

The role of social belongingness during the post disaster recovery

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Definitions

Sense of belonging

Sense of belonging is a common state of emotions any human being would feel right about. It frames who someone is and where that person is connected to. It develops the value of a person, and the absence of such a feeling may develop an insecurity resulting in negative consequences both physically and psychologically (Allen, 2019).

In broader terms, the state of belonging shapes up one's recognition (Chin, 2019). This gradually develops the relationships and collectively forms a group, or a community, which welcomes and accepts each other. On the other hand, this state of mind may pull oneself out from being socially affiliated with other social groups, and might not be welcoming of other groups into one's own group.

1. Introduction

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has established a prime goal of eradicating all kinds of poverty, including extreme poverty which remains as a global challenge and a vital requisite for sustainable development. Out of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) a strong emphasis and key imperative is evolved around the first goal 'No Poverty'. Although a significant achievement has been made in achieving the SDGs, we often witness that extreme weather events and associated disasters deplete the hard gains of development.

Impacts from disasters are more likely to severely affect poorer communities and their environments. Disasters not only increase their vulnerability but can result in loss of lives and/or their assets and livelihoods. They not only may destroy their existing meagre assets but also trap them into a further poverty cycle which can be passed on generation to generation (UNESCAP, 2018). Literature suggests that their barely owned assets are prone to depletion either by 'fire sales' or consumption increasing their poverty and destabilizing their human capital (Shepherd et al., 2013). Disasters also reduce the opportunities for social mobility of their younger generation and eventually will increase the cyclical effect of intergenerational transmission of poverty (Hallegatte, 2016).

In these circumstances, governments attempting to achieve the SDG 1, No Poverty should pay attention to the disasters as they adversely impact the poorer population, and drag them back and forth to poverty (Arnold, 2006; Hallegatte et al., 2018). In this regard, the post-disaster recovery period plays a vital role in the disaster management cycle as it recognizes the direction of both long and short term recovery strategies (Finucane et al., 2020) that could affect the well-being of the disaster victims, and where the poverty issues could be addressed.

Scholars argue that the post-disaster recovery period plays a critical role in reducing people's vulnerability and building community resilience (Monteil et al., 2020). This is a complex stage because many activities related to the identification of the recovery strategies and the continuation of the emergency response take place simultaneously. It may also prevent the exploration of important dimensions of the recovery process (Finucane et al., 2020). Thus, after a disaster, it is worthwhile to identify the subgroups who are differentially vulnerable to the situation for effective recovery in a limited resources context. Therefore, this chapter attempts to explore one of the important dimensions that need to be sufficiently taken in to consideration during the post disaster recovery phase. Social belongingness is one of them, it is also a key driver of sustainable recovery. This concept presents many dimensions and is linked to many subject areas. Proper identification of this concept within the disaster management realm could lead decision makers and practitioners to develop post disaster recovery strategies more effectively, and ensure more sustainable livelihoods for disaster victims (Aldrich, 2011; Monteil et al., 2020)

For the purpose of this discussion, the first half of the chapter mainly focuses on discussing different dimensions of the sense of belonging as an entry point. The second half illustrates how this notion relates to post disaster recovery efforts. Thirdly, the ambiguity concerning the concept is illustrated. Finally, the chapter concludes with the importance of giving due recognition to the sense of belonging in the post disaster recovery agenda.

2. Different theoretical perspectives on social belonging

The term belonging is used with the term identity interchangeably in many social science disciplines such as geography, sociology, and political science. One of the earliest theories on sense of belonging was developed by psychologist Abraham Maslow (1943) in his paper "A Theory of Human Motivation" where he explained the human needs in the form of a five layered pyramid, in which the third layer describes the need for affiliation and interpersonal relationships with those who accept them (Poston, 2009). In the social belongingness literature there are two major analytical dimensions: place-belongingness, and the politics of belonging (Antonsich, 2010).

