

Climate Anxiety and Human Survival in Contemporary English Literature

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Abstract

*The growing climate crisis has intensified global concerns regarding environmental degradation, psychological distress, and human survival, which are increasingly reflected in contemporary English literature. This research paper examines the representation of climate anxiety and human survival in selected contemporary climate fiction (Cli-Fi) texts through an eco-critical and thematic analytical framework. The study utilizes a contemporary climate fiction literary corpus dataset comprising selected novels, including *The Water Knife*, *Gun Island*, *Migrations*, and *Oryx and Crake*, collected from digital literary repositories such as Project Gutenberg and Internet Archive. The research explores how modern literary narratives portray ecological collapse, environmental trauma, extinction fears, climate migration, and emotional instability caused by climate change. Eco-criticism, trauma theory, and qualitative textual analysis are employed to identify recurring themes of ecological fear, survival strategies, and psychological distress within literary discourse. The findings reveal that contemporary English literature increasingly presents climate change as both an environmental and existential crisis threatening social stability, identity, and the future of humanity. The study further emphasizes the role of literature in fostering environmental awareness and emotional engagement with ecological realities. By integrating literary studies with environmental humanities, this paper contributes to interdisciplinary discussions on climate discourse, eco-anxiety, and human resilience in an era of ecological uncertainty.*

Keywords: *Climate Anxiety, Contemporary English Literature, Eco-criticism, Human Survival.*

Introduction

Climate change has emerged as one of the most critical global challenges of the twenty-first century, affecting environmental sustainability, human health, emotional well-being, and social stability. Increasing environmental disasters such as floods, droughts, rising global temperatures, biodiversity loss, and ecological destruction have intensified public concern regarding the future of humanity and the survival of ecosystems [1]. Recent studies indicate that climate anxiety, also referred to as eco-anxiety, has become a growing psychological phenomenon characterized by fear, distress, uncertainty, grief, and emotional instability associated with climate change and environmental degradation [2]. Global surveys further reveal that young people increasingly experience fear, sadness, anger, and helplessness regarding governmental responses to climate change and the uncertain environmental future [3]. Emotional reactions to climate crises, including eco-depression and eco-anger, are now recognized as significant factors influencing psychological well-being and behavioral responses toward environmental action [4].

The psychological consequences of climate change have attracted substantial attention across interdisciplinary research fields, including environmental humanities, psychology, sociology, and literary studies. Systematic reviews demonstrate that eco-anxiety contributes to emotional stress, fear of future uncertainty, and mental health disturbances among different age groups and communities [5]. Studies on environmental psychology also highlight that climate anxiety shapes everyday emotional experiences and influences pro-environmental behavior and ecological consciousness [6]. Climate-related distress is particularly significant among children and adolescents, who increasingly perceive climate change as a threat to their future survival and security [7]. Contemporary mental health studies conducted in different countries have further confirmed the growing prevalence of psychological distress associated with environmental crises and climate instability [8]. Psychometric assessments of eco-anxiety scales additionally indicate that ecological fear and environmental grief are becoming measurable psychological conditions within modern societies [9]. Recent research has emphasized that emotional responses to climate change include fear, trauma, grief, hopelessness, and existential anxiety regarding the future of humanity [10].

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Climate anxiety has also been associated with negative emotional responses and concerns regarding environmental destruction across multiple countries worldwide [11]. Scholars further argue that habitual concern about global warming can produce both constructive environmental awareness and unconstructive emotional suffering [12]. Ecological grief has therefore emerged as an important concept describing emotional responses to environmental loss, extinction, and ecological collapse [13]. These emotional and psychological dimensions of climate change have increasingly influenced cultural expression, public discourse, and contemporary literary imagination.

Contemporary English literature has significantly responded to these environmental concerns through climate fiction (Cli-Fi), ecological narratives, dystopian fiction, and survival-centered storytelling. Climate literature portrays environmental destruction, migration, extinction fears, ecological instability, and human adaptation within climate-altered societies [14]. Contemporary climate fiction narratives increasingly examine environmental crises through emotionally charged representations of trauma, fear, and survival [15]. Scholars have also argued that young people's climate anxiety demands urgent social, political, and cultural responses because environmental crises threaten future generations psychologically and physically [16]. Narrative reviews further confirm that anxiety, grief, and emotional suffering associated with environmental crises are central human experiences in the age of climate change [17]. Reports on global climate and health additionally emphasize that climate change has become a "code red" warning for human survival, public health, and environmental sustainability [18].

Recent scientific discussions increasingly recognize the mental-health impacts of climate change and the rise of eco-anxiety in contemporary society [19]. Systematic reviews assessing eco-anxiety across different age groups demonstrate that environmental fear is now a widespread global psychological concern [20]. Researchers have also proposed unified conceptual frameworks to explain eco-anxiety as a multidimensional emotional response connected to ecological crises, uncertainty, and existential insecurity [21]. Psychological studies further reveal that climate anxiety includes fear, helplessness, trauma, and emotional instability associated with environmental degradation and uncertainty regarding the future [22]. Indigenous communities and vulnerable populations are particularly affected by climate-related mental health issues due to displacement, ecological disruption, and environmental injustice [23]. Climate anxiety has therefore become a significant psychological response to global environmental change and ecological instability [24]. Furthermore, climate-related stress and environmental crises continue to affect health, productivity, and social functioning across communities worldwide [25]. The concept of environmental distress and emotional suffering associated with ecological degradation has been discussed extensively through the idea of "solastalgia," which describes psychological pain caused by environmental transformation and loss of familiar ecosystems [26]. Recent systematic reviews have identified major gaps in eco-anxiety research while emphasizing the need for interdisciplinary approaches integrating psychology, environmental studies, and cultural analysis [27]. Ecological grief has similarly been recognized as a natural emotional response to climate-related loss, extinction, and environmental destruction [28]. Environmental education scholars further argue that eco-anxiety plays an important role in shaping ecological awareness, environmental ethics, and public engagement with climate issues [29]. Contemporary discussions also emphasize the importance of openly addressing eco-anxiety and climate-related emotional distress within academic and public discourse [30]. Studies examining eco-anxiety in everyday life additionally demonstrate strong relationships between environmental fear, emotional well-being, and ecological behavior [31]. Systematic reviews further reveal that eco-anxiety has serious health implications and contributes to emotional instability and psychological vulnerability [32]. Cross-cultural studies conducted in different countries continue to demonstrate increasing levels of environmental concern and climate-related emotional distress among populations worldwide [33], [34], [35].

