

Investigating the role of community-based interventions in people's preparedness against disasters

Abstract

Accidents and disasters have become a global concern and occur all over the world. A look at the history of the origin of human life from the beginning until now has shown a path full of accidents and disasters. Events such as floods, earthquakes, tsunamis, fires, etc. have always been a concern of the human mind and have caused countless casualties and injuries to various areas of society's life. The purpose of this review article is to investigate the role of community-oriented interventions of social workers in the field of increasing people's preparedness against natural disasters.

Articles, books and documents related to the subject were reviewed by using the methods of reviewing internal and external sources about natural crises and disasters and in a documentary and library manner. (A review article using 26 Persian sources and 8 foreign sources)

The approach of social workers to accidents and natural disasters that includes a large part of the population includes disaster management, neighborhood self-help and coordination with other organizations and systems. Social workers can play many roles in natural disasters both at the macro level (general society and the affected society) and at the micro and intermediate level (individuals and affected groups).

This research shows that strengthening the relationship between different institutions and empowering the local community through education and raising the level of perception and practical skills regarding the crisis in the studied area is very necessary.

Keywords: *Community-based interventions, Preparedness, Disasters, Peoples*

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Introduction

The people of human society are always and everywhere exposed to natural hazards throughout their lives, which are sometimes very threatening and lead to the destruction of their lives and property. These risks can include different forms such as communicable and non-communicable diseases, violence, natural and technological disasters, the individual, the family or the whole society.

People's understanding of risks and how to react to them depends on experience and information and values received from family, environment and society. This acquisition of knowledge and experience is an educational process and requires guidance to be on the right track. A complete understanding of threats, their causing, intensifying and restraining factors plays an essential role in reducing their destructive effects on human life. Research has shown that certain social groups are more vulnerable to disasters. These groups include the poor, the disabled, the elderly, children and women. People living in non-resistant buildings are also in this group. In recent years, attention to the impact of disasters has been accompanied by different perspectives. Many people have analyzed the issue with gender focus. The image of harming women and children during disasters is one of the special cases that are usually discussed in mass media. Basically, women are more vulnerable due to their physical condition, and less access to resources, social networks, transportation, information skills, etc. In addition, they also bear the heavy responsibilities of family management after disasters.

In our country, floods, earthquakes, storms, and droughts are among the major natural disasters, as a result of which many people lose their lives, are injured, become homeless, and are deprived of sufficient food, clothing, health, and other necessities of life. And finally, they are exposed to adverse health effects.

The unpreparedness of society to deal with disasters increases the above bad consequences. The increase and density of population in urban areas, and the structural vulnerability of urban and rural areas are also factors that aggravate these consequences.

Vocabulary definitions

The opposite term of vulnerability is "capacity", which is positive factors that increase people's ability to adapt to hazards. "Capacity" is a combination of all the strengths and resources available to a society, community or organization that can reduce the level of risk or the adverse effects of a hazard. Capacity can also be described as "ability". "Hazard" is an important and common term that is the result of the interaction of "risk", "vulnerability" and "capacity". Risk is the probability that we will be harmed if a "hazard" occurs at a certain level of "vulnerability" and "capacity". "Disaster" is a function of the process of "danger" and it means "disruption of the functioning of a society caused by a hazard, in the case of the vulnerability of that society, which is beyond the ability of that society to cope with using the available

resources."

Disaster risk management is the regular process of using executive, organizational decisions, functional skills, and capacities to implement policies, solutions, and community adaptation capacity, in order to reduce the effects of natural hazards and disasters related to the environment and technology. This includes structural and non-structural measures to avoid (prevention) or limit (damage reduction and preparation) the adverse effects of hazards.

Disaster risk reduction (disaster reduction) is measures that provide the possibility of reducing vulnerability and disaster risk, to prevent or limit the adverse effects of hazards, in the context of sustainable development of a society. The disaster risk management cycle consists of 4 main stages:

- 1) Mitigation
- 2) Preparation
- 3) Response
- 4) Recovery

Mitigation consists of structural and non-structural measures that are implemented to limit the adverse effects of natural hazards, environmental degradation and technological hazards. Structural measures refer to any physical construction that leads to the reduction or prevention of the possible effects of hazards and includes engineering measures and the construction of resistant and protective structures and infrastructures against hazards. Nonstructural measures refer to policies, awareness, knowledge development, public commitment, and operational methods and practices, including participatory mechanisms and information provision, that can reduce risk and its consequences.

Preparedness is the activities and measures that are carried out in advance to ensure an effective response to the effects of hazards and including the issuance of a timely and effective early warning and the temporary evacuation of people and assets from the area at risk. The response is providing assistance or carrying out interventions during or immediately after the disaster in order to preserve the life and minimum and basic needs of the affected people. The response can be immediate, short or long-term.

