Abstract

Despite the growing interest in the Sri Lankan government to engage communities in flood resilience, the effectiveness of such measures is still scarce. There is very little work identifying the knowledge transfer needs of the disaster management stakeholders and the impact on resilience. This study has four main aims. The first is to identify knowledge transfer techniques during floods. The second is to explain the influence of relational and cognitive social ties on knowledge transfer. The third is to identify the impact of knowledge transfer on resilience. Fourth is to propose a framework of practice to foster community resilience through knowledge networks.

This study employs the process of building theory from interpretive case study research to analyze data collected from four case studies from Sri Lanka. The Glaserian strand of grounded theory was specifically used to drive the analysis to arrive at conceptual conclusions. While the case study approach helped to provide a systematic procedure to understand participants' experiences, the rigorous analytical procedures of grounded theory facilitated cross-case analyses of the study themes. Purposive strategies are used to select the cases and the participants. 39 semi-structured interviews and 4 field observations developed a comprehensive data set to investigate the research questions of this study. The constant comparison method is used for theory building. During the analysis, two core categories "Interactions" and "Ambience", and six categories emerged from the findings of this research. The six categories were not evenly distributed across all the case studies. Each case revealed unique findings and dissimilarities but all the findings from the cases showed the integrity to form a six-category theoretical model.

The outcomes of this study include a comprehensive analysis of the intensive knowledge transfer practices during floods, KTinSSC theory, the Dumbbell framework of practice, and a series of practical recommendations for improving resilience in survival-focused social context. Additionally, this study recognizes its contribution to literature in social capital, knowledge management, and disaster resilience scholarship. This study provides a substantive theory and practice implications of how disaster management stakeholder groups engage in knowledge transferring during flood situations and how these knowledge transfer practices affect their resilience level. Emphasizing the importance of initiatives to enhance connectivity between communities and government agencies through the horizontal and vertical collaboration of knowledge brokers, this study argues that resilience can be achieved only if the perceptual gap between multi-stakeholder networks is bridged.