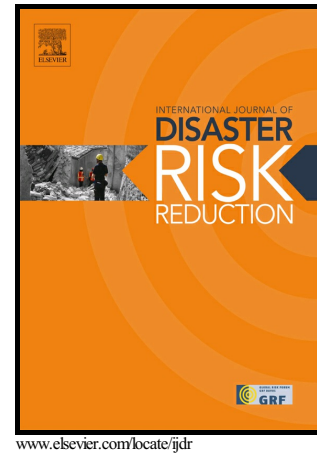


High school students' perceptions of earthquake disaster: A comparative study of Lebanon and Turkey

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High school students' perceptions of earthquake disaster: A comparative study of Lebanon and Turkey

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Abstract: Little is known about high school students' perceptions of earthquake disasters in the Middle East region. It has been shown that individuals can possess various attitudes towards earthquakes based on gender, ethnicity, social class and disaster-related knowledge and experiences. This study explores the perceptions of two groups: 498 public high school students in Lebanon and 465 public high school students in Turkey. Both groups completed a survey investigating their perceptions of earthquake hazards. An independent t-test revealed significant statistical differences in schools' roles in implementing needed disaster risk education on earthquakes, while both groups exhibit high adherence to fatalistic beliefs.

Keywords: High school students, disaster risk education, fatalistic beliefs, earthquake disaster, Turkey, Lebanon

1. Introduction

Earthquakes have proven to be among the most terrifying and costly natural hazards, posing real and serious threats to countries' infrastructure, population, economies and social structures. According to the Organisation for Economic and Co-operation Development (OECD, 2008), approximately 90% of earthquake fatalities occur in developing countries, mostly due to poor engineering design and construction practices, corruption in the construction sector and a lack of awareness and preparedness (Escaleras, Anbarci, & Register, 2007). The damaging effects of natural hazards on human lives tend to be severest in developing countries, while shocking economic losses have also been experienced frequently in developed countries (Daniell & Vervaeck, 2011).

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