On the one hand, place belongingness is one's feeling of their location, where place is referred to as a geographical aspect. It is believed that this feeling is stimulated when a feeling of exclusion is experienced rather than the feeling itself (Antonsich, 2010). Place belongingness could be either formal or informal (Yuval-Davis et al., 2005). Antonsich (2010) explains that the feeling of place belongingness is a familiar feeling of being at home. Place belongingness has a great influence on the disaster victims. A number of studies have shown that the forced dislocation of the victims

during forced migrations or evacuations are taken with a great struggle. Their displacement can cause feelings such as grief and anxiety (Cox & Perry, 2011). The loss of place in a disaster can be a temporary or a permanent situation. Prewitt Diaz and Dayal (2008) state that ‘the most catastrophic impact of natural disasters is an individual feeling of loss of place’ (Prewitt Diaz & Dayal, 2008). For example, a wild fire that ravaged Mc Clure in British Columbia Canada in July 2003 burnt for about 75 days devastating a huge forest area and causing loss of homes and million dollars of damage to properties. As a result, about 3,800 people were evacuated from the communities (McGee et al., 2009). One study (Cox & Perry, 2011) reported that people who were evacuated from their homes had developed a feeling of disorientation, as they have been detached from their own places to be sheltered in the evacuation centers. Some had lost their homes, jobs and other belongings making them feel perplexed. But even for others who had not lost anything material, psychically they had lost their usual way of life. People who were evacuated from their houses were more traumatized by their feeling of disoriented separation from their homes than those who stayed and endured the fires. One year after the fire, many of the affected people had rebuilt their houses up to a considerably habitable level of living. It was not only a process of reconstruction but also ‘a process of reconnecting with their sense of rootedness or their belonging in place’ (Cox & Perry, 2011, p. 400). One of the victims revealed that it was not only their house but also their hearts which had been lost. Many described that they didn’t feel ‘at home’ any more in their new homes - contributing to the fact that their loss of place belongingness and novel disorientation was centered in and around their houses and their familiar backgrounds. Cox and Perry (2011) showed that the disorientation requires a process of reorientation to restore people’s sense of self, place and community. Typically, disaster victims take a considerable amount of time to develop a distinctive perspective of what their place becomes in their sense of belongingness.

On the other hand, political belongingness is considered as a personal experience which is developed with a social spatial inclusion/exclusion dimension determined by the political boundaries and borders (Antonsich, 2010). Chin (2019) argues that there is either vertical or horizontal dimension to political belongingness. The connection between individual states, groups within state institutions, and the formal aspects of citizenship which creates legality of a citizen to a state are some examples of vertical belongingness. Horizontal belongingness is a concept developed among individuals and groups within a state, confining it to its citizens. Citizenship is considered as a similar term of political belonging. However, it is necessary to determine whether granting only a citizenship would make them feel belonging. Scholars (Chin, 2019; Krūma, 2013) reveal that granting the citizenship alone by the political institutions is not sufficient to develop such feeling unless a wider social acceptance is also offered to a person. Chin (2019) also identified groupness as another concept in the literature of belongingness. For the author, groupness is a sense of belonging to a group which is formed by cognitive and affective attachments. Safety and familiarity are another two broader terms indefinitely embedded in to this. One who is belonging would feel natural and eased in a group and will be recognized and understandable by the others in the group. Some will use their group belonging as a significance in their personal identity while others will not, others will need the self-definition of their members to be centered in the group (Chin, 2019).

2.1 Social identity and social capital

Social identity refers to how a person defines themselves depending on their roles, group membership or personal attributes (Dinger et al., 2019). The social identity theory is an important school of thought developed by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in 1979 based on the differences between the ingroup and outgroup concept (Tajfel, 1974). It explains how a person will behave entirely individualistically rather than having the sense of being a member of a group in certain situations; and how, at other times, an individual will behave completely as a member of a group ignoring the individual sense. In this definition, the former behavior tends to result in social mobility. According to this theory, it is comparatively easier to move individually from one social group to another where one fits in, when one feels that the present group is not satisfactory to their needs, or when it does not contribute to one's social identity. The basis of social identity is the group membership which people use to distinguish themselves from others.

Scholars have suggested that social identity is at its peak immediately after a disaster (Dinger et al., 2019; Dynes & Quarantelli, 1973). But this seems to change during the post disaster recovery period. A study carried out with the entrepreneurs of six small to medium size cities in the Rocky Mountain West and Midwestern United States, who suffered massive damage from a large-scale disaster between 2011 and 2014, identified that not only social identity does not return to its pre disaster levels, but it also transforms based on changed values and concepts during the rebuilding period (i.e., dependents, noneconomic motivation, changes to business) (Dinger et al., 2019). This finding suggests that, while the importance of an identity of an individual's self-concept may not change easily, the meanings of identity-driven entrepreneurial action may change greatly over time.

