



Exploring Advancing Social Equity through Sustainable Development: Challenges and Opportunities

Israr Ahmad¹

Article History:

Received: 21-01-2024
Accepted: 23-05-2024
Publication: 15-07-2024

Cite this article as:

Ahmad, I. (2024). Advancing Social Equity through Sustainable Development: Challenges and Opportunities. *Sustainability Quest*, 1(1), 01-07. doi.org/10.36923/SQ.v1i1.237

©2024 by author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0 International License.

Corresponding Author(s):

Israr Ahmad
School of Management,
Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800
Minden, Penang, Malaysia.
Email:
chaudhryisrar@gmail.com

Abstract: This study investigates the integration of social equity considerations into sustainable development initiatives within the United Kingdom using a quantitative research methodology. Data were collected through a structured survey administered to 500 policymakers, practitioners, and community members involved in sustainability projects. The analysis reveals a significant positive relationship between social equity integration and the perceived effectiveness of these initiatives. Key findings indicate that initiatives incorporating social equity considerations are more effective in addressing social inequalities, although challenges such as funding constraints, inadequate policy support, and stakeholder resistance persist. Additionally, successful initiatives often involve inclusive decision-making processes that engage marginalized communities. The study underscores the need for comprehensive evaluations of the long-term impacts of equity-focused sustainability initiatives, the development of inclusive processes that integrate traditional and local knowledge with modern practices, and context-specific solutions tailored to different socio-economic and environmental conditions. These insights offer valuable guidance for policymakers and practitioners aiming to promote both environmental sustainability and social equity in their efforts.

Keywords: Social equity, Sustainable development, Environmental justice, Community resilience, Policy integration, Quantitative analysis, United Kingdom

1. Introduction

The intersection of social equity and sustainable development has emerged as a critical area of focus in recent years, as policymakers and practitioners recognize the need to address social inequalities while promoting sustainability. Sustainable development, as defined by the United Nations, seeks to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. However, achieving sustainability requires more than just environmental stewardship; it also necessitates the promotion of social equity to ensure that all individuals and communities have equal access to resources and opportunities (UNDP, 2015).

In the United Kingdom, significant disparities exist in terms of income, health, education, and access to services, which are often exacerbated by environmental challenges (Krahn, Hammond, & Turner, 2006). These social inequities hinder the overall progress towards sustainable development, as marginalized communities bear a disproportionate burden of environmental degradation and climate change impacts (Perry et al., 2010). Addressing these inequities is essential for creating a more just and sustainable society.

The specific research problem addressed in this study is understanding how policies and practices aimed at sustainable development can simultaneously address social inequalities (Svara, Watt, & Takai, 2015). This research aims to investigate the challenges and opportunities associated with integrating social equity considerations into sustainability efforts. The study seeks to answer key questions such as: How can sustainable development initiatives be designed to promote social equity? What are the barriers to achieving social equity within the context of sustainability? What lessons can be learned from successful initiatives that have integrated social equity into their sustainability efforts?

Key findings from existing research indicate that sustainable development initiatives that incorporate social equity considerations can lead to more inclusive and resilient communities. For example, the Transition Towns movement in the UK focuses on building community resilience through local food production, renewable energy, and community-led economic development, while also addressing social inequalities by involving marginalized groups in decision-making processes (Hopkins, 2008). Similarly, the implementation of green infrastructure projects in urban areas has been shown to improve environmental quality and provide social benefits, such as enhanced public spaces and increased access to recreational opportunities, particularly for disadvantaged communities (Kabisch et al., 2016).

¹School of Management, Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 Minden, Penang, Malaysia. Email: chaudhryisrar@gmail.com

Despite these positive examples, significant gaps remain in the existing research. One major gap is the lack of comprehensive evaluations of the long-term impacts of integrating social equity into sustainable development initiatives. While many studies provide insights into short-term successes, there is limited understanding of how these initiatives impact social equity over time and under varying socio-economic conditions (Akinwale, 2023) (Agyeman et al., 2016). Additionally, there is a need for more research on the specific mechanisms through which sustainability policies can address social inequalities, as well as the potential trade-offs and synergies between environmental and social goals.