Recovery: Decisions and actions taken after a disaster to restore or improve the living conditions of the affected community to the pre-disaster situation, while encouraging and facilitating the necessary adjustments to reduce the risk of disaster. Recovery (rehabilitation and reconstruction) provides the opportunity to develop and apply disaster risk reduction measures.

Benefits of community preparedness

Numerous international and national pieces of evidence show the importance of a disaster-prepared society. It has been observed many times that people are the first responders after a flood or earthquake. The evidence of earthquakes in Bam, Zarand, Lorestan and flash floods in Golestan province prove this. Experience has also shown that the most successful disaster risk reduction programs have been those implemented with the participation of the people and by the people. The sustainability of programs is guaranteed by community participation.

International experiences and modern science of disaster management emphasize that the success of disaster risk reduction programs requires decentralization of management and the participation of all members of society. The purpose of preparing the community for a quick response is to reduce short-term and long-term damages and problems caused by a hazard, and ultimately to reduce damage and prevent them. Among other advantages, the following can be mentioned:

- The communities that are located in the vicinity of the accident areas can immediately take action and effectively provide first aid to save the lives of the injured.
- Preparing communities for various incidents reduces the impact of hazards on health systems and community development, and reduces the level of suffering and suffering of people, vulnerable groups, women, and the possibility of death, injuries, and disease epidemics.
- Although preparing the society to face and prepare for risks involves costs, compared to the cost of reconstruction, the damages will be much less.
- In the community preparation process, the participation of people and women, as the main focus of the family, will be institutionalized in reducing the effects of disasters and will be an integral part of their lives.
- In community preparation, the needs and education of local people and women are locally taken into account, paying attention to gender and available resources. Therefore, the results of training and skills will be stable.
- In the course of community preparation, programs to reduce inequalities in access to resources, opportunities, knowledge, empowering and equipping women's groups and capacity building in the involved organizations, identifying women and capable and key people and their participation in decision-making, needs assessment, community

preparation, Service management, emergency management is provided to reduce disaster damage.

Materials and methods:

A review article using the methods of reviewing domestic and foreign sources about natural crises and disasters and in a documentary and library manner, articles, books and documents related to the topic were reviewed (26 domestic sources and 8 foreign sources).

Findings:

Social workers

What actions, activities and roles do social workers play in natural disasters and crises (floods, earthquakes, storms, etc.)? What are these roles? In natural disasters, which of them is emphasized more and is more useful?

What is the difference between the roles of social workers and other mental health groups such as psychologists? Do social workers play the role of defenders and organizers? Is the profession interested in such roles for social workers? "Pie Los" believes that generally we are not yet prepared to perform such roles. The role of retelling and reducing the effects of trauma is important. However, one must ask what evidence we have that this role is the most important need that such societies have

Crisis, calamity, catastrophe, accident, etc. are words that are usually used interchangeably in rescue literature. But according to the subject under study, which is natural disasters, and according to the definitions provided, it seems that the word "accident" is more appropriate. Anyway, let's first look at some definitions of this word and related words.

Educational experts of the Red Crescent equate disaster, accident, calamity, misfortune and accident and define the disaster as follows: "It is called vast destruction that affects the functioning of the society and causes damage to people and objects. and the environment, as well as the reconstruction of the destruction is beyond the ability of the affected society using its internal resources. (Sharifisdeh 2010). A crisis is an incident that occurs suddenly as a result of natural and human events and actions, imposes hardship, difficulty and damage on a human group or society, and its resolution requires emergency and extraordinary actions and operations. (Hossieni, 2008)

"A disaster is a sudden natural phenomenon that disrupts the functions, structure and social institutions for a period of time. According to them, accidents can be natural or man-made events that occur so suddenly and are so devastating that the people who have suffered an accident are not able to remove and repair the damage and do not extend a helping hand to others. (Bahreini & Akhoondi 2000)

Social work researchers define disaster as follows: "A disaster is a stressful collective situation in which many people cannot meet their needs through normal social processes (Barton, 1969).

Accidents are often defined in social work research by applying the stress framework and focusing on stressors and affected systems. This conceptualization of the accident makes it possible to examine and analyze the effects of the accident at the micro, medium, and macro levels. Stress theory categorizes the effects of disaster based on the type, demands on the affected system, and the duration of the disaster. Such characteristics of the disaster are per the typology of stressful social situations.

