



+ • CHOIX DE CARRIÈRE DES ÉTUDIANT.ES ET CRISE
CLIMATIQUE : RÔLE DE LA SENSIBILISATION, DE L'ÉCO-
ANXIÉTÉ, DE L'INCERTITUDE FACE À L'AVENIR

○ CAREER CHOICES OF STUDENTS AND CLIMATE CRISIS: ROLE OF
AWARENESS, ECO-ANXIETY, UNCERTAINTY ABOUT THE FUTURE

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Contexte de l'étude
Context of the study



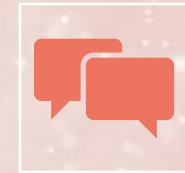
Objectifs
Aims



Méthode
Method



Résultats
Results



Discussion
Discussion



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Context

Awareness is growing

- In 2022, UN Secretary-General António Guterres declared that the report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was a "*red alert for humanity*".

Younger generations, the most exposed

- That same year, at her graduation ceremony, Anne-Fleur Goll, a student at the Hautes Études Commerciales (HEC) business school in Paris, expressed her "*deep unease*" at realizing that her studies would lead her into professions *responsible for "environmental collapse."*

Study by Hickman et al (2021) / 10,000 16-25 year-olds from 10 countries

- Climate anxiety,
- Dissatisfaction with Government Response
- → Impact on their daily behavior





In France

Caillaud et al., 2022;
Harris Interactiv,
mars 2023

- **Giving up a parental project;**
- **Giving up applying for a job** with a company that is considered environmentally unsound;
- **Change direction**
- **Extend their studies** to learn about climate issues and/or a more ecologically useful profession.

Paradoxically

- **More young people are involved in environmental associations** (4% in 2016, 16% in 2019, Vie publique, 2020).
- a significant number of young people have **little reliable knowledge on the subject** (IPSOS, November 2021)

=> Need to develop further research into the impact of climate change on young people's attitudes and behaviors (Hickman et al., 2021), particularly on career choices.





A challenge for Counselling Psychology

- Citizen psychology: social justice and the environment
 - Guichard & Huteau (2006, p.29) : *"Individual career choices now explicitly raise the question of human responsibility, both individual and collective »*
 - Masdonati & Rossier (2021) : Ensuring a sustainable career (promoting continuity, agency and meaning throughout one's career and during career transitions) and with an ethical imperative (integrating collective issues).

→ *The integration of a collective dimension into professional thinking in an uncertain societal context since globalization (Blustein, 2019), and more recently Covid (Greenhaus et al., 2024).*

→ *The increase in psychological uncertainty about the future (Soidet et al., in press), in which the environmental issue plays a role...*





Aims

1- Document students' attitudes and behaviors regarding climate issues.

2- Examine how students' consideration of climate change in their educational and career choices varies across three variables:

- **Eco-anxiety** (Hickman et collaborateurs)
→ “ *Chronic fear of environmental catastrophe* ” (APA, American Psychological Association)
- **Raise awareness of climate issues**
→ Engaged / Not Informed (IPSOS 2021 ; Vie publique, 2020)
- **Uncertainty about the future**
→ “ *Ambiguity in the perception of one's future, whether in terms of goals or means, which leads the person to mobilize resources and adjust representations in order to take action* ” (Soidet et al. , 2022, in presse)



Method



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Sample : 165 students

- 69.1% women, 81.2% aged 20 to 22, 69.1% in Master's programs
- 55.9% at university (39.6% Humanities and Social Sciences, 6.7% Law, 3.6% Science, Technology and Health, 6% other).
- 44.1% in higher education (28% engineering schools, 8.5% business or communication schools, 5.5% environmental schools, 1.8% schools in other sectors).

Procedure: online questionnaire

- Late 2023 / early 2024,
- Thematic analysis for open questions and inferential analysis for others

• 6 parts of the questionnaire :

1- Socio-demographic data.

