on ethical issues difficult. For example, debates on oil exploitation in Nigeria may divide learners along economic versus environmental lines.
- **Curriculum Constraints**: Standardized curricula often prioritize factual knowledge over ethical reflection, leaving limited time and space for deeper discussions of moral implications.

These tensions highlight the need for teacher training, curriculum reform, and supportive policies that recognize ethics as integral to geography learning.

Implications for Citizenship and Policy

Beyond the classroom, geography education that emphasizes ethical decision-making contributes to building **active, responsible citizens**. Students trained to critically assess environmental and social issues are better equipped to participate in civic life, advocate for justice, and hold leaders accountable. On a policy level, integrating ethics into geography supports national and international goals of fostering democratic participation, environmental stewardship, and social cohesion. For African contexts such as Nigeria, where resource conflicts, urbanization pressures, and climate vulnerabilities are acute, geography education can serve as a strategic tool for nurturing citizens capable of making responsible choices for sustainable futures.

Challenges and Limitations

While geography education has immense potential to cultivate ethical decision-making skills, its practical application is constrained by several challenges and limitations. These issues span curriculum design, pedagogical practice, institutional support, and societal contexts.

Understanding these challenges is critical for strengthening the role of geography in fostering ethical awareness and responsible citizenship.

Curriculum and Policy Constraints

One of the foremost challenges is the structure of existing curricula. In many education systems, geography is presented primarily as a knowledge-based subject, focusing on physical processes, map reading, or location facts, while downplaying its ethical and moral dimensions. As a result:

- Ethical reasoning is often treated as a peripheral theme rather than a central learning outcome.
- Teachers feel pressured to "cover the syllabus" for examinations, leaving little room for reflective discussions about values and ethics.
- National education policies may emphasize science and technology for economic growth while neglecting the moral dimensions of environmental issues.

This rigid curricular framework limits the integration of ethical perspectives into geography lessons.

Teacher Preparedness and Pedagogical Skills

The effectiveness of teaching ethics in geography largely depends on teachers' capacity to facilitate critical dialogue and manage sensitive issues. However, many teachers face challenges such as:

- **Lack of Training**: Few teacher education programs explicitly prepare geography teachers to handle ethical debates in the classroom.
- **Personal Bias**: Teachers may unconsciously impose their own cultural, political, or religious values, which can compromise balanced ethical inquiry.
- **Classroom Management**: Ethical discussions often generate disagreement, requiring teachers to mediate conflicting perspectives constructively.

Without adequate professional development, teachers may avoid or oversimplify ethical issues, weakening the transformative potential of geography education.

Resource and Logistical Limitations

Fieldwork and experiential learning, which are vital for connecting ethical theory with lived realities, are frequently hindered by logistical barriers:

- **Financial Costs**: Organizing field trips requires funds for transportation, materials, and safety provisions, which are often unavailable in underfunded schools.

- **Infrastructure Deficits**: In many Nigerian and African schools, inadequate facilities limit access to modern teaching tools such as GIS, digital mapping, and environmental monitoring technologies.
- **Safety Concerns**: In some regions, insecurity or environmental hazards prevent students from conducting meaningful fieldwork in local communities.

These limitations reduce students' opportunities for first-hand engagement with ethical dilemmas.

Cultural and Political Sensitivities

Geography education inevitably deals with issues that intersect with cultural values, politics, and identity. This creates challenges such as:

- **Cultural Resistance**: Some communities may view discussions on gender equity, climate change, or indigenous rights as controversial or conflicting with local traditions.
- **Political Pressures**: Environmental issues such as oil exploration in the Niger Delta or deforestation in the Congo Basin involve powerful stakeholders. Teachers may feel constrained from encouraging open critique due to fear of political repercussions.
- **Value Diversity**: Students bring diverse worldviews into the classroom, making it difficult to establish common ground in ethical debates.

Navigating these sensitivities requires careful, inclusive teaching strategies to avoid polarization or alienation.

Student Engagement and Cognitive Challenges

Not all students find ethical discussions accessible or engaging. Common barriers include:

- **Abstractness of Ethics**: Some learners may struggle to connect ethical principles to concrete realities, especially when lessons remain theoretical.
- **Examination Orientation**: In contexts where education is heavily exam-driven, students may undervalue ethical reflection since it does not directly translate into test scores.
- **Limited Empathy Development**: Building empathy for distant or marginalized communities requires deliberate pedagogical scaffolding, which is not always provided.

These challenges reduce the effectiveness of geography in fostering deep ethical competencies.

Research and Evaluation Gaps

Finally, there is limited research and systematic evaluation of how geography education contributes to ethical decision-making, especially in African contexts. Much of the literature is concentrated in Europe and North America, with relatively fewer empirical studies from Nigeria, Ghana, or other African countries. This creates a gap in:

- Evidence-based strategies tailored to local realities.
- Comparative data on how geography fosters ethics across cultural settings.
- Assessment tools for measuring students' ethical growth in geography education.

Without robust research, policies and pedagogies risk being based on assumptions rather than evidence.

