

PSYCHOSOCIAL PERSPECTIVES OF DISASTER

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ABSTRACT

The paper is an attempt to investigate and discuss that the societies and individuals have a social history that is not easily set a side at the time when conditions remain no more normal. But disaster as an enemy can disturb the vital functioning of a society. Where individual behavior becomes non- functional and looks at every changing event with uncertainty and to some extent develops agnostic thinking about existence. One of the unwanted events was the earthquake in northern areas which has affected social, cultural, economic and institutional set up and caused widespread damage to the existing social and economic infrastructure. It ruined the system of biological survival, i.e., subsistence, shelter, health, reproduction; the system of order, i.e., division of labour, authority patterns, cultural norms, social roles; the system of the meaning, i.e., values, shared definitions of reality, communication mechanisms and the motivation of the people within all these systems. Being so, it is very difficult to identify and, on occasions, difficult to understand and empathize with victims of disaster. If we as a nation fail to take action to prevent, minimize, if not altogether eliminate the abnormal manifestations of this trauma the psychosocial stresses could lead to a disability far worse than the consequences of a physical dislocation. This research is a type of step to address the human side of the disaster and to assess the psychosocial effects of the earthquake and to recommend for, to design and implement intervention packages so as to prevent the development of abnormal reactions and manage those that have already arisen.

INTRODUCTION

Acquiring knowledge of psychosocial aspect of human life is very significant in a seismic area. Because disaster disrupts so many aspects of daily life, many problems for disaster survivors are immediate and practical in nature. People may need help locating missing loved ones; finding temporary housing, clothing, and food; obtaining transportation; applying for financial assistance and getting medical care. But most serious is the multitudes of stresses affecting disaster survivors. As the implications and meaning of losses become more real, grief reactions intensify. As fatigue sets in and frustrations and disillusionment accumulate, more stress symptoms may appear. Diminished cognitive functioning which mean short-term memory loss, confusion, difficulty in setting priorities and making decisions, etc. may occur because of stress and fatigue. This can impair survivors' ability to make sound decisions and take necessary steps toward recovery and reconstruction. If we are aware that we have become very vulnerable societies in the presence of natural and anthropogenic hazards, we will promote the change needed in social

behavior and practices, in order to stop putting at risk current development possibilities and those of future generations. Disaster reduction is a commitment of all. It is therefore necessary to promote a culture of seismic prevention among social institutions within society. The role of the media and the formal education system, at all levels, are appropriate and powerful tools to make changes in social behavior and to advance both community commitment and participation, in order to develop actions for seismic prevention within the whole provincial territory. Lessons learned at the international level, however, prove that human behavior may and must be used as a primary tool to reduce one of the most important causes of disasters: In this connection the research is an academic approach and its emphasis is on changing individual psychosocial behavior by translating it into concrete actions with an active intervention of both governments and civil society.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Problem of the article was to discuss disaster in psychosocial perspectives