

# IMPACT OF DISASTER AND LIFE EVENTS AMONG SURVIVORS

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## Introduction .....

- Disaster may be natural or human made leaves a long trail of sufferings
- Any disaster experience is a stress for the survivors
- Facilitating the healing of the mind to ensure normalizations and long term rebuilding process is important.

## Working in disaster.....

- The local community and the available resources are not enough to provide required support.
- Physically the observable destruction of the usual support system causes a wide range of problems.
- Disasters devastate. They leave a long trail of mortality and morbidity.
- Any disaster takes the society in to depression and impedes its development for years together. This takes a considerable time to bounce back to normalcy.
- Political consideration is important and also essential (in some cases) to consider a calamity as disaster

## Psychological distress and life events.....

- Life events has differential role in causing psychological distress, disability or other mental health problems.
- The stressful events require certain amount of coping to get adjusted with the changed situation.
- Higher numbers of stressful events cause higher amount of stress.
- Disaster cause enormous number of life events, which need to be seen for understanding the impact.

## Literatures speaks.....

Higher psychological distress and disability.

Various life events in disaster cause distress.

Increased mental health problems continue for long.

Higher exposure to disaster events caused more problems.

Human made disaster mostly cause intensive psychological problems.

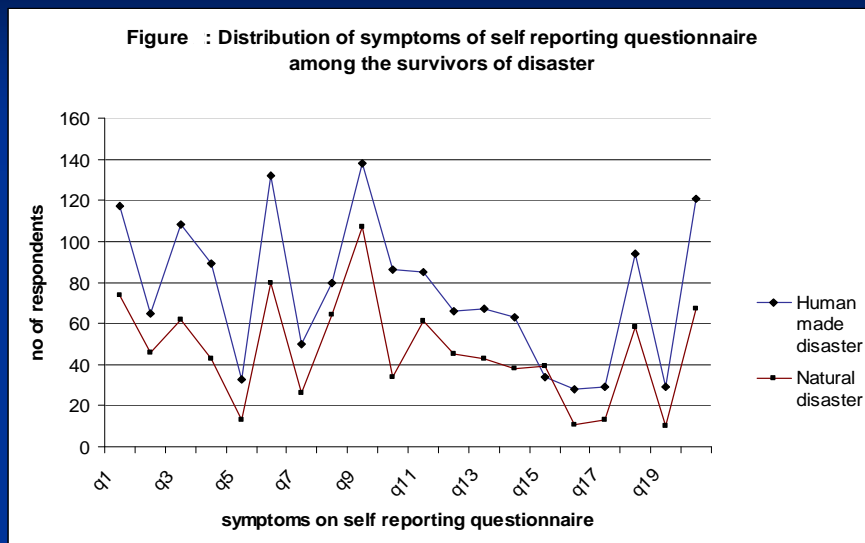
## Methodology of the study.....

- Earthquake and riots affected areas of Gujarat selected as universe.
- Developing population frame from the beneficiary list.
- Random sampling based on inclusion criteria.
- 150 survivors from each disaster.
- Use of Family Schedule, SRQ (WHO 1994 ) and PSLES (Singh. et. al. 1984) for assessment.

## Psychological distress.....

- Mean SRQ score among the survivors was 8.16
- Mean SRQ score among the survivors of riots, 10.02 and earthquake 6.22.
- 76% of the human made disaster and 24% of the natural disaster survivors had 'caseness'
- Higher psychological distress among the survivors of human made disaster.

## Results....



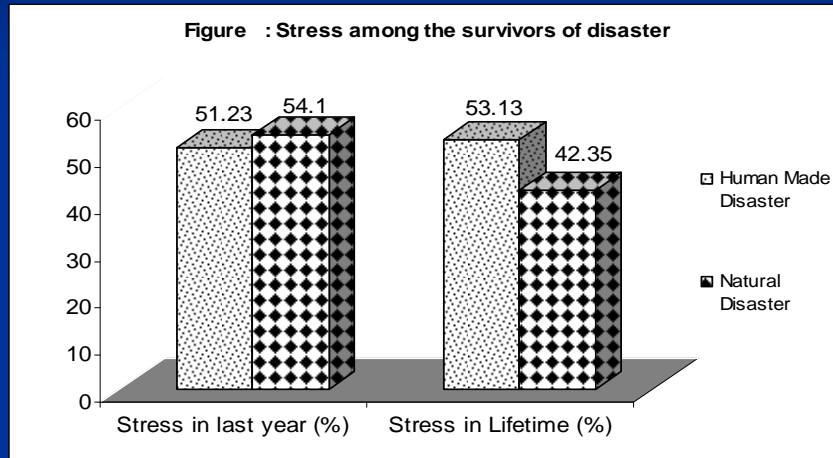
## Higher psychological distress among the survivors. ....

