



Disaster Management

Pradeep Bahire 2023-B-050620003A

Aditya Patil 2023-B-03102005

Guide by: **Prachi Bhure**

Dr. Sandip Kulkarni

Assistant professor, Department of computer Science, Pune, Maharashtra


Ajeenkay D Y Patil University

Lohegaon ,Airport rd. charholi Budruk ,Pune, Maharashtra



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Abstract

A critical, strategic framework designed to mitigate, prepare for, respond to, and recover from natural and human-induced hazards to protect vulnerable communities and infrastructure. As disasters increase in frequency and intensity, effective management requires a multi-faceted approach involving government, local entities, and technical expertise to minimize damage. This study reviews the four core Pillars mitigation preparedness (planning), response immediate action, and recovery highlighting the importance of communication, cooperation, coordination, and collaboration in effective, actionable emergency planning. By analyzing historical data and implementing standardized, structured protocols, the research demonstrates how proactive strategies can enhance community resilience and reduce socioeconomic losses

Keywords: *Emergency Preparedness, Risk Reduction, Response Planning, Resilience*

Introduction

A disaster is understood as a serious disruption of the functioning of a community or society, causing widespread human, material, or environmental losses that exceed the ability of the affected community to cope using its own resources. While often triggered by natural physical phenomena (earthquakes, floods, cyclones) or human-induced actions (industrial accidents, terrorism), disasters are fundamentally crises of development. biological agents resulting in massive loss of assets and human resources. Libraries must safeguard their resources from any kind of disaster and conserve them for future use. So, it becomes the libraries' duty to develop a disaster management plan, which in reality is neglected in this field of librarianship.

Disaster Management Planning in Libraries and Information Centers

It guides in dealing with catastrophic situations. It is a blueprint guide to dealing with disastrous situations and must contain five stages in a disaster management plan (Bansal, 2015). These include:

- Risk assessment



- Prevention
- Preparedness
- Response
- Recovery

Disaster Management Planning is library management's core area, and library staff should be trained to deal with disaster situations. The first stage is concerned with identifying the threat and prevention deals with taking measures to reduce the risk. The third stage is preparation which means when a problem arises then be ready to deal with it. The response phase deals with the action to be taken at the time of any accident. Recovery involves knowing what to do to recover. A disaster plan should be regularly reviewed and updated from time to time.

Review of Literature

1. Shift Toward Proactive Risk Management

Recent literature indicates a fundamental paradigm shift from reactive relief to proactive disaster risk reduction (DRR) and resilience building. This shift emphasizes the "build back better" principle, aiming to minimize the impact of future hazards rather than merely responding to them.

- **Integrated Frameworks:** There is an increased focus on integrating DRR with sustainable development goals (SDGs) and climate change adaptation.
- **Policy Evolution:** Studies highlight the transition from colonial-era relief laws to comprehensive risk-reduction models, exemplified by the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

2. Key Themes in Current Literature

- **Community-Based Disaster Risk Reduction (CBDRR):** Local communities are recognized as first responders, necessitating their involvement in risk assessment and preparedness.
- **Resilience and Vulnerability:** Research often defines resilience as the capacity to absorb, adapt, and transform in the face of disasters. Vulnerability studies focus on identifying factors such as poverty and environmental degradation that heighten risks.
- **Social Capital:** Studies emphasize that social cohesion, trust, and community networks improve response efficiency.

Objectives of Study

The study aims to assess the plan for disaster preparedness and strategies to fight unannounced disastrous consequences with the following objectives:

1. To know the current status of disaster management policy in libraries.
2. To find out the problem of implementation of disaster management policy.
3. To investigate the impact of disaster management policy to cope with the conservation and preservation of information reading material.

Research Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design to evaluate disaster management strategies, combining quantitative survey data with qualitative interviews for a comprehensive analysis. Primary data will be collected through structured questionnaires distributed to local stakeholders—including community members, first responders, and government officials—to assess preparedness, response efficiency, and recovery efforts. This primary data is supplemented by qualitative semi-structured interviews with key informants, such as disaster management professionals, to gain in-depth

insights into institutional challenges and successful practices. Secondary data sources, including government reports, emergency management plans, and previous archival records of disaster events, will be reviewed to support the analysis.

Scope and Limitation of the Study

The scope of the study covered state university libraries of Uttarakhand and it is confined to three state university libraries in the Kumaun region of Uttarakhand out of four state universities in this region. The one that is excluded from the study is the open university of the State.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Library located in a region or place threatened by Natural Disaster

A natural disaster is very disruptive and can occur at any time even without alarming. Uttarakhand is a disastrous prone area due to its adverse geological conditioning natural disasters like earthquakes and landslides are likely to occur. Respondents were asked whether their library is located in a region that is threatened by natural disasters. Figure 1 shows that 66.7% of librarians responded that their library is situated in a place that is prone to natural disasters whereas 33.3% of librarians responded that their library is in a safe zone.