Although in a social work research, accidents are defined by emphasizing social disintegration, the environmental aspect of injuries and losses is not ignored. The use of systems theory in social work is largely based on Duncan's perspective, abbreviated as POET, which refers to the interaction of population, organization, environment and technology variables (Quarantelli, 1998).

"Malcolm Payne" who presents crisis intervention as a practical model in social work, believes that "Crisis intervention" includes the initial consideration of people's health and safety, then the evaluation of emotional, cognitive and behavioral reactions to that event. First, strong emotional reactions are addressed, and then the activity is focused on rebuilding people's capabilities. "Payne" believes that while this model helps to solve them by focusing on urgent and emergency problems and provides a theoretical basis for services, it has lost the main emphasis on prevention and points out that "Crisis intervention" is unable to help people whose whole lives are exposed to constant crises" (Payne, Translated by Allahyari and Bakhshinia 2012).

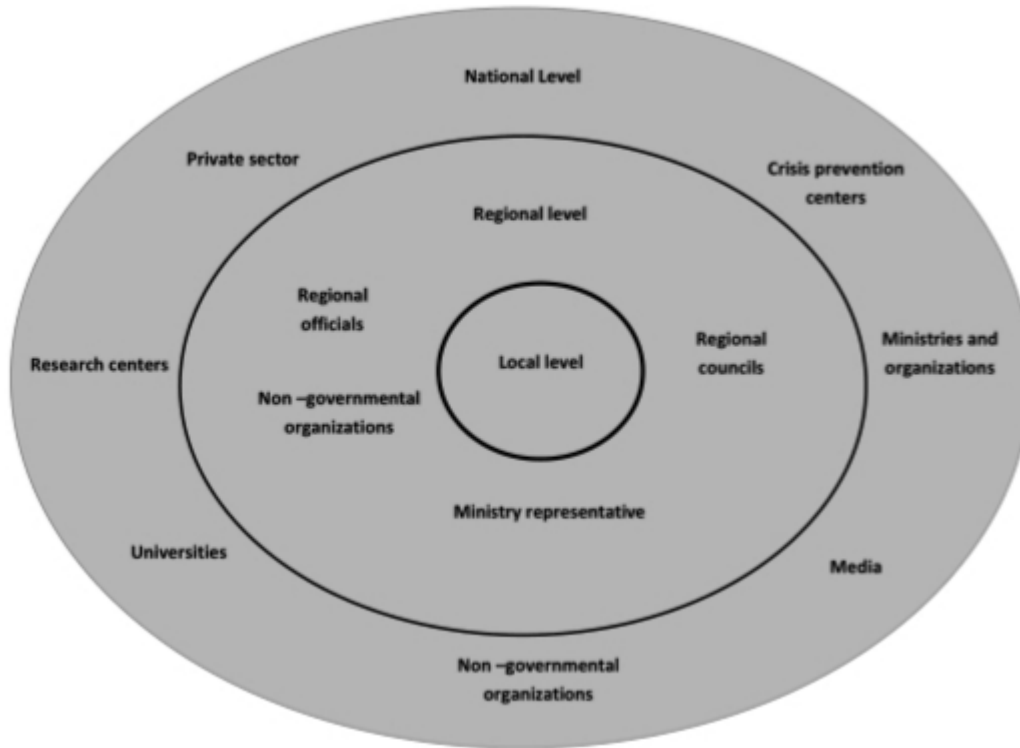
Social workers have learned to evaluate situations comprehensively and consider all social, environmental, and psychological factors. Therefore, when social workers approach natural disasters, it is necessary to analyze the situation and conditions using a comprehensive approach that focuses on relief efforts and the disaster areas, moving from a developmental perspective to a sustainable state. Social workers intend to establish immediate and long-lasting support networks through the formation and gathering of multidisciplinary teams to help with disaster-related activities. After a natural disaster, societies continuously try to rebuild their internal structures. However, the need for mental health professionals should not be overlooked. In addition, in dealing with social reconstruction by non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government aid, this process should proceed through cultural considerations, while due to the psychosocial impact of the accident on those who have been injured, their

general need for specialists should be considered. Emphasize mental health care.

Types of community-oriented intervention methods

Social activities aimed at increasing access to resources and services in disasters include: case management, case finding, mobile services, intervention, information and referral and help to clients so that they can use the needed services, as well as identifying eligible clients to receive help. . Joint training activities and disaster planning can be an effective tool for smaller and less formal organizations. Also, social workers can serve as community organizers and organizers of local people. Prevention and psychosocial support are two special areas of

interventions for social workers. Intervention at different levels is a part of the historical mission of the profession and includes prevention through providing services at the level of the organization, society and community to promote the well-being of people. Social workers are active in voluntary activities. They played a mobilizing role in times of crises and disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina. In fact, social workers make up about 40 percent of the American Red Cross mental health staff and volunteers.