2.2 Social change

Social change is a broader concept. It happens when human interactions and relationships of a whole group transform cultural and social traditions for any reason that matters. It creates apparent changes in the social affiliation between larger groups such as national, ethnic or religious. Bates and Peacock (1987) described that 'social change is always a change in behavioral practices carried out in a complex network of relationships and includes change in the network itself' (Bates & Peacock, 1987, p. 307). They explained that social changes can be expected as a result of disasters. There is a greater probability for a social change to occur when the magnitude of both the disaster and the external aid is greater, and the time period taken for social restoration is longer. In literature the concept of sense of belonging has been identified as a tool evaluate the social change (May, 2011)

In 1976, a severe earthquake struck Guatemala which, was a relatively underdeveloped country at the time, killing about 25,000 people and destroying houses of over one million people (Bates & Peacock, 1987)). As a result of this disaster, there was a massive housing shortage. The government allowed foreign companies which were new to the country to implement the reconstruction activities with a low government supervision. The companies utilize new methods

and alien values in this reconstruction activities which were totally different from the government operations (Bates & Peacock, 1987).

Bates and Peacock (1987) study showed that two or three years after the disaster the gap between the poor and middle class, and between Indians and Latinos narrowed slightly due to the disaster recovery activities. But after the completion of the reconstruction efforts the gap began to widen again. Massive foreign aid was flown into the country for relief and reconstruction efforts which provided investment which the country had never experienced before. This eventually created a boom for businesses and this effect consequently trickled down to a segment of the community. In contrary, another segment of disaster victims did not receive the foreign aid which slowed down their development. The majority of the resources were pumped to the disaster affected areas, but the non-affected areas of the country only developed slightly. Further, the development concentrated on infrastructure development and the traditional agri based economy was left neglected. After the reconstruction phase, people were left only with the improved infrastructure but little or nothing was being left to the community. This situation contributed the disaster victims to return back to their previous underdeveloped condition. Finally, conflicts were developed between various interests' groups in the country and perhaps contributed to the political upheaval which took shape in 1979 and 1980, when a war between the government and a growing guerilla movement became more and more severe. This social change occurred as a result of the disaster and how it was managed, especially on how the outside aid was distributed and managed.

2.3 Civic and ethno sense of belonging

In the literature of refugee settlement (Fozdar & Hartley, 2014; Marlowe, 2015), civic, ethno and ethnic-based concepts of belonging gives another perspective to the broad notion of belongingness. Civic belonging discusses about ones' ability to enjoy the same rights and privileges as the others in the same community such as being able to access services, work rights, social security education, and voting without any difference. Ethno belonging is an affiliation among people in a broader sense who share aspects such as similar culture, land, memories, birth place, heritage, and culture, who are connected to one another indirectly - it is a mutual common feeling among the other fellow peers who share similar features or shared vision.

The Canterbury region in New Zealand was struck by four major earthquakes in September 2010 to December 2011, resulting in a large number of fatalities and a huge economic shock. This region used to be a locality where a large number of political refugees were living before the disaster. These refugee communities were among those who were heavily affected. With respect to refugees, Marlowe (2015) argued that the term refugee was used as an umbrella term to refer to all the disaster victims in different forums, but the obfuscated usage of the term mostly refrained the affected community from benefiting from the disaster relief assistance. Hence, when considering disaster recovery such statuses of the community need to be correctly identified.

Marlowe's (2015) study was carried out to explore how the disaster victimized refugees' perception of belonging over a period of time. Their view point on belonging was in principle based on the civic belonging which was developed due to their ability to access employment and

education. But they claimed that there was a lack of ethno belonging as they were not connected to the majority of the Christchurch community. Immediately after the earthquakes, their opinion about the civic belonging had slightly increased with their hope of having new job opportunities. Their sense of ethno belonging was also changed positively. For the first time they had the chance to get to know their neighbors outside their own community, and got the feeling of integration which displayed opportunities for new social connections. During this period, they were accepted by a larger community and their sense of ethno belonging had gradually developed.

Nevertheless, two years after the earthquake their opinion on both civic and ethno belonging had reversed. With time, their neighbors had gradually returned to their usual lifestyles and the majority of the affected were left out from employment which consequently changed their perspective. Their notion of community evolved around the intra-ethnic relationships. The sense of civic and ethno belongings may change over a period of time during the disaster recovery phase depending on many reasons, including the time taken for the resettlement, or whether or not the affected had been accepted by a wider society. The affected community will make their judgement to remain in or to leave the region (in case of another disaster) depending on both their civic and ethnic belonging (Marlowe, 2015). They will also return to their normal lives based on their civic belonging which is one of the indicators of successful recovery efforts (Aldrich, 2012).

