Disaster-resistant communities, public awareness program

ABSTRACT
Background: The tremendous increase in disasters in the Middle East whether natural or man-made is unforeseen in its characters and/or catastrophic effects to the communities and infrastructure, thus making public awareness is a mandate to plan, respond and mitigate the community.
Methods: We run Public Awareness program targeting non-medical university students, aiming at raising their knowledge about first aid and response during disasters by designing and conducting hands-on First Aid and disaster preparedness course, pretest and post-test was done, graded from 0 to 10 for evaluation of the candidates and their level of knowledge, aiming at achieving 3 grades or above change in the candidates knowledge.
Results: Of 95 candidates attended the course, 84 pre and post-test were complete and included in this study. More than half of them were male (n = 55; 65%). There was a significant difference in the candidates grades in the pre and post-test, with near 95% achieved the goal and almost 90% was satisfied by the program.
Discussion and conclusion: The surge in disasters over the last decades is unforeseen, in order to meet that threat national disaster plans should focus on effective disaster public awareness programs, targeting especially the most active and largest part of the community, which is university students.

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