

Young People in Times of Crises

Young People in Times of Crises:

Global Revelations and Social Change

Edited by

Susan Eriksson and Alexis Buettgen

Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing



Young People in Times of Crises: Global Revelations and Social Change

Edited by Susan Eriksson and Alexis Buettgen

This book first published 2025

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2025 by Susan Eriksson, Alexis Buettgen and contributors

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN: 978-1-0364-4711-3

ISBN (Ebook): 978-1-0364-4712-0

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgements	x
List of Tables and Illustrations	xii
Introduction	1
<i>Susan Eriksson and Alexis Buettgen</i>	
Intersectional differences in inequities between young people	
Young people and the intersectional essence of unjust world	
Overview of the book	
 The Caretta Paradox: Tourism, Economic Interests, and Environmental Awareness in Zakynthos' Marine Park	 12
<i>Ioannis Alexandrou</i>	
Introduction	
Qualitative research method	
<i>Area of study</i>	
<i>Research questions</i>	
Definition for Marine Protected Areas	
Ecological and Socio-Economic Outcomes	
The Role of an MPA: Informing the Public	
Environmental Awareness and Ecological Behaviour	
Determinants of Environmentalism	
Measuring Environmental Awareness	
<i>Inconsistencies</i>	
Thinking and Doing	
Findings: Limited knowledge of general principles	
<i>Knowledge about Zakynthos</i>	
<i>Local Environmental Awareness</i>	
<i>Island Behaviour and "Ownership"</i>	
Measuring Ecological Behaviour in the context of Zakynthos and its MPA	
Conclusion	
References	

Young People Responding to Multiple “Crises”: Intersecting Precarities and Everyday Life in an Informal Settlement in Kenya	43
<i>Natascha Mueller-Hirth and Stephen Vertigans</i>	

Introduction
Informality
Youth
Resilience
Research Context
Crises, intersecting precarities and everyday life in informal settings
Methodology
Experiences and Consequences of COVID – 19 in Korogocho
Economic impacts
Educational impacts
Health and social impacts
Gender impacts
Compounding “crises” of environmental and climate change
Responding to multiple “crises”
<i>Community gardens and urban farming</i>
<i>The People’s Park</i>
<i>Other initiatives</i>
Conclusion
References

Engaging and Resisting the Law During The COVID-19 Pandemic: Young People’s Production of Legality through Class and Gender.....	69
<i>Isabella Quadrelli and Anna Uboldi</i>	

Introduction
Theoretical Framework
Methodology
Results and Discussion
<i>The ethics of solidarity</i>
<i>Mariel and Luca's experiences</i>
<i>Class, gender, and law: Luca</i>
<i>Class, gender, and law: Mariel</i>
The individualistic contestation
<i>Class, gender, and law: Riccardo</i>
<i>Class, gender and law: Margot</i>
Final discussion: gender, class, and the contingency of action contexts
Conclusions
References

Open Arms and Closed Opportunity: Life Post Invasion for Young Ukrainian Women in Spain	95
--	----

Daniel Briggs

Introduction	
Ukrainian exodus and welcome to Europe	
Hosting Ukrainians in Spain	
Trauma	
Rejection of the ‘refugee’ label	
Idealised hope: Servant of the People	
Work, study and cultural integration	
Prestigious hope, empty promises – Masha	
Between the nooks and crannies	
No escape from precarity	
Discussion	
Conclusion	
References	

Young Finnish-Russian Dual Citizens and Sailing on Two Boats at the Sea of International Politics since the Beginning of the Russo-Ukrainian War	130
--	-----

Kari Saari, Jussi Ronkainen and Marko Kananen

Introduction	
Theoretical framework	
Data and Methodology	
Young people’s reality of impacts of recent politics of Finland and Russia on their status as dual citizens	
<i>Meaningless accounts</i>	
<i>Rational/Practical accounts</i>	
<i>Emotional/personal accounts</i>	
Conclusion	
References	

The Student Movement for Justice in Gaza.....	157
---	-----

Marie Kortam

The globalisation of the Palestinian solidarity movement	
Social Justice activists against injustice	
Political consciousness, engagement, and the student movement	
The trigger of mobilisation	
The Protest solidarity movement	
Online/offline engagement	

Conclusion	
References	
Digitalization: A New String in the Tangle of Social Inequalities?.....	179
<i>Päivi Armila, Sari Tuuva-Hongisto and Kristiina Korjonen-Kuusipuro</i>	
Introduction	
Conceptual and methodological boundaries of the study	
Analysis: Social differences of digital agencies:	
<i>The target population and its characteristics</i>	
<i>Digital devices, digital activities, and digital agency</i>	
Concluding remarks	
Acknowledgements	
References	
Digital Capital and Participation of Youth with Disability –	
Intersections of Citizenship	199
<i>Susan Eriksson</i>	
Digital capital as a theoretical framework	
Digital capital of persons with disabilities	
Methods used in data collection and analytical framework	
For studies and personal pleasure: digital everyday life for young	
people with mobility impairments	
iPad and assistive devices – the various roles of digital practices in the	
lives of young people with profound intellectual and multiple	
disabilities	
Digital lives for young people with disabilities – limitless opportunities	
in institutional structures	
References	
Innovation and Inclusion at Secondary School:	
Exploratory Research in Italian and Finnish Schools	221
<i>Matteo Di Pietrantonio</i>	
Introduction	
Can innovative schools also be inclusive? A summary of the main	
theoretical references	
<i>Innovative Learning Environments (ILEs)</i>	
<i>Innovative Learning Environments in Italy</i>	
<i>Innovative Learning Environments in Finland</i>	
Integration of formal and non-formal education	
Recognition of Non-Formal Learning and Youth Work	
The research	

