



Disasters- Negative and positive Effects

Attar Singh

Assistant Professor

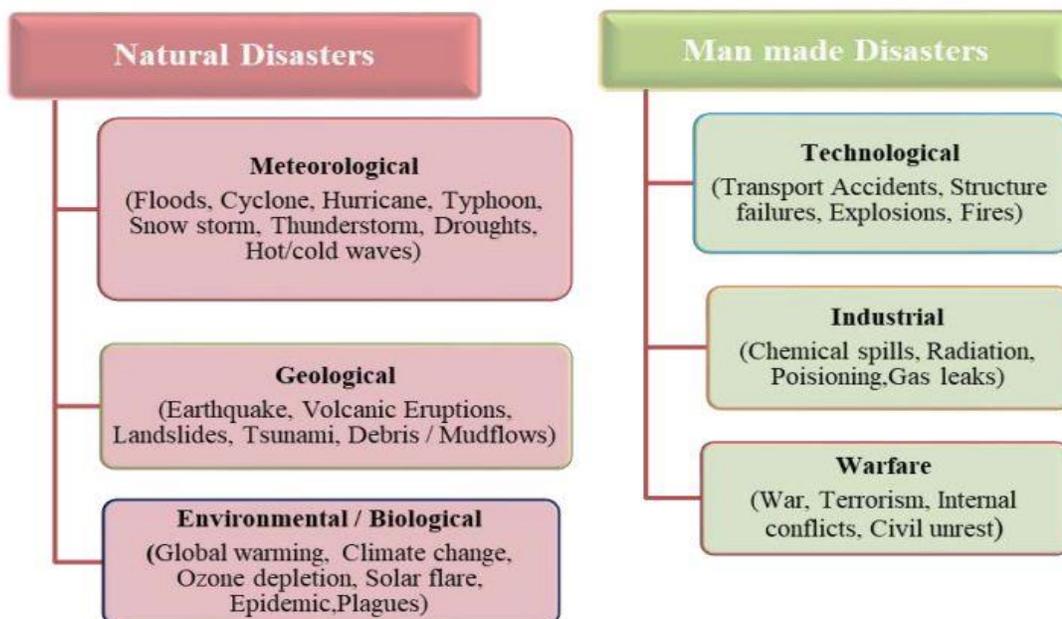
Department of Political Science

Ahir College, Rewari

Introduction

Disaster is a serious problem that happens over a period of time and causes so much harm to people, things, economies, or the environment that the affected community or society cannot handle it on its own. In theory, natural disasters are those caused by natural hazards, whereas human-made disasters are those caused by human hazards. However, in modern times, the divide between natural, human-made or human-accelerated disasters is more and more difficult to draw. In fact; all disasters can be seen as human-made, due to human failure to introduce appropriate emergency management measures. Disasters caused by natural hazards are things like avalanches, floods, earthquakes, and wildfires. Further examples are cold waves and heat waves, droughts, cyclones, landslides, lightning, tsunamis, volcanic activity. When disasters happen, developing countries often suffer the most. Over 95% of deaths from disasters occur in these countries, and they lose much more money compared to other countries. Disasters, however, are the catastrophic events resulting in heavy losses in terms of human, animal and plant lives, injuries and disabilities and damage to property and environment.

Types of Disasters



Natural Disasters

Natural Hazards are the result of naturally occurring processes that have operated throughout Earth's history. Natural disasters are beyond human control. Natural disasters are often termed an "Act of God". If the natural process that poses the hazard occurs and destroys human life or property, then a natural disaster has occurred.

Negative effects of Natural disasters

1 Food insecurity

Disasters are a leading cause of hunger. Food insecurity leads to many health, social, political, and economic disturbances. The floods have their own negative impacts on food security. It makes the land wet and difficult to use. Earthquakes sometimes trigger tsunamis, landslides, and even volcanic activity. Tsunamis result in lesser fishing activity and resultant food insecurity in the coastal areas. In many cases, after earthquakes, water and food shortages become acute. In most situations after disasters, distribution happens to be the bottleneck. They destroy standing crops, irrigation systems, livestock shelters, veterinary services, and Aquaculture Equipments and hatcheries.

2 Emotional aftershocks

After natural disasters, traumatic stress reactions are common. They lead to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder among some of the affected people and people who witnessed the disasters. They experience flashbacks, anxiety, depression, emotional numbness, hallucinations, troubled sleep, and excessive reactions to loud noises, anger, sadness, self-destructive behavior, memory problems, fear of crowds, Physical disorders like tiredness, dizziness, pounding heart, headaches, and sleeplessness are noticed among many.

3 Health Risks:

Over the last few decades, millions of people got killed by natural disasters. Corona virus has become a household terror of unimaginable proportions. Apart from a million deaths, its after effects on people linger. Diarrheal disease outbreak due to contaminated water occurs after a flood. The cholera epidemic is also common. Hepatitis A and E are also transmitted due to a lack of access to safe water and sanitation. Measles is another risk which occurs due to overcrowding. Neisseria meningitidis is transmitted from person to person in situations of overcrowding.

4 Displacement of large groups of people

Natural disasters like drought, floods, landslides, earthquakes, wildfires, and tsunami have caused many to displace from their homes. In India, the rural population migrating to nearby cities after the severe drought is a common sight. Their livelihood is taken away and they have to make do with whatever work available in cities. The problems faced by the displaced population include: Poor shelters and sanitation facilities, unsafe water and Poor quality food.