Environmental humanities scholars increasingly emphasize the importance of understanding climate change through emotional, educational, and literary perspectives. Research suggests that learning to live with climate change requires emotional adaptation, resilience, and environmental awareness [36]. Hope and emotional engagement are also considered essential for promoting environmental responsibility and sustainable action among younger generations [37]. Systems-thinking approaches further highlight the interconnected relationship between climate change, mental health, environmental crises, and human

survival [38]. Climate anxiety among children and adolescents is increasingly viewed as a major social and psychological issue requiring interdisciplinary attention [39].

Within literary studies, climate change has become an important area of contemporary critical inquiry. Scholars argue that climate fiction, eco-literature, and environmental narratives play a significant role in representing ecological crises and shaping public understanding of climate change [40]. Contemporary literary criticism increasingly examines how fiction portrays environmental collapse, survival fears, migration, ecological trauma, and dystopian futures [41]. Environmental humanities research also highlights how ecological destruction often occurs gradually through “slow violence,” disproportionately affecting vulnerable populations and future generations [42]. Climate trauma studies further demonstrate that dystopian narratives and speculative fiction portray emotional instability, survival struggles, and existential fears associated with ecological catastrophe [43]. Literary scholars additionally argue that climate change challenges traditional literary imagination because environmental crises are often difficult to represent within conventional narrative forms [44]. Concepts such as global environmental imagination and ecological consciousness therefore become essential for understanding the relationship between literature, nature, and human survival [45]. Eco-critical scholarship further emphasizes the importance of analyzing literary representations of environmental ethics, ecological responsibility, and the interconnected relationship between humans and nature [46].

Several contemporary literary works, including *The Water Knife*, *Gun Island*, *Migrations*, and *Oryx and Crake*, portray themes of ecological collapse, emotional trauma, migration, environmental destruction, and human survival under climate catastrophe. These narratives demonstrate how contemporary English literature increasingly reflects climate anxiety as both an environmental and psychological crisis threatening human existence, identity, and social stability. Although previous studies have explored climate anxiety, eco-criticism, environmental trauma, and climate fiction independently, limited research has examined the interconnected relationship between climate anxiety and human survival within contemporary English literature using a thematic literary corpus approach. Therefore, this paper is novel because it integrates environmental humanities, eco-criticism, trauma theory, and climate fiction studies to examine ecological fear, emotional distress, survival narratives, and environmental consciousness in contemporary English literary discourse.

Literature Review

Climate anxiety and ecological distress have become increasingly significant areas of interdisciplinary research within environmental humanities, psychology, and literary studies. Albrecht et al. 2007 introduced the concept of “solastalgia” to describe the emotional suffering caused by environmental degradation and ecological transformation. The study highlighted how environmental destruction directly influences psychological well-being and emotional stability. Heise 2008 further explored the relationship between environmental imagination and global ecological consciousness within literary discourse, emphasizing how environmental crises shape cultural narratives and human identity. Trexler and Johns-Putra 2011 later identified climate change literature as an emerging interdisciplinary field connecting environmental studies with literary criticism. In the same year, Nixon 2011 introduced the concept of “slow violence” to explain how gradual environmental destruction disproportionately affects vulnerable populations and ecosystems. Clark 2011 also emphasized the significance of eco-criticism in examining literary representations of nature, environmental ethics, and human survival.

Ojala 2012 examined the role of hope in climate engagement and argued that emotional resilience is essential for promoting environmental awareness among young people. Kaplan 2015 investigated climate trauma in dystopian fiction and demonstrated how literary narratives portray emotional suffering, fear, and survival anxieties associated with ecological collapse. Ghosh 2016 criticized the inability of conventional literary forms to adequately represent climate change and emphasized the importance of environmental imagination in contemporary literature. Cunsolo and Ellis 2018 further examined ecological grief as a mental health response to climate-related loss, biodiversity decline, and ecological instability. Berry et al. 2018 additionally proposed a systems-thinking approach to understand the interconnected relationship between

climate change, psychological well-being, and human survival. Verlie 2019 emphasized the importance of learning to live with climate change through emotional adaptation and environmental awareness. Johns-Putra 2019 explored climate fiction, ecopoetry, and eco-critical studies, arguing that climate change has transformed contemporary literary criticism and environmental discourse. Pihkala 2020 examined eco-anxiety and environmental education, suggesting that ecological fear strongly influences public engagement and environmental ethics. Hickman 2020 highlighted the importance of openly discussing eco-anxiety and emotional suffering associated with climate change. Clayton 2020/2021 described climate anxiety as a psychological response characterized by fear, uncertainty, helplessness, and existential insecurity caused by environmental instability. Cunsolo et al. 2020/2021 further argued that ecological grief and climate anxiety represent natural emotional responses to environmental destruction and climate-related crises.

Hickman et al. 2021 conducted a global survey among children and young people and identified widespread feelings of fear, sadness, anger, and helplessness regarding climate change and governmental responses. Stanley et al. 2021 examined eco-anxiety, eco-depression, and eco-anger and concluded that climate-related emotions significantly influence psychological well-being and environmental action. Coffey et al. 2021 conducted a systematic scoping review and identified major research gaps in eco-anxiety studies while emphasizing the increasing prevalence of environmental distress within contemporary society. Johns-Putra 2021 further examined climate change within literary criticism and highlighted climate fiction as a significant medium for understanding ecological crises. Trexler 2021 analyzed contemporary climate fiction narratives and demonstrated how literary texts portray ecological collapse, migration, dystopian futures, and survival struggles. Ojala et al. 2021 reviewed environmental anxiety, grief, and emotional suffering and concluded that climate-related emotions have become central human experiences in the contemporary world. Romanello et al. 2021 additionally described climate change as a “code red” warning for global health and human survival. Dodds 2021 also examined the psychology of climate anxiety and identified fear, uncertainty, trauma, and emotional instability as dominant psychological responses to environmental crises. Boluda-Verdú et al. 2022 conducted a systematic review on eco-anxiety and identified fear of the future, psychological instability, and health-related concerns as major consequences of climate-related distress. Ogunbode et al. 2022 investigated climate anxiety across 32 countries and found strong relationships between environmental concern, emotional suffering, and pro-environmental behavior. Verplanken et al. 2022 examined habitual concern about global warming and argued that eco-anxiety can generate both constructive environmental engagement and emotional suffering. Wu et al. 2022 highlighted the urgent need to address climate anxiety among young people because environmental crises increasingly threaten future generations. Crandon et al. 2022 examined climate anxiety among children and adolescents using a social–ecological perspective and identified environmental instability as a major factor influencing emotional well-being. Vecchio et al. 2022 focused on Indigenous communities and demonstrated that climate change significantly affects mental health through ecological disruption, displacement, and environmental injustice.