Reflection on the data
 Some critical elements
 Conclusion
 References

Conclusion: Young People Amidst the Polycrisis - From the Global to the Local.....	261
<i>Alexis Buettgen and Susan Eriksson</i>	
Young people and the polycrisis	
Key Reflections and Learnings From this Book	
Ecological Perspectives on the Global Polycrisis: Impacts and Influences on Young People	
Tempered Hope for the Future	
Concluding remarks	
References	
Author Biographies	275

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The book is comprised of research papers presented at an international convention held at South-Eastern Finland University of Applied Sciences, in Mikkeli, Finland on 28th-31st March 2023. It was the second world convention arranged by (In)justice International Research Collective. (In)Justice International, of which we (the editors of this collection) are a part, represents a multidisciplinary global collective of like-minded scholars, practitioners, advocates, and activists. Our aim is to uncover, expose and publicize injustices/atrocities committed against the environment, Indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, refugees, disabled people, the so-called ‘troublesome’ or ‘at-risk’ youth and people from poorer class backgrounds. Injustices inflicted against gender ‘difference’ is also an important consideration.

This book is the third (3rd) collection of (In)justice International Series of academic articles published between 2023-2025. We dedicate this collection to the founder of (In)Justice International – Dr. Simon Prideaux, who was an Associate Professor at the University of Leeds, UK. Over the course of his career, he wrote widely in the fields of social policy, sociology, disability studies and crime with a particular interest in comparative access policy, welfare discourses, conditionality, and political ideologies. Before his death in 2023, Simon brought the contributors of this collection together to advance innovative collaborative thinking between established and emerging leaders from separate disciplines to work in complementarity with one another to explain and address the reasons why—whether it be good or bad—society and/or the economic environment has come to be in the condition that it is. Genocide, war, class, gender, social exclusion, (institutional) discrimination and racism, migration, (social) media influence and public perception/actions are prominent aspects of our dissemination process in a dedicated opposition to (anti)social injustice.

We also want to thank all the amazing authors and contributors to this book. We greatly appreciate your critical thought and reflection, and quick responses to our invitations and inquiries. We thank you for sharing your insights, intrigue, and knowledge to co-create this provocative collection of writing. We appreciate your recognition, amplification and respect for the

power and potential of young people. Thank you for your collective efforts to build solidarity for transformative social, political, and economic change.

We also want to sincerely thank our publisher, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, and particularly Adam Rummens, for the guidance and patience as we compiled these texts and conducted a thorough peer and editorial review process. Thank you to our peer reviewers and copy editors for your careful and considerate reading of this collection. This has indeed been a team effort, and we are grateful for all your support and co-operation.

The editors

LIST OF TABLES AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure. 2-1: Map of the protected beaches that form the NMPZ (Marine Turtle Newsletter, 2001)

Table. 2-1: Adapted from Kokkinen, 2013

Figure. 2-2: Example of a pamphlet given out by the NMPZ, NECCA 2020)

Figure. 3-1: Research phases and participants

Figure. 4-1. Photo stimulus introducing the section "friends and intimate relationships".

Figure. 4-2. Photostimulus introducing the final section "Anti-Covid regulation".

Table. 6-1. Key background information of the respondent (n=194) in the survey

Table. 6-2. Multi-nationality orientations and their features

Table. 6-3. Young peoples' views on their status in Finland and Russia in the era of new international politics in the survey 2016

Table. 6-4. Summary on key quantitative and qualitative findings of the study

Table. 8-1. Perceived family income level (distribution of perceptions).

Figure.8-1. Perceptions of the positiveness of views of one's own future (medians among genders).

Table. 8-2. Connections between the perceived family income and positive views of one's own future.

Figure. 8-1. Variables chosen for the principal component analysis.

Figure. 8-3. Connection between perceived family income and positive digital agency.

Figure. 8-4. Connection between gender and positive digital agency.

Table. 8-3. Cumulative “goodness” in young people’s lives.

Figure.8-5. Gender differences in responses to *mandatory digital agency*.

Figure. 10–1. Open space "Launeen monitoimitalo Lähde" (Lahti, Finland)

Figure. 10-2. Open space "Kalliolan Koulu" (Hollola, Finland)

Figure 10-3. What is Youth Work?

Figure.10-4. Example of Learning Landscape in Finnish Schools

Figure.10-5. Example of Learning Landscape in Finnish Schools

Figure. 10-6. Class 1, cooperative learning setting

Figure. 10-7. Class 2, traditional setting

Figure. 10-8. Class 3, traditional setting

Table. 10-1. International recommendations concerning the recognition of non-formal learning.

Figure. 11-1. The ecological metaphor adapted from (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2005)

Figure. 11-2. Image of a dreamcatcher in sunlight. Dreamcatchers are handmade willow hoops woven to a web or net. They are a form of armor and protection, symbolizing oneness, and indicative of Indigenous identity.

