UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

THE IMPACT OF FLOOD DISASTER ON OCCUPATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AMONG WOMEN FLOOD SURVIVORS

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Flood disaster is a common natural disaster in Malaysia. The disaster had caused millions of losses in monetary value, life, disruption and difficulties in engaging in occupations especially amongst women. However, to date, the information about which occupations are most or least affected by flood disaster is scarce and limited. Hence, the objective of the study is to determine the overall level of difficulty in engaging in occupations, to determine the most or the least occupation affected among women flood disaster survivors, to identify the significant differences in the level of difficulty in engaging in occupation with demographic variables, and to explore the impact of flood disaster on occupation. **Method:** The study underwent 4 stages, whereby stage 1 focused on development of the content of the questionnaire, as well as rating and scoring method, involving the survivors and experts. Stage 2 focused on pilot testing of the questionnaire, and stage 3 test the reliability of the questionnaire (test-retest). Stage 4 (main study), used the mixed method study design (concurrent embedded). A total of 131 participants from Kuala Selangor and Kelantan who met the inclusion and exclusion criteria of the study were chosen to participate in this cross-sectional study (quantitative). To identify the level of difficulty in engaging in occupations, a structured questionnaire was developed based on the OTPF (3rd edition). For the qualitative part of the study, 10 participants were interviewed through purposive sampling and the findings were analyzed using IPA method. **Results:** Descriptive analysis found that most of the women flood survivors (n = 109, 83.20%) had moderate level of difficulty (34% - 66%) in engaging in occupation. The most affected occupation among women flood survivors is ADL, IADL, and work, which have the highest median = 7.00. Number of health problem was found to be the predictive factor for ADL (R^2=0.08) and IADL (R^2=0.07). Furthermore, total number of flood experienced was the predictive factor for work (R^2=0.04). Rest and sleep was the least affected occupations among women flood survivors with median = 4.00, and was found that number of person staying together as the predictive factor (R^2=0.09). There is a positive significant relationship in level of overall difficulty with age, number of health problem and total number of flood experience ($p < 0.05$). One super-ordinate themes "Difficult, yet life must goes on" emerged, describes the experience of survivors which include challenges, and coping strategies. Eight master themes emerged based on the eight component of occupations in OTPF (3rd edition) comprise of ADL, IADL, Rest and Sleep, Work, Education, Play, Leisure, and Social Participation. **Conclusion:** The impact of flood disaster on women occupations varies across the demographic variables. These findings will assists the government and NGOs to delegate the necessary steps and focuses on major issues (occupations) affecting them, in order to help them build their life after flood and for occupational therapists, to provide the necessary intervention through meaningful and purposeful activity. The questionnaire developed in this study will guide occupational therapists to focus on affected occupations, hence, gain future footing in disaster management. Recommendation can be made by developing a more comprehensive questionnaire on affected occupations on flood survivors.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

1.1.1 What Is Disaster?

The United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UNISDR), (2009), defines disaster as a condition where there is a serious disruption of the community or society function and the ability to use its own resources comprising of human, material, and economic to recover from environmental losses and impact. Furthermore, the Malaysian National Security Council Directive No. 20 (Revision) (2012), defines disaster as:

> *"... an incident that occurs unexpectedly, complex in nature, resulting in the loss of lives and damage to properties and the environment as well as interfering in the daily activities of the local community. The incident requires the management which involves resources, equipment, frequency and extensive manpower from various agencies as well as effective coordination and the possibility of taking complex actions over a long period of time."*

Both of the definitions hold true as when a disaster strikes, the whole community will come to a standstill. These will cause interruption to an individual performance in daily living activities, hence, affecting their physical and psychological functioning, which impairs their performance in the community or society. Depending on the severity of a disaster, the ability of a society to recover depends on how efficient the disaster team handles the situation during a disaster and whether the team is resilient enough to face the disaster. Once resolved, only then the community will be able to function and make use of the resources again, though might not be the same as before, but moving in a recovering direction.

Disaster is classified into two parts which are natural and technological disaster (Rathore et al., 2012). A natural disaster involves earthquake, floods, hurricanes, tsunamis, volcanic eruption, and fires, whereas, technological disaster or man-made