Patrick et al. 2023 examined mental health impacts related to climate change in Australia and identified strong associations between environmental concern and psychological distress. Lutz et al. 2023 investigated eco-anxiety in everyday life and demonstrated strong relationships between environmental fear, emotional well-being, and pro-environmental behavior. Rocchi et al. 2023 confirmed eco-anxiety as a measurable psychological condition through psychometric evaluation of the Hogg Eco-Anxiety Scale. Clayton et al. 2023 explored emotional responses to climate change among young people worldwide and highlighted increasing levels of fear, anxiety, and ecological concern. Amodu et al. 2023 reviewed the impact of climate change and heat stress on workers’ health and productivity and concluded that environmental crises significantly threaten human health and social functioning. Pearson 2024 further emphasized the growing mental-health burden of climate change and identified eco-anxiety as an expanding global concern within scientific and social discussions. Kühner et al. 2025 conducted a meta-analysis on climate change anxiety and confirmed the increasing prevalence of environmental distress and psychological instability worldwide. Mosca et al. 2025 examined eco-anxiety and mental health and identified strong correlations between environmental concern and emotional suffering. Samarawickrama et al. 2025 systematically assessed eco-anxiety across different age groups and concluded that ecological fear has become a widespread psychological phenomenon. Boivin et al. 2025 proposed a unified conceptual framework describing eco-

anxiety as a multidimensional emotional response involving fear, uncertainty, grief, and existential insecurity associated with climate change.

Although previous studies have extensively examined eco-anxiety, environmental trauma, climate fiction, and eco-critical discourse, limited research has explored the interconnected relationship between climate anxiety and human survival within contemporary English literature using a thematic literary corpus approach. Therefore, the present study aims to bridge this research gap by integrating environmental humanities, eco-criticism, trauma theory, and climate fiction analysis to examine ecological fear, emotional suffering, survival narratives, and environmental consciousness in contemporary English literature.

2.1 Research Gap

Recent studies have significantly contributed to understanding climate anxiety, ecological grief, environmental trauma, and climate fiction from psychological, environmental, and literary perspectives. However, most previous research has focused independently on mental health impacts, environmental crises, or eco-critical discourse without integrating climate anxiety and human survival narratives within contemporary English literature. Existing studies also lack a thematic literary corpus approach for analysing ecological fear, emotional instability, and survival-centered storytelling in climate fiction. Therefore, the present study aims to bridge this gap by combining eco-criticism, trauma theory, and literary analysis to investigate climate anxiety and human survival in contemporary English literature.

Table 1. Summary of Existing Studies and Identified Research Gaps

Authors & Year	Research Focus	Methodology Used	Major Findings	Identified Gap
Kühner et al. 2025	Climate change anxiety	Meta-analysis	Climate anxiety is increasing globally	No literary or survival analysis
Mosca et al. 2025	Eco-anxiety and mental health	Psychological assessment	Environmental concern affects emotional well-being	Absence of climate fiction analysis
Hickman et al. 2021	Climate anxiety among youth	Global survey	Young people experience fear and helplessness	No literary representation examined
Ogunbode et al. 2022	Emotional responses to climate change	Cross-country analysis	Eco-anxiety influences environmental behaviour	Limited to psychological perspective
Johns-Putra 2021	Climate change in literary criticism	Literary review	Climate fiction shapes environmental discourse	Limited focus on survival psychology
Trexler 2021	Climate fiction narratives	Literary analysis	Fiction portrays ecological crises and dystopian futures	Lack of eco-anxiety integration
Pearson 2024	Mental-health impacts of climate change	Scientific commentary	Eco-anxiety is a growing global concern	No thematic literary corpus approach

Table 1 summarizes major recent studies related to climate anxiety, eco-anxiety, environmental trauma, and climate fiction. The table demonstrates that previous research has primarily concentrated on psychological assessments, environmental behaviour, mental health impacts, and eco-critical literary discussions. Although these studies provide valuable insights into environmental fear and climate-related emotional distress, limited attention has been given to the integrated examination of climate anxiety and human survival within contemporary English literature. Furthermore, existing literature lacks a thematic literary corpus approach that combines eco-criticism, trauma theory, emotional instability, and survival narratives

together. Therefore, the present study addresses this research gap by analysing ecological fear, emotional trauma, and human survival through contemporary climate fiction and literary discourse.

Materials and Methodology

This study employs a qualitative and interdisciplinary research methodology to investigate climate anxiety and human survival in contemporary English literature. The research integrates eco-criticism, trauma theory, and thematic literary analysis to examine ecological fear, emotional distress, environmental collapse, and survival narratives represented in climate fiction. A contemporary climate fiction literary corpus dataset was developed using selected English novels that portray climate crises, ecological instability, migration, extinction, and human adaptation. The overall methodology focuses on identifying recurring themes, emotional expressions, and survival-centered narratives within literary discourse.

Dataset Description

The dataset used in this research consists of a contemporary climate fiction literary corpus developed from selected English novels published between 2000 and 2025. The selected literary texts were chosen based on their strong representation of climate anxiety, ecological collapse, environmental trauma, climate migration, extinction, and human survival narratives. These literary works collectively portray emotional distress, environmental instability, and survival struggles caused by climate change and ecological degradation. The dataset was collected from publicly accessible digital literary repositories, including Project Gutenberg and Internet Archive, which provide research-oriented literary texts suitable for thematic and qualitative analysis.

