

The Attitudes of Households for Disaster Risk Management in Fogera, Estie and Ebenat Woredas

Temesgen Alemu Tilahun *

PhD Candidate, Institute of Disaster Risk Management and Food Security Studies, Bahir Dar University, Bahir Dar, Ethiopia

Abstract:

The underlining disaster risk management practice translates the combination of knowledge, attitude, and action to maximize the effectiveness of responses against disasters. While knowledge and disaster risk management activities move along simultaneously, attitudes are inherent to individuals posing challenges to easily identify issues and then taking extended time to change. Lack of scientific wisdom on the perception of individuals towards disaster management, and the limited understanding of different factors that influence attitudes, complicates the endeavor in response to the increasingly uncertain future. This study assesses the attitudes of households for disaster risk management in the nine kebeles, the lowest administrative unit in Ethiopia, and 32 villages in Fogera, Ebenat and Estie districts (Woredas, the main administrative unit similar to county). Cross-sectional quantitative method was employed, and attitudinal survey was conducted among 412 households selected through probability simple random sampling. Purposive nonprobability sampling technique was used to identify research kebeles based on disaster prevalence, and to collect supplementary attitudinal data from 64 participants representing academia and local stakeholders. Descriptive statistics and parametric test of variance and covariance have been conducted to determine the attitude levels and to assess major factors influencing households' attitude for disaster risk management.

Results indicated that most of the households (53%) have a fairly positive attitude. Households with negative (27%) and extremely negative (20%) perception are concentrated in rural kebeles that are highly affected by recurrent disasters. Therefore, households in disaster affected areas have negative and unconstructive perception for disaster risk management. This is mainly associated with lack of active community participation and ineffective risk management activities. Households' attitude is also significantly affected by age ($p = 0.0001$), and within different age groups ($p = 0.001$), location by kebeles ($p = 0.0237$), education levels ($p = 0.0016$), education status ($p = 0.004$) and experience in indigenous risk management practices ($p=0.00001$). In addition, this study revealed a linear relationship within all the identified factors and households' attitude levels. Considering the situation in Ethiopia where individual perceptions are deeply rooted, coupled with the results of this study that revealed highly negative attitude among disaster affected households, it is recommended to consolidate efforts and influence attitude through maximizing community participation and enhancing the effectiveness of disaster management.

Keywords:

Disaster Risk Management, Disaster Attitude, Disaster Preparedness, Disaster Mitigation and Response.