2.4 Belongingness in the post disaster recovery phase

To date, the notion of belongingness among the disaster affected communities is a topic which has received limited attention. In particular, the change of sensitivity on belongingness during the course of disaster recovery remains undertheorized (Marlowe, 2015). Therefore, this chapter investigates the importance of different faces of belongingness in the disaster recovery phase by exploring the literature to identify lessons learnt from the past disasters to frame future recovery phases more efficiently by addressing the underlying issue of poverty.

During the post disaster recovery phase, the affected communities face immense challenges both mentally and physically depending on the magnitude of the damage. Typically, authorities work hard during the post disaster recovery stage to bring back normalcy to affected communities (Cox & Perry, 2011)) It is argued that the delay in the recovery phase can produce negative results for the affected communities as well as their economies (Adie, 2001). The longer the recovery period takes the greater is the vulnerability of those affected. The recovery phase is complicated and last for a longer period - usually longer than the duration of the disaster, it also incurs huge costs. Hence, the implementation of effective recovery strategies is paramount.

3. Ambiguity during the post disaster recovery period

The disaster recovery period is very complex and involves a large number of external stakeholders from outside of the affected community. Those organizations and individuals extending support for the recovery activities might not be well conversant about the affected community (such as in

the Guatemalan case, Bates and Peacock (1987)). This situation usually welcomes a different set of problems as the underlying issues of the affected community might not be properly taken into consideration. To understand the real effects of the disasters, it is best to know what the community used to be like before the event (Enarson et al., 2007). It must be reminded that the psychological aspects of the affected community such as their sense of belongingness has to be carefully taken into serious consideration in this disaster phase.

Post disaster environments are usually full different mental health conditions such as grievances, loss of hope, depression, anxiety and other conditions (R. Wind et al., 2011). Individuals, or the communities as a whole, would not be the same as they used to be during the pre-disaster conditions. It is necessary to handle such affected communities with due attention, as their psychological conditions might get worsened due to the prolonging procedures in the recovery stage as well as the mal practices that are being followed during the course of the recovery. 'Delays in normalcy delay the emotional recovery' (Landesman, 2005, p. 191).

There is an enormous ambiguity in the post-disaster recovery phase on how and what strategies should be adopted for efficient recovery processes. Even if these are preexistent it is doubtful that the procedures will be effective as expected when they were formulated in the ex-ante stage. Pre-existing disaster policies must be repetitively evaluated to identify and recognize their effectiveness and weaknesses in reducing vulnerabilities. Characteristics of each disaster and the affected community may differ from one another. Therefore, the practical involvement of the affected communities is important to customize the procedures and strategies to ensure its efficiency and the effectiveness. The recovery phase of a disaster is eventually the period where people will have positive expectations about the future but this remains to be the least understood characteristic of a disaster (Passerini, 2000).

The theorizing regarding the sense of belongingness includes a careful consideration of the factors such as gender dimension and age (Cox & Perry, 2011; Huddy, 2001; Stewart et al., 2009). Gender consideration in disaster management has been discussed very broadly. International advocacies have been made to mainstream gender into disaster risk reduction through gender inclusive frameworks for disaster risk reduction such as Hyogo Framework for Action. This framework describes that 'gender perspective should be integrated into all disaster risk management policies, plans and decision-making processes, including those related to risk assessment, early warning, information management, and education and training' (UNISDR, 2009, p. 10). This chapter, however, limits its emphasis on the relationship between gender and belongingness and its impact on the disaster recovery.

3.1 Gender as an entry point for belongingness

The normalcy during the pre-disaster situation is usually disrupted by the magnitude of the disasters and their impact on the communities. The loss of lives, property and livelihoods impact both men and women differently. Women becomes more vulnerable with the loss of their own dwelling which is the epicenter of the individual privacy. Their psychological distress due to the disasters can be combatted with their sense of belonging at home (Cox & Perry, 2011). Women's

sense of belongingness mainly concentrates around their houses and their families, and especially their children. This may be due to the social responsibilities that has been passed on to them generation by generation, and also due to the traditional conceptions of the gender roles defining women as nurtures of their families (Cox & Perry, 2011).