INTRODUCTION

SUSAN ERIKSSON AND ALEXIS BUETTGEN

“All that is solid, melts into air”, “declared Karl Marx in his Communist Manifesto, referring to rapid and profound change, in which the capitalist society is subject to constant transformation affecting institutions, social relations, values, and beliefs. Since then, it has been an iconic slogan of modernization, often quoted by later social theorists describing the consequences of these processes on cultures and societies, especially as characteristics of late modernity (Berman 1971; Beck, Giddens & Lash 1994). Basically, it has been argued that the crucial signifiers of late modern era are the rupturing traditional social structures and weakening ties, and the post-modern individual is free to choose how to live a life. Gender, family, religion, employment, or social class do not determine the life course of an individual in ways as in the traditional communities of early modernity.

Centuries after Marx’s declaration, the process of modernization has still intensified by triggering, and being triggered by other developments of social change. Having a vast impact on people, one of the most poignant is rapid globalization changing international finances and trade, political and security systems, and cultural and welfare policies. In accordance, it has created new interdependencies, and consequently new tensions between the societies. As social knowledge has evolved along with these developments, there is presently a strong understanding amongst the scientists on that these early theories of a post-modern individual apply only to Western welfare realm.

Within decolonial perspectives and feminist anthropology, it has been acknowledged that there are several parts in the world, where the social status and citizenship of a person is determined by powerful social structures based on family, education, employment, and social rank, and by individual difference, such as age, gender, and state of health. These attributions set strong constraints on how to live a life. A child is not always privileged to be born as an individual, free to choose the future.

As for young people, freedom to choose is one of the most appraised social rights in the modern world, but it doesn't mean the same things to all. Some struggle with inferior position in the society due to their religious beliefs, some to their gender, affecting the opportunities for education, some to disability, being dehumanized in their communities, and some of poverty, unable to struggle out of the social rank. Many have been forced to leave their homes because of war, famine, or climate disasters, and being a refugee means inferior social status in the receiving country.

Furtherly in global scale, many interdependencies continue to change. Process of globalization doesn't only involve changes that affect everyone, but also brings on the responsibility to cope with the effects of global crises. In the times of climate change, pandemic, warfare and unexpected military actions, the position of young people has changed drastically due to deepening social polarization, being the major consequence of these crises. Basic rights of children and young people to safety, shelter, health, or nutrition are not cared for in all societies, and due to this, it is impossible for many young people to escape to a safer country to seek for better living conditions.

This anthology of articles is a collective effort to reveal the actual realities of young people facing global crises and the effects of social change being amplified or reinforced by them. By illuminating the realities of contemporary youth in circumstances, on which the crises have vast impact affecting their daily lives and living conditions, we provide topical knowledge on the position of young people in the present, uncertain world. Scholars contributing to this book work in different fields of social sciences, each presenting from a particular angle the effects of inequity between young people struggling in the crisis zones.

Intersectional differences in inequities between young people

Climate disasters and war destroy infrastructure, homes, and means of living, and cause poverty, famine, and massive migration. Pandemics have caused inequality in the society, as they have amplified the social polarization between the societies that have sufficient financial means for survival, and those suffering of massive poverty. Global crises have a vast impact on youth in various parts of the world and their prospects of future.

Deepening social polarization and widening gaps in wellbeing between Global North and Global South have been the major structural effects of these crises on youth. Many of those living in poverty or unsafe country have not had choices other than to migrate. Those who have stayed, are affected by worsened living conditions, such as lack of paid work and deteriorating health care and education. Despite of the many differences in the effects of the crises on individuals, they are interrelated with their statuses in the society. Inferior societal positions caused by unequal gender systems and heteronormativity, supremacy of certain religious stands, discrimination based on ethnic and cultural background, as well as socio-economic and educational ranks formed by powerful elites, have crucial significance in how the crisis affects individual lives and how the individual copes with the consequences.

Global crises have permanent influence in societies, as they accelerate social change. Climate change, for instance, has brought environmental consciousness into many spheres of life, and initiated the ideology of environmental sustainability into various social and economic systems. Digitalization has been one of the most influential changes re-shaping the life practices of youth, even though its effects have been controversial. It has served the societies and cultures by providing ecologically sustainable solutions and practices for many spheres of life, but it has also posed new security threats, as it has enabled rapid networking, and offered social tools having been used for anti-social purposes.

Climate change causes uncertainty: its societal effects are interdependent, and many are still unknown. Climate change has eroded agriculture and food supply. Causing poverty and increasing migration, the geopolitical influence of climate change is vast, as it weakens security environments and changes security systems and policies. As to its social consequences, it has been warned that climate change has severe effects on children and young people particularly, and according to UNICEF, children are the most vulnerable. Extreme weather phenomena, such as draught, destroy agriculture and other means of income, and thus the wellbeing of the whole family. Hurricanes destroy crucial infrastructure, such as roads and information connections. Extreme heat increases aggressivity and domestic violence. Pollution weakens the health of the children still developing physically. These living conditions decline the wellbeing and safety of children and young people, especially in the Global South. (UNICEF 2015.) In developing countries, diminishing food supply and increased violence are the most crucial reasons for young people to migrate (Moralez-Muños et al. 2020).

