

## **The Stability of Emotional Symptoms Among Disaster Victims in a Developing Country**

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*Accepted September 15, 1989*

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*This stability of emotional distress following a major disaster in Colombia was evaluated in a 2-year follow-up of a representative subsample of 40 adult victims of the Armero disaster in Colombia. The utilization of the Self-Reporting Questionnaire indicated an increase of emotional distress from 55% to 78%. However, the mean neurotic subscale score, the most frequent neurotic symptoms, the strongest predictors of emotional distress, and the symptom-profiles of distressed victims were essentially the same.*

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**KEY WORDS:** emotional distress; disasters; developing countries.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The emotional consequences of disasters, although still controversial (Quarantelli and Dynes, 1977) have been recognized in the short-term and long-term (Bromet and Schulberg, 1987; Gleser *et al.*, 1981; Shore *et al.*, 1986), mostly through clinical and social observations. Various preiods have been described in the phases that precede and follow a disaster, with different psychological features, which range from enthusiasm and hope in the

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