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Pediatric Experiences of PTSD Related to Natural Disasters

Victoria J. Denen

Cedarville University, vdenen@cedarville.edu

Julianna H. Ruckersfeldt

Cedarville University, juliannaruckersfeldt@cedarville.edu

Wyatt S. Kyser

Cedarville University, wyattskyser@cedarville.edu

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Pediatric Experiences of PTSD Related to Natural Disasters

Victoria Denen, Wyatt Kyser, Julianna Ruckersfeldt
Cedarville University School of Nursing

PATIENT CARE ISSUE

Background & Significance

- Children and adolescents all over the world experience natural disasters
- 218 million people affected by natural disasters per year between 1994-2013 ^[1]
- Experiences of PTSD are often overlooked or misunderstood ^[2]
- As nurses, recognition of PTSD is key to understanding patient experiences

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE QUESTION

Question: How do children and adolescents who have survived severe natural disaster experience PTSD?

Population: Children (6 to 12 years) and Adolescents (13 to 18 years)

Interest: Natural Disasters (Hurricanes, Tsunamis, Earthquakes)

Outcomes: Experiences of PTSD

REGISTERED NURSE INTERVIEW

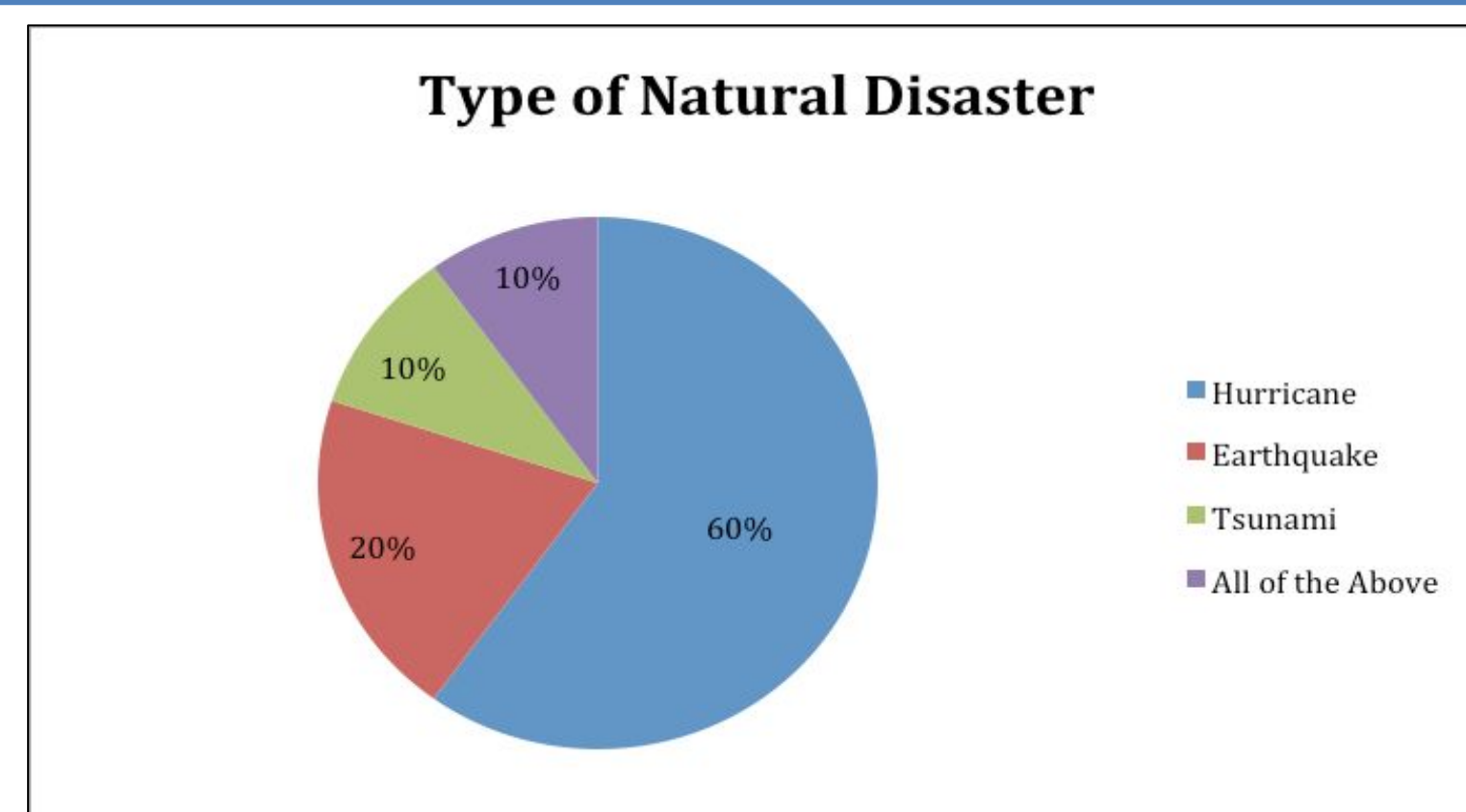
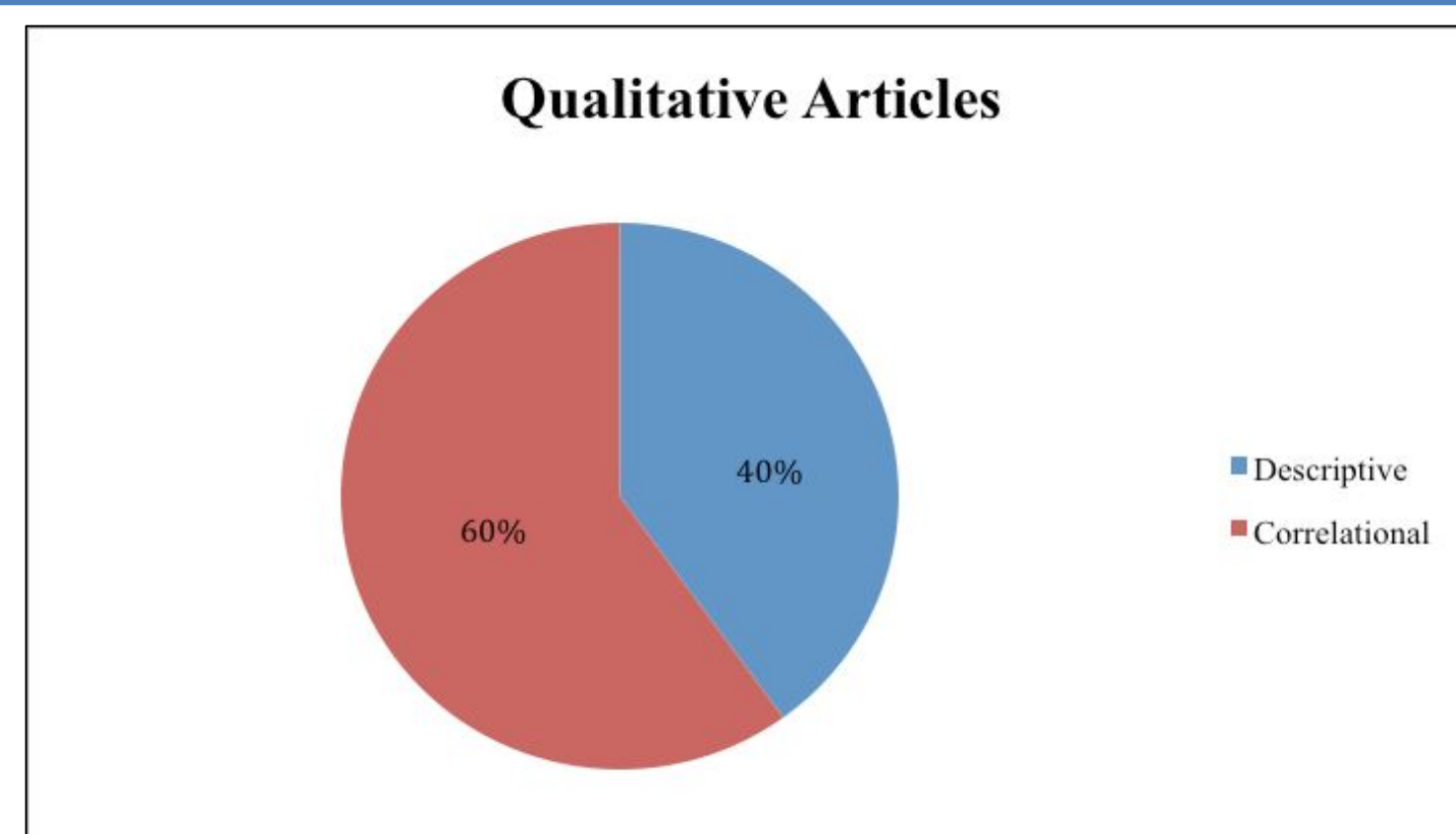
- A registered nurse at a local emergency department was interviewed:
 - Had experience with children in Guatemala after a mudslide
 - Children involved were sleep deprived and emotionally disconnected
 - Hospital protocol: "First line are our Child Life Specialists." (Anonymous)
 - A Child Life Specialist provides therapeutic play and education to reduce fear, anxiety, and pain ^[3]