Global environmental and social changes are interrelated in the living spheres of young people, having impact on many practices of their daily lives. These practices have been influenced by the societal reactions to the global crises, also changing values and attitudes in many significant life realms. However, on many young people these developments have had drastic impact based on their unequal social positions. Intersecting statuses relating to gender, disability, ethnic backgrounds, and socio-economic positions cause injustice in the life realities shaped by effects of social change.

For example, environmental disasters have had serious consequences on Indigenous peoples. It indicates that governmental environment policies do not cover all citizens equally, and the effects of the disasters are more severe on those with inferior societal positions and statuses (Manga 2020). For people with disabilities, the ability to survive climate disasters, such as floods and earthquakes, is often dependent on the help of others. When seeking asylum, women and disabled women particularly are subjected to harassment and abuse (Pirmasari & McQuaid 2023). When the consequences of climate change and environmental disasters are tackled, those in marginalized positions are facing injustice not just in their life realms, but also in the local policy level, as their cultural specificity or need for support have not been acknowledged. Climate change has the worst impact particularly on children, elderly, and people with disability and illness, as they are not necessarily provided with support by the society (Jampel 2018; Levy & Patz 2015). Lack of justice and insecurity caused by global crises are strongly experienced by those in marginalized positions and vulnerable in the community.

One of the major effects of COVID-19 on youth has been that it reinforced social polarization between young people both locally and globally. In the global scale, the poorest young people suffer from multidimensional poverty involving deprivation in vital living conditions, including education, health, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, crowdedness, access to information, and housing facilities, such as residencies with proper floors (Yassine & Bakass 2023). This depth of deprivation causes inability to cope with global crises, such as health disasters. According to several recent studies, COVID-19 has deepened inequalities among young people in local scales as well, and those disadvantaged with class, ethnicity and disability have been in worst position. For example, they suffered from mental health disorders and had experiences of loneliness more often than their peers of the same age group (Colombo & Rebughini 2024; McDonald et al. 2023; Majlander et al. 2022; Woodrow & Moore 2022). Poverty,

especially intersecting with subordinate statuses based on disability, ethnic backgrounds and sexuality have the most drastic impact on young people and their opportunities to cope and survive.

War causes deep insecurity on various societal levels, and its effects on children and young people are severe. In many developing countries, military conflicts and wars are often internal, and if the nation state lacks developed institutions of justice, children are in extremely vulnerable position. They are recruited to warfare and forced to join extremist military groups, and growing up in a violent environment is fatal for physical and psychic development. Mental health disorders are persistent amongst child soldiers and other war-affected young people, such as refugee youth (Hinchey et al. 2023; Veronese et al. 2022; Betancourt et al. 2020). In many post-war countries, sufficient support is not necessarily available for young people to deal with the trauma, as there is a lack of support services (Cvetanovic 2016). Behavioral problems of children and young people are closely connected to the experiences of insecurity and lack of safety (Ma et al. 2022).

Digital opportunities have been available for several young people to provide support in their individual struggles amidst the crises and their consequences. Giving possibilities for virtual action, digital applications and social media offer young people ways to cope with the changed life circumstances. Amongst diasporic youth in particular, the opportunities for action in cyberspace constitute such hybrid spaces between home and homeland, that offer ways for expressions of agency, identity negotiation and citizenship performance (Levenson 2022). During the COVID-19 lockdown, digital applications were in efficient use to provide support for youth with mental health problems and those suffering from isolation. Exception was those with profound intellectual disabilities, who were not able to use digital devices. Also, due to the restrictions on visiting disability residence units during lockdown, many were left isolated from their families and close communities, except from those providing them with basic care (Shakespeare et al. 2021). Digitalization has been a social change with major impact especially on young people, as it has revolutionized their daily life practices and cultures. However, a vast majority of young people are unable to enjoy the benefits of digitalization, due to poverty and poor living conditions, and the lack of functional abilities and dependence on help and support. Digital world therefore involves deep social divides based on ableist and economic statuses (Dalat Ward & Yasin Ar 2024).

Young people and the intersectional essence of unjust world

Insecurity caused by unsafe conditions and threat of violence, or threat of not surviving climate or health disasters, increases vulnerability. Young people not having equal social rights are vulnerable, whether it comes to legislative or societal policy levels, or other practices in the culture and society, such as norms and attitudes. Having insecure living conditions is the situation of the underprivileged, the subaltern, as Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) called those with inferior ranks. Subaltern studies as a specific domain of postcolonial studies, focuses on analyzing subordination in certain societies, and particularly the relation between people or groups in inferior position and those enjoying the statuses secured by the powerful classes. This book represents several approaches in social sciences, but the common factor is the inferiority of people. Young people with inferior social ranks lack social justice, relating to the opportunities for living in safe conditions, having physical and psychical wellbeing, having opportunities for education and work, to start a family, and lead a meaningful lifestyle.

To fully understand the differences between the inequities amongst young people, intersectional approach is necessary. In youth studies, it involves the need to study the societal position of people with various cultural, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds, as well as people with diverse gender and health statuses. As being scrutinized in this anthology by scholars from various fields of social sciences, intersectionality is an endeavor to investigate the social conditions of contemporary global youth, by acknowledging difference as an analytic concept. It helps to grasp the multiplicity of human experience as to what the social rights, citizenship and dignified life involves in the present-day world. Intersectionality also provides analytic tools to clarify the reasons for injustice in the living conditions of young people, and the role of societal structures and practices involved in their lives, whether they are restraining or enabling. As an approach, intersectionality also allows interdisciplinary theoretical and analytical frameworks, as the global youth and their various societal positions and statuses are being investigated and explained.