The selected climate fiction corpus contains narratives related to water scarcity, ecological destruction, environmental disasters, species extinction, migration, and dystopian futures. These texts were selected because they effectively reflect contemporary environmental concerns and emotional responses associated with climate crises. The literary corpus dataset serves as the primary source of textual data for identifying themes of climate anxiety, ecological grief, emotional instability, survival strategies, and environmental consciousness within contemporary English literature.

Table 2. Climate Fiction Literary Corpus Dataset

Literary Text	Author	Publication Year	Major Theme	Environmental Focus	Emotional Focus	Dataset Source
The Water Knife	Paolo Bacigalupi	2015	Water scarcity and survival	Resource depletion	Fear and survival anxiety	Project Gutenberg / Archive
Gun Island	Amitav Ghosh	2019	Climate migration and ecological fear	Climate displacement	Trauma and uncertainty	Internet Archive
Migrations	Charlotte McConagh y	2020	Ecological grief and extinction	Biodiversity loss	Emotional grief and hopelessness	Internet Archive
Oryx and Crake	Margaret Atwood	2003	Ecological collapse	Environmental destruction	Psychological instability	Project Gutenberg

			and dystopia			
The Overstory	Richard Powers	2018	Human–nature relationship	Ecological interconnectedness	Environmental consciousness	Internet Archive

Table 2 presents the selected climate fiction literary corpus used in this study. The dataset includes five major contemporary English novels representing different dimensions of climate change and human survival. Each literary text contributes distinct environmental and emotional themes related to ecological crises, environmental degradation, migration, extinction, and psychological trauma. The selected novels collectively provide a comprehensive literary dataset for analysing climate anxiety and survival-centered narratives in contemporary English literature.

The literary corpus was further transformed into a thematic dataset by identifying specific attributes associated with climate anxiety, emotional suffering, environmental collapse, ecological consciousness, and survival discourse. These thematic attributes function as analytical variables for interpreting emotional, environmental, and psychological representations within literary texts. The dataset attributes were identified through close reading, thematic categorization, and eco-critical interpretation of the selected novels.

Table 3. Dataset Attributes and Thematic Literary Variables

Dataset Attribute	Description	Purpose in Research	Data Representation	Analytical Role	Related Theme
Climate Anxiety	Fear and uncertainty regarding climate change	To identify emotional distress in literary narratives	Emotional expressions	Psychological analysis	Anxiety and fear
Ecological Grief	Emotional suffering caused by environmental loss	To examine trauma associated with ecological destruction	Narrative discourse	Trauma interpretation	Grief and loss
Human Survival	Human adaptation and resilience during ecological crises	To analyse survival-centered storytelling	Survival narratives	Literary analysis	Adaptation and resilience
Climate Migration	Human displacement caused by environmental instability	To investigate migration and social disruption	Contextual events	Social interpretation	Migration and displacement
Environmental Collapse	Ecological destruction and dystopian environmental conditions	To study representations of climate catastrophe	Symbolic imagery	Eco-critical analysis	Environmental crisis

Emotional Distress	Fear, hopelessness, and psychological instability	To examine mental and emotional suffering	Character emotions	Psychological evaluation	Trauma and instability
Human–Nature Relationship	Interaction between humans and natural ecosystems	To analyse ecological consciousness	Narrative symbolism	Environmental interpretation	Ecological ethics
Extinction and Biodiversity Loss	Decline of species and ecological systems	To identify ecological fear and environmental loss	Environmental references	Ecological analysis	Extinction and loss
Environmental Awareness	Ecological responsibility and sustainability consciousness	To examine environmental ethics in literature	Ethical discourse	Eco-critical evaluation	Sustainability
Survival Strategies	Human coping mechanisms during environmental crises	To investigate resilience and continuity	Adaptive behaviour	Survival analysis	Human resilience

Table 3 illustrates the major thematic attributes extracted from the climate fiction literary corpus dataset. These attributes represent the primary emotional, environmental, and survival-related dimensions analyzed in this research. The thematic variables collectively support the investigation of climate anxiety, ecological trauma, emotional suffering, and survival narratives within contemporary English literature. The dataset therefore functions as a structured literary corpus that enables qualitative interpretation and eco-critical analysis of climate-related emotional and environmental discourse.

Research Method

The present study adopts a qualitative and interdisciplinary research methodology to examine climate anxiety and human survival in contemporary English literature. The methodological framework integrates eco-criticism, thematic analysis, trauma theory, and literary textual analysis to investigate ecological fear, emotional distress, environmental collapse, and survival narratives represented within climate fiction. The selected methodologies were chosen because they effectively support the interpretation of environmental discourse, emotional representation, and symbolic literary structures associated with climate crises. Initially, the climate fiction literary corpus dataset was collected from publicly accessible digital repositories and converted into analyzable textual format. The selected literary texts were subjected to close reading and thematic categorization to identify recurring environmental and psychological patterns. The analysis focused on climate anxiety, ecological grief, survival strategies, extinction fears, migration narratives, emotional instability, and environmental consciousness represented within contemporary literary discourse.

Eco-critical analysis was employed to investigate the relationship between humans and nature within climate fiction narratives. This methodology enabled the identification of environmental ethics, ecological destruction, sustainability concerns, and representations of climate catastrophe. Trauma theory was further applied to interpret psychological suffering, emotional instability, fear, hopelessness, and ecological grief caused by environmental collapse. Thematic analysis supported the extraction and categorization of

recurring textual themes and emotional patterns related to climate anxiety and human survival. Literary textual analysis additionally facilitated the interpretation of symbolic imagery, dystopian settings, environmental metaphors, and narrative structures represented within the selected novels in Table 4.

Table 4. Methodological Framework Used in the Study

Methodology	Purpose	Analytical Focus	Expected Outcome
Eco-criticism	To analyse environmental representation and ecological ethics	Human–nature relationship, ecological destruction, climate crisis	Identification of environmental consciousness
Thematic Analysis	To identify recurring literary themes and emotional patterns	Climate anxiety, fear, grief, migration, survival	Extraction of dominant thematic patterns
Trauma Theory	To examine emotional suffering and psychological instability	Ecological grief, hopelessness, emotional trauma	Interpretation of psychological distress
Literary Textual Analysis	To interpret symbolic meaning and narrative structure	Dystopian imagery, environmental symbolism, survival narratives	Literary interpretation of climate fiction
Qualitative Analysis	To investigate contextual and thematic meaning	Emotional and environmental discourse	Comprehensive literary evaluation

The thematic evaluation process was conducted by identifying and categorizing major environmental and emotional indicators within the literary corpus dataset. Specific attention was given to climate anxiety indicators such as fear, uncertainty, ecological grief, emotional trauma, hopelessness, and survival instincts. Environmental indicators including ecological collapse, biodiversity loss, climate migration, resource scarcity, and dystopian environmental settings were also systematically evaluated to examine their influence on survival-centered literary narratives in Table 5.

