

PSYCHOSOCIAL CARE BY TEACHERS FOR SCHOOLCHILDREN AFFECTED BY THE TSUNAMI

NIMHANS-USF COLLABORATIVE PROJECT

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BACKGROUND

- 26th December 2006: The Indian coastline experienced a devastating tsunami triggered by an earthquake of magnitude 9.0 on the Richter scale off the coast of Sumatra, Indonesia
- States of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and union territories of Pondicherry and Andaman & Nicobar Islands affected
- Out of the total deaths, about 37-39% were children under 14 years
- Children are among the vulnerable groups, post tsunami
- Serious consequences on the children's mental health and psychological development.

NIMHANS-USF Partnership

- **NIMHANS** selected as Nodal Agency in disaster management in the country
- Reached out to provide psychosocial care to all the tsunami-affected regions and survivors.
- Cuddalore, one of the worst affected areas by the tsunami – death toll 617 out of which 222 were children.
- Evidence based research work undertaken by NIMHANS in collaboration with the University of South Florida (USF) in Cuddalore.

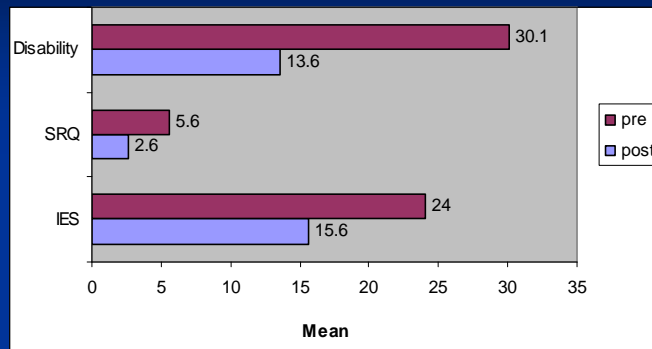
OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

- ❖ Develop an understanding of the impact of the tsunami on the children/early adolescents and the subsequent issues faced by them.
- ❖ Ascertain the effect of psychosocial care on the mental and emotional well being of the children and early adolescents affected by the tsunami.
- ❖ Assess the effectiveness of utilizing teachers in the provision of psychosocial care for the children and early adolescents.

METHODOLOGY

- ❖ Selection of school based on affected area, co-education and middle school in Cuddalore – St. David Matriculation School
- ❖ Training of school teachers to provide children with psychosocial care through play therapy and use of mediums over a period of 6 months
- ❖ Assessment through specific measuring tools (Family Schedule , Children Behavior Questionnaire, and the Reporting Questionnaire for Children)
- ❖ Assessment to be carried out in the beginning and over 6 months (twice every 3 months to compare changes if any)
- ❖ Continuous monitoring by NIMHANS

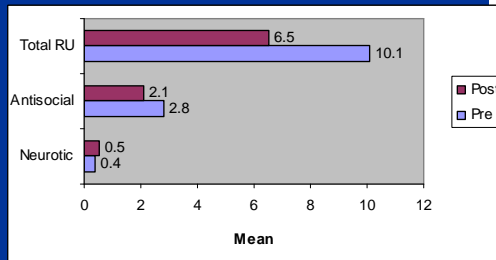
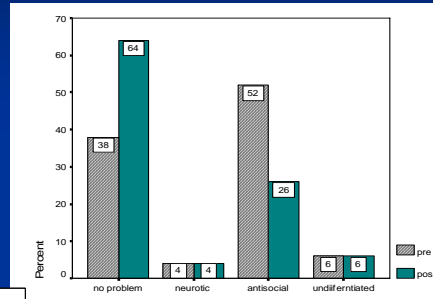
TEACHERS



- Adjustment patterns indirectly linked with their ability to provide psychosocial care for the children.
- Significant reduction in the severity of impact, extent of impact as well as disability

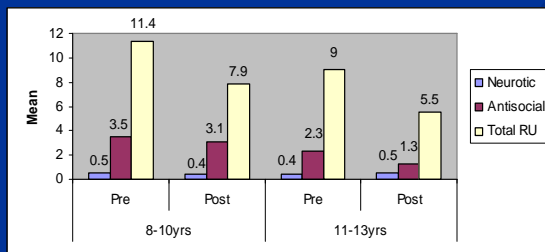
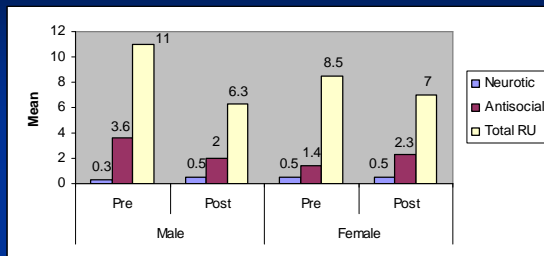
Children Behavior Questionnaire (Rutter's Scale)

- Decrease in behaviour problems in post assessment
- Majority of children report no problems
- Antisocial scores higher than neurotic



Pre-Post Rutter's Scale contd..