2- Awareness of environmental issues, including self-perception:

- ☐ “novice, I've had very little information on the subject”,
- ☐ “informed.e, I have at least had some training, or I regularly inform myself on the subject”
- ☐ “activist, I'm involved in the fight against global warming”.

3- Ecological practices (eco-gestures, large-scale actions, etc.).

4- Career choice: Intended occupation, followed by:

"Has the climate crisis had an impact on your decision regarding your career direction and/or your thoughts on how to practice your future profession?" ☐ If "yes", then "in what way(s)", ☐ If "no", then "why?"

5- Ecoanxiety scale (Mouguiama-Daouda et al., 2022), french version of *Climate Anxiety Scale (CAS)* (Clayton et Karazsia, 2020)

e.g. «I find it hard to fall asleep when I think about climate change" (cognitive and emotional difficulties).

e.g. My worries about climate change prevent me from enjoying having fun with my family or friends" (Impaired functioning)

6- Perceived Uncertainty about the Future Scale (IFA), in general and in relation to school and career prospects(Soidet & al, sous presse)

e.g. "I feel uncertain about my future education and training choices. »



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RESULTS - DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS – SOME HIGHLIGHTS



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Level of Awareness & Awareness Vectors

92.7% Everyday eco-actions (e.g. selective sorting, limited use of plastic, car, etc.)

72.7% Not involved in large-scale actions (e.g. climate walks, awareness campaigns, etc.)

88% find higher education useful.



Current practices

92,7% éco-gestes du quotidien (e.g. tri-sélectif, usage limité du plastique, de la voiture, etc.)

72,7% non engagés dans des actions d'envergure (e.g. marches pour le climat, actions de sensibilisation, etc.)



Career choices

35% mention a green job (e.g. environmental officer) or a greening job (e.g. energy efficiency engineer).

52.7% think that the climate crisis has had an impact on their career choices.

47.3% say the opposite

Reasons given

YES (52,7%)

- **Strong beliefs / personal reflections**

"I've been thinking about the impact this profession could have on the environment, and if there are ways to minimize that impact, I'd like to find out and apply them .

- **A long-standing interest in the environment**

"It influenced my choice of major because it's an area I enjoy.

- **Employment opportunities**

"Demand in this field will continue to grow, so now's the time to get involved.

NO (47,3%)

- **A private matter**

"No, because I believe that ecological battles can be fought mainly outside the workplace.

- **Form of resignation**

"I'm not too interested in ecology because I think that on an individual level, and even on a national level, we won't be able to change our ecological fate.

- **Career choice before awareness of the issue**

"I chose my future career before I became involved.



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RESULTS - INFERENTIAL ANALYSIS-



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Climate Awareness & Occupation choice, Climate Awareness & Career Decisions –

Chi² Independence Tests: Significant and Strong Relationships.

Tableau 1 - Niveau de sensibilisation à l'écologie et orientation

	Choix de métier		Impact de la crise écologique sur les décisions d'orientation	
	Métiers verts/verdisants	Métiers non verts/verdisants	oui	non
Activistes (n = 30)	18	12	23	7
Informés (n = 114)	41	73	61	53
Novices (n = 21)	0	21	3	18
Total	59	106	87	78

- **Awareness & Occupation Choice**

- $\chi^2 (2, N = 165) = 19.4, p < .001, V = .343.$

→ **Activists (60%) are more likely to choose an eco-related profession than the informed (36%). No novice has chosen a profession related to ecology.**

- **Awareness & Career decisions**

- $\chi^2 (2, N = 165) = 19.4, p < .001, V = .343.$

→ **76.7% of activists said that the climate crisis had had an impact on their professional decisions or thinking, compared with 51.5% of informed people and 14.3% of novices.**

Levels of eco-anxiety (CAS) or perceived uncertainty (IFA) according to occupation choice or career decisions

- *Significant Means Test* -

Tableau 2 - *Statistiques descriptives aux échelles d'éco-anxiété (CAS) et d'incertitude face à l'avenir (IFA) selon l'orientation*