Seeking to cover widely the effects of global crises on young people living in different parts of the world, this book provides various gazes, or looks at, to various young people with various living conditions. Being drastically affected by global crises, it provides a dive into the consequences of crises

which their local communities, cultures, and the societies they represent, have been unable to solve.

Overview of the book

This collection is comprised of 11 chapters including this introduction. The book is organized thematically starting with discussions related to climate change and resilience. Ioannis Alexandrou presents a case study on environmental awareness among young people on the Greek island of Zakynthos. This chapter offers a critical perspective on the relationship between global climate change and local environmental awareness and action. The chapter addresses various social, economic, and environmental intersections and dilemmas for the development and implementation of practical measures to protect the endangered Carretta Carretta turtle. Following this, Natascha Mueller-Hirth and Stephen Vertigans problematize the concept of resilience in the face of climate change in informal settlements in Nairobi, Kenya. Their analysis critiques international discussions of climate resilience which “highlight individual responsibility and decision-making, while downplaying or obscuring the socio-political and structural factors that contribute to vulnerability”. This chapter presents the findings of qualitative fieldwork since 2020, particularly exploring the activities of a group of young environmentalists and their strategies to cope with diverse and interlinked acute and structural challenges – including the COVID-19 pandemic.

Picking up on discussions of this global crisis, Isabella Quadrelli and Anna Ubaldi home in on the experiences of young people in Italy during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their chapter presents findings and a critical theoretical analysis of discursive interviews with young people between 18 and 25 years old around the experience of the pandemic, legality, and resistance. To provide an analytical framework to interpret young people’s experiences of the law and unprecedented legal regulations during the peak of the pandemic, Quadrelli and Ubaldi engage with Ewick and Silbey’s theory of legal consciousness, the neo-Bourdieuian literature on class and gender and Mary Douglas’ work on cultures of risk.

The following theme includes young people’s resistance and resilience to experiences and bearing witness to war. First, Daniel Briggs presents a detailed narrative of young Ukrainian refugees living in Spain and mobilizing for hope. The main areas of analysis revolve around the cultural integration of young Ukrainian women’s efforts to establish themselves in

the labour market. The chapter highlights how their newly arrived status creates a constant obstacle in the context of a declining domestic economy, forcing them into exploitative informal market opportunities and impeding various other aspects of their lives. After that, Kari Saari, Jussi Ronkainen, and Marko Kananen explore how young Finnish-Russian dual citizens perceive and experience their status as dual citizens in the new era of the political tensions between Russia and the “west”/European Union since 2014. This study is based on empirical mixed-method data collected in 2016-2019, soon after the beginning of the Russo-Ukrainian military tensions in 2014. They reflect on the nature of national identity and offer a lucid insight into the complex nature of dual citizenship.

With greater focus on resistance and youth activism, Marie Kortam takes a deep dive into the student movement for justice in Gaza. This chapter tackles student mobilisations through the solidarity movement with Palestine during the time of the war in Gaza. Kortam analyses this movement in terms of how this impacts a global revelation and social political change. It inscribes a framework of the decolonial anti-imperialist movement, crystallised in the Palestinian cause. Kortam describes the various digital and physical platforms used in the protest movement.

The impacts and influence of digitalization is the final theme of our book before we conclude with the key learnings gathered in this compilation of reflections on young people in the time of crises. Päivi Armila, Sari Tuuva-Hongisto and Kristiina Korjonen-Kuusipuro investigate the inequalities in young people’s lives from the perspective of living and growing in a society permeated by digitalization. They interrogate the tangle of socio-economic and gender inequalities with ideology of digitalization as a very critical structural turn in society that permeates the boundaries of individual, community, and societal life. Susan Eriksson examines these intersections specifically from the lens of disability. This chapter accounts for considerations of assistive devices needed to advance inclusion and equity, while this is simultaneously challenged by issues of digital equity for young people with disabilities. This chapter describes the practices in the life of young people with disabilities to enhance their digital participation who also face challenges in gaining recognition as equal citizens – regardless of their nationality. Finally, with a focus on education, Matteo DiPietrantonio presents a comparative case study of innovation and inclusion in Italian and Finnish secondary schools. They build upon debates to rethink the education system and learning environments to reflect our current local and global contexts, promote inclusion and innovation, and fairly integrate technology. This illustrative chapter includes an in-depth discussion of the intersection

of digitalization, disability and accessibility, inclusion, ideology, and inequality in education.

We conclude the book with reflections from the editors in relation to the concepts of systems thinking, ecology and the global polycrisis, and their interrelations with social change. The term polycrisis refers to the simultaneous occurrence of multiple, interconnected crises that are interdependent and often amplify each other, creating complex and cascading challenges. Unlike isolated crises, a polycrisis describes a situation where various global, social, environmental, political, and economic crises are not just happening at the same time but are also interacting and compounding one another, making the overall impact more severe and difficult to address. We reflect on the polycrisis with a message of hope. Young people present us with myriad ways that we - as a global human community and distinct societies – can build collective resilience and resistance to the systems and structures of power and oppression. The analyses shared in this text call upon us to amplify our critical analysis of crisis and dramatically increase our awareness of the powerful potential of young people and the need to work in solidarity between and among generations and national borders to co-create more positive and transformative social globalization.

