

Is trypophobia an urbanized emotion?

Comparative research in ethnic minority regions of China

WHAT IS TRYPOPHOBIA?

WHAT DO YOU FEEL WHEN YOU LOOK AT THIS IMAGE?



Trypophobia (n.)

Strong disgust evoked by clusters of holes or round objects (e.g., lotus seed pods or a honey comb).



Trypophobia has become increasingly widespread. It has been studied since the 2010s, primarily in the West and Japan. It might be a modern emotion and hence, urbanization may play a key role in trypophobia.

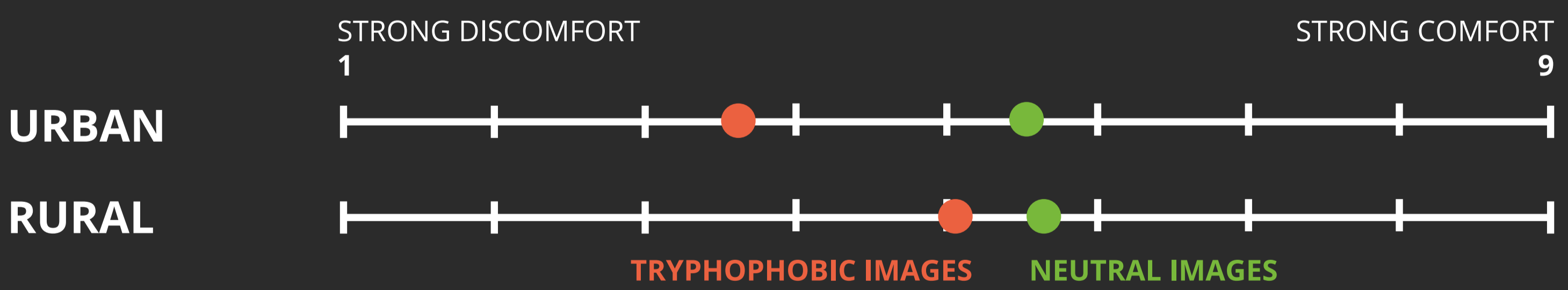
OUR STUDY

We **compared the degree of trypophobia between urban and rural Chinese people**. In an experiment, we asked participants about their degree of discomfort from viewing trypophobic images.



RESULTS

The results showed that **trypophobia occurred in both groups, although the effect size was larger in urban than rural people**.



Moreover, post-experimental interviews and post-hoc analyses revealed that **older people in rural areas did not experience as much trypophobia**.



THE IMAGES DID NOT INDUCE DISCOMFORT REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THESE CONTAINED MANY HOLES.

Female Hani people (42) from rural areas

CONCLUSIONS

Our findings suggest that trypophobia is linked to urbanization and age.