Affected women of the Canterbury earthquake were more concerned about their ethno belonging more than the loss of their personal belongings, they were concerned about the well-being of the children and the immediate ethnic community (Marlowe, 2015). Non possession of a drivers' license, having children to look after, poor knowledge of English was some of the draw back factors that limited that female community from getting into occupations. This created self-isolation among the women resulting in less opportunities to mingle with the rest of the society rather than their own ethnic group. Therefore, their decisions were mostly influenced by their ethno belonging. On the other hand, the belongingness of men evolved around the economic and social activities, they were more concerned about their livelihoods and access to education, or the civic features of belongingness (Marlowe, 2015).

3.2 Does age impact on sense of belongingness?

Psychological stress and injuries are some of the negative impacts of disasters. But not all those who are affected by the disasters experience these conditions. Scholars who have studied the consequences of disasters among the old age have concluded mixed results (Fornara et al., 2019).

Some of the early studies done on the coping behavior of elderly flood victims found that elderly individuals have fared better than the younger population in the affected community in terms of emotional recovery (Huerta & Horton, 1978). Another study carried out on two disaster stricken communities in Texas have concluded that elderly victims (over sixty years of age) have demonstrated a lower incidence of emotional and family problems than the younger ones (Bolin & Klenow, 1983). A study on the disaster victims of Hurricane Hugo (Thompson et al., 1993) suggested that younger people demonstrated most distress in the absence of a disaster, while middle aged people displayed their distress during the presence of a disaster. This may be due to the serious exposure of middle aged people to disasters, though older people are more vulnerable as their economic resources are limited, and they usually receive a weaker social support. From a burden point of view, middle aged people were disproportionately distressed due to their societal and family responsibilities during both the mid and long term recovery of Hurricane Hugo.

In the course of the emergency operations and the post disaster recovery process the disaster victims can be relocated or displaced. This aggravates the chances of their feeling of place belongingness disappearing, especially when they are forced to relocate. This might negatively impact the elderly people the most as their place of residence is noticeably important for them; they usually spend most of the day in their residential environment and this may help in providing a relationship with their past (Fornara et al., 2019). There is also positive correlation between age and sense of community belonging (Schellenberg et al., 2018). These provide evidence for how much the different perspectives of sense of belongingness is attached to the older age.

Childhood is considered as the most important stage of one's life. In a catastrophic situation, children's life and health would be endangered, and if not managed properly the consequences will

impact their growth and adulthood; therefore, it is necessary to take essential measures to protect them (Gamini & Khalili, 2019). The way children feel about the disruption to their homes during a disaster may be distinct to that of the adults. The linkages to places that individuals may have would differ depending on their age and stage of development (Scannell et al., 2016). In the case of children, their place of attachment is always closer to their homes. But as a child grows, at different stages of childhood their place attachment changes. Youth's sense of place attachment has been described as disoriented in a disaster like in the case of adults. Generally, children and youth express their place attachments to different places, whereas adults link it with their psychological needs. Scannell et al. (2016) argue that it is important to evaluate the place attachment of different age groups to find out the level of psychological distress one is experiencing based on different aspects of the sense belongingness compared to other effects of disasters, especially during the post disaster recovery stage.

4. Social capital and sense of belonging in post disaster recovery

The notion of belongingness and social capital are both inter-related. The interpersonal relationships, common understandings, identities, values and the human networking of a community which helps them function smoothly are some of the features of the social capital. This term has been used in the early social science literature to explain the ability of people to access certain resources and being part of a certain group (Storr et al., 2017). When people face unexpected hard times such as disasters the first responders will always be their family, relatives, friends and the neighboring community who come in to help as a safety net. These groups of social capital are enriched with different set of social networks and community organizations which places them in a stronger position against poverty and vulnerability (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000).

Social capital can be of immense support during the disaster recovery phase, especially in extending support immediately after a disaster (Aldrich, 2012). This support could be in various forms such as emotional, financial, or information sharing. Social capital is important for the disaster victims for their survival until the external support is received (Chan et al., 2019). Scholars noted that the communities with a wider span of a social capital have the advantage of acquiring better information and participation in the recovery process (Nakagawa & Shaw, 2004). Such advantages support the affected communities to take better, informed decisions related to their future. Social capital plays a main role during the changes confronted by communities during and after a disaster occurs. A number of studies on disaster recovery has proven that social capital is a key element in disaster recovery (Aldrich, 2011).

