

# WHEN THE WATERS RISE: FINANCIAL STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH AFTER THE 2021 LIMBURG FLOODS





**OUR TEAM**

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## RESEARCH QUESTION

How did temporary internal displacement caused by the 2021 floods in Limburg affect residents' mental well-being ?

## INTRODUCTION

- Extreme climate disasters, such as flooding, are occurring more frequently due to climate change, shaping discourses on possible future solutions to reduce health vulnerabilities.
- Floods can lead to temporary displacement, financial burden, health risks and psychological distress (PTSD and Anxiety)
- This study investigates whether internal displacement following the 2021 flooding in Limburg, the Netherlands, is associated with higher levels of stress and anxiety
- By focusing on the Netherlands, this study contributes to a European context that remains relatively underrepresented in the existing literature

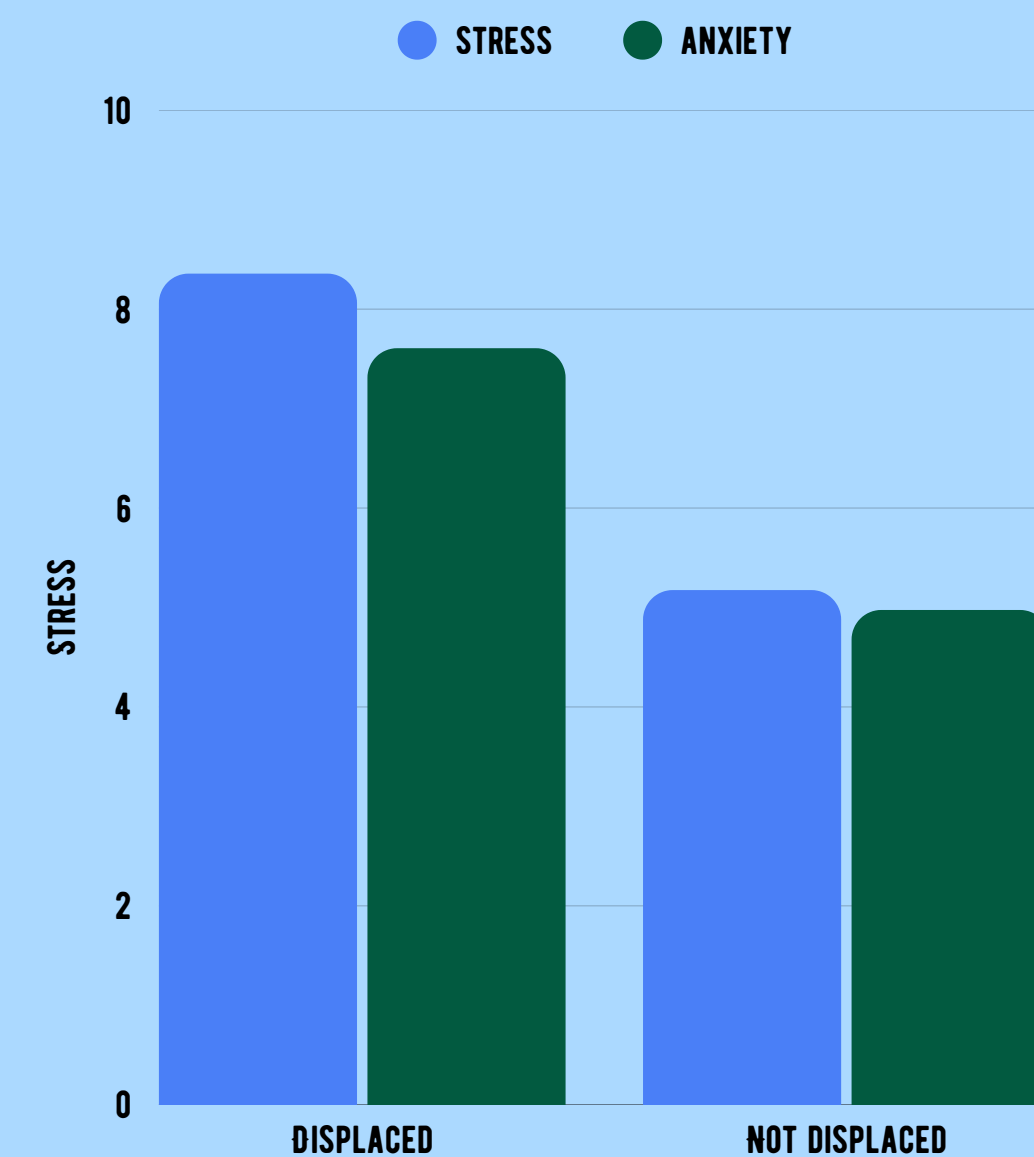
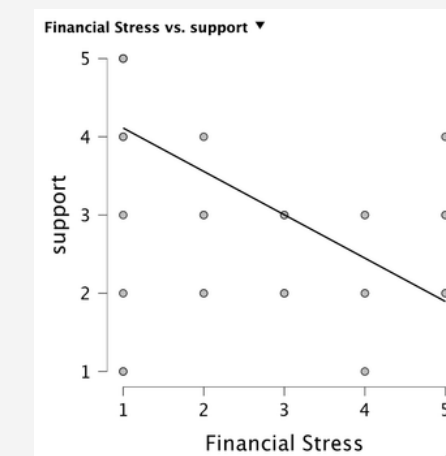
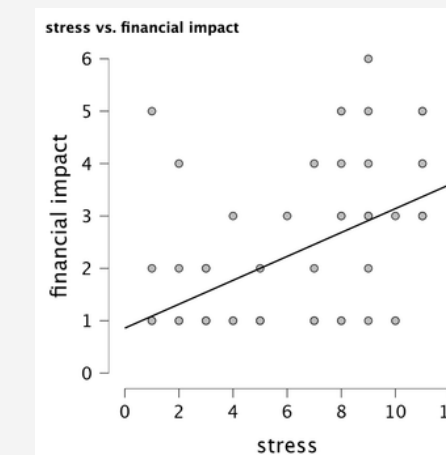
## RESULTS