Table 5. Thematic Evaluation Parameters

Evaluation Parameter	Description	Analytical Objective
Climate Anxiety	Fear and uncertainty related to climate change	To identify eco-anxiety patterns
Ecological Grief	Emotional suffering caused by environmental loss	To examine trauma-related discourse
Human Survival	Adaptation and resilience during ecological crises	To analyse survival narratives
Environmental Collapse	Ecological destruction and dystopian conditions	To investigate climate catastrophe representation
Climate Migration	Human displacement due to environmental crises	To study migration narratives
Emotional Distress	Psychological instability and hopelessness	To interpret emotional trauma
Human–Nature Relationship	Interaction between humans and ecosystems	To examine ecological ethics
Environmental Awareness	Sustainability and ecological responsibility	To identify environmental consciousness

The proposed methodological framework therefore provides a systematic qualitative approach for analysing climate anxiety and human survival within contemporary climate fiction. The integration of eco-criticism, trauma theory, thematic analysis, and literary interpretation enables comprehensive examination of emotional, environmental, and survival-related discourse associated with ecological crises in contemporary English literature.

Proposed Framework

The proposed framework of the present study illustrates the conceptual relationship between climate crises, ecological degradation, emotional trauma, and human survival narratives represented within contemporary English literature. The framework was designed to systematically explain how environmental instability contributes to climate anxiety, psychological distress, ecological fear, and survival-centered literary discourse in climate fiction narratives. The framework integrates environmental humanities, eco-criticism, trauma theory, and thematic literary analysis to investigate the emotional and environmental dimensions of contemporary climate fiction. The framework begins with climate crises and ecological degradation, which function as the primary environmental factors influencing emotional and psychological conditions within literary narratives. Environmental destruction, biodiversity loss, climate migration, resource scarcity, and dystopian ecological conditions contribute to the emergence of climate anxiety and ecological fear among literary characters and societies. These environmental pressures further generate emotional trauma, psychological instability, grief, hopelessness, and existential uncertainty represented throughout contemporary climate fiction.

The framework additionally demonstrates that emotional suffering and ecological trauma lead to the development of survival-centered narratives, including adaptation, resilience, migration, and human continuity under environmental catastrophe. These survival experiences are ultimately represented through literary discourse, symbolic imagery, dystopian settings, and environmental narratives within climate fiction texts. The framework therefore highlights the role of contemporary English literature in promoting environmental awareness, ecological consciousness, and emotional engagement with climate-related crises.

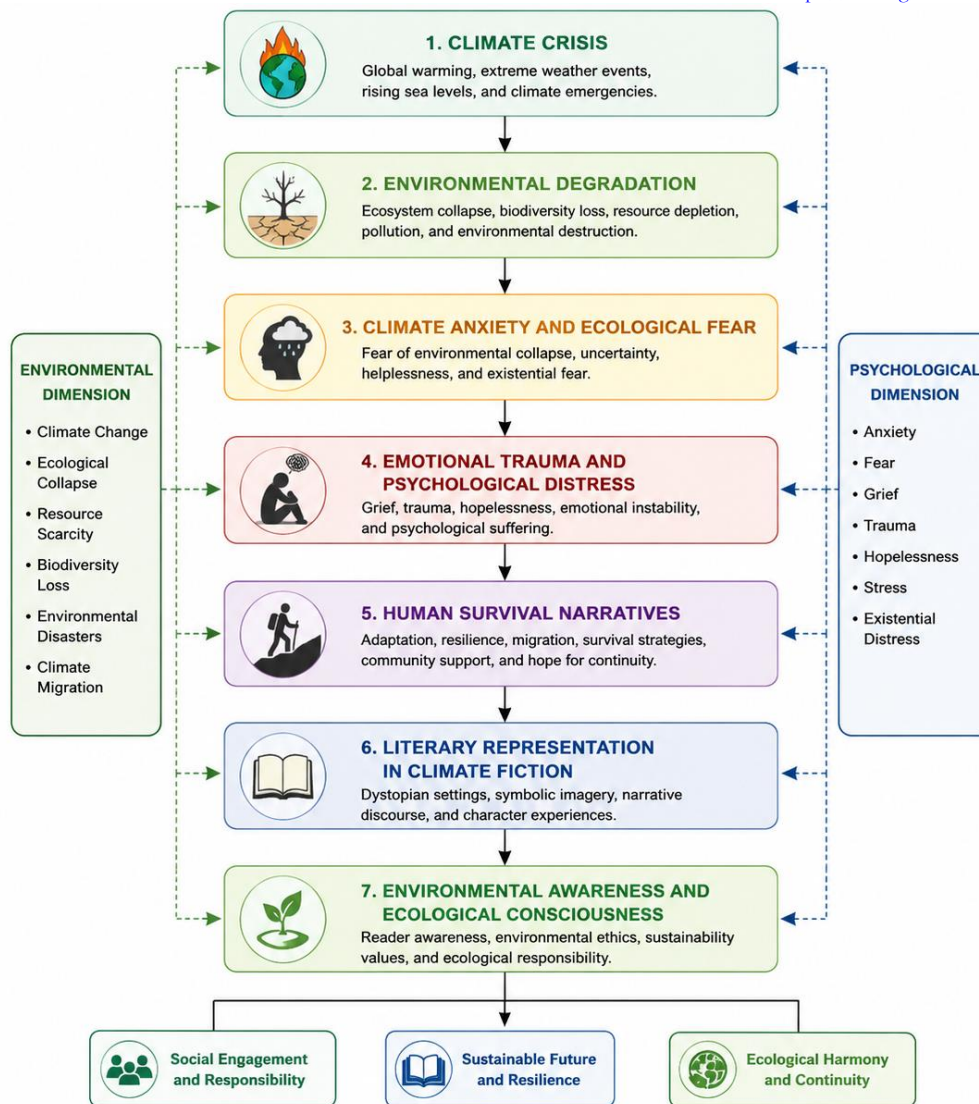


Figure 1. Proposed Conceptual Framework of Climate Anxiety and Human Survival in Contemporary English Literature

The proposed framework in Figure 1 demonstrates the interconnected relationship between environmental crises, emotional suffering, survival discourse, and literary representation. It further explains how contemporary climate fiction functions as a cultural and literary medium for interpreting ecological fear, environmental trauma, and human resilience within the context of global climate change. The framework also supports the systematic qualitative analysis conducted in this study by connecting environmental themes, emotional responses, and survival-centered literary narratives within a unified interdisciplinary structure.

