Health Consequences of Exposure to a Super Typhoon

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Dr. Lapiz-Bluhm is a registered nurse of Asia-Pacific heritage with a graduate degree in neuroscience. Having been raised in the Philippines as well as educated and worked in different parts of the world (Australia, Thailand, Sweden, England, and Denmark), she has observed how stress and trauma transcend social boundaries and affect health. This has influenced her program of science which involves biopsychosocial studies in vulnerable populations. She has been engaged in translational clinical research on posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as well as education-based and community service-based diversity research. Her main goal is to inform the development of interventions to treat, or even prevent, the negative consequences of trauma exposure among vulnerable individuals.

ABSTRACT

Problem and rationale: Stress to a pregnant woman can have serious negative consequences to the mother and her unborn child. The biopsychosocial mechanisms associated with long-term negative health consequences of prenatal maternal stress exposure is not well understood. Understanding these mechanisms could potentially inform the development of interventions to optimize the development of the unborn child. However, experimental research exposing pregnant women to stress is prevented by ethical and logistical issues. Natural disasters may offer an alternative means to conduct these studies. The overall aim of this study is to determine the health consequences of exposure to a natural disaster of pregnant women and their offspring.

Statement of the research question: This study aims to describe health issues of mother-offspring dyads of mothers who were pregnant at the time of Super Typhoon Haiyan and their offspring, and the associated social, economic and political determinants in the Philippines.

Overview of the research project: This study has a cross-sectional exploratory/descriptive design. The study aims to recruit 400 mothers who were pregnant during exposure to the Super Typhoon Haiyan and had successful deliveries in the hard hit areas of the Province of Capiz, Philippines.

Plans for patient/stakeholder engagement: Community health workers (nurses or midwives) assigned to a health catchment area will recruit mother-offspring dyads to participate in the survey component of the study. Representative families, local politicians, the municipal doctor, and church representatives will be invited to open discussion sessions to share support strategy ideas.

Proposed mixed methods design
The study will utilize a convergent design. Quantitative maternal and child demographics and health data before, during and after Haiyan will be collected and analyzed. Qualitative data will also be collected to describe the experience and thoughts of mothers before, during and after Haiyan. Both quantitative and qualitative data will be merged and interpreted.

No handouts provided for this session.

Notes: