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CHILDREN AND DISASTER RESEARCH: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

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Handbook of Disaster Research

Second Edition

 Springer

Children and Disasters

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13.1 Introduction

Children's experiences with and exposure to disaster and other adverse events can plant the seeds for far-reaching physical, cognitive, and emotional changes that may not reveal themselves fully for decades (Laplante et al., 2004; Shonkoff et al., 2012). Socially, children are embedded in a number of caretaking relationships—within families, peer groups, schools, and many other organizations and institutions in their lives—that may either buffer or exacerbate the effects of disaster (Fothergill & Peek, 2015). Ecologically, children's capacity to grow and thrive is often contingent upon a supportive balance of these caregivers, networks, and institutions, all within the broader context of a child's built, natural, and cultural environment (Abramson, Park, Stehling-Ariza, & Redlener, 2010a; Noffsinger, Pfefferbaum, Pfefferbaum, Sherrieb, & Norris, 2012; Weems & Overstreet, 2008).

Children and disasters is an emerging subfield of disaster studies which has contributed to a number of disciplines—sociology, psychology, geography, anthropology, political science, and public health, to name a few—as well as to the field itself. In turn, these disciplines have shaped

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PURPOSE AND APPROACH

1. Establish **how the subfield of children and disaster research in the social and behavioral sciences has grown and evolved** over time.
2. Identify the major **trends in theory, methods, and research that have shaped the study of children and disasters** as well as the broader field of disaster research.
3. Identify **future directions** for children and disaster research.