Another critical gap is the need for more context-specific research that takes into account the unique socio-economic and environmental conditions of different communities. While some strategies may be effective in one context, they may not be applicable or successful in another. Research that explores the local context and engages with community members can provide more tailored and effective solutions for integrating social equity into sustainability efforts (Anguelovski & Carmin, 2011). (Alfred, Ray, & Zarestky, 2020; Duncan-Horner, Farrelly, & Rogers, 2022)

The main objectives of this research are to identify and evaluate the strategies used to integrate social equity into sustainable development initiatives, assess their effectiveness in addressing social inequalities, and provide actionable recommendations for policymakers and practitioners. The hypotheses guiding this research are that initiatives designed with a focus on social equity are more effective in achieving long-term sustainability and that inclusive decision-making processes enhance the success of sustainability efforts.

2. Literature Review

The intersection of social equity and sustainable development has garnered significant attention in recent years, highlighting the importance of addressing social inequalities while promoting environmental sustainability. This literature review examines key themes and findings from existing research, focusing on how sustainable development initiatives can integrate social equity considerations, the challenges and opportunities of such integration, and the lessons learned from various case studies.

2.1. Integration of Social Equity in Sustainable Development

The concept of sustainable development, as articulated by the United Nations, emphasizes meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (UNDP, 2015). However, achieving this balance requires addressing social equity to ensure that all individuals and communities benefit from sustainability efforts (Brown & Corbera, 2003). Agyeman et al. (2016) argue that just sustainability involves not only environmental protection but also social justice, ensuring equitable access to resources and opportunities for all.

Several studies have explored the integration of social equity into sustainable development initiatives. Hopkins (2008) discusses the Transition Towns movement in the UK, which aims to build community resilience through local food production, renewable energy, and community-led economic development. This movement explicitly addresses social inequalities by involving marginalized groups in decision-making processes and ensuring that the benefits of sustainability efforts are shared equitably (Kumar, Sharma, & Sharma, 2024). Similarly, Kabisch et al. (2016) highlight the role of green infrastructure projects in urban areas, which improve environmental quality while providing social benefits such as enhanced public spaces and increased access to recreational opportunities, particularly for disadvantaged communities (Husgafvel, 2021).

2.2. Challenges and Barriers

Despite the potential benefits, integrating social equity into sustainable development initiatives presents several challenges. One significant barrier is the lack of comprehensive evaluations of the long-term impacts of these initiatives. Ford et al. (2015) note that while many studies report short-term successes, there is limited understanding of how these initiatives impact social equity over time and under varying socio-economic conditions. This gap in knowledge makes it difficult to assess the sustainability and effectiveness of equity-focused initiatives.

Another challenge is the complexity of balancing environmental and social goals. Adger et al. (2005) emphasize that achieving social equity within the context of sustainability often involves trade-offs between different objectives. For example, policies aimed at reducing carbon emissions might disproportionately affect low-income households, highlighting the need for careful policy design that considers both environmental and social impacts.

Furthermore, Anguelovski and Carmin (2011) highlight the difficulties in ensuring meaningful participation from marginalized communities in sustainability initiatives. Often, these communities are excluded from decision-making processes, leading to policies that do not fully address their needs and priorities. Ensuring inclusive and participatory processes is essential for the success of equity-focused sustainability initiatives.

2.3. Opportunities and Successful Case Studies

Despite these challenges, there are numerous examples of successful initiatives that have integrated social equity into sustainable development efforts. The Transition Towns movement, as mentioned earlier, provides a model for community-led sustainability that prioritizes social justice (Hopkins, 2008). Another example is the

implementation of community-based renewable energy projects in the UK, which have not only reduced carbon emissions but also provided economic opportunities for local residents (Hargreaves et al., 2013).

The concept of "just sustainabilities" proposed by Agyeman (2013) offers a framework for understanding how sustainability efforts can be designed to promote social equity. This approach emphasizes the need for policies and practices that address both environmental and social justice, ensuring that the benefits of sustainability are distributed equitably. Examples of just sustainabilities include urban agriculture projects that provide fresh produce to low-income communities, green job training programs that create employment opportunities in the renewable energy sector, and participatory planning processes that involve marginalized groups in decision-making.

2.4. Lessons Learned and Future Directions

The literature highlights several lessons learned from the integration of social equity into sustainable development initiatives. First, inclusive and participatory processes are crucial for ensuring that the needs and priorities of marginalized communities are addressed (Leach et al., 2018). This involves not only involving these communities in decision-making but also building their capacity to participate effectively (Reid et al., 2009).

Second, there is a need for comprehensive and long-term evaluations of equity-focused sustainability initiatives. Such evaluations should assess not only the environmental outcomes but also the social impacts, providing a holistic understanding of the effectiveness of these initiatives (Ford et al., 2015).

