

The Physical And Psychological Effects Of The Attacks On September 11, 2001

Posted on August 26, 2021

Introduction

In human history, there have been many heartbreaking incidents that have their an impact on our physical and psychological health for a long time. The 9/11 attack is one of the examples of these incidents, which is raising several questions about human brutality. Terrorists attacked the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001, around 8:40 am. These militants belonged to the terrorist group Al Qaida; they hijacked four planes. Al-Qaida has used these planes to carry their explosive suicidal attacks against their targets. Their main targets were the World Trade Center and the Pentagon (Eric, 2019). The September 11 attacks killed 2,977 victims, excluding the 19 hijackers, and remain one of the deadliest terrorist attacks in United States history. This incident put a question mark on the safety and security issues of the citizens. It has a deep impact on every aspect of life, such as social life, educational institutions, entertainment, politics, and international relations. This incident has brought a strategic change in the world and a war against terrorism started by the US Army with its alliances. The incident of this brutal terrorist attack was condemned by people around the world. It has affected the families who have lost their loved ones, both physically and mentally. It was hard for those who were injured to get out of this trauma. According to researchers, it has influenced the lives of Americans because they were suffering many mental disorders, including the emotional effects of this attack and psychological disorders. Hansen et al. (2016) found that this event has affected a large number of individuals both physically and psychologically. This paper will discuss the physical and psychological impacts of the 9/11 terrorist attack in detail.

Discussion

This event has changed international relations and politics around the world. The countries where the terrorists are getting training and organizing were targeted, and military operations were done. After this event, the people of the USA were more conscious about their security and knew the fact that terrorists could hurt them anywhere if their networks were not destroyed. Researchers have done a lot of work on the social, economic, mental, and physiological impacts of this incident on the people of America. It was the worst terrorist act on the soil of America to date. Before this event, people were optimistic about their security; however, after this event, many people feared that it would happen again (Hall & Andrew, 2015). This mental issue continued for several years, especially those people who were eye-witnessed or lost their loved ones in this incident.

Psychological Effects Of 9/11

People who watched the incident live on TV in the first week of this incident were more likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress and certain physical health issues (Stewart, 2019). The symptoms of these incidents included cardiovascular issues, anxiety, depression, stress, etc. The post-traumatic stress symptoms (PTS) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) were a common mental illness. PTS refers to the fear of happening again in the event. It causes flashbacks and nightmares, which remind the event to the people. Some people with PTS feel negative and have certain negative beliefs, such as the world is in danger or have difficulties sleeping and concentrating. According to psychologists, PTSD is usually treated by exposing an individual directly to the event. In addition, patients are taken to the site where the incident happened. This event has a strong impact on the children and youth of America. The people had experienced collective trauma. In the weeks and months after the event, media-based exposure has raised psychological distress (Bowler et al., 2016). The most common mental health issue was acute stress, which was caused by excessively watching the videos of the incident. It increased the fear of people, and they were worried that it would happen again. The PST and the ongoing fears regarding the future of acts of terrorism. These psychological effects persisted for a few years after the event of 9/11. Psychologists found that this incident has affected people both physically and mentally for the next three years.

Impact On Children

The children of the people who had lost their lives in these incidents were adversely affected by this incident. They were suffering from several mental issues. There were long-term distress symptoms found in these children. Other children whose parents had low coping abilities and the children who had less learning abilities were reported at higher risk of distress. Children who were exposed to the 9/11 event through media had symptoms of PTSD. Children who were already suffering from mental health issues and learning disabilities are found at higher risk of distress symptoms. Children are more vulnerable to mental issues when they experience such brutal incidents. Researchers have found that media-based exposure to collective trauma is likely to have longer-term impacts on the attitude of the children. This incident has caused fear, stress, xenophobia, and intolerance in the behaviour of kids.

Physical Impacts

In the 9/11 attack, those who had experienced serious injuries could persist for several years of their injuries. These physical injuries had still an impact on their lives; for instance, hundreds of people are suffering from certain disabilities (Li et al., 2018). These injuries had a long-term effect on their physical and mental health. However, the mortality rate declined to a greater extent with these injuries because of the advanced-level treatments. People who were watching the incident through

the media for long hours were vulnerable to heart disease and other health issues. These people had limited their mobility and daily activities after this attack, which caused several physical and mental health issues. In the nearby population, respiratory symptoms were found when they were exposed to heavy firefighters, and other health issues included aerodigestive disorders, cardiovascular problems, and certain mental health problems. The psychological disorders have a direct impact on physical health, so due to this collective trauma, patients with heart, hypertension, and diabetes were vulnerable, and they were suffering more health issues. A high prevalence of PTSD, asthma, and GERD was found in the people even after several years of this incident.

Long Term Consequences

In the later years of this event, there was a collective trauma that affected the people for the long term. It has changed politics and international relations around the world. Throughout the world, many countries have suffered such incidents of terrorism. Europe and America have a potential threat of terrorist attacks. America, with the help of NATO forces, has done many military operations to destroy safe havens of terrorists all around the world. It has affected the country's economy because a huge budget has been spent so far to protect people from the threats of terrorist attacks around the globe. Excessive exposure to events through television and other sources of media has caused a number of mental health issues and hopelessness in people