

Only A Few Were Anxious: Climate Change Anxiety in 2021

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INTRODUCTION

- Climate change is long term changes to global temperature and climatic patterns. Climate change has led to rising sea levels, ecosystem disruptions, and weather disasters.
- Women tend to exhibit higher levels of concern and knowledge about climate change compared to men, and gender norms and power relations can make women more vulnerable to climate change effects.
- The present study sought to determine if there is difference in climate change anxiety between males and females.
- We hypothesized that women would be more anxious.

METHOD

- Data were collected from 500 United States MTurk workers using Cloud Research Approved Participants, who have passed rigorous attention and data quality checks.
- We filtered out 15 climate change deniers, 3 nonbinary people, and 12 multivariate outliers.
- Our study had 470 participants (274 male, 196 female).
 - Participants ranged in age from 19 to 76 ($M = 39.78$, $SD = 11.84$)
 - 394 identified as Caucasian/White, 36 as African American/Black, 24 as Asian, 11 as other, 4 as Native American (North, Central, or South), and 1 as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.
- Participants completed the Climate Change Anxiety Scale (Clayton & Karazsia, 2020).

RESULTS

- An independent sample t- test was performed to compare mean levels of anxiety between males and females.
- The analysis revealed a non-significant difference ($t(468) = -0.169$, $p = .866$), indicating no statistically significant association between gender and climate change anxiety.
- The 95% confidence interval ranged from -1.49 to 51.25, providing further evidence of the lack of a substantial relationship between the variables. Refer to Figure 1 for visualization.

In 2021, few United States residents were anxious about climate change.

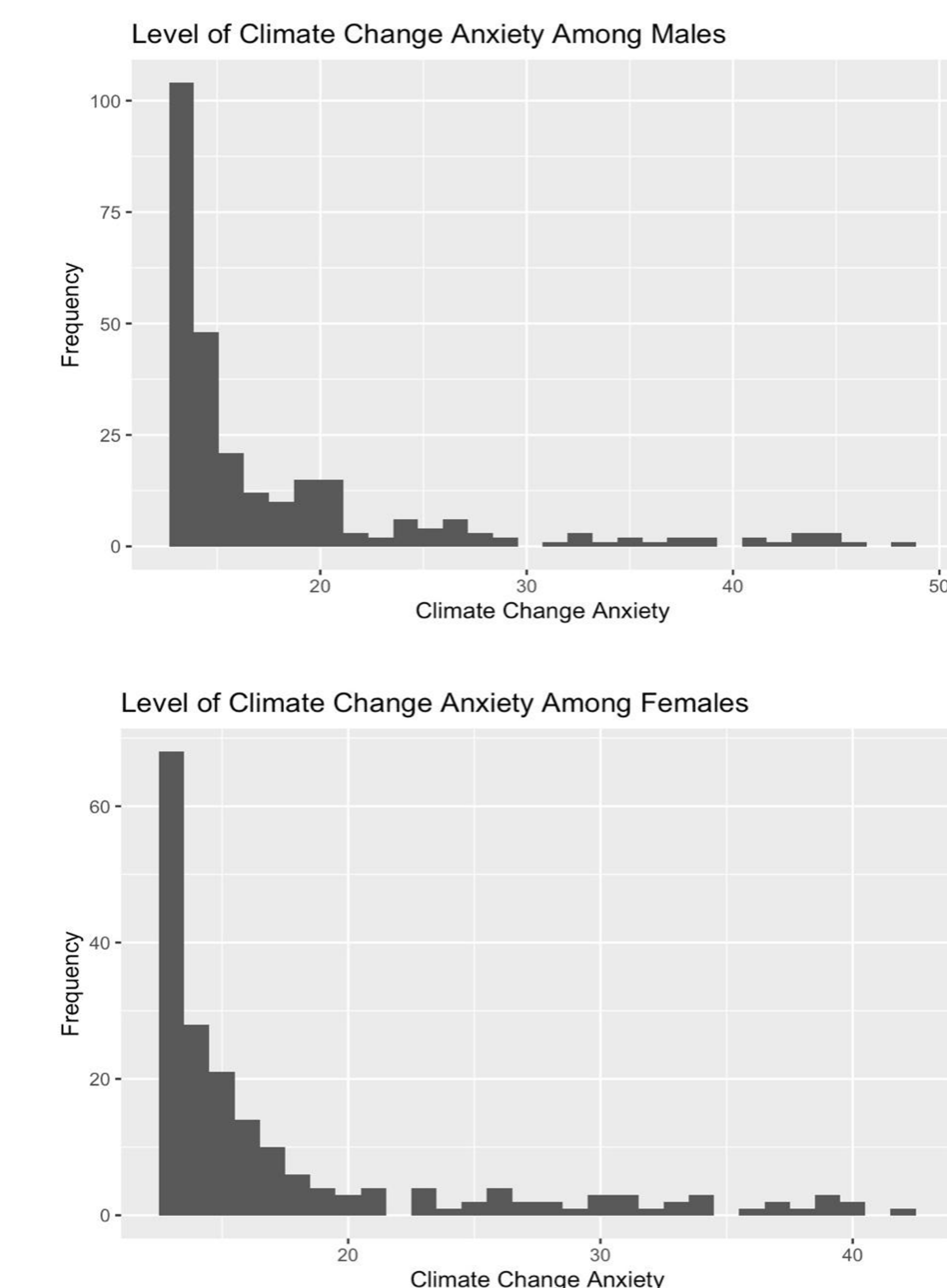
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DISCUSSION

- Males and females had similar levels of climate change anxiety.
- Notably, both men and women reported low levels of anxiety.
 - In similar studies across several countries, people in the United States reported much lower anxiety than people from other countries.
- The study excluded non-binary and other non-cisgender individuals were excluded due to data limitations. Future research should examine climate change anxiety in these groups.
- The data were collected in 2021. However, climate change anxiety may have changed over the last two years, as more people have experienced the effects of climate change and more information is available about it. Such changes might have reduced differences between the United States and other countries and might have increased differences between men and women.

Figure 1

Levels of Climate Change Anxiety Among Males and Females



*** $p < .001$.