

RESEARCH PAPER

Earthquake experience and preparedness in Turkey

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preparedness

21

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to measure and compare the level of earthquake preparedness of individuals living in Eastern Anatolia region of Turkey, evaluate whether prior earthquake experience has an impact on earthquake preparedness and discuss the cultural factors that may play a role in determining the level of preparedness.

Design/methodology/approach – Three locations were identified for the study. Aşkale and Erçiş district had experienced a major earthquake where Erzurum City Center had no major earthquake experience. A total of 174 participants were included in the study. Earthquake preparation was assessed using the Turkish version of the Wellington Earthquake Preparedness Scale by Spittal *et al.* (2006).

Findings – The results showed a significant relationship between the place of living, earthquake experience and preparation. Those who had prior earthquake experience had higher preparation than those who had no prior earthquake experience. Home owners had taken more steps to prepare for an earthquake than non-home owners. Individuals who were married had higher preparation scores than those who were single or widowed. A comparison of general perception of preparedness levels reported by participants having a major earthquake experience and no earthquake experience showed that Erçiş and Aşkale residents were significantly more prepared for an earthquake than Erzurum residents. Home ownership and past earthquake experience were found to be predictors of preparation.

Originality/value – Although the Eastern Anatolia region of Turkey encounters many earthquakes resulting in mass destruction, the issue of whether individuals living in this region are ready and prepared for a possible earthquake has not been researched sufficiently.

Keywords Disaster prevention, Earthquake preparedness, Natural hazard, Preparedness, Risk reduction, Safety measures

Paper type Research paper



Earthquakes are among the most dangerous geologic phenomena on our planet. There are many thousands of earthquakes every year on Earth and the timing as well as the magnitude of earthquakes still remain unpredictable. Since earthquake is an unpredictable disaster, it usually evokes the idea that one cannot prepare for it. However, the only way to

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