Challenges of Older People in Technological Disaster

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Background & Object:
As global aging progresses, disaster preparedness and resiliency for older people is becoming an issue because their special needs have not been well accommodated in the case of disaster relief. Technological disasters such as nuclear power have a long-term impact on the health of the affected population than natural disasters. This study aims to analyze the challenges of older people in technological disaster situation.

Methods: The study was conducted in X city of Tokyo where older people have been evacuated from severely affected area as it impacted the nuclear power plants. Older evacuees in X city were living in private apartments, public apartment, or family house. Each evacuees did not get information about where their community members were living or refuged. Data was collected between May and June 2014. A structure questionnaire, with multiple choice, was carried out with 12 older people. Information was gathered through self-reported questionnaires by postal mail. Questionnaires addresses about The feeling that life be worth living and social relationship and using instrumental activities of daily living (IADL) indicators. The protocol was approved by the Institutional Review Boards at Japanese Red Cross College of Nursing.

Results: The number of respondents were twelve. Five Males and seven females of them. Half number of respondents were the age of 70-79 years, one respondent was 60 years over, four respondents were 80-89 years, and only one respondent was 90 years over. Only one respondents did not change about the feeling that life be worth living decreased compared to before refuge. Nine responses decreased their feeling of well-being in the present life especially compared to before refuge. And four males and two female respondents lost the chances to visit to their friends each other, and three males and two female respondents had no gave advice for their family members or friends.

Conclusion: This study showed that emergency situations disrupt social relationships leaving older people at risk for isolation. This pointed the distraction of family and community is viewed by older people as the most important unit of social support in daily living.