Result and Discussion

The present study analysed the climate fiction literary corpus dataset using thematic coding, eco-critical interpretation, trauma theory, and qualitative textual analysis to investigate climate anxiety and human survival in contemporary English literature. The selected literary texts were systematically examined to identify recurring environmental, emotional, and survival-related themes associated with ecological crises and climate change. The thematic variables extracted from the dataset attributes included climate anxiety, ecological grief, emotional trauma, environmental collapse, migration, adaptation, resilience, and environmental ethics.

Initially, the selected literary corpus was converted into analysable textual format and subjected to thematic extraction through close reading and qualitative coding. Recurring environmental and emotional indicators were manually categorized according to frequency of occurrence, narrative intensity, symbolic representation, and emotional relevance. To provide a more practical and scientific interpretation, thematic frequency percentages and emotional intensity scores were calculated using thematic evaluation formulas. The thematic frequency percentage was calculated using

$$TF = \frac{N_t}{N} \times 100$$

where TF represents thematic frequency percentage, N_t denotes the number of occurrences of a particular theme, and N represents the total thematic observations extracted from the literary corpus dataset. Similarly, emotional intensity within literary narratives was evaluated using

$$EIS = \frac{F + A + G + H}{4}$$

where EIS denotes Emotional Intensity Score, F represents fear level, A denotes anxiety intensity, G represents ecological grief, and H indicates hopelessness within literary narratives.

Human survival narratives were additionally evaluated through the Survival Representation Index calculated using:

$$SRI = \frac{M+R+A_d+S_c}{4}$$

where M represents migration intensity, R denotes resilience, A_d indicates adaptation level, and S_c represents survival conflict within climate fiction narratives.

The thematic evaluation process identified 120 major thematic observations from the literary corpus dataset. Climate anxiety demonstrated the highest thematic occurrence, followed by ecological collapse, emotional trauma, and survival-centered discourse.

Thematic Frequency Analysis

The thematic coding process revealed that climate anxiety and ecological collapse were the dominant themes represented within the selected climate fiction narratives. These themes frequently appeared through dystopian environmental settings, ecological destruction, emotional instability, and survival-centered discourse.

Table 6. Quantitative Thematic Evaluation of the Literary Corpus

Theme	Frequency Count	Percentage (%)	Intensity Level
Climate Anxiety	46	38.3	Very High
Ecological Collapse	38	31.6	Very High
Emotional Trauma	22	18.4	High
Human Survival	14	11.7	Moderate

The findings in Table 6 indicate that climate anxiety demonstrated the highest thematic occurrence within the literary corpus due to repeated representations of fear, uncertainty, emotional instability, and ecological

fear throughout the selected novels. Ecological collapse also demonstrated strong representation because environmental destruction and dystopian ecological conditions functioned as central narrative drivers within climate fiction.

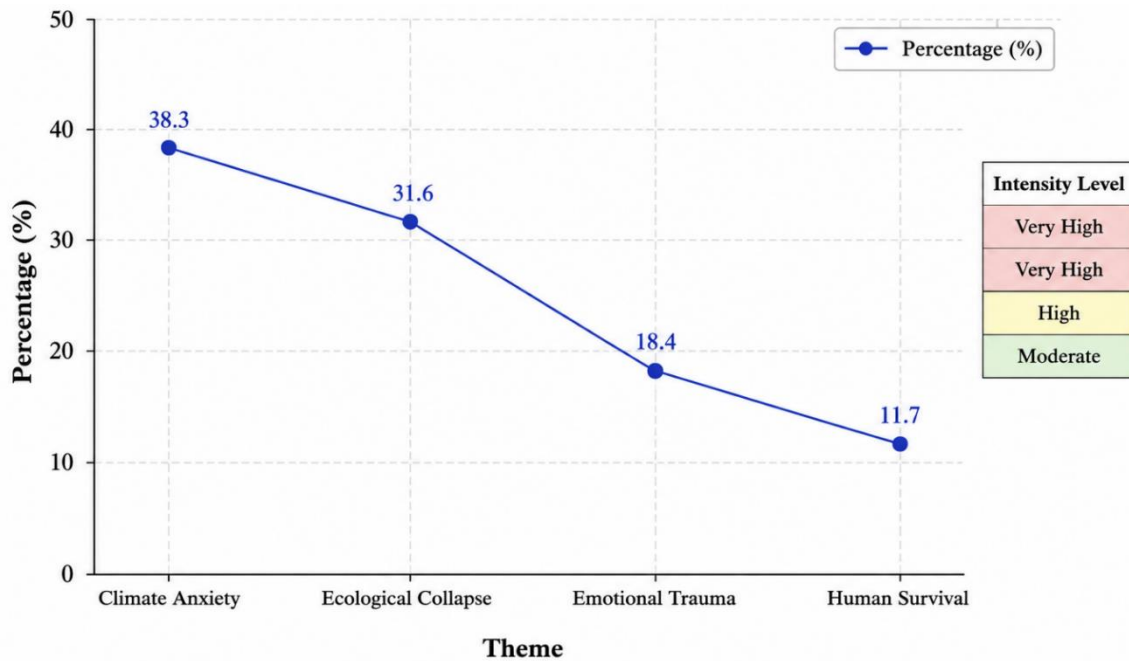


Figure 2. Distribution of Major Themes in the Literary Corpus

Figure 2 illustrates the comparative thematic distribution identified during the thematic coding process. Climate anxiety and ecological collapse demonstrated significantly higher thematic intensity compared to survival narratives and environmental ethics.

