

Review of: "An approach to the background, methods and challenges of research in disasters"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

It is a good worthwhile topic. pp.2-3 & table 1 are good elements.

But this paper is very, very preliminary. It doesn't dig deep into any of the issues. E.g. Table 1 is good but it is only descriptive.

It is not clear what is the fundamental motivation for this paper.

(A) It could be general history of changes in approaches, "significant moments" – what are they?, who made the moments? But "**why these changes?**" is much more important, e.g. link the "significant moments" with changes in bigger methodology & epistemology of social sciences.

Or (B) it could be a focus on epidemiological models & methods. In which case, it is necessary to explain, or at least to outline, first, what is significant about these models. Explain, why such a focus is selected? (I guess because the authors are medical doctors). There is a list – but only a list - of "traditional types of epidemiological designs ... in present disaster research", after Table 1. In this version of the paper, "epidemiological methods" are not discussed.

The paper sometimes strays off-message into other areas: e.g. there is a mention of "difference between rapid onset & slow onset disasters" (This is correct). But nothing is done with that observation. So why say it? e.g. a statement: "disaster research also presents specific difficulties derived from the nature of the disaster phenomenon and the context, such as ... limited time to organize the investigation ...". But this paper is not intended to be a review of descriptive research about actual disasters – the focus is methodologies.

The "Conclusions" are not yet 'conclusions'. They are observations, and some expectations.