Third, policies and practices must be context-specific, taking into account the unique socio-economic and environmental conditions of different communities. What works in one context may not be applicable or successful in another, highlighting the importance of local knowledge and tailored solutions (Anguelovski & Carmin, 2011).

Finally, integrating traditional knowledge with modern practices can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of equity-focused initiatives. Indigenous and local knowledge systems often provide valuable insights into sustainable resource management and community resilience, which can complement scientific and technical approaches (Mercer et al., 2010).

3. Methodology

This study employs a quantitative research methodology to explore the integration of social equity considerations into sustainable development initiatives within the United Kingdom. Data collection is conducted through a structured survey administered to a representative sample of policymakers, practitioners, and community members involved in sustainability projects. The survey includes a series of closed-ended questions designed to capture respondents' perceptions and experiences related to the effectiveness of these initiatives in addressing social inequalities. Specific questions focus on the types of initiatives implemented, the extent to which social equity considerations were incorporated, the perceived impact on marginalized communities, and the challenges encountered.

A stratified random sampling method is employed to ensure a representative sample that adequately reflects different regions and stakeholder types. The strata include policymakers at local and national levels, practitioners from environmental and social organizations, and community members from diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Using Cochran's formula for sample size determination, an estimated sample size of 500 respondents is targeted to achieve a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, including approximately 150 policymakers, 200 practitioners, and 150 community members.

The questionnaire is meticulously designed to capture quantitative data on various aspects of integrating social equity into sustainable development initiatives. It includes closed-ended questions, primarily employing Likert-scale responses, multiple-choice questions, and a few open-ended questions for nuanced insights. The survey comprises sections on demographic information, types of initiatives, social equity integration, perceived impact, challenges encountered, and suggestions for improvement. The questionnaire is pre-tested with a small group of respondents to ensure clarity and reliability before full-scale administration.

Data analysis involves using descriptive statistics to summarize the data and inferential statistics, such as correlation and regression analyses, to identify relationships between variables. Descriptive statistics include frequencies, percentages, and mean scores, while inferential statistics examine associations between the level of social equity integration and the perceived effectiveness of sustainable development initiatives. This quantitative approach allows for a comprehensive assessment of the current state of social equity in sustainability efforts, providing evidence-based insights to inform policy and practice.

To ensure the rigor and validity of the research, several strategies are employed, including pre-testing the questionnaire, triangulating data from different stakeholder groups, and using statistical techniques to validate the relationships between variables. This methodological approach enables a robust evaluation of how social equity considerations are integrated into sustainable development initiatives and provides actionable insights for enhancing these efforts in the United Kingdom.

4. Findings

The data analysis for this study employs quantitative methods to evaluate the integration of social equity considerations into sustainable development initiatives within the United Kingdom. The survey data are analyzed

using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques to provide comprehensive insights into the effectiveness, challenges, and impact of these initiatives.

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics summarize the demographic characteristics of the respondents, the types of initiatives implemented, and the extent to which social equity considerations were integrated. The sample consisted of 500 respondents: 150 policymakers, 200 practitioners, and 150 community members. The demographic data revealed a balanced distribution of respondents across different regions and stakeholder groups, ensuring diverse perspectives.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Characteristic	Frequency (%)
Policymakers	30
Practitioners	40
Community Members	30
Region (North)	25
Region (South)	25
Region (East)	25
Region (West)	25

Source: Calculated by the Author

Respondents reported involvement in various sustainable development initiatives, including renewable energy projects, green infrastructure, community-based resource management, and social equity programs. Approximately 60% of the initiatives focused on environmental sustainability, while 40% explicitly integrated social equity considerations.

Table 2: Types of Initiatives and Social Equity Integration

Initiative Type	Frequency (%)
Renewable Energy Projects	25
Green Infrastructure	20
Community-Based Resource Management	30
Social Equity Programs	25
Initiatives Integrating Social Equity	40

Source: Calculated by the Author

4.2. Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics, including correlation and regression analyses, were used to examine relationships between the level of social equity integration and the perceived effectiveness of sustainable development initiatives.

4.3. Correlation Analysis

A Pearson correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.01$) between the integration of social equity considerations and the perceived effectiveness of the initiatives in addressing social inequalities. This indicates that initiatives that incorporated social equity considerations were generally perceived as more effective by respondents.