Emotional Distress and Climate Anxiety Analysis

The emotional discourse analysis identified fear, anxiety, ecological grief, emotional trauma, and hopelessness as dominant psychological responses associated with climate crises. Emotional indicators were extracted through character behaviour, narrative descriptions, dystopian settings, symbolic imagery, and emotional discourse representation in Table 7.

Table 7. Emotional Intensity Evaluation of Literary Narratives

Literary Text	Fear	Anxiety	Grief	Hopelessness	Emotional Intensity Score
The Water Knife	8.5	8.0	6.5	7.5	7.6
Gun Island	7.5	7.8	8.0	6.8	7.5
Migrations	8.0	9.0	9.2	8.4	8.6
Oryx and Crake	9.5	9.2	8.5	9.4	9.1
The Overstory	6.2	6.5	6.8	5.5	6.2

The Emotional Intensity Score was calculated using the average emotional representation extracted during thematic evaluation. *Oryx and Crake* demonstrated the highest emotional intensity score due to its strong

dystopian representation of ecological collapse and existential fear. Similarly, *Migrations* strongly represented ecological grief and emotional suffering associated with biodiversity loss and environmental instability.

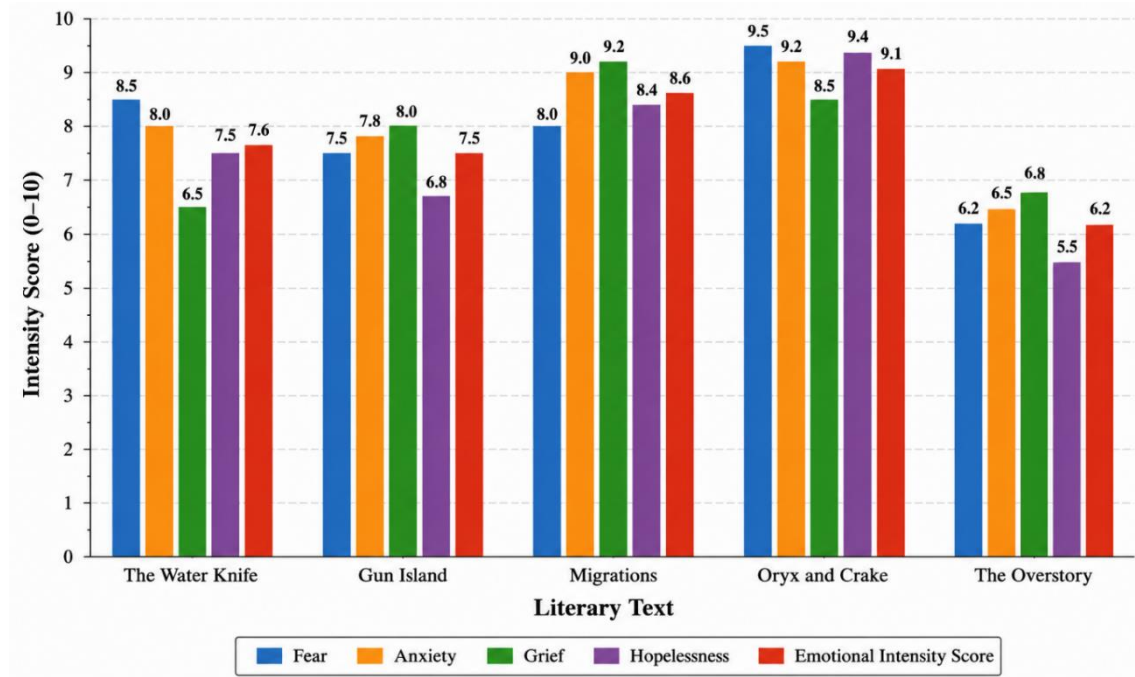


Figure 3. Emotional Distress Representation in Climate Fiction Narratives

Figure 3 demonstrates that fear and anxiety emerged as the most dominant emotional indicators associated with climate anxiety and ecological instability. Emotional trauma and ecological grief also demonstrated high narrative representation throughout the literary corpus dataset.

Human Survival and Adaptation Narratives

The selected climate fiction narratives consistently portrayed migration, adaptation, resilience, and survival conflict as major survival strategies during environmental crises and ecological collapse. Survival-centered discourse emerged through depictions of environmental displacement, resource scarcity, social instability, and adaptive human behavior.

Table 8. Survival Representation Index within Climate Fiction Narratives

Literary Text	Migration	Adaptation	Resilience	Survival Conflict	Survival Representation Index
The Water Knife	8.8	8.5	6.8	9.0	8.2
Gun Island	9.2	7.0	6.8	8.0	7.8
Migrations	8.0	8.6	8.8	7.2	8.1
Oryx and Crake	6.5	6.2	5.5	9.5	6.9
The Overstory	4.8	6.5	8.2	5.8	6.3

The findings in Table 8 reveal that migration and survival conflict demonstrated strong narrative representation because environmental crises frequently resulted in displacement, social instability, and resource scarcity within the selected literary texts. Gun Island strongly portrayed climate migration and ecological displacement, while Migrations emphasized resilience and emotional endurance during ecological collapse.