Different functional levels of community-oriented crisis risk management process

Social support in natural disasters

The definition of social support by institutions active in this field is different. But the basic concept of social protection is empowering vulnerable groups in order to prevent, reduce or face risk. It should be emphasized that social support can cover non-poor and poor vulnerable groups, especially in unexpected events. Social support in natural disasters is a set of policies and programs designed before, during, and after disasters to reduce vulnerability by reducing people's exposure to risk through empowering vulnerable groups and areas in their care and support. and strengthening their capacity against risks and disruptions caused by natural disasters.

In this regard, the Red Crescent Youth Organization has put comprehensive programs on its agenda since 2013 in order to prevent and reduce the effects of natural disasters on three

levels, and with the participation of relevant organizations and institutions, including the Iranian Social Workers Association. With the conclusion of the memorandum of understanding, it has carried out joint programs in its agenda as follows, which are mentioned below:

- prevention
- Intervention
- Rehabilitation

1) Plans and measures are taken in the field of prevention:

- ❖ Teaching preventive interventions to reduce the effects of natural disasters in a community-oriented way

These pieces of training are in 21 provinces of the country and for 1000 experts, vice presidents and heads of branches as well as teachers of student centers, rural youth and students of the Red Crescent Youth Organization, contain educational topics

about the community-oriented approach, facilitation techniques, empowerment methods Local teams, project writing, logical goals, planning methods, the concept of participation, etc. were implemented.

To test the community-oriented model in the education provided in the provinces, in 2013, the youth organization implemented a preventive model with a community-oriented approach in the village of Hrank Qazvin, located in the eastern river Almut. The implementation of this project led to the participation of the villagers and the formation of a local team, sensitizing the people to the preventive measures of flood damage and the effective measures of the local team and the villagers to prevent floods. (It is worth mentioning that the local team continues its activities. Gives.)

- Designing a protocol to prevent and reduce the effects of natural disasters in a community-oriented way
- The protocol for the prevention of natural disasters was prepared according to the lessons learned from the implementation of the project in the village of Hrank, Qazvin, as well as the effective consensus of several experts and members active in charity caravans. This protocol is a suitable scientific model for community-based education and intervention in preventing and reducing the effects of natural disasters.
- Preparation, compilation and publication of books in the field of prevention and reduction of the effects of natural disasters in a community-oriented way
- Preparing, editing and printing the book of community-based interventions to prevent floods in Haranak Qazvin village
- Teaching first aid and first aid to social workers who are members of the Iranian Social Workers Association

2) Plans and actions carried out in the field of intervention:

- ❖ Organizing, equipping, training and dispatching social and psychological support teams in East Azarbaijan, South Khorasan and Bushehr earthquakes.

Since the members of the youth organization have been sent to deprived and remote villages in the form of charity caravans since 2001 and have gained valuable experience of social and cultural support for vulnerable people, therefore, with the occurrence of an earthquake in the mentioned provinces 25 teams of volunteer and experienced members in charity caravans were selected from 25 provinces and sent to the affected areas with orientation training in coordination with the youth organization. Below is an example of the actions of the dispatched teams.

- ❖ Relief and humanitarian interventions of the charity caravan with a community-oriented approach in the earthquake-affected areas of Tabriz
 - Supply and installation of 1362 toilets and spa baths
 - Immunization and distribution of fire suppression capsules in 60 villages
 - Fencing and securing the cattle and property of the residents of the region
 - Setting up child-friendly spaces in 50 regions and accepting 6091 children and teenagers
 - Distribution of 13,440 sanitary packages
 - Construction of 44 sports fields and playground equipment for children
 - Collection and sanitary disposal of garbage in 23 villages
 - Creation of rain channel grooves around the tents in 87 villages
 - Comforting the survivors of the recent earthquake and sympathizing with them to return to a normal and normal life
 - Commemoration of the lost
 - Craft, doll making and painting workshop
 - Setting up stations of happiness, hope and dynamism with diverse cultural programs such as (plays, station competitions, painting, etc.)

The role of governments in disaster management

Usually, when disasters occur, the most important thing is the role of governments. Usually, it is not the government itself that does something, but the Red Cross and Red Crescent forces, the military forces; People's organizations and medical services are the government that is involved in doing things. In many countries, due to the vastness of the territory, the central government in the capital is the most inappropriate body to carry out the main activities, therefore, such countries that have a plan to deal with disasters have assigned this task to the regional and local governments to use the skills and use regional and local facilities for quick response. (Ahanji, 1996, pp. 190-189)

Comparison of Iran and the world

During the last years of the 90s, several natural disasters have occurred in different parts of the world, which include a wide range of unpredictable events such as earthquakes to predictable seasonal floods. About 188 million people around the world are affected annually by these disasters. It is interesting to know that this statistic is 6 times more than the victims of wars and more than 90% of deaths caused by natural disasters occurred in developing countries. The frequency and types of disasters vary from one region to another in the world.