5 Financial distress

Once a natural disaster passes. A lot of resources and assets get destroyed and replacing them takes a ton of money. A lot of people are left homeless and unable to return to their normal lives. There is also a huge loss of life and these disasters also leave a lot of people injured and needing medical attention. After effects of a natural disaster such as during a flood that leaves behind stagnant water that then becomes a breeding ground for water borne diseases such as malaria also are a major cause for concern.

6 Environmental effects:

There are also environmental impacts after a natural disaster takes place. There is a mass amount of destruction to the wildlife and we also lose important resources such as trees. Hurricanes, storms and floods also take with them tons of natural resources such as soil when they pass. The loss of huge populations of wildlife can lead some species to extinction.

Positive effects of natural disasters:

Disasters are not welcome but they do come. While it does massive destructions, it also has some ecological benefits. However, it should not be construed that we are finding good out of bad.

1 Positive effects on ecological

Natural disasters have certain ecological effects such as balancing the temperature in regions of imbalance, storms, hurricanes and heavy rains all transfer heat from the tropics to the poles without which there might be an imbalance in the climatic conditions. The tremendous amount of rains is also beneficial to our ecology and helps farmers with their agricultural needs. Hurricanes and storms also redistribute the top soil and balance it in places that lack top soil, this is also beneficial for agriculture. Volcanic eruptions bring up the nutrients that were trapped deep in the ground before the eruption, thereby enriching the soil. Volcanoes have also known to expand small islands and overtime create more land mass. They also release useful chemicals into the atmosphere such as hydrogen and carbon dioxide which are part of the water cycle.

2 Positive effects on human behavior

At times of crisis, human beings come forward to save people and nurse the wounded. Volunteers crop up and try to save people even at the cost of their own life. Neighbours help spontaneously by giving food, shelter and clothes. Charity comes in the form of money and materials from all directions irrespective of caste, religion, region or creed. There is a general atmosphere of feeling sad for the affected ones. People learn to appreciate the power of nature.

3 Positive effects on productivity

Change is something a lot of people are not comfortable with. There have been many correlations between disasters and positive economic benefit seen in the longer run. Natural disasters forces ones hand to rebuild what's lost. Things that require change but have not undergone change just out of disinterest now will have to undergo change. Reconstruction work demands more assimilation of newer talents and innovation. New projects benefitting the poor come up and provide better facilities to withstand future occurrences.

4 Alerting the authorities

Disasters put nations and governments to an alert mode and prepare them to plan and execute disaster management efforts on a regular basis. Systems and organizations get activated to face future such disasters. COVID 19 has brought bio research to the fore and the nations have toiled to bring in acceptable vaccines in record time. The frontline workers like doctors, nurses, volunteers, police, researchers, politicians and government personnel are proving their mettle during the pandemic. The financial institutions have geared up to meet the challenges. Each nation has experimented its own strategies to tackle the situation.

Man-made disasters:

Man-made disasters are preventable though it is generally difficult to predict. Wars, terrorism, oilspill, nuclear accidents, human stampede, internet hacking, global warming, financial frauds and so on do happen in various parts of the world. Media goes agog for some time and then they move on. But the death of thousands of people in war cannot be compensated by any measures.

Negative effects of Man-made disasters

Most of the effects of natural disasters and man-made disasters are common. Some positive outlook and humanitarian approach can bring some solace in future.

Terrorism affects growth of a nation. It creates insecurity and helplessness. It reduces the government revenue. Tourism and other related activities get shelved or shunted. It destroys physical infrastructure. To reconstruct is a painful task. At the individual level death, physical deformity, anxiety, hatred and long term pain become a way of endurance in life. Industrial and technological disasters may occur due to industrial accidents or technology failures. Nuclear accidents create fire and explosions. Equally or even more harmful is the release of radioactive materials. Beyond a threshold limit, the exposure to radiation causes vomiting, diarrhea and skin rashes in human beings. High enough doses also damage brain cells.

Internet hacking and cyber- crime go hand in hand. They create financial havoc in banks, financial institutions and individuals. Hackers gain access to sensitive information including pass words and user identity, credit card information and sensitive government and corporate information. Global warming is a much talked about but less acted upon threat. It has multiple effects on earth. To mention a few - Temperature rise, water shortage, drought, pest invasions, storm damage and fire threats.

Positive effects of man-made disasters

Disasters are bad. But they are occurring everywhere. Though it may appear cynical, even a casual look into the positive effects has some convoluted advantages. In the case of man-made disasters, it is needed to prevent future occurrences. The birth of League of Nations and the United Nations after the First World War and Second World War respectively prove to be the way positive in a composite world. Cyber Security is becoming a science by itself to counter internet hacking. In general, security has become the watch word in every aspect of human Endeavour. Crowd Management has become an art and science to contain mob-violence and human stampede. Global warming is a real threat. In short term, it may benefit some farmers in some regions from early onset of spring and from a longer warm season that is suitable for growing crops. Also some plants grow better in the presence of high carbon dioxide. But this benefit is a two-edged sword. In the long run, the negative impact due to global warming will be far greater than the positive impacts.

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