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Floods and PTSD

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Floods are the most common natural disaster affecting millions of people across the globe than any other natural or technological disasters. Around the world an average of 140 million people are affected with flood every year. In 1998 a major flood in China killed around 3004 people and left many devastated. One of the severe types that struck in China's Hunan province during 1998 and 1999 left hundreds of thousands of residents homeless. Much of the infrastructure and many agricultural projects were drastically ruined by the flood. Floods around the world, in general, impacts the economic status of the affected population directly by bringing property loss in the local community. The floods not only lead to deaths and physical injuries but also leave behind severe psychological distress among the victims. Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is one of the most commonly used indicators to evaluate the psychological injuries after disaster. PTSD is a severe psychological reaction of great fear, helplessness, and averseness, caused by exposure to one or more extraordinary threats or traumatic events. The most common characteristic of PTSD is anxiety that lasts longer after the foregone threat or trauma.

Result: The occurrence of PTSD among the flood victims evaluated in our study was about 8- 9%. Also the risk of PTSD is found out to be high among female and older victims, which again varies with the type and severity of the flood. The chronicity rate among the flood victims after 13 years was found to be 17.1%. The other indicators such as characteristics of social behavior and the frequency of general collective actions are some of the important evaluators of chronic PTSD.

Biography

Aizhong Liu currently holds the chair for the Epidemiology and Health Statistics Department of Central South University in Hunan. He has received his professional Doctorate of Epidemiology and Biostatistics in 2005. He pursued his Post-doctoral research in Queen's University, Canada between 2005 and 2008. He is serving as the chairman of Community Health Management Committee and standing Professional Committee of Epidemiology in Hunan Province. He is an Executive Director in Hunan Province Health Management Association and Hunan Province Children's Health management committee. He also holds the privilege as Vice-chairman for Hunan Province Clinical epidemiology and evidence based medicine professional committee. He has served as National Occupational Skill Testing assessor in Health management division and as an editorial board member in many reputed scientific journals in China.

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