Kind of Disasters that are most likely to Occur

There are several natural as well as manmade disasters that can disrupt society. Figure 2 shows the probability of disasters that are most likely to occur in libraries under the scope. Results showed that 66.7% of respondents were

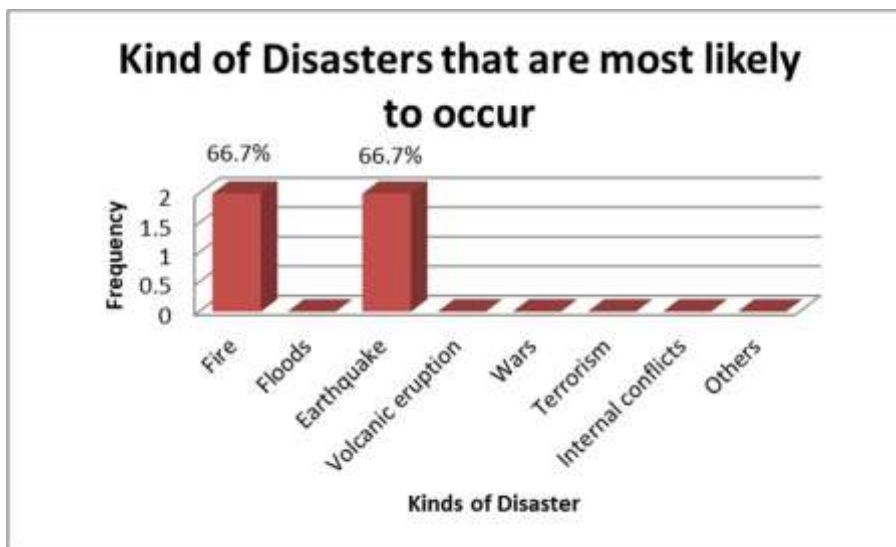


Figure 2- Kind of Disasters that are most likely to Occur Availability of Written Disaster Management Policy

Any policy in every institution is formally implemented in writing, only then does it come into force. Hence, this question sought to know from the respondents, about the availability of written disaster management policy in the library. As can be seen in Table 2, 100% of the sample population did not have a written disaster management policy to prevent, fight and manage disasters in the library.

Availability of Written Disaster Management Policy	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	0	0
No	3	100%
Total	3	100%

Table 2- Availability of Written Disaster Management Policy Intend to write and implement Disaster Management Plan

Libraries are considered to be the heart of the university as it owns valuable resources that act as an intermediate between the teaching and learning process. Libraries are now beginning to understand the importance of disaster management plans so that libraries will be prepared in advance for any disastrous situation. But in reality, no such policy exists. Table 3 illustrates that 100% of the respondents now intend to write and implement a disaster management policy, for this they need support from the higher authorities of the institution.

Intend to write & implement a disaster management plan	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	3	100%
No	0	0
Total	3	100%

Table 3- Intend to write & implement a Disaster Management Plan Reasons for not having a Disaster Management Policy

Figure 3 illustrates the response of the respondents regarding reasons for not having a disaster management policy in the library. The majority of the respondents i.e., 66.7% said that untrained staff is the biggest reason for not having a policy in the library. 33.3% of the respondent thought that this policy has no relevance for libraries, whereas 33.3% of the respondents said that there is a lack of awareness, resources, and staff.

Note: Percentage exceeds 100% because respondents were allowed multiple answers.

