

Psychological Response of Young People to Climate Change

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Abstract

Climate change is a global threat to human health, and it has a profound impact on our mental health. This research aims to understand the psychological responses of young people to climate change and their impact on mental health, particularly with regard to anxiety and other psychological conditions. A questionnaire was completed by 768 Hungarian-speaking students at the Budapest Metropolitan University between May 2024 and January 2025. In accordance with the research, two hypotheses were formulated: 1. Among the examined generations, members of Generation Z struggle the most, while members of Generation X struggle the least with symptoms caused by climate anxiety; 2. Among the frequent events affecting climate change, natural disasters are most likely to cause the feelings of fear and anxiety among the members of the examined generations. The results indicate that members of Generation Z significantly experience symptoms associated with climate anxiety, such as apathy, unprovoked outbursts of anger, or intense anxiety and feelings of hopelessness due to natural disasters caused by climate change. In order to fully grasp the societal impacts of climate change and the psychological dimensions of climate anxiety, the execution of further research is required.

Keywords

Sustainability, Climate change, Climate anxiety, Mental health, Generation research.