

### Level of Individual Preparedness for an Earthquake among Voluntary Medical Rescuers in Turkey

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**Study/Objective:** Our aim was to assess how prepared the UMKE (Ulusal Medikal Kurtarama Ekibi – National Medical Rescue Team) members and their families were for the next disaster.

**Background:** Turkey is a land of earthquakes and a major earthquake in the Marmara region is expected in the near future. Despite this fact, people, including volunteer disaster workers, have low levels of awareness regarding risks and have limited interest in preparedness.

**Methods:** This is a descriptive cross-sectional study, and the study participants were the UMKE (Ulusal Medikal Kurtarama Ekibi – National Medical Rescue Team) members working in the Marmara region. UMKEs are volunteer medical rescue teams. Data collection tools were a questionnaire involving socio-demographic information, and a Disaster Preparedness Checklist (Tezgider et al, 2013).

**Results:** A total of 105 volunteers participated in the study. Of them 53 (50,5%) were women and 52 were (49,5%) men. The mean age was  $32.29 \pm 7.19$ ; 55 (52,4%) of the participants had personally experienced a disaster, and 62 (59%) worked actively in a disaster. The most common preparedness activities that the participants have taken were; learning the phone numbers of emergency services (N = 96, 91,4%), knowing local institutions providing information about disaster preparedness (N = 95, 90,5%), having information about residential usage license of current residence (N = 95, 90,5%). The least common preparedness activities were; obtaining information on disaster preparedness activities of neighborhood units (N = 82, 78,1), obtaining information on disaster preparedness activities of district governorship (N = 82, 78,1), obtaining information regarding disaster preparedness activities of the municipality (N = 78, 74,3%).

**Conclusion:** These findings indicate that, although volunteers are highly motivated to engage in rescue activities as a 'saver', neither them, or their families are interested in disaster risk reduction in pre-disaster period.

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### An Exploration of the Effects that Frequent Exposure to Life-threatening Events may have on a Critical Care Paramedic's Psychological Wellbeing

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**Study/Objective:** To explore if Critical Care Paramedics (CCPs) feel their role impacts on their psychological wellbeing.

**Background:** UK Critical Care Paramedics (CCPs) are a specialty of experienced paramedics who have received higher education to deliver extended clinical care. Due to their specialist skills, they are dispatched to the most critically ill and injured patients to deliver advanced care. Internationally, CCPs are recognized within the USA and Canada as Advanced Care Paramedics and as Mobile Intensive Care Ambulance Paramedic (MICA) in Australia.

**Methods:** The CCPs who studied within this UK Ambulance Trust have all received post-graduate training, achieving a certificate, diploma, or MSc in Advanced Paramedic Practice or Critical Care. Eight qualified CCPs with at least one years' experience as a CCP were recruited from one UK Ambulance Service. Face to face, semi structured interviews were conducted. Descriptive phenomenology and Colizzi's framework for data analysis was used to discover the personal perspectives and experiences of CCPs.

**Results:** CCPs see a range of highly emotive incidents daily specifically cardiac arrests and traumatically injured patients. They identified with symptoms suggestive of a heightened emotional response. The negativity of trauma identified within the studies literature review was not comparable with the responses from the majority of CCPs. The CCPs demonstrate resilience and adopt a diverse range of conscious coping strategies. The following factors were appraised by the CCPs to enhance their coping strategies: their ability to perform advanced clinical interventions and perceived positive patient outcomes; organized debriefings and improved clinical reflection; enhanced inter-professional relationships; and a regular crewmate for support.

**Conclusion:** CCPs felt that their role caused slight disruption to their health and wellbeing. They implied improvements to the ambulance services' counseling. Further research focussing on larger populations adopting CCP and advanced paramedic groups would be recommended.

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### Psychological Correlates of Preparedness Behavior of Civilian Populations to Armed Conflicts

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**Study/Objective:** The purpose of this study was to expand our understanding of the behavioral psychological indicators related to preparedness behavior. We hypothesized that correlations would be found between psychological constructs examined in this study and reported preparedness.

**Background:** Preparedness to emergency and disaster situation is imperative to public resilience. Prepared populations are better adapt to cope with emergencies, endure less of their adverse consequences, and recuperate more quickly. Previous studies revealed only a medium level of preparedness

(of the Israeli public) to the threat of armed conflicts, despite it being a major threat in Israel. In particular, studies performed thus far suggest that Israeli preparedness behavior does not adhere to classical correlates of preparedness behavior, such as perception of likelihood or severity. This makes behavioral prediction models inapt in describing preparedness patterns among the Israeli population.

