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ART-BASED INTERVENTION EFFECTIVENESS ON STRESS AMONG NEPALESE PEOPLE INDIRECTLY EXPOSED TO THE NEPAL EARTHQUAKE

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Statement of the Problem: Earthquakes can lead to short and long-term psychological consequences, which negatively affect survivors' quality of life. To date, the clear majority of earthquake trauma related studies focus on people directly exposed to the event. The current study focused on an indirectly-exposed group.

Aim: The aim of this study was to examine the effectiveness of a single-session art-based intervention to reduce stress among Nepalese students, who were enrolled in a special program in Israel during the April 2015 Nepal earthquake.

Methodology: The intervention included drawing pictures that were later shared in small groups related to three topics:

1. Emotions and thoughts related to the earthquake
2. Personal and collective resources that may help them cope with the earthquake outcomes upon their return to Nepal
3. Integration of the stressful image and the resource picture. To examine the intervention effect, the Subjective Units of Distress (SUDs) values of 116 Nepalese students were measured using a pre-post design.

Findings: The study results indicate that students' initial high distress levels significantly decreased on completion of the intervention.

Conclusion & Significance: The study results show the efficacy of an easily implemented art-based tool for stress reduction among individuals indirectly exposed to disaster conditions. Implications for future studies and for interventions designed for indirect victims of additional disasters will be discussed.

Biography

Dorit Segal Engelchin is an Associate Professor. She is the Head of the Spitzer Department of Social Work and Co-director of the Center for Women's Health Studies and Promotion, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. Her research interests include diverse aspects of women's health and well-being, stress and coping, and evaluation of art-based interventions designed to reduce stress among people exposed to disasters.

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Orly Sarid completed her Bachelor of social work from Tel Aviv University and also done her Masters of social work from Tel Aviv University. Later she completed her Ph.D from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. Currently, she is an Assistant Professor at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and belongs to the Department of Social work as a faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences

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