Literature Search for
*Children and Disasters

Via Web of Science and Social
Sciences Abstracts

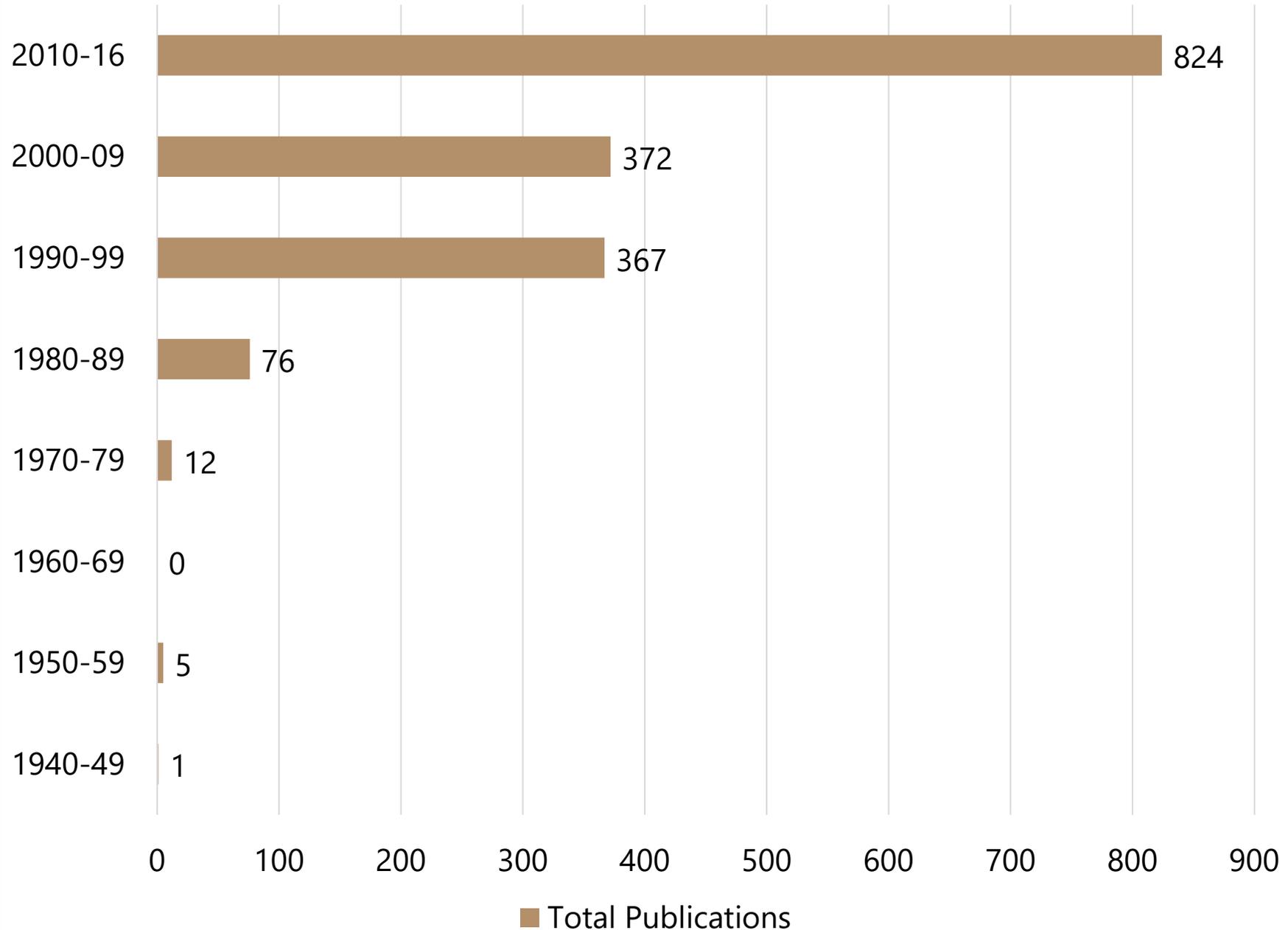
Eliminate Duplicate
Publications

Organize Search Results
Using 20 Analytic Categories

PUBLICATION PATTERNS OVER TIME

- **1,657 publications** between **1945 and 2016**, with nearly half in print since 2010.
- Most of the available research in the social and behavioral sciences focuses on **natural hazard events** (e.g., Hurricanes Hugo, Andrew, Katrina; Haiti Earthquake) and other **large-scale catastrophes** (Chernobyl; Oklahoma City; 9/11).
- Most research is **cross-sectional**, although more **longitudinal studies** beginning in 1990s and accelerating after 2005.

Publications on Children and Disasters



SIX MAJOR WAVES OF RESEARCH

Wave 1

- Assessing Children's **Psychological and Behavioral Reactions** to Disaster

Wave 2

- Understanding Children's **Exposure and Physical Health Outcomes**

Wave 3

- Characterizing **Social Vulnerability** and **Considering Socio-Demographic Characteristics**

Wave 4

- Placing Children in Broader **Socio-Ecological Context**

Wave 5

- Revealing Children's **Resilience, Strengths, and Capacities**

Wave 6

- Centering Children's **Voices, Perspectives, Actions, and Human Rights**

- Waves are Not Discrete but Instead are Overlapping; Start of New Wave Does Not Indicate End of Earlier Wave
- Primary Disciplines, Methodologies and Theoretical Orientations, Phase(s) of Disaster Cycle
- Emerging Questions and Approaches

Children's Psychological and Behavioral Reactions



Children's Exposure and Physical Health



Social Vulnerability and Socio-Demographic Characteristics



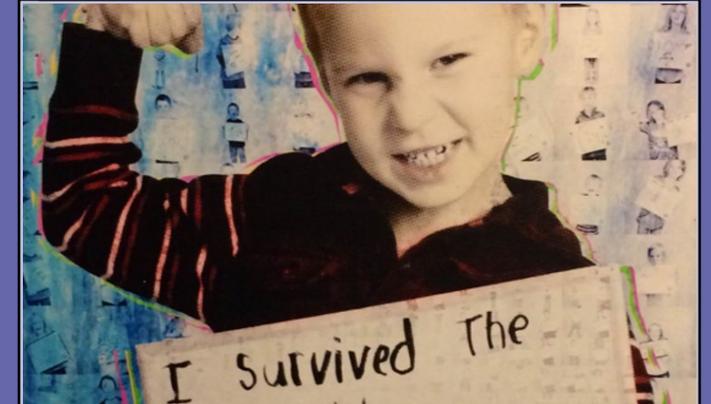
Children in Broader Socio-Ecological Context



Children's Resilience, Strengths, and Capacities



Children's Voices, Perspectives, and Actions



FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND ENDURING QUESTIONS



There remains a need for more explicitly **intersectional research**



More nuanced analyses of factors that **influence children's participation** in disaster risk reduction and climate change adaption strategies



Sustained support and funding for **life course research**



More **interdisciplinary teams** to push the boundaries of children and disaster studies



Recognizing children as "**digital natives**"



More scholarship focusing on **key organizations and institutions** that may be producing and/or reducing risk in children's lives



More evidence-informed **evaluation research** as well as more **policy-focused research**



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