

Feeling the Heat:

Exploring Media's Role in Eco-Anxiety Among Indonesian Youth

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Climate change is spreading rapidly. The moderate increase in the earth's temperature leads to different impacts such as heat waves, increase in average annual rainfall, floods, drought, the rising of sea level, etc., causing a considerably serious threat to the environment and people's health and well-being around the globe, including Indonesia. The World Bank (2021) mentioned Indonesia as one of the top three countries most vulnerable to climate-related risks. Based on the data released by The National Agency for Disaster Countermeasures (BNBP, 2024), within the last ten years, the number of disasters in Indonesia reached its peak in 2020 at 5004 events. It was dominated by cyclones, floods, landslides, forest fires, and drought.

The occurrence of a disaster certainly attracts the media's attention. Since it contains a variety of news values, which are worth reporting. More media cover this issue; not limited to the conventional media but also new media, including online media and social media. Thus, people are massively exposed to the issue. Although some of them might not be directly affected by the disaster, media exposure can stimulate their emotional responses, including sadness, anger, fear, worry, and anxiety. This is usually acknowledged as eco-anxiety. Based on studies in several countries, it has been shown that such media coverage influenced the increase in eco-anxiety (Maran and Begotti, 2021; Shao and Yu, 2023).

However, both the media coverage effect and eco-anxiety level in Indonesia are still far under-reported and under-investigated. ABC News Australia (2021) has featured a small interview revealing that Indonesian youth started to experience eco-anxiety. The result of the interview gave invaluable insight but cannot be used as evidence due to the limited respondents and methodology.

Therefore, it is interesting to conduct further research exploring the relationship between media coverage and eco-anxiety in Indonesia. We plan to conduct research targeting 300 Indonesian youth by filling out a questionnaire to collect how much attention is paid to information related to climate issues, to which media they mostly consume, and how they feel receiving such information. Given that more young adults showed anxiety compared to the older generation as a response to the climate crisis (Agoston et al., 2024) we will be focusing on portraying the phenomenon in young people, aged 10-24 as it is defined by WHO (2024).

We hypothesize that the exposure frequency to climate-related news and contents positively correlated to the eco-anxiety level. In addition, we also hypothesized that certain media types would influence the eco-anxiety level that one experiences in Indonesia.

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Adaptasi Climate Anxiety Scale bahasa Indonesia (Adaptation of the Climate Anxiety Scale in Indonesian version: The sample of young adults) Sinta 1

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