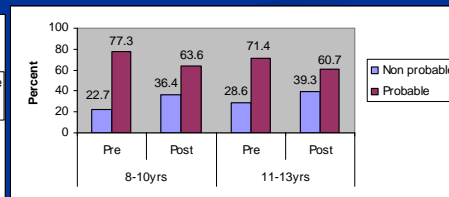
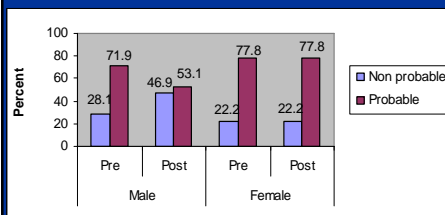
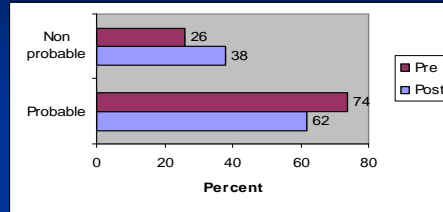
- Females report higher scores on behaviour problems in post assessment
- Both genders have a higher mean on antisocial behavior.



- Behavioral problems higher in the 8-10yrs age group

Reporting Questionnaire for Children (RQC)

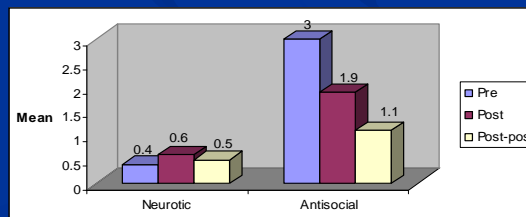
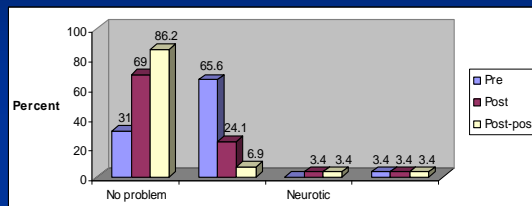
- Significant decrease in probable cases
- Females have a higher susceptibility towards developing mental health problems



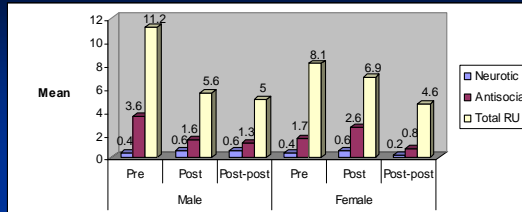
■ Children (8-10yrs) display a higher degree of probability to psychological problems

Children Behavior Questionnaire (Rutter's Scale)

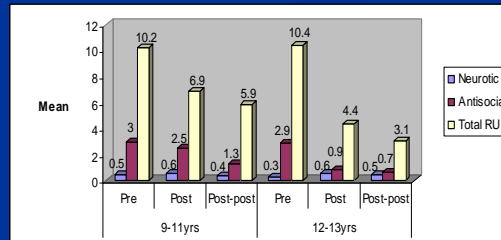
- Steady decrease in behavioral disorders over the three assessments
- Decrease in children displaying anti social behaviors.
- Children more prone to antisocial behaviour as compared to neurotic
- Not much difference in reporting of neurotic behavior



Post-Post Rutter's Scale contd..

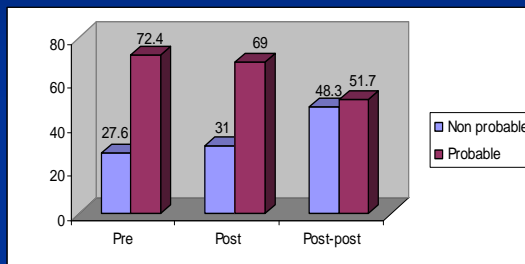


- Behavioral problems found to be higher in males
- Considerable decrease in behavioural problems in males; less noticeable in females
- Decline in neurotic and antisocial behavior in both age groups
- 9-11 years showed higher scores on behavior problems

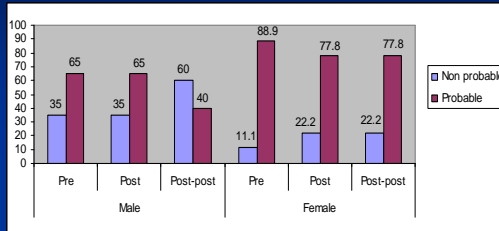


Reporting Questionnaire for Children (RQC)

- Slight decrease in the overall susceptibility towards mental and psychological problems.
- Probable cases still more than non-probable cases

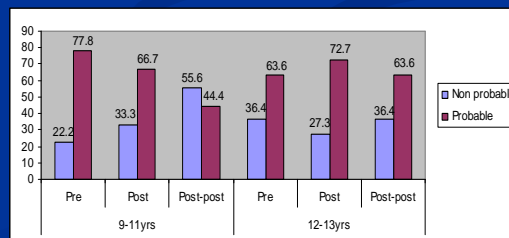


RQC contd...



- Females showed a higher probability towards developing psychological problems
- Decrease in male's probable cases; however no significant change for females

- Both age groups are susceptible to developing mental health problems
- 9-11yrs age group shows a better response to the intervention



CONCLUSION

- Significant decrease in all spheres in the final assessment.
- Continuous psychosocial care interventions that were implemented in the classroom setting through the teachers acted to normalize the experience and helped the children to ventilate their emotional reactions
- Micro aspects and individuality within the data need to be taken into consideration
- Some children require given more attention and a higher level of intervention focusing on their unique requirements.