References

- Beck, Ulrich, Anthony Giddens, and Scott Lash. 1994. *Reflexive Modernisation. Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*. London: Cambridge Polity Press.
- Berman, Marshall. 1971. *All that is solid, melts into air: The Experience of Modernity*. New York & London: Verso.
- Betancourt, Theresa S., Katrina Keegan, Jordan Farrar, and Robert T. Brennan. 2020. The intergenerational impact of war on mental health and psychosocial wellbeing: lessons from the longitudinal study of war-affected youth in Sierra Leone. *Conflict & Health*, 2020. 14: 62.
- Colombo, Enzo, and Paola Rebughini. 2024. Generational Inequalities in Multiple Crises: Pandemic and Italian Youth on the Edge. In Simone Maddanu and Emmanuele Toscano (eds.): *Inequalities, Youth, Democracy, and the Pandemic*. The Covid-19 Pandemic Series. London: Routledge. 157-171.
- Cvetanovic, Dragana (2016): Balkanin nuoret konfliktin jälkeen. [Balkan youth after the conflict.] *Idäntutkimus*, 23 (4): 28-44.

- Hinchey, Lisa Marie-Emilie, Raya Nashef, Celine Pazzi, Kathleen Gorski and Arash Javanbakht. 2023. The longitudinal impact of war exposure on psychopathology of Syrian and Iraqi Refugee Youth. *International Journal of Social Psychiatry* 2023, Vol. 69 (7), 1833-1836.
- Jampel, Catherine. 2018. Intersections of disability justice, racial justice, and environmental justice. *Environmental Sociology* 4 (1): 122-135.
- Levenson, Lance. 2022, #WeWillWin: Mobilisations of Jerusalem's Armenian youth and digital acts of citizenship during the Second Artshakh War. *Nations and Nationalism*. 2024; (30): 72-89.
- Levy, Barry S. and Jonathan A. Paz. 2015. Climate Change, Human Rights and Social Justice. Review. *Annals of Global Health*, 18 (3): 310-322.
- Ma, Mengjia, Xiaoliu Chen, Yao Li, Baosan Zhang and Yanling Bi. 2022. How does the belief in the just world correlate with conduct problems in adolescents? The intervening roles of security, cognitive reappraisal, and gender. *Children and Youth Services Review*. 137, 106432.
- Majlander, Satu; Katri Kilpeläinen, and Saara Tuunainen. 2022. *Väestöryhmät, joiden tilanne heikkeni koronapandemian aikana. Miten ottaa huomioon haavoittuvassa asemassa olevat hyvinvoinnin ja terveyden edistämiseksi?* [Groups, whose situation weakened during Covid -19 pandemic. How to consider those in vulnerable position to enhance wellbeing and health?] Suomen kestävän kasvun ohjelma, THL, Työpaperi 61/2022. Helsinki: Terveyden ja hyvinvoinnin laitos. [Programme of Sustainable Growth in Finland, Institution of Wellbeing and Health, Working paper 61/2022. Helsinki: Institution of Wellbeing and Health.]
- Manga, Sylvestre and Jose Tidiane. 2020. When further inclusion of indigenous people's youth matters: Towards smart climate change resilient indigenous territories, communities, and diasporas. *Journal of Rural and Community Development*, 2020-01, Vol. 15, (4) p 39.
- MacDonald, Robert, Hannah King, Emma Murphy, and Wendy Gill. 2023. The covid-19 pandemic and youth in recent historical perspective: more pressure, more precarity. *Journal of Youth Studies*, 2024. Vol 27, 723-740.
- Moralez-Muños, Héctor, Srjina Jha, Michelle Bnatti, Henryk Alff, Sabine Kurtenbach and Stefan Sieber, 2020. Exploring Connections – Environmental Change, Food Security, and Violence as Drivers of Migration: A Critical Review of Research. *Sustainability*, 12 (14), 5702.
- Pirmasari, Desy Ayu and Katie McQuaid. 2023. Halin ai: Intersectional experiences of disability, climate change, and disasters in Indonesia. *Social Inclusion* 11 (4): 291-302.

- Shakespeare, Tom, Florence Ndagire and Queen E. Seketi. 2021. Triple jeopardy: disabled people and the covid -19 pandemic. *The Lancet*, Vol. 397. April 10, 2021, 1331-1333.
- UNICEF (2015): *Unless We Act Now. The Impact of Climate Change on Children*. (Accessed 24th May 2024).
- Veronese, Guido, Frederica Cavazzoni, Alec Fiorini, Ala Shoman, and Cindy A. Sousa. 2022. Human Insecurity and Psychological Wellbeing in Palestinian Children Living Amidst Military Violence: A Qualitative Participatory Research Using Interactive Maps. *Child, Care, Health, and Development*. 48 (1) 159-169.
- Ward, Dalat Yabarak and Anil Yasin Ar. 2024. The Digital (In)equity Crisis during Covid-19 pandemic: Narratives from the Field. In Simone Maddanu and Emmanuele Toscano (eds.) *Inequalities, Youth, Democracy and the Pandemic*. London: Routledge.
- Woodrow, Nicholas and Karenza Moore. 2021. The Liminal Leisure of Disadvantaged Young People in the UK before and after the Covid-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Applied Youth Studies*. 4, 475-491.
- Yassine, Abderrahman and Fatima Bakass. 2023. Youth's Poverty and Inequality of Opportunities: Empirical Evidence from Morocco. *Social Sciences* 12: 28.