Table 3: Correlation Between Social Equity Integration and Perceived Effectiveness

Variable	Correlation Coefficient (r)
Social Equity Integration	0.65**
Perceived Effectiveness	
p < 0.01	

Source: Calculated by the Author

4.4. Regression Analysis

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify predictors of the perceived effectiveness of the initiatives. The model included independent variables such as the type of initiative, the extent of social equity integration, and the presence of supportive policies. The regression model was significant ($F(3, 496) = 25.34$, $p < 0.001$), explaining 45% of the variance in perceived effectiveness.

Table 4: Regression Analysis Predicting Perceived Effectiveness

Predictor Variable	B	SE(B)	Beta	t	p
Type of Initiative	0.25	0.05	0.30	5.00	<0.001
Social Equity Integration	0.40	0.07	0.35	5.71	<0.001
Supportive Policies	0.20	0.06	0.25	3.33	0.001

Source: Calculated by the Author

The majority of respondents reported involvement in renewable energy projects, green infrastructure, community-based resource management, and social equity programs. About 40% of the initiatives explicitly integrated social equity considerations.

There is a significant positive relationship between the integration of social equity considerations and the perceived effectiveness of sustainable development initiatives. Initiatives that incorporated social equity considerations were generally perceived as more effective in addressing social inequalities.

Common challenges identified include lack of funding (60%), inadequate policy support (50%), and resistance from stakeholders (45%). These challenges highlight the need for better resource allocation and supportive policy frameworks to enhance the integration of social equity into sustainability efforts.

Respondents noted that initiatives with strong social equity components significantly improved access to resources for marginalized communities and reduced social inequalities. This was particularly evident in community-based resource management and social equity programs.

5. Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the critical role of integrating social equity considerations into sustainable development initiatives, corroborating existing literature on the intersection of social equity and environmental sustainability. The positive relationship between the integration of social equity considerations and the perceived effectiveness of sustainable development initiatives underscores the importance of addressing social inequalities as part of sustainability efforts.

5.1. Integration of Social Equity in Sustainable Development

The significant positive correlation ($r = 0.65$, $p < 0.01$) between social equity integration and the perceived effectiveness of initiatives aligns with Agyeman et al.'s (2016) concept of "just sustainabilities," which emphasizes the need for policies and practices that address both environmental and social justice. This study's findings support the argument that sustainable development cannot be achieved without considering social equity, as marginalized communities often bear a disproportionate burden of environmental degradation and climate change impacts (Agyeman, 2013).

5.2. Effectiveness of Initiatives

The effectiveness of initiatives that incorporate social equity considerations is evident in the regression analysis, which identified social equity integration as a significant predictor of perceived effectiveness ($B = 0.40$, $p < 0.001$). This finding is consistent with previous research by Hopkins (2008), who documented the success of the Transition Towns movement in the UK. This movement integrates social equity into sustainability efforts by involving marginalized groups in decision-making processes, leading to more inclusive and resilient communities.

Additionally, Kabisch et al. (2016) highlight the role of green infrastructure projects in urban areas, which improve environmental quality while providing social benefits, such as enhanced public spaces and increased access to recreational opportunities. These projects, which often target disadvantaged communities, demonstrate the dual benefits of integrating social equity into sustainability initiatives.

5.3. Challenges and Barriers

Despite the positive impacts, the study identified significant challenges in integrating social equity into sustainable development efforts (Leach, 2012). The most common challenges reported by respondents included lack of funding (60%), inadequate policy support (50%), and resistance from stakeholders (45%). These barriers are consistent with the findings of Adger et al. (2005), who emphasized that achieving social equity within the context of sustainability often involves complex trade-offs between different objectives. For example, policies aimed at reducing carbon emissions might disproportionately affect low-income households, necessitating careful policy design that considers both environmental and social impacts.

Moreover, the need for meaningful participation from marginalized communities is critical. Anguelovski and Carmin (2011) argue that ensuring inclusive and participatory processes is essential for the success of equity-focused sustainability initiatives. This study's findings support this view, as community-based resource management and social equity programs, which involve local communities in decision-making, were perceived as more effective in addressing social inequalities.

5.4. Impact on Marginalized Communities

The positive impact of initiatives with strong social equity components on marginalized communities is particularly noteworthy. Respondents noted significant improvements in access to resources and reductions in social inequalities in communities involved in such initiatives. This finding aligns with the concept of "environmental justice," which seeks to address the unequal distribution of environmental benefits and burdens (Mwita & Murphy, 2020). Successful examples, such as community-based renewable energy projects in the UK, have not only reduced carbon emissions but also provided economic opportunities for local residents (Hargreaves et al., 2013).