**H0:** supported - displacement induced by flooding increases stress levels

**H1a:** supported - greater financial impact results in greater stress levels

**H1b:** supported - longer duration of displacement results in higher stress levels

**H1c:** supported - receiving financial support reduced stress levels



## RELEVANCE

- Offers an interdisciplinary approach into an academically under researched case.
- Climate disasters are becoming more frequent. This research supports the development of better policy solutions and response strategies for climate emergencies.



## METHODOLOGY

- Two Expert Interviews:
  - Melissa Siegel - Professor of Migration Studies
  - Samuel Ballin - PhD candidate for climate change, labor migration and EU law
- Survey:
  - 76 respondents from the Limburg Area
  - Measured: Duration of displacement, financial impact, possible governmental aid, and perceived stress/anxiety levels

## RECOMMENDATION

Although climate change cannot be fully prevented, its social and economic consequences can be mitigated.

- Infrastructural Development and Social Resilience
- Cross-Border Project, Euregio Maas-Rhine between Maastricht University and RWTH Aachen → EU funding, Interreg
- Three-stage approach: Pre-disaster preparedness, disaster stage psychological support & post-disaster long-term recovery
- Resilience Labs, Resilience Shelters with Psychological First Aid, Community Recovery Circles, Workshops & Simulations and Awareness Campaigns
- Providing Psychological and Financial Aid to displaced households

## CONCLUSION

The 2021 floods highlighted that climate change is affecting Europe not only environmentally, but also socially and psychologically. Our findings indicate that financial security, preparedness, and community resilience are essential for reducing additional negative consequences of climate disasters. Universities and students can raise awareness, promote cooperation and strengthen the resilience of the future generation.

Climate resilience starts with education, awareness and community.

SUPPORT  
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