**Methods:** A cross-sectional study based on an Internet survey was performed in 2016. The sample included 385 participants from a diverse socio-demographic background representing the different sectors of Israeli society. The questionnaire included a preparedness index, measurement of the sense of preparedness, Trait Anxiety Inventory, Life Orientation Test, Behavioral Inhibition System (BIS) & Behavioral Activation System (BAS) Scales, and ego defenses.

**Results:** The results suggest that optimistic and rational individuals report significantly greater levels of preparedness, whereas people scoring high on the trait anxiety scale, and those with a tendency to use denial coping mechanisms, report significantly lower levels of preparedness. In addition, the BIS was found to be significantly, negatively associated with reported preparedness. See Table 1.

**Conclusion:** The results of the current study suggest that trait anxiety and optimism appear to be substantially associated with preparedness behavior, and the latter can serve as a predictor of said behavior. Motivating preparedness behavior could draw inspiration from the results of our study.

|                | PI      | Sense of prep. | Anxiety | Optimism | BIB    | BAS    | Denial |
|----------------|---------|----------------|---------|----------|--------|--------|--------|
| Sense of prep. | .418**  |                |         |          |        |        |        |
| Anxiety        | -.256** | -.315**        |         |          |        |        |        |
| Optimism       | .231**  | .132*          | -.596** |          |        |        |        |
| BIS            | .167**  | -.184**        | .406**  | -.175**  |        |        |        |
| BAS            | .013    | -.028          | .021    | .209**   | .347** |        |        |
| Denial         | .111*   | .147**         | .272**  | -.035    | .253** | .146** |        |
| Rationalism    | .113*   | .132*          | -.036   | .051     | .091   | .200** | .079   |

Table 1. Spearman correlations of preparedness indices and psychological constructs.

(N = 3S5).

\* - Correlation is significant on the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

\*\* - Correlation is significant on the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

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### A Media Analysis of Canadian Disasters: How are Capability and Vulnerability Framed?

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**Study/Objective:** The purpose of this study is to present a media analysis of articles related to 12 Canadian disasters.

The specific research question is: What are the dominant discourses related to capability and vulnerability in mainstream media surrounding Canadian disasters? Our objective is to explore how persons in the general population and those living with functional limitations are portrayed in the media in all phases of disaster.

**Background:** Extreme weather events are becoming more frequent and severe, disproportionately affecting people living with functional limitations. The Sendai Framework emphasizes the need for an all-of-society approach to promote engagement of those disproportionately affected by disasters (UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction UNISDR, 2015). To do this, community assets must be identified and developed to promote inclusive social participation. The lives of persons living with functional limitations are represented through mainstream media. It is therefore important to explore the language used in the media to provide insight into societal perceptions of capability and vulnerability, to develop strategies for inclusive practice.

**Methods:** A multiple case study design (Yin, 1998) was used to perform a media analysis of 12 Canadian disasters (eg. Fort McMurray wildfire). Cases were chosen to represent different types of events across Canada, between 2009 to 2016. The dataset was analyzed using discourse and sentiment analysis.

**Results:** The results of this study provide an interpretation of how capability and vulnerability are portrayed in mainstream media, and how the consideration of language and power relations influences implementation of an all-of-society approach to disaster risk reduction.

**Conclusion:** Potential contributions of this study include raising awareness of the role of discourse in promoting social participation in disaster risk reduction strategies; including the need for a balanced approach in discussing assets and gaps that make up community contexts that support resilience. These findings will also contribute important knowledge for the application of an equity lens in disaster risk reduction.

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### Preparedness Promoting and Delaying - What Factors Influence Civilian Preparedness to Armed Conflicts?

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**Study/Objective:** The purpose of this study was to explore the promotion and inhibition effects of several socio-psychological factors on households' preparedness to armed conflicts in Israel.

**Background:** Emergency preparedness is a key factor in public resilience when facing adversities. The most prominent emergency threat for the Israeli population is the risk of an armed conflict. Yet, most Israelis tend to ignore the civil defense authorities recommendations for household adjustment to war. Other studies suggest that classical socio-psychological mechanisms of preparedness are irrelevant when tested in Israeli context, making promotion of preparedness behavior a challenging task.