

ABSTRACT

The current study focused on the nature and severity of loss, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Anxiety, Age, and Gender as the determinants of the PTSD in child survivors of Earthquake in Pakistan. A Purposive stratified sample of 100 survivors (50% girls and 50% boys) were drawn from Muzzaferabad, Balakot, Abbotabad and its surrounding areas. The sample was divided into three groups, those who were living with both parents and, those who were living with single parents, either father or mother, and those who were living in Special Orphanages Services (SOS) villages. The measures used included Oklahoma State University-Post traumatic Stress Disorder Inventory (Bulut, 2003) Revised Children Manifest Anxiety Scale (RCMAS; Reynolds & Richmond, 1978) and nature and severity of loss (NSL). The results showed that 13% of child survivors in the sample fulfilled the criteria of very severe level of PTSD, 83% severe PTSD according to the cut off scores of OSU-PTSDI while only 4% of the total sample showed moderate level of PTSD and non mild PTSD. It was found that the nature and severity of loss and living conditions of children did not contribute to PTSD in children. The anxiety level among children was the only significant predictor of PTSD. As far as their loss was concerned, 60% children included in the sample lost their immediate family members, 14% relatives, 90% homes and 70% property. According to the living conditions of children, PTSD and anxiety levels were high in the children living with single parents followed by children living in SOS villages as compared to children living with both of their parents. Moreover physiological anxiety was the significant predictor among subscales of RCMAS. There were no gender differences regarding PTSD and anxiety levels overall; only significant difference was on the subscale of re-experiencing where girls showed high score than boys. The finding of the current study are discussed in Pakistani social and religious context which could help the mental health professionals to device intervention plans for earthquake child survivors by keeping in view their present mental state and needs.