



## A STUDY ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF DISASTER VICTIMS IN KRISHNA DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH

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### ABSTRACT

Social and economic development throughout India is frequently interrupted by extreme events. The Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh is particularly vulnerable to natural disasters, thus to social and economic losses. Although disaster events impact this region, in the latter, they can cause a sharp increase in poverty. As disasters pose an important hurdle to the development of this coastal area, it is important to assess their global, regional, economic, and social impacts. Most economic assessments of the impacts of disasters have concentrated on direct losses that is, the financial cost of physical damage. Equally important are indirect and secondary impacts of disasters, including the destruction of communities and their negative impacts on families. It is expected that concerted action on risk management will help create an increased awareness of the economy wide significance of natural disasters and the problems they pose for long term development. Accordingly, this growing awareness will lead to an increased resilience in the selected area.

**KEYWORDS :** Disaster, Cyclone, Vulnerability, Disaster Risk Reduction (drr), Livelihood.

### INTRODUCTION

This work focuses on how people in poverty, with low incomes, and of low socio-economic status experience disasters. Although it provides some information on super cyclone (Uppena) and tsunami events, this is primarily focused on disasters that have affected communities within the coastal areas of Krishna district. Being of low socioeconomic status, in the selected area, may affect how people understand disaster risk, prepare for disasters, and respond to warnings and evacuation orders. This paper suggests that people of differing socioeconomic statuses may prepare for a disaster differently. So, the main objective of this paper is to examine how flood, cyclone, tsunami affects the socio-economic and demographic conditions in the village. The present paper will explore the social and economic impact of disasters on individual, family, and community; and how they react during different phases of disaster.

Ancient Indian history gives many examples of disasters and measures to cope with natural and man-made disasters such as invasions, wars, droughts, floods, earthquakes (Tsunami) and cyclones. Due to its unique geo-climatic condition, together with a densely population, makes the country most vulnerable. Through the ages, people have adopted different measures to deal with recurring disasters through suitable settlement plans, livelihood preferences, socio-economic practices and traditions.

The impact of disaster on a community is dependent on everyday patterns of social interaction among the people which varies with their socio-economic characteristics and their accessibility of resources. Socio-economic background of people and their relationship is very important to understand the level of support during disaster and post disaster phase. As everybody needs help from each other to tackle the situation, the villagers in the affected areas try hard to maintain cohesion among them even at the time of emergency. The relationship among the villagers can be broadly classified under two types: social and monetary. The relationship among the villagers is maintained through social interaction which helps them to get a safer location, food, and water during disaster. There is high possibility of breakdown of existing social and monetary relationship among the villagers due to the crisis of resources after flood. However, they try to maintain their relationship with the grocers, medicine shop owners, vegetable shop owners, doctors, cloth shop owners because the 'disaster' is a temporary phenomenon.

### IMPACT OF DISASTERS ON FISHING

The socio-economic conditions of the victims especially fishermen in the chronically disaster affected coastal villages is danger. Disaster natural or man-made is the impact of hazards that affects society or environment. It is a sudden, calamitous event which brings great damage, loss, destruction and devastation of life and property. The damage caused by disasters is many a time immeasurable and varies with the geographical location, climate and the type of earth surface and degree of vulnerability. This influences the socio-economic and mental state of the affected area. Mostly population in this region are depending on fishing but agricultural labour and other allied labour

works. Hence, fishing communities majorly lost their movable and immovable properties like boats, nets, home appliances and houses also due to disasters which are affect and influence the socio-economic conditions of the victims of the selected area.

Lindell and Prater (2003) and Cutter (1996), developed models to understand the impact of disaster. They have focused on existing vulnerability and capacities of people to reduce the impact. However, the impacts vary with the type of hazard and its intensity. Lindell and Prater (2003) divided the disaster impacts as physical and social impact. Physical impacts include casualties and damages to properties. Social impact refers to the consequences of hazards or any other action on people that changes or capable to change the psychological impact, socio-economic impact, socio-demographic impacts, and socio-political activities (Usman et al. 2003). Social impact of disaster is also influenced by socio-cultural impact that includes changing norm, value, local beliefs, and social capital that guides people to cope with disaster (Usman et al. 2003).

### DISASTER AND DEVELOPMENT

As per the Brundtland Commission Report, 1987 development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs is sustainable. It contains within it two key concepts: the concept of needs, in particular the needs of the poor; and the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organization on the environment's ability to meet these needs. The main objective of sustainable development is to prevent the acts of nature from becoming disasters. Development that is sustainable will not disturb its environs beyond reasonable levels. It is based on socio-cultural development, political stability, economic growth and ecosystem protection, which all relate to disaster risk reduction.

Vulnerability is directly related to impact. The loss of one's dwelling led to a situation of physical vulnerability (being homeless), social vulnerability (dependency on others) and psychological vulnerability (the trauma of the experience of loss), among others. However, even when these types of vulnerability are significant, especially for reconstruction plans, it is the vulnerabilities experienced by people prior to a disaster occurring that require the greatest attention.