THE CARETTA PARADOX: TOURISM, ECONOMIC INTERESTS, AND ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS IN ZAKYNTHOS' MARINE PARK

IOANNIS ALEXANDROU

Introduction

The rapid growth of the global population, coupled with technological advancements, has intensified the exploitation of natural resources and the degradation of the environment (Czajkowska and Ingaldi 2023). Anthropogenic activities are widely recognized as having a detrimental impact on ecosystems (Lazar, Klimecka-Tatar and Obrecht 2021; Tomsana and Itoba-Tombo 2020), with climate change emerging as one of the most pressing threats of the Anthropocene era. Characterized as a "wicked problem," climate change involves a complex interplay of factors that make it difficult to address comprehensively (Cramer et al., 2018; Rittel and Webber, 1973; Sprain, 2016). A significant contributor to this issue is the global reliance on fossil fuels for production, transportation, and logistics, which exacerbates environmental challenges and highlights the urgent need for sustainable practices (Lazar, Klimecka-Tatar and Obrecht 2021).

Sustainable development, introduced in the 1987 Brundtland Report, seeks to balance current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own (Brundtland 1987). It serves as a broad framework guiding actions at governmental, organizational, and individual levels. While governments focus on policies and institutional capacities, individuals contribute through eco-friendly behaviors, consumer trends, and civic engagement (Hartman Group 2007; Kim and Lee 2023). A notable shift is seen in how consumers adopt environmentally conscious lifestyles, often aligning their daily practices with pro-environmental values (Kim and Lee 2023). Young people, in particular, demonstrate high levels of civic engagement and environmental concern, shaping their actions according to

their worldviews and local contexts (Ekman and Amnå 2012; Bakker et al. 2011; Schulz et al. 2016). Despite this, traditional political engagement has declined, reflecting broader disillusionment with established institutions (Franklin 2004; Putnam 2000; Stoker 2006).

On the island of Zakynthos, cultural and economic factors shape the environmental awareness of young people. As a major tourist destination with a Marine Protected Area (MPA) established to safeguard the endangered *Caretta Caretta* turtle, Zakynthos faces unique challenges in balancing ecological conservation with economic activity. Qualitative research reveals that young people are environmentally conscious when such behaviors do not conflict with their livelihoods, which are predominantly linked to tourism, hospitality, and the primary sector. This tendency reflects cultural values inherited from older generations and underscores the influence of economic priorities on environmental attitudes. The study explores how occupational factors, cultural elements, and the presence of the marine park collectively shape environmental awareness among Zakynthos' youth (Sloam 2014; Marsh et al. 2006; Norris, 2004).

Qualitative Research Method

This research utilized a case study methodology focused on the National Marine Park of Zakynthos and the island of Zakynthos as a whole, incorporating 50 semi-structured interviews and participant observation within volunteering programs in the protected area. Qualitative research was chosen to delve deeper into personal and group incentives, challenging simplistic views of environmental awareness among young people. Such methods excel in uncovering the nuanced meanings that research topics hold for specific communities and generating criteria for further quantitative studies (Johnson and Christensen 2010; Mertens and Hesse-Biber 2013; Barclay et al. 2017). By focusing on causation through mediating and moderating processes, qualitative approaches provide holistic insights that better anticipate policy implications (Johnson and Schoonenboom 2017).

Qualitative methods allow for immersion in everyday life, enabling researchers to explore "unseen" aspects of respondents' worldviews and their interactions with formal rules, cultural influences, and external factors such as the marine park. This approach aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the culture and context under study, highlighting how local politics, livelihood priorities, and cultural values shape environmental awareness (Shaw and Gould 2002). The study's design facilitated direct

engagement with participants to understand their thought processes, daily activities, and responses to the marine park's establishment and regulations.

Fifty participants aged 18–30 was interviewed, all lifelong Zakynthos residents involved in hospitality, tourism, or agriculture—the sectors most impacted by the marine park. Semi-structured interviews provided flexibility, with questions tailored to the participants' expertise, professions, and livelihoods. This personalized approach ensured the integration of cultural elements into the analysis, offering insights into how the marine park influences environmental awareness in a context shaped by local traditions and economic activities (Jamshed 2014).

