



Empowering or Decapitating Influence of News: Exploring the Relationship Between College Students Media Exposure and Perceptions about Climate Change.



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Background

The direct impacts of climate change are already being felt around the world; from rising sea levels to increase extreme weather conditions and wildfires.

The indirect impact of climate change: eco-anxiety: "the chronic fear of environmental doom" (Mooney, 2020).

Eco-Anxiety is intense among young people in the United States, especially those in college ages 18-24

Studies have suggested that their sources of information, in this case, the media, contribute significantly to these anxieties about climate change.

These anxieties about climate change could eventually lead to feelings of loss of efficacy to take proactive actions (Maran & Begotti, 2021).

Objectives

1. To explain the relationship between media exposure to climate change information and eco-anxiety.
2. To explore how media exposure related to peoples' self-efficacy and their pro-environmental behavior.

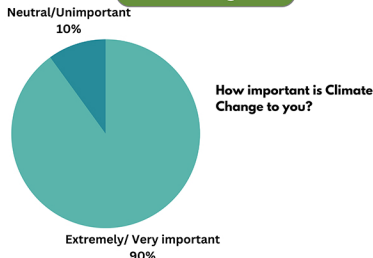
RQ/Hypothesis

RQ1: Media exposure to climate change information will be positively related to climate anxiety among college students in the United States.

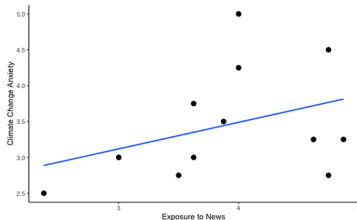
RQ2: Is there a relationship between media exposure to climate change information and college students' climate change (a) self-efficacy and (b) collective efficacy?

H1: College students' (a) self-efficacy beliefs and (b) collective efficacy beliefs will both positively predict adaptive climate change behavioral intentions.

Findings



RQ1: Partially Supported: The more participant paid attention to climate change news, the more they were likely to report increased climate change anxiety ($\beta = .598, p = .013$).



RQ2: Not Supported: Media exposure did not relate to beliefs about self and collective efficacy about climate change.

H1: Partially Supported: Participants with a higher self-efficacy tended to express pro-environmental intentions. Those with collective self-efficacy marginally expressed pro-environmental behavioral intentions.

Methods/Measures

Survey (Nonrandom Convenience Sampling)
Web Questionnaire

Pilot test (N =32)

Population: College Students sampled from the University of Oregon

Media Exposure to Climate Change news

Media exposure was measured using two variables: attention to climate change news (1= Extremely Inattentive, 5 = Extremely attentive) and a 13-item scale measuring their information source with responses.

Efficacy Beliefs This was measured using a 10-item scale adapted from Huang, (2016) and (Jugert et al., 2016) with two dimensions (self and collective efficacy)

Climate Change Anxiety: Climate Change anxiety was measured using a 15-item scale adapted from Maran & Begotti (2021) and Ogunbode et al. (2019)

Pro-environmental behavioral intentions: Relying on Coleman et al. (2020), pro-environmental behavioral intentions will be measured using an 8-item scale

Discussion

The media potentially plays a role in young people's feelings of climate change anxiety.

Their exposure to media might not predict their efficacy beliefs about climate change.

Self Efficacy beliefs (but not collective efficacy) could potentially predict if one will engage in pro-environmental behavior.

THIS IS PILOT DATA WITH A SMALL SAMPLE

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