- Survivors of natural disaster expressed distress more in terms of emotional problems, but somatization was higher among the survivors of riots.
- The long term difficulties with livelihood and living condition caused higher emotional disturbances among the survivors of the riots.
- Factors causing distress in human made disaster have higher potentiality to produce negative outcome than natural disaster.
- Some of these factors are hatred within the community, lack of cohesiveness, instant fear, social motive behind the disaster, intended harm and aggravated anger among the survivors

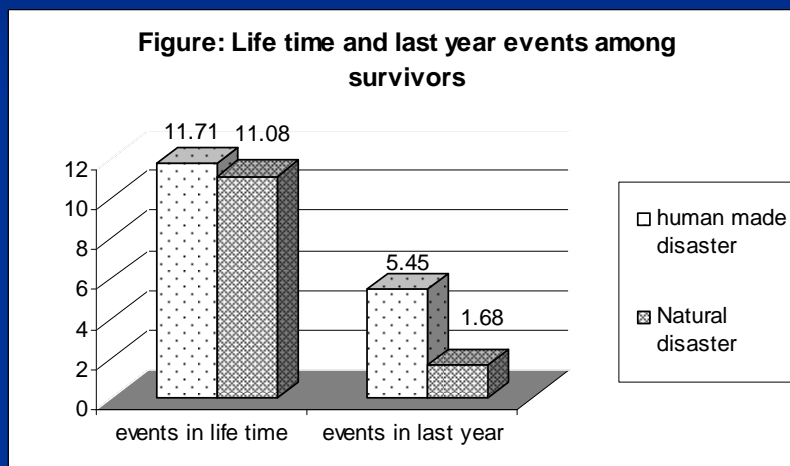
## Understanding the reasons of higher distress.....

- Acceptance of the disaster events is very less among the survivors of human made disaster as the reasons for sufferings are in and around the living space
- In natural disaster the supreme power or the nature was the reason
- Acceptance of sufferings due to disaster was higher among the survivors of earthquake in long term that helped to reduce the distress and get on to life with available resources.

## Life events and stress among the survivors.....



## Number of events among survivors.....



## Life events and stress

- Survivors of disaster face large number of events in life time.
- Many of these events are related to disaster experiences
- Disaster inflicted events are highly stressful.
- 'Financial loss or problem' and 'living in temporary shelter' was highly stressful events.
- Most of the highly stressful events were, undesirable, unexpected, exit oriented and personal.

## Disaster related life events...

- Events which were not clearly linked to the disaster experiences of the survivors had close relation with the psychosocial consequences in the aftermath of the disaster.
- Events like, marital conflict, marital separation/divorce, excessive use of alcohol by family members, failure in examination were closely linked with post-disaster experiences of the survivors.
- Events related to family, finance, health and bereavement caused higher stress.

## Inference .....

- Human made disaster cause higher distress and problems.
- In natural disaster like earthquake, one epicenter caused the whole damage
- human made disaster like riots the epicenter was multiple and spread over in the society
- The origin of epicenter in earthquake was geological but in riots it was sociopolitical.
- Therefore, situation of human made disaster demands more sensitivity

## Implications-I....

Disaster intervention and psychosocial care should be planned considering the

- nature of disaster,
- presence of instigative factors within the environment,
- stress due to various disaster inflicted life events,
- community bondage
- availability of community supports.

## Implications-II....

- The survivors with higher stressors and lifetime life events should be the prime focus who need support
- Facilitating a uniform model on disaster management and psychosocial care practices is important.
- Starting through emotional first aid, psychosocial care and support and rehabilitation are crucial in long term.
- Facilitating desirable life events and reducing stress in the post disaster rehabilitation process is most crucial

*Thank you*