

Lifelong Learning in Disaster Management: The Indian initiative

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Abstract:

Disaster management in India has undergone a paradigm shift from Relief Centric to Prevention, Mitigation and Preparedness moving from being reactive to proactive in nature. It is the result of learning from various incidents when communities are exposed to disasters of various types, today we cannot wait for disasters to occur to learn from them. Research has shown us the cause and effect phenomenon of all disasters leading to identification of the various risks to the community. This has made possible learning from such incidents.

Learning today is not confined to being a one off event but serially spaced opportunities to learn anew and reinforce what has been learnt. Learning is neither age-bound nor classroom-bound, but it takes place throughout life and in all kinds of situations. Education in India today has focused on this aspect of teaching and learning, especially disaster management. Learning begins as adolescents in school Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) in class VIII, IX, X, XI .This was started in 2003-2004 and now continues into adulthood as graduates and postgraduates, where efforts are made to learn and relearn the nuances of disaster management as lifelong learning.

At the level of graduates and post graduates, specific issues facing disaster management are considered wherein specialized knowledge.e.g.making of disaster management plan, safety audit and environmental issues is shared and reinforced with the community to which the student belongs. This knowledge is in addition to the main discipline training that they have registered for with the university. Having completed their formal education students go back into the community, it is at this stage that they must possess the necessary skill set to be able to tackle all phases of a disaster along with other members of the community.