For example, floods and tornadoes are the most common hazards leading to disasters in Asia, the Pacific, Europe and North America. Droughts and epidemics are often reported in Africa, while the Pacific and Caribbean islands are most vulnerable to the effects of tropical storms. El Niño events, floods, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes affect North American countries severely. As a result of such incidents, over the past 16 years, the affected countries have suffered more than 40 billion dollars in damages. Human losses due to natural disasters and accidents in the world are estimated to be more than 10 thousand people per month.

Due to its geographical location, our country is frequently faced with the occurrence of various disasters such as floods, earthquakes, storms, droughts, etc. and there is always a possibility of occurrence of any of these disasters. Iran has taken sixth place in the world in terms of damage caused by natural disasters. According to the available statistics, 31 of the 40 types of natural disasters recorded in the world occur in Iran. According to the assessment of the National Committee for Natural Disaster Risk Reduction, earthquakes and floods are the first and second priorities in Iran, followed by drought. One of the deadliest disasters of the 20th century in our country took place on June 31, 1969 in Gilan and Zanjan provinces, which left more than 40,000 people dead (albeit unofficially), 100,000 injured, and 400,000 homeless. This natural disaster also caused heartbreaking accidents in the following years in Khorasan, Azerbaijan and Qazvin.

A study on the provision of rehabilitation services to the victims of the Gilan and Fars earthquakes showed that the number of injured women who needed rehabilitation services in the Rudbar earthquake after the earthquake was far more than men, so 72% of those in need of services were women. . It seems that some individual characteristics in men can be a factor for the difference. Because the Gilan earthquake happened at night while sleeping and all the people, both men and women, were at home. It can be said that men are more prepared to deal with and avoid earthquakes than women, and on the other hand, women are more vulnerable to earthquakes. This finding was also observed in the Bam earthquake.

Floods, the most common disasters in our country, kill several people every year, destroying many houses, and with little rain, a large area goes under water. The statistics show the trend of increasing the number of floods in the country, so that during the last 4 decades, its frequency has increased about 4 times. This important question is always in front of us, why in countries like Iran, this type of disaster is associated with such a large number of casualties, but in other countries like Japan, where living with earthquakes is an integral part of the people's there, the amount of damage has been minimized. For example, in a 7-magnitude earthquake in Japan in May 2003, only a few people were injured. The answer to this question is the

unfavorable state of construction, inappropriate use of materials and non-compliance with engineering principles and standards, inappropriate choice of the building site, and the low readiness of society to deal with it. To these factors, we can add the lack of attention to the value of human life. Creating a ready society armed with the necessary knowledge, attitude and skills to deal with disasters and reduce their risk is the solution to this. Awareness of the fact that at least 24 big cities in the country are located in very dangerous areas increases the duty of housing and urban development officials and specialists.

Discussion:

The first step for community-based planning is to have a suitable diagnostic framework for selecting and screening the characteristics and issues of local communities in a community. In social networks, it is very important and necessary to identify and understand local social relations and power structures between the different individual, group and institutional actors in economic, cultural, etc. fields. The importance of social networks is increasing day by day with the development of information and communication technology infrastructure.

the plan of durability has various shortcomings including : lack of sufficient training facilities , lack of training facilities and activities and lack of team and team work , lack of sufficient practical training and participation of team members , lack of responsibility and lack of sufficient practical training of team members , lack of responsibility and lack of responsibility for the participation of team members , lack of responsibility and lack of responsibility for the participation of team members . the necessity of gathering people who have the capacity and intellectual and physical intellectual abilities when it comes to a crisis , lack of systematic planning and proper information , lack of adequate facilities at the disposal of the neighborhood to prevent incidents , continue and complete the work of relief and rescue notes that are referred to in the field studies .

conclusion:

despite the shortcomings mentioned at the statistical analysis level , this study shows that strengthening the relationship between different institutions and empowering the local community through training and enhancing the level of perception and control of the crisis in the study area is of great necessity . For example , having mosques and numerous and active religious missions , identification and understanding of local social relations and structures of power , key economic groups and ... will be essential , and when this communication is established , it must be taken to recognize the public position of the community in terms of economic , political and social aspects , which unfortunately does not have an important relationship between them in dealing with social issues .

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