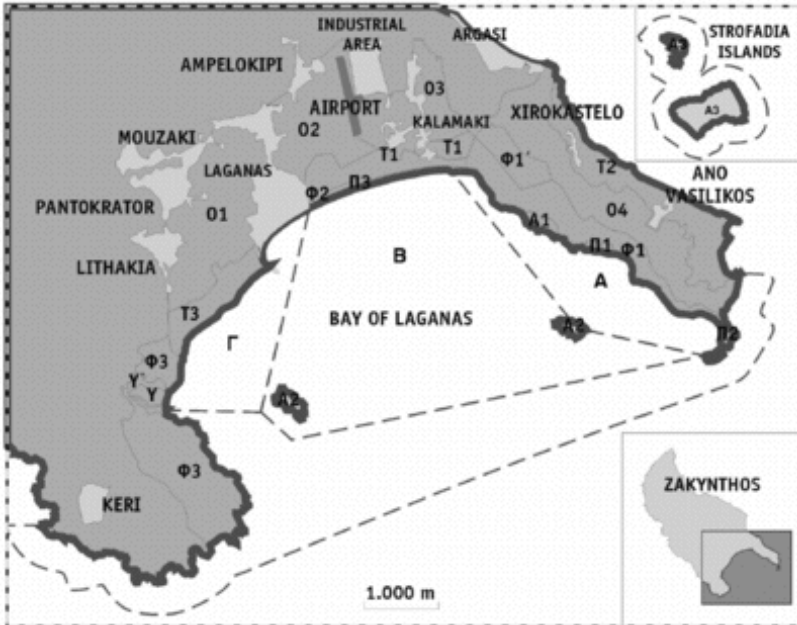
Area of Study

Secondly, with the intention to narrow down the study area, a case study is going to be used, namely the National Park of Zakynthos (NMPZ). The creation of the NMPZ marks Greece's first marine protection initiative. This particular species holds emblematic significance for the Mediterranean and Greek marine environments. Greece is home to roughly 60% of the Mediterranean's nesting sites and boasts two of the species' most vital breeding grounds, including the National Marine Park of Zakynthos, featuring six nesting beaches nestled within Laganas Bay on the island of Zakynthos (WWF 2020).

Its inception was driven by Zakynthos' pivotal role as the primary nesting site for the Caretta Caretta turtle, which faces extinction even today, making its preservation paramount. Moreover, the creation of this MPA was influenced by two key factors: a) Greece's obligation to the European Union to safeguard the biodiversity hotspot, given its significance as the primary breeding ground for the critically endangered Caretta Caretta turtle, and b) the looming threat of legal action against Greece in the Court of Justice of the European Union if measures weren't taken to preserve this biodiverse area. Consequently, the process to establish this region as an MPA proceeded swiftly and without hindrance.

The Presidential Decree on the establishment of the NMPZ was signed on the 1st of December 1999 by the President of Greek Republic (Gov. Gazette 906D, 22 December 1999). The Management Agency of the protected area of the National Marine Park of Zakynthos was the first of its kind in Greece. It used to be operated by a Management Board comprising eleven members, including representatives of the local government and local professional agencies, the constituency of Ionian Islands, the

Ministries of Public Works, Agricultural Development and Commercial Shipping plus delegates from Non-Governmental Organizations (NECCA 2021). Today, a new central institution has been created, NECCA, who is responsible for the management of all protected area networks in Greece.



[Fig. 2-1: Map of the protected beaches that form the NMPZ (Marine Turtle Newsletter, 2001)]

The region is still of great ecological importance, as it is one of the main rookeries of the *Caretta Caretta* sea-turtle and there are underwater meadows of *Posidonia oceanica* (Zioga 2007). It also includes 3 areas of the “Natura 2000” Network for the Protected Areas. Briefly, the NMPZ is divided into three zones: In Zone A, there is no boating activity allowed, in Zone B, boating is allowed with a speed limit of 6kn, and mooring is prohibited, in Zone C, boating is allowed up to 6kn and mooring is also permitted (NECCA 2021).

The reason behind the choice of this case study is twofold. Firstly, not only are clear geographical boundaries available for conducting qualitative research, but this also provides the opportunity to investigate how people on an island, away from the capital city, behave and inform themselves. It

allows for the examination of how the MPA affects their information sources and how it contributes to education regarding one of the primordial crises of our times, the environmental one. Secondly, this study is not comparative; instead, it aims to delve deeper into the perception of being ecologically aware, avoiding simple yes-or-no questions. A marine park not only narrows the research geographically but also institutionally, as the establishment of the marine protected area creates a regulatory framework that governs and often restricts their professional activities.

Research Questions

Based on the above methods, I will attempt to tackle the following research questions:

- How does an individual's line of work (tourism, primary sector, hospitality) affect their tendency to be environmentally aware in the context of an MPA?
- How does local culture affect their environmental consciousness?

Definition for Marine Protected Areas

The most used definition of protected areas was provided by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN): They are defined as a “clearly defined geographical space, recognized, dedicated, and managed, through legal or other effective means, to achieve the long-term conservation of nature with associated ecosystem services and cultural values” (Dudley 2008). Another widely used definition was given by WWF: An MPA (henceforth MPA) is described as: “an area designated to protect marine ecosystems, processes, habitats and species, including the essentials of marine biodiversity and which can contribute to the restoration and replenishment of resources for social, economic, and cultural enrichment” (WWF 2015).

Both definitions draw on four criteria: (1) A geographical area of marine character with defined boundaries, including both water column and benthic components; (2) protected through legal or other explicit means; (3) for the purpose of conservation of specified features or systems; (4) managed with the intention of achieving a higher level of protection than that of the surrounding area (Humphreys and Herbert 2018). MPAs have been proposed as an efficient way to protect biodiversity and critical habitats on which sustainable tourism is focused, to help restore overexploited stocks,