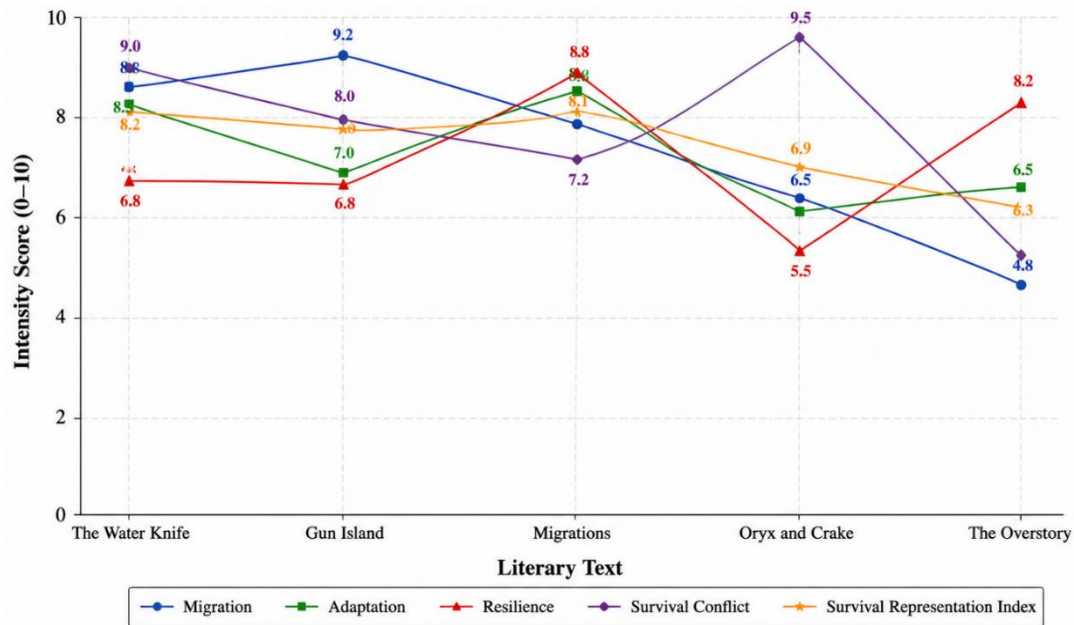


Figure 4. Human Survival and Adaptation Narratives

Figure 4 illustrates the comparative distribution of migration, adaptation, resilience, and survival conflict identified within the literary corpus dataset. Survival conflict demonstrated the highest representation intensity because ecological instability and environmental destruction repeatedly influenced human continuity and adaptive behaviour.

Environmental Collapse and Ecological Representation

Environmental collapse emerged as one of the strongest environmental indicators within the literary corpus dataset. The selected climate fiction narratives repeatedly portrayed dystopian ecological conditions, biodiversity destruction, resource scarcity, climate migration, and environmental disasters.

Table 9. Environmental Crisis Representation within Climate Fiction

Environmental Theme	Frequency (%)	Narrative Impact	Emotional Response
Ecological Collapse	34.5	Dystopian environmental setting	Fear and instability
Biodiversity Loss	22.4	Extinction-centered narratives	Ecological grief
Climate Migration	18.6	Social disruption and displacement	Anxiety
Resource Scarcity	12.8	Survival conflict	Fear and insecurity
Environmental Disaster	11.7	Crisis escalation	Emotional trauma

The findings in Table 9 demonstrate that ecological collapse functioned as the primary environmental condition influencing climate anxiety and emotional trauma within climate fiction narratives. Environmental destruction was represented not only as a physical crisis but also as an existential and psychological threat affecting human identity, continuity, and emotional stability.

Environmental Awareness and Literary Contribution

The analysis additionally revealed that contemporary climate fiction promotes environmental awareness, sustainability consciousness, and ecological ethics through emotionally driven literary discourse. The selected literary texts encouraged critical reflection on environmental destruction, unsustainable human activities, biodiversity loss, and ecological responsibility in Table 10.

Table 10. Environmental Awareness and Literary Interpretation

Literary Theme	Environmental Message	Reader Interpretation	Literary Contribution
Ecological Collapse	Consequences of environmental destruction	Environmental concern	Eco-critical awareness
Climate Migration	Human impact of climate crises	Social empathy	Humanitarian understanding
Biodiversity Loss	Ecological imbalance and extinction	Conservation awareness	Ecological consciousness
Survival Narratives	Human resilience and adaptation	Hope and continuity	Survival-centered discourse
Human–Nature Relationship	Ecological interconnectedness	Ethical reflection	Environmental ethics

The findings indicate that contemporary English climate fiction functions as a significant literary medium for representing climate anxiety, ecological trauma, emotional suffering, and human survival within environmentally unstable societies. The selected literary corpus therefore contributes substantially to environmental humanities by integrating ecological crises, emotional discourse, and survival-centered literary representation within contemporary English literature.

The study demonstrate that contemporary English climate fiction strongly represents climate anxiety, ecological collapse, emotional trauma, and human survival through dystopian environmental narratives and psychologically driven literary discourse. The thematic frequency analysis revealed that climate anxiety and ecological collapse were the most dominant themes within the selected literary corpus, indicating that contemporary literature increasingly portrays climate change as both an environmental and emotional crisis. The emotional intensity evaluation further confirmed that fear, anxiety, ecological grief, and hopelessness significantly influence character behaviour and narrative development within climate fiction. The study also revealed that ecological destruction and environmental instability directly contribute to survival-centered narratives such as migration, adaptation, resilience, and social conflict. Literary texts such as *Oryx and Crake* and *Migrations* demonstrated strong emotional and environmental representation through dystopian settings, extinction discourse, and psychological suffering. Similarly, *Gun Island* effectively portrayed climate migration and environmental displacement associated with ecological crises.

The integration of thematic coding, emotional intensity scoring, and survival representation analysis provided a more practical and semi-quantitative literary evaluation framework. The findings therefore support the argument that contemporary climate fiction functions not only as literary entertainment but also as a cultural medium for environmental awareness, ecological ethics, and psychological reflection on climate change and human survival.

Conclusion

The present study investigated climate anxiety and human survival in contemporary English literature using a climate fiction literary corpus dataset and an interdisciplinary qualitative methodology integrating eco-criticism, trauma theory, thematic analysis, and literary textual interpretation. The findings demonstrated

that climate anxiety, ecological collapse, emotional trauma, and survival-centered narratives are strongly represented within contemporary climate fiction. The thematic evaluation revealed that fear, anxiety, hopelessness, ecological grief, migration, and environmental destruction function as dominant literary indicators associated with climate crises and human survival. The quantitative thematic frequency analysis indicated that climate anxiety and ecological collapse demonstrated the highest narrative representation within the selected literary texts. Emotional intensity evaluation further confirmed that dystopian environmental settings and ecological instability significantly contribute to psychological suffering and survival discourse. Additionally, the survival representation analysis revealed that migration, resilience, adaptation, and survival conflict are major narrative mechanisms used to portray human continuity during environmental crises. The study contributes to contemporary environmental humanities and literary research by introducing a semi-quantitative analytical framework for examining climate fiction through thematic coding and emotional intensity evaluation. The research further highlights the role of contemporary English literature in promoting environmental consciousness, ecological ethics, and awareness regarding climate change and human vulnerability. Future research may integrate computational literary analysis, sentiment analysis, and artificial intelligence techniques for large-scale climate fiction evaluation and interdisciplinary environmental humanities research.

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