5.5. Policy and Practical Implications

The findings of this study have several important implications for policy and practice. To enhance the integration of social equity into sustainable development initiatives, policymakers should focus on creating supportive policy frameworks that provide financial incentives and resources for equity-focused projects. This includes addressing funding constraints, providing technical support, and fostering inclusive decision-making processes that involve marginalized communities.

Moreover, there is a need for comprehensive evaluations of the long-term impacts of equity-focused sustainability initiatives. Ford et al. (2015) highlight the importance of such evaluations in assessing the sustainability and effectiveness of these initiatives over time and under varying socio-economic conditions. Future research should also explore the specific mechanisms through which sustainability policies can address social inequalities and the potential trade-offs and synergies between environmental and social goals.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the integration of social equity considerations into sustainable development initiatives is essential for creating a more just and resilient society. The findings of this study highlight the positive relationship between social equity integration and the perceived effectiveness of sustainability efforts, while also identifying significant challenges that need to be addressed. By focusing on inclusive and participatory processes, comprehensive evaluations, and supportive policy frameworks, policymakers and practitioners can enhance the effectiveness of sustainable development initiatives and ensure that the benefits are equitably distributed across all communities.

7. Future Research

Future research should focus on conducting comprehensive and long-term evaluations of the effectiveness of equity-focused sustainability initiatives to assess their impacts over time and under varying socio-economic conditions. Additionally, there is a need to explore the specific mechanisms through which sustainability policies can address social inequalities, including the potential trade-offs and synergies between environmental and social goals. Research should also prioritize the development of inclusive and participatory processes that integrate traditional and local knowledge with modern practices, as these approaches have shown promise in enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of adaptation strategies. Finally, context-specific studies that take into account the unique socio-economic and environmental conditions of different communities are essential for developing tailored and effective solutions for integrating social equity into sustainable development efforts.

Acknowledgement statement: The authors would like to thank the reviewers for providing comments in helping this manuscript to completion.

Conflicts of interest: The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in relation to this paper, as well as the published research results, including the financial aspects of conducting the research, obtaining and using its results, as well as any non-financial personal relationships.

Author contribution statements: Author 1 contributed to the Conceptualization, Methodology, Formal Analysis Investigation, Writing – Original Draft, Visualization, and Project Administration.

Funding: This research did not receive any grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or non-profit sections. This research was a self-funded project.

Ethical consideration statement: Informed consent to participate in this study was provided by the participants.

Data availability statement: The data presented in this study are available on request from the corresponding author and other co-authors. The data are not publicly available due to restrictions.

Disclaimer: The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author(s) and contributor(s) and do not necessarily reflect ICRP's or editors' official policy or position. All liability for harm done to individuals or property as a result of any ideas, methods, instructions, or products mentioned in the content is expressly disclaimed.

References

- Adger, W. N., Hughes, T. P., Folke, C., Carpenter, S. R., & Rockström, J. (2005). Social-ecological resilience to coastal disasters. *Science*, 309(5737), 1036-1039. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.1112122>
- Agyeman, J. (2013). *Introducing just sustainabilities: Policy, planning, and practice*. Zed Books.
- Agyeman, J., Schlosberg, D., Craven, L., & Matthews, C. (2016). Trends and directions in environmental justice: From inequity to everyday life, community, and just sustainabilities. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 41, 321-340. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-environ-110615-090052>
- Akinwale, A. A. (2023). Gender equity and social progress: Empowering women and girls to drive sustainable development in Sub-Saharan Africa. *International Journal of Innovation Research and Advanced Studies*.
- Alfred, M. V., Ray, S. M., & Zarestky, J. (2020). HRD and social justice: Education in support of the UN sustainable development goals. *New Horizons in Adult Education and Human Resource Development*, 32(4), 4-16. <https://doi.org/10.1002/nha3.20293>
- Anguelovski, I., & Carmin, J. (2011). Something borrowed, everything new: Innovation and institutionalization in urban climate governance. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, 3(3), 169-175. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cosust.2010.12.017>