### THE VULNERABILITY OF DISASTERS IN INDIA

According to the Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters (CRED), Brussels, Belgium, India is the worst disaster-affected country in South Asia. CRED studies show that between 1987 and 1996, on an annual average, disasters killed 5,063 people and affected 56,563,631 people in India. 2540 people died and 392,690 people were affected by disasters in 1997 alone. Estimation of the economic impact of natural disasters (Average 1985-1995) is 1,645,507 million US dollars. CRED cautions that data on the financial cost of disasters is extremely difficult to gather and verify. Lack of standards, accepted definitions, documentation mechanisms make disaster data collection and collation a researcher's nightmare in India. The National Center for Disaster Management, New Delhi reports that

the number of disasters in India has increased 5 to 6 times in three decades and that the relief provided after disasters was Rs.61.5 millions in the second finance commission and rose up to Rs.14,000 Millions during the 10th finance commission. Due to globalization and consequent structural adjustment programmes, poverty, urbanization, environmental degradation, social disintegration, terrorism, communalism, deforestation, global warming, pollution, industrial disasters, etc., the human made disasters are also expected to increase in the near future.

### ANDHRA PRADESH

The most disaster prone state in India, Andhra Pradesh is the most disaster prone area in terms of drought, floods, cyclones and fire. It is the fifth largest state in India, in terms of both population and area. Spread over 2.75 lakh sq km, it comprises 8.4 per cent of the country's total geographic area. It has a long coastline stretching approximately 1,030 km, and an equally long history of cyclones. It is battered by at least one cyclone per year. The coastline districts are normally affected by cyclones and floods, whereas the western and northern parts of Andhra Pradesh often experience severe drought conditions.

### KRISHNADISTRICT

The worst cyclonic disaster in the recent memory in the country occurred in 1977 in Krishna district, Andhra Pradesh, due to tidal waves locally known as Uppena. The cyclone can be traced to a weak tropical disturbance which was first noted on satellite imagery on the morning of 14 November while located roughly 520 km (320 mi) southwest of the Nicobar Islands. Travelling due west at 25 km/h (15 mph) along the southern periphery of the mid-tropospheric subtropical ridge. More than 10,000 people perished overnight, making it the biggest national calamity. The government was strongly criticized for its failure in relief and rescue operations and disaster preparedness. Tsunami also hit this region on 26<sup>th</sup> December 2004. Innumerable human and material resources were mobilized by various bodies for relief and reconstruction.

### DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) is a systematic approach to identifying, assessing and reducing the risks of disaster. It aims to reduce socio-economic vulnerabilities to disaster as well as dealing with the environmental and other hazards that trigger them: here it has been strongly influenced by the mass of research on vulnerability that has appeared in print since the mid-1970s. It is the responsibility of development and relief agencies alike and it should be an integral part of the way such organizations do their work, not an add-on or one-off action. DRR is very wide-ranging, therefore. Its scope is much broader and deeper than conventional emergency management. There is potential for DRR initiatives in just about every sector of development and humanitarian work.

### POLICIES FOR VULNERABLE POPULATION

Many researchers also note that people of socio-economic status may have more difficulty than people of higher socio economic status in accessing loans and other financial support to help with disaster recovery. For instance, in light of this work, findings recommend that equal access to loans and other financial incentives be facilitated for all members of disaster-affected communities. As part of the global resilience policy packages proposed in the World Bank suggest financial services to support post-disaster rebuilding, as well as increased accessibility of social safety nets. These policy implications and recommendations exceed traditional disaster behavioural health or emergency planning operations roles and responsibilities. In order to better meet the needs of people of socio-economic status and mitigate the risks they face in disasters, disaster behavioural health professionals should consider developing robust partnerships with social service, economic, transportation, and housing agencies and organizations.

Disaster reduction is now considered a social component of national development in developing countries where the cost of flood control measures is too high for annual government budgets or allocations for public sector investments. Prioritization of disaster reduction activities is a difficult task in the context of the national socio- economic development process.

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Social impacts, which include psychosocial socio demographic, socio economic and socio political impacts can develop over a long period of time, can be difficult to assess when they occur. Despite the difficult in

measuring these social impacts it is nonetheless important to minor them because they can cause significant problems from the long-term functioning of specific types of households and business in an affected community. A better understanding of disaster is social impacts can provide a basis for pre impacts predication and the development of contingency plans to prevent adverse consequences from occurring.

The property damage caused by disaster impact causes direct economic losses that can be thought of as a loss in asset value, the Ultimate economic impact of a disaster depends upon the disposition of the damage assets some of these assets are not replaces and so their loss causes a reduction in consumption and thus a decrease in quality of life or a reduction in investments and thus a decrease in economic productivity other assets are replaced either through in kind donations, for example food and clothing or commercial purchases. In the latter case, the cost of replacement must come from some source of recovery funding, which generally can be characterized an either inter temporal transfer to the present time from part savings or future from one group to another at a given time.

### CONCLUSION

The current trends of climate change are expected to increase the frequency and intensity of existing hazards, an increased probability of extreme events, spur the emergence of new hazards and vulnerabilities with differential spatial and socioeconomic impacts. This is likely to further degrade the resilience and coping capacities of poor and vulnerable communities, who make up from a quarter to half of the population of most Indian cities Vulnerability has typically contributed more to overall risk in India than hazard exposure. The efforts for integrating climate change and disaster risk reduction measures needs to be further strengthened and institutionalised and community be sensitised to take up such adaptive measures, which reduces their vulnerability. Disaster is a brake on socio economic and human development at the household level (when livestock, crops, homes and tools are repeatedly destroyed) and at a national level when roads, bridges, hospital, schools and other facilities damaged.

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