METHODS

- **Databases:** CINAHL Plus Full Text, Academic Search Complete, Cochrane Central Register of Controlled Trials, Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, MEDLINE with Full Text, Psychology and Behavioral Sciences Collection, PsycINFO, and SocINDEX with full text.
- **Search Terms:** "Natural disasters" "PTSD" "Somatic Symptoms"
- **Limiters:** Full Text, Scholarly (peer reviewed) journals; Publication Date: 2007-2017; Age: childhood (birth-12 yrs), Adolescence (13-17 yrs); Methodology: Interview; Classification: psychological disorders; English.

- **Number of Articles Found:** 122
- **Number of Articles Selected:** 10

RESULTS



Ten Articles chosen:

40% Descriptive ^{[4][5][6][7]}

60% Correlational, all LOE 6 ^{[8][9][10][11][12][13]}

ALL critiqued with Joanna Briggs

Institute Critical Appraisal Tools ^[14]

Natural Disasters:

- 60% Hurricanes

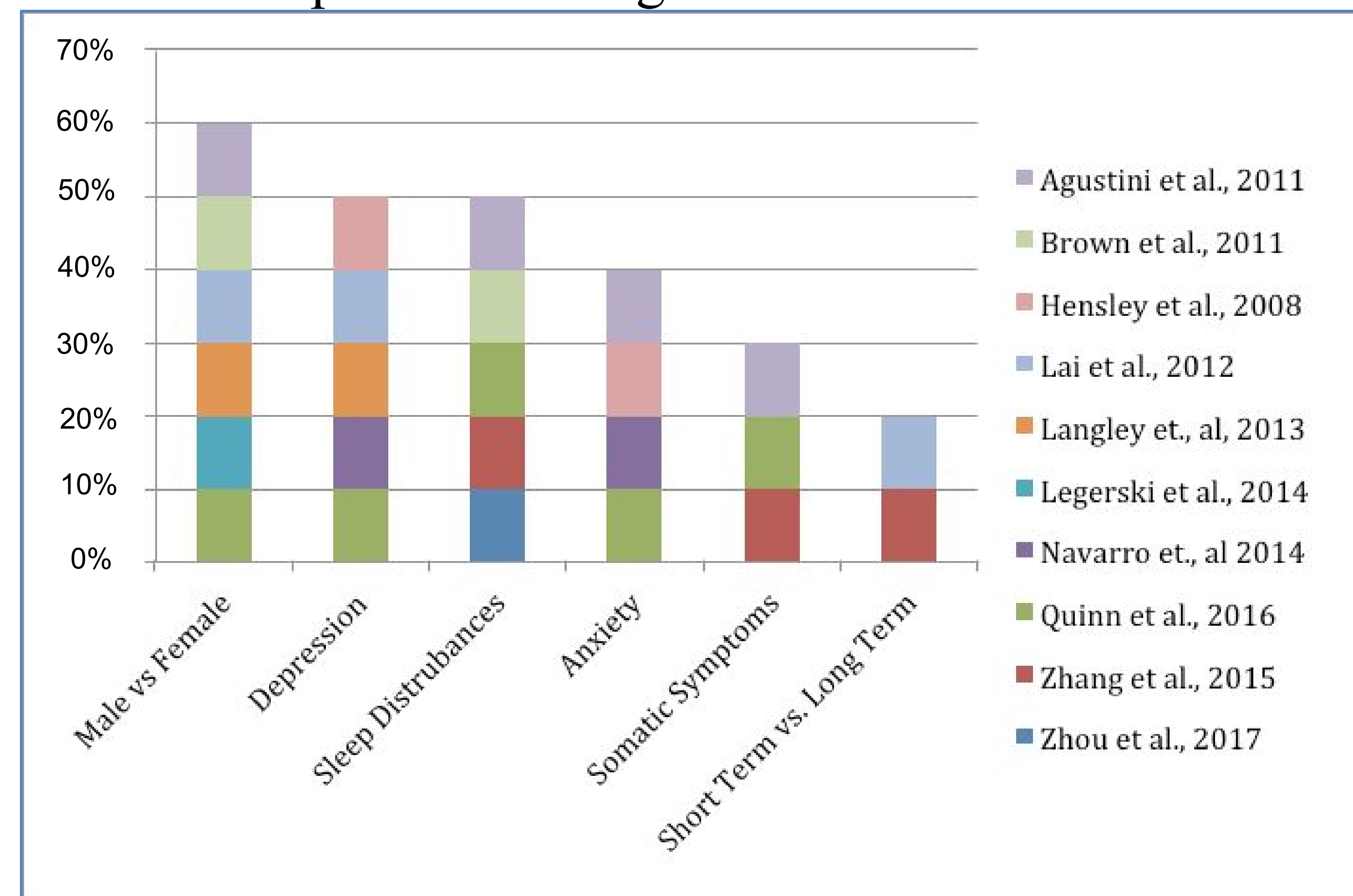
- 20% Earthquakes

- 10% Tsunamis

- 10% All of The Above

SYNTHESIS OF EVIDENCE

Specific Findings Noted in Articles



Male vs. Female: Girls more likely to suffer PTSD than boys ^{[4][5][8][10][11][12]}

Depression: Common; worsens PTSD severity ^{[5][6][9][10][12]}

Sleep Disturbances: Insomnia, hyperarousal, nightmares, fatigue, & fear of sleeping alone common ^{[4][7][8][12][13]}

Anxiety: Often expressed as emotional avoidance and fear ^{[4][6][9][12]}

Somatic Symptoms: Stomach pain, headaches, dizziness, racing heart, chest pain, fainting spells, shortness of breath, GI issues, and pain in the arm, legs, and joints ^{[4][7][12]}

Short Term vs. Long Term: 3 months vs 6 months ^[7] and 8 months vs. 15 months ^[5]

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE RECOMMENDATIONS

- The IOWA Model of Evidence Based Practice to Promote Quality of Care was the framework used to guide this project ^[15]
- Nurses & healthcare professionals need to be aware of the short-term & long-term multifaceted experiences of PTSD in children following natural disasters
- Research is needed regarding how children experience PTSD post-natural disaster

LIMITATIONS

1. Lack of Comparison Groups
2. Exclusively Level of Evidence 6
3. Varied Locations and Type of Event
4. Self-Report of Children and Adolescents
5. Lack of Pre-Disaster Baseline Measurements
6. Not all articles reported the same experiences to PTSD

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