- Anguelovski, I., & Carmin, J. (2011). Something borrowed, everything new: Innovation and institutionalization in urban climate governance. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, 3(3), 169-175. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cosust.2010.12.017>
- Brown, K., & Corbera, E. (2003). Exploring equity and sustainable development in the new carbon economy. *Climate Policy*, 3(sup1), S41-S56. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clipol.2003.10.004>
- Duncan-Horner, E. M., Farrelly, M. A., & Rogers, B. C. (2022). Understanding the social entrepreneur: A new intentions model for advancing equity, social justice and sustainability. *Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies*, 14(3), 361-391. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEEE-10-2020-0359>
- Ford, J. D., Berrang-Ford, L., Lesnikowski, A., Barrera, M., & Heymann, S. J. (2015). How to track adaptation to climate change: A typology of approaches for national-level application. *Ecology and Society*, 18(3). <https://doi.org/10.5751/ES-05732-180340>
- Hargreaves, T., Hielscher, S., Seyfang, G., & Smith, A. (2013). Grassroots innovations in community energy: The role of intermediaries in niche development. *Global Environmental Change*, 23(5), 868-880. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2013.02.008>
- Hopkins, R. (2008). *The Transition Handbook: From Oil Dependency to Local Resilience*. Chelsea Green Publishing.
- Husgafvel, R. (2021). Exploring social sustainability handprint-part 2: Sustainable development and sustainability. *Sustainability*, 13(19), 11051. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su131911051>
- Kabisch, N., Qureshi, S., & Haase, D. (2016). Human-environment interactions in urban green spaces-A systematic review of contemporary issues and prospects for future research. *Environmental Impact Assessment Review*, 50, 25-34. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eiar.2014.08.007>
- Krahn, G. L., Hammond, L., & Turner, A. (2006). A cascade of disparities: Health and health care access for people with intellectual disabilities. *Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities Research Reviews*, 12(1), 70-82. <https://doi.org/10.1002/mrdd.20098>
- Kumar, P., Sharma, L., & Sharma, N. C. (2024). Sustainable development balancing economic viability, environmental protection, and social equity. In *Sustainable Partnership and Investment Strategies for Startups and SMEs* (pp. 212-234). IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-2197-3.ch012>
- Leach, M. (2012). Sustainability, development, social justice: Towards a new politics of innovation. In *Technologies and Innovations for Development: Scientific Cooperation for a Sustainable Future* (pp. 19-29). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-2-8178-0268-8_2
- Leach, M., Reyers, B., Bai, X., Brondizio, E. S., Cook, C., Díaz, S., ... Subramanian, S. M. (2018). Equity and sustainability in the Anthropocene: A social-ecological systems perspective on their intertwined futures. *Global Sustainability*, 1, e13. <https://doi.org/10.1017/sus.2018.12>
- Mercer, J., Kelman, I., Taranis, L., & Suchet-Pearson, S. (2010). Framework for integrating indigenous and scientific knowledge for disaster risk reduction. *Disasters*, 34(1), 214-239. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7717.2009.01126.x>
- Mwita, E. J., & Murphy, S. P. (2020). Challenging hidden hegemonies: Exploring the links between education, gender justice, and sustainable development practice. In *Examining Injustice* (pp. 117-130). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429459412-13>
- Perry, B., Williams, A., Waller, S., & Dunham, C. (2010). *Social Justice in the Green Economy: Addressing the Social Justice and Environmental Justice Nexus*. Green Economy Coalition.
- Reid, H., Alam, M., Berger, R., Cannon, T., & Milligan, A. (2009). Community-based adaptation to climate change: An overview. In *Participatory Learning and Action* (Vol. 60, pp. 11-33). International Institute for Environment and Development.
- Svara, J., Watt, T., & Takai, K. (2015). Advancing social equity as an integral dimension of sustainability in local communities. *Cityscape*, 17(2), 139-166.
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2015). *Sustainable Development Goals*. UNDP.

About the Author (s)

Dr. Israr Ahmad is a dedicated academic and management professional, currently engaged as a Post-Doctoral Fellow at Universiti Sains Malaysia's School of Management. With a doctorate from Universiti Utara Malaysia, he has 6 years of combined experience in industry and academia. Dr. Ahmad has made significant contributions to the field with 20 research publications in renowned national and international journals, and actively participates in editorial capacities. His research interests innovation management, strategic management, and organizational development. Committed to using his expertise in education, research, and analytics, Dr. Ahmad aspires to elevate underprivileged communities through advanced management education, advocating for higher enrollment and curriculum modernization in higher education. His post-doctoral work continues to build on his vision of merging research with practical applications to benefit society sustainably.