	CAS			IFA		
	N	M	ET	N	M	ET
Métiers verts/verdissants	59	26.5	8.9	59	27.3	7.3
Métiers non verts/verdissants	106	24.8	7.3	106	24.8	7.3
Influence de la crise écologique sur l'orientation	87	25.4	8.8	87	27.3	7
Pas d'influence de la crise écologique sur l'orientation	78	19.9	6.23	78	23.9	6.9

- The group of people who have chosen an eco-related profession is, on average, more eco-anxious than the group who have not. ($t(97.8) = 4.30, p < .001, d_s \text{ de Cohen} = .722$)
- The group of people who said their career decisions were affected by the climate crisis is on average more eco-anxious than the group who didn't. ($t(155) = 4.65, p < .001, d_s \text{ de Cohen} = 0.718$)
- Same results but smaller effect sizes for IFA

Influence of climate awareness on eco-anxiety and uncertainty about the future

- *Significant ANOVA* -

Tableau 3 - *Tableau croisé entre le niveau de sensibilisation, l'éco-anxiété (CAS) et l'incertitude perçue face à l'avenir (IFA) : moyennes et écarts-types*

	CAS		IFA	
	M	ET	M	ET
Activistes (n=30)	27.0	9.2	27.0	6.7
Informés (n=114)	22.7	7.8	26.1	7.1
Novices (n=21)	17.2	4.6	22	6.7

- Effect of awareness on eco-anxiety ($F(2,162) = 9.74, p < .001$)
- Effect of awareness on perceived uncertainty about the future ($F(2,162) = 3.67, p = .028$)
- Tests *Post hoc*:
 - **Activists were significantly more eco-anxious than informed and novices, and novices were significantly less eco-anxious than informed.**
 - **Results were similar for uncertainty about the future, but no significant difference was found between informed and activists.**



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DISCUSSION THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS



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- The results confirm and clarify various research studies (Hickman et al., 2021) and surveys (Harris Interactive, 2023, Ipsos, 2021; Vie Publique, 2020).
 - The climate emergency is influencing young people's behavior, particularly in terms of career choices.
 - They need more education on the subject (88%), and schools play a key role in raising awareness (in addition to the media).
 - Awareness raising is more about eco-gestures than activism

→ The school system appears to be a legitimate vector for raising awareness.

→ It should aim early in the curriculum to develop a critical awareness of the issue with a view to transforming society (Jickling & Wals,





- It also appears that

- Activists (compared to novices and/or the informed)
- Are more environmentally anxious and uncertain about the future,
- make more pro-environmental decisions

→ *Reinforces the idea of an **adaptive function of eco-anxiety** (Jalin et al. 2022; Clayton & Karazsia, 2020) and uncertainty about the future (Soidet et al. 2021), which is still under discussion.*

- **47.3% of students say that**

- crisis has had any impact on their career choices,
- often due to a lack of guidance on the issue when making their initial choices.

→ ***Strengthens the role of guidance services in the development of ethical and agentic careers** (Masdonati & Rossier, 2021).*



- **Some practical implications**

- Orientation workshops integrating the environmental dimension
 - Some of the verbatims from this study could be discussed as levers (reflection on the impact of career choices, personal interests, job opportunities) or obstacles (privacy, resignation, post-choice awareness) to the development of environmental awareness.
 - In terms of identity (the person I want to become)
 - Relatively early in the curriculum to avoid resignation
- Make eco-awareness, in its motivational and emotional components, an object of reflection and sharing in career counseling.

- **Limitations:** sample size and voluntary participation, over-representation of the SHS sector, wording of the question on "the impact of the climate crisis on career choices or thinking about how to practice the future profession".

- **Future directions:** target other audiences (middle school students, high school students, the low-skilled, etc.), continue to explore the relationship between eco-anxiety and uncertainty about the future ($r = .38$), for which studies are lacking.





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Any questions ?



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