



**A STUDY OF DISASTER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM IN SCHOOLS IN SATARA DISTRICT OF
MAHARASHTRA STATE**

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ABSTRACT :

The term 'Disaster' is defined as "a serious disruption of the functioning of a society, causing wider spread human, material, or environmental, losses which exceed the ability of the affected society to cope using its own resources".¹ Disaster is the product of a hazard such as earthquake, flood or windstorm coinciding with a vulnerable situation which might include communities, cities or villages. There are two main components in this definition, namely, hazard and vulnerability. Without vulnerability or hazard there is no disaster. A disaster occurs when hazard and vulnerability meet. Hence regarding possible hazards, vulnerability and risk assessment personal as well as community awareness is very important.

KEYWORDS : *society, causing wider spread human, material.*

INTRODUCTION –

As disaster is a sudden, calamitous event bringing great damage, loss and destruction and devastation to life and property, it has the following effects in the concerned areas like - it completely disrupts the normal day to day life, it negatively influences the emergency systems and normal needs like food, shelter, health etc. are affected. Thus "disaster may have some main features like, unpredictability, unfamiliarity, speed, urgency, uncertainty and threat".²

Generally, disasters are of two types-natural and manmade disasters. Based on the devastation these are further classified in to major and minor disasters. Some major natural disasters are flood, cyclone, drought, earthquake, while minor natural disasters are cold wave, thunderstorms, heat waves, mudslides, and storm. Major manmade disasters are setting of fires, epidemic, deforestation, and pollution while minor manmade disasters are road/train accidents, riots, food poisoning, industrial disaster/crisis and environment pollution.³

As there are different types of disasters, we need to be aware of their vulnerability and how, when and where they are likely to occur. "With 60 per cent of the land mass susceptible to seismic hazard damage, 40 million hectares of landmass prone to floods, 8000 km long coastline with two cyclone seasons, 68 per cent of the total area are vulnerable to drought, hilly regions vulnerable to landslides / hailstorms / cloudbursts".⁴ Thinking of all these

vulnerability, it is necessary to become sensitive about how to cope up with their effects. In any disaster, whenever it occurs, most of the vulnerable and dependable mass of the society that is children are badly affected and it creates a lot of socio - psychological problems with a different dimensions.

A culture of safety is an environment where everyone is aware about their local hazards and is active in reducing the risks. Schools can play an important role in maintaining values of safety in community life. Children can act as a route for information for families at home. To build a culture of safety at community level government and non-government organizations can play important role through schools to disseminate knowledge and information. This information and knowledge would be on scientific basis e.g. causes of natural disasters, vulnerability and risk assessment and reduction activities (e.g. awareness through rally, exhibition, street play, resource updating, training, mock drill etc.) Why this scientific knowledge and education is essential at school level because we know that education is considered to be the best way for making a safe and disaster resilient society. School is an important agency to reduce the disaster risk through knowledge, innovation and education. Teachers and students play important role in the development of culture of prevention and preparedness because they can transfer the knowledge regarding disaster risk reduction and skills to the families and communities.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:

The present study explores the problems faced by school authorities and evaluates the implementation of disaster management programme so as to provide some inputs for implementing the programme in a better way. The entire exercise would be to suggest better models / options for sustainable school safety programme among school children of the district.

Significance of the Study:

Children are one of the most vulnerable groups during disaster. They have particular needs that must meet for their healthy growth and development. Besides physical threat to life, experience of fear, violence, separation from parents, exploitations and abuse are threats to their well being and development. Further, the loss of their livelihood can lead to homelessness and poverty. Exposure to any disaster can be a traumatic experience for children.

Children's participation in disaster risk reduction is an emerging concern. Hence there is need to facilitate children's participation in the disaster preparedness activities and push up the participation of teachers, parents and local leader is also necessary. With the help of findings regarding gaps at execution level and implementing level of Disaster Risk Management Programme at district level can provide important strategies to make the interventions more successfully at grass root level among schools. The entire exercise would be from the development point of view, suggesting better models providing special tools and techniques, need of specific training and mechanisms to improve school safety agenda in the disaster prone area of Satara District and making this process more practical and sustainable at school level.

• **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY.**

To find out the efforts (if any) taken for hazard identification and risk assessment at school level in the study area.

- To investigate the preparedness activities and mitigation measures taken by schools.
- To find out needs of training regarding disaster risk reduction activities for children and key holders among schools.
- To investigate the rehearsal/ mock drill activities taken among schools.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Disaster Management Program: Programs undertaken by the school authority to prevent and mitigate Disaster School: Zilla Parishad Schools rendering education from 1st to 10th Standard

SELECTION OF SUBJECTS

According to Hazard and Seismic Zoning Map of India, India lies under seismic zone III. In western Maharashtra, Satara district is vulnerable to earthquake, where maximum intensity of VII of earthquake can be expected. District is also vulnerable for flood, landslides. Hence, universe of study would be schools of Satara district which are vulnerable to earthquake.

There are 3450 schools in Satara district with 4, 15,489 children on school attendance registers where Disaster Management Programmes have been undertaken. Using Krejcie Morgan Table of Sampling researcher proposed to take a sample of 384 school children through Simple Random Sampling using Sequential List technique.

UNIVERSE

The present study was conducted in earthquake prone talukas Karad and Patan of Satara district. Both these talukas falls in the basin of Koyana river on which well known Koyana dam is constructed.

RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design is descriptive so that it describes very specifically evaluate the programmes /training in terms of the knowledge and skills related with awareness, preparedness and mitigation measures taken about earthquake at school level.

TOOLS OF DATA COLLECTION

For collecting data interview method was used. Keeping in mind the objectives of the study structured interview schedules was prepared to collect data. The interview schedules consist of questions on various dimensions of Disaster Management Programmes/Trainings, such as, awareness, preparedness and mitigation measures taken about earthquake Participatory observation method was also used for recording the impressions of the school principals.

ACTIVITIES:

Training programs were arranged to create awareness among students and teachers of the school. Prevention and mitigation plans are designed.

Major findings of the present study are.

1. A majority of schools are poorly equipped as far as disaster preparedness is concerned.
2. A majority of schools are constructed on load bearing type of construction which is at high risk during disaster. Proper directions to exit from school buildings are not shown. Few school buildings are at high risk.
3. A majority of schools do not even have first aid boxes.
4. A large number of teachers have not shown any interest to take active participation in disaster preparedness.
5. Awareness level regarding various kinds of disaster among students is poor.
6. A majority of schools have not prepared their safety audit to prevent major loss due to disaster.
7. Schools have not provided any kind of training to students for quick evacuation from school.
8. Cent per cent school authorities shared about need of training regarding disaster risk reduction activities for children and key holders among schools.
9. None of the school has undertaken the rehearsal/ mock drill activities taken among schools.

CONCLUSION

Satara district is known as earthquake prone district. Well known Koyana dam is central location for earthquake. Earthquake is a frequent disaster occurrence in Satara district. Karad and Patan are the two earthquake sensitive talukas of Satara district. Patan experiences at least 3 to 4 earthquake shocks every year. Lower Richter scale earthquakes are very much common in Patan taluka. Irrespective of risk zone neither school nor district disaster management cell has taken any kind of serious efforts regarding preparedness activities in earthquake prone area of Satara district. It is been usually observed that government machinery always wait for disaster to happen and later struggle to provide basic amenities to affected people.

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