Three categories of social capital are identified in the literature depending on the context that the concept is being used. They are bonding, bridging, and linking social capital (Hawkins & Maurer, 2010). Bonding social capital is the close-knit between people who have similarities in their community, race and region. Bridging social capital is the ties external social groups such as heterogeneous groups that link people of social differences. Finally, the linking social capital is the links between members from different social setting of different power within a society such as the community and the informal organizations.

Hurricane Katrina was one of the most disastrous hurricanes that had occurred in the United States. It resulted in several thousands of fatalities and a huge economic loss. It damaged the city of New Orleans and its surrounding areas. The lower Ninth Ward was one of the highly devastated areas among them (Elliott et al., 2010). Separated from the rest of the area of New Orleans by a shipping channel, the Ninth Ward was completely inundated by the flood that followed the destruction of the flood wall protecting the area. The population in the area were already vulnerable due to combined factors related to poverty and racism (Chamlee-Wright & Storr, 2009). These factors combined with the disaster impacts further pushed them into a distinct disadvantageous position.

However, among the vulnerable ninth ward disaster victims were a Vietnamese- American community who recovered comparatively faster than their neighboring communities in the same locality with the support of their church (Patterson et al., 2010). The community got together and repaired each damaged house by the disasters one at a time. They used the church as a warehouse to stock building material, prepare and have shared meals together. Together, they overcame many barriers, including the social coordination difficulties through effective political actions to protect their community (Chamlee-Wright & Storr, 2009). These religious organizations have a strong link and an attachment with its congregation and could have played a leading role in the community as a part of their social capital. Not only religious organizations but also the other community and non-governmental organizations and universities can also cooperate in the long and short term recovery efforts (Chan et al., 2019). Additionally, a large number of community leaders gathered during the post Hurricane Katrina disaster recovery period in Baton Rouge - where there was a large number of refugees (Ahn & Davis, 2020). These leaders were involved in both planning disaster relief and disaster recovery activities. Both examples not only illustrate the important contribution of social capital but also the association between sense of belonging and social capital for effective disaster response and recovery.

5. Conclusion

The post disaster recovery period opens up to a large number of problems. During this phase, plans and strategies related to reconstruction, rehabilitation and repopulating the original community are formulated, and the existing procedures are reevaluated. The disaster recovery period does not merely comprise a place's reconstruction and resettlement, it also includes the social well-being of the victims, including poverty eradication and mental well-being. A broader classification of disaster recovery found in the literature elaborates that it is a process linked with social recovery which includes a large number of solutions for the issues that evolved due to disasters. Some of the important ones are providing the victims with solutions for short and long term housing, food, financial support, overcoming the psychological and psychosocial problems and achieve desired level of social well-being, sense of place and belonging, and civic engagement (Tierney & Oliver-Smith, 2012). It has been often argued that due to the overwhelming load of activities involved during this period (Iuchi, 2014), some important socio-psychological concepts are often being neglected such as well-being and sense of belonging. This chapter re-emphasizes the importance of some of these factors including the sense of belongingness and its associated concepts in the disaster recovery period. In particular, the accomplishment of recovery strategies, and their implementation, may be limited if those are not articulated with an in-depth understanding of

human behavior, especially the social and cultural behavior (Tierney & Oliver-Smith, 2012). The case studies reviewed in this chapter provided evidence that the lack of those considerations may lead to a failure in the disaster recovery. Failing the recovery process results in further social distress and problems. The huge capital investments and other humanitarian aid flowing into the affected areas can be used as an opportunity to reduce vulnerabilities, and existing and future income disparities, along with creating a better living environment for the community.

The disaster recovery period can be used as an effective mechanism to overcome poverty if properly planned and executed provided that all the necessary factors are adequately taken into consideration. In particular, the losses incurred by disasters are short term, but their effects can exacerbate poverty if post disaster recovery policies do not consider how people could resume their livelihoods thereafter. In the case of the resettlement of victims, there could be a dissatisfaction because of their loss of sense of belonging (Borsuk & Eroglu, 2019). It is also useful to remember that the sense of belonging influences how communities consensually reach their decisions (Miller & Rivera, 2010). Formulation of a broader understanding of disaster stress and designing interventions to enhance the well-being of the disaster victims should be advocated strongly. The decision-making pattern of policy makers, and disaster workers, need to go beyond the prototypes of quick reconstruction, and return to normalcy, to also include more in-depth analysis of the impact of disasters on people and communities' sense of belongingness, and vice-versa.

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