Solutions to the Challenges of Fostering Ethical Decision-Making in Geography Education

Addressing the challenges in fostering ethical decision-making in geography education requires a holistic and multi-dimensional approach that involves curriculum reform, teacher capacity-building, technological innovation, and institutional support.

Curriculum Integration and Policy Support

A key solution lies in embedding ethical reasoning and environmental justice themes directly into geography curricula. National education policies should prioritize sustainability and citizenship education so that ethical inquiry becomes a central learning outcome rather than a peripheral theme (UNESCO, 2017). This ensures that learners encounter ethical dilemmas systematically through case studies, problem-solving activities, and cross-disciplinary projects.

Teacher Training and Professional Development

Teachers play a critical role in guiding students through complex ethical issues. Therefore, capacity-building programs must equip educators with pedagogical tools for facilitating discussions on sensitive environmental and social dilemmas. Professional development that emphasizes inquiry-based learning, critical pedagogy, and environmental ethics has been shown to enhance teachers' ability to foster ethical reasoning in classrooms (Wals, 2020; Barth et al., 2016).

Resource Provision and Technological Innovation

Financial and logistical constraints can be addressed by leveraging affordable technological tools such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS), remote sensing applications, and virtual fieldwork platforms. These resources help simulate real-world ethical scenarios when physical fieldwork is not feasible, allowing students to critically evaluate human-environment interactions (Favier & Van der Schee, 2014). Open educational resources and locally relevant case studies can also reduce dependence on expensive materials.

Promoting Inclusive and Context-Specific Approaches

Solutions must also reflect local realities. In African contexts, integrating indigenous knowledge systems into geography teaching fosters cultural relevance and promotes ethical perspectives rooted in community-based sustainability (Akinola, 2021). By combining scientific knowledge with indigenous practices, students are exposed to diverse ways of reasoning about environmental justice and responsibility.

Collaborative Partnerships and Support Systems

Partnerships between schools, universities, NGOs, and local communities can provide experiential opportunities for learners. Programs that link geography education with real-world environmental initiatives enable students to actively engage in problem-solving while cultivating ethical responsibility (Tilbury, 2011). Such collaborations also reduce institutional isolation and provide teachers with external support networks. Overcoming these challenges demands systemic reforms that integrate ethics into curricula, empower teachers, utilize technology, embrace local contexts, and foster multi-stakeholder collaborations. These strategies collectively contribute to producing ethically aware citizens equipped to make responsible decisions for sustainable futures.

Conclusion

Geography education plays a crucial role in shaping students' values, perspectives, and ethical reasoning, particularly when confronted with complex environmental and social challenges. Through its interdisciplinary nature, geography provides a unique lens for learners to examine the interconnectedness of human activities, natural systems, and societal well-being. By emphasizing inquiry-based learning, place-based education, and critical engagement with sustainability issues, geography can help students develop the ethical competence needed to navigate dilemmas such as climate change, deforestation, urbanization, and resource exploitation. This capacity for ethical decision-making is not only vital for personal growth but also for building societies that prioritize justice, equity, and environmental stewardship (Sterling, 2010; Lotz-Sisitka, 2017). However, while solutions have been proposed to strengthen geography's role in ethical education, deliberate recommendations are required to ensure its effective integration into teaching and learning systems. These recommendations go beyond immediate solutions and provide broader strategies for sustainability in geography education.

Recommendations

1. There is a need for a **systematic reorientation of teacher training institutions** to emphasize value-based and ethical competencies. Pre-service and in-service training should not only cover sustainability knowledge but also encourage educators to embody and model ethical practices in their pedagogy. This creates a ripple effect where teachers themselves become agents of ethical change (Tilbury, 2011).
2. **Curriculum frameworks should be designed with long-term ethical literacy in mind**, moving beyond simply embedding environmental topics. This involves incorporating ethical reasoning frameworks, moral dilemmas, and cross-cultural perspectives into the geography curriculum. Such integration enables learners to view environmental problems not only as scientific or economic issues but also as moral questions requiring fairness, accountability, and responsibility (Chawla & Cushing, 2007).

3. **Greater emphasis should be placed on fostering civic responsibility through community engagement projects**. Geography education should encourage students to engage in real-world action such as environmental campaigns, conservation programs, or local sustainability initiatives. These projects provide practical opportunities for learners to practice ethical reasoning in decision-making while directly contributing to sustainable development goals (UNESCO, 2017).

4. **Educational policymakers and governments must institutionalize support for ethical geography education** by providing funding, resources, and enabling policies. Without political will and financial investment, efforts at the classroom level may remain fragmented. Institutional commitment ensures that ethics in geography is not treated as an "add-on" but as an integral part of national education strategies (Adejuwon, 2012).

5. There is a need for **interdisciplinary and cross-sector collaboration**. Partnerships between educators, NGOs, environmental agencies, and community stakeholders can strengthen the link between classroom learning and societal challenges. Such collaborations ensure that students' ethical learning is situated within real-world contexts, making geography education transformative rather than theoretical (Ojong, 2021). In summary, geography education has immense potential to shape ethically aware and socially responsible individuals. With deliberate integration of ethics into teaching, curriculum, and policy, supported by collaboration and civic engagement, it can prepare students to act wisely in the face of today's pressing environmental and social issues.

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