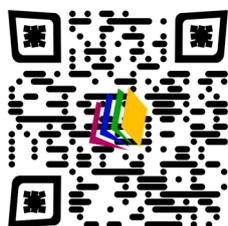




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## Understanding Disaster Management: An Analysis

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### ABSTRACT:

Disaster is defined as rapid and sudden natural calamity impacting the natural environment and socio-economic system that disrupts normal functioning of the community life. On the other hand, hazards are the pre-disaster situation in which some risk of disaster exists as human population has put themselves in a vulnerable situation. When the risk becomes tangible and impending, there is a distinct threat of disaster. This situation is not only threatening for national defence and security but may also pose various large scale medical, social, economic problems like epidemics, pandemics, shortage and scarcity of food and usable water, accumulation of waste, displacements of persons, problems of hunger and refugees etc. Poor are the worst sufferers in these circumstances. Disasters whether natural or man-made are not confined to a particular location or nation but are of a transnational character as it occurs throughout the world. It is beyond human comprehension and control as Nature has its own laws of creation, destruction and devastations. Human beings have made tireless efforts to protect themselves from the bad effects of these disasters.

Due to the result of various types of hazards, vulnerability and insufficient capacity to reduce the potentiality of risk, disasters impact individuals physically (through loss of life, injury, health, disability) as well as psychologically (fear, threat, stress, shock, trauma, behavioural and mental disorder, non-working of reflex action). The disaster risks in India are further contributed and aggravated by increasing vulnerabilities due to fast changing demographic profile and socio-economic conditions, poor and unplanned urbanization, infrastructural development within catchment area of high risks zones, environmental pollution and degradation, climate change, geological hazards, epidemics and pandemics.

Thus, disaster management requires the management of resource and responsibilities for dealing with all humanitarian aspects of

emergencies; in particular, preparedness, response and recovery in order to reduce the impacts of disaster. Disasters are the consequences of natural and human hazards. Disaster planning should be aimed at prevention, mitigation and reducing the effects of various disaster which do occur. The identification of post disaster tasks, allocation of these tasks to organisation and individual and coordination of planning efforts of all potential responders are the basic element of the disaster planning process so that the eventual response when it is required is co-ordinated and effective.

**KEY WORDS:** Disaster, Hazards, Disaster Risk Management, Prevention, Mitigation, Development

## Introduction

Disasters are one of the unescapable realities of life and human beings are experiencing and struggling with it to protect himself since the day of origin of human civilisation. They are the outcome of the interplay of a number of factors operating both on and under the earth. Their impact is so grave on the humanity that they are invariably intel great devastations, sorrows, hardships and dislocations in normal life. The only safeguards available to human beings is to attain better forecast facilities and take up full proof prevention and mitigations measures along with proper preparedness planning. Accordingly, in principle an analysis and anticipation of hazards and problems facing both community and organisation, the elimination or mitigation of consequences by highlighting proper, feasible and possible solutions, and using available coping resources to bring best suitable results within the existing constraints. As an alert participant in and observer of the happenings in the human life I want to draw your attention in the mitigation of the threats emanating from diverse man-made and natural disaster.

## Conceptual Framework

The term disaster has its origin from a French word '**DISASTRE**' which is made up of two terms: '**Dis**' means evil or bad and '**Astre**' meaning star. So, disaster expresses '**Evil or Bad Star**'. Hence,

in the past as per traditional ancient mythological perception natural disaster is perceived as 'Acts of God' which is beyond the control of human intervention and were projected in terms of God's punishment of the sins of mankind.

But with the passage of time today we realised the responsible and rational causes of disasters which encompasses, ecological and social perspective to disasters involving organised human action in terms of various acts, omissions and interferences of human beings. It not only contributed but aggravated to disasters which is perceived as 'Acts of Man'.

Different parts of the universe are affected by different kinds of disaster. Disasters whether natural or man-made are not confined to a particular location or nation but occur throughout the world and the effects of all kinds of disasters are very much akin to each other but are classified under various groups. As per their origin disaster are classified into two types, e.g. natural and man-made.

## Natural disaster

Natural disasters are violent phenomenon caused by the natural events and be further divided into:

**Wind related**, e.g. storm, cyclone, tornado, hurricane, heat wave, cold wave, thunder/ lightning etc.