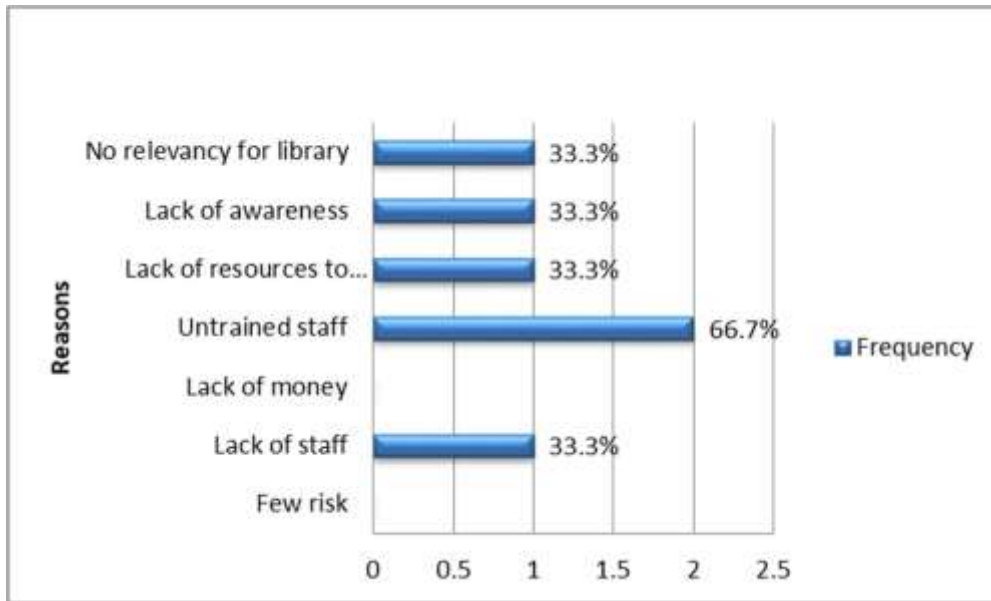


Figure 3- Reasons for not having a Disaster Management Plan Existence of Disaster Management Tools

There are many tools available for first aid in case of emergencies such as fire extinguishers, emergency gates, and fire and smoke alarm systems; and it is necessary for every institution. The study shows that almost all libraries under scope have one or the other disaster management tools for coping in times of emergency. It is clear from Figure 4 that 100% of the respondents have fire extinguishers in their workplace, followed by 66.7% of the respondents having fire and smoke alarm systems; and 33.3% of respondents have an emergency gate in their libraries.

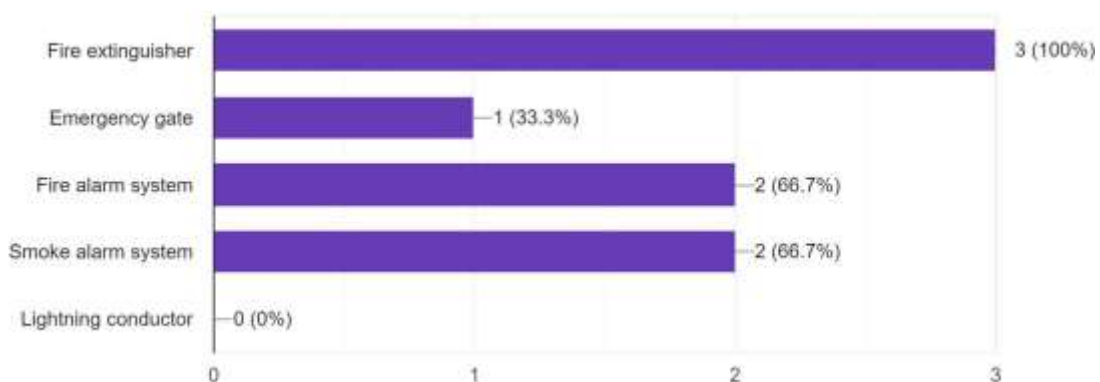


Figure 4- Existence of Disaster Management Tools Summary of Analysis

The study was conducted to know the current status and to assess the disaster management plan and strategies in the State University Libraries of the Kumaun region of Uttarakhand. Uttarakhand is situated in the hilly region of North India and it is prone to disasters like landslides, earthquakes, and floods. The majority of the respondents i.e., 66.7% also agreed with the fact libraries are located in a place that is threatened by natural disasters.

It has emerged from the study that there is no disaster management plan and strategies available in the libraries under the scope that hamper safety at the time of disasters. This shows that not all libraries are prepared to prevent and manage disasters but 100% of the sample population intends to implement the policy now.

The majority of the respondents i.e., 66.7% indicated that untrained staff is one of the reasons for not having a disaster management policy; followed by other reasons such as lack of awareness, staff, resources, and no relevancy of this policy for libraries.



The study revealed that almost all libraries under the scope have one or the other disaster management tools available in their workplace to cope with the situations.

Conclusion

Effective disaster management is not merely a reactive measure but a proactive, continuous cycle of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery essential for minimizing the impact of natural and human-made catastrophes. By prioritizing structural resilience, early warning systems, and community-based education, societies can significantly reduce vulnerability and protect both lives and infrastructure. Ultimately, strengthening collaboration between government agencies, NGOs, and local communities ensures a swift, coordinated response, fostering long-term resilience against the increasing frequency of disasters.

Suggestions

The study emphasized on pertinent issues of disaster preparedness in the workplace, especially in university libraries. The following suggestions are made from the findings of the study:

It is revealed from the study that no libraries have a disaster management policy therefore, it is highly recommended that university libraries should adopt a written disaster management policy to prevent, and manage disasters.

A disaster management team should be formed in the libraries that will manage the disaster-related issues for the library.

Furthermore, regular training should be provided to the staff so that they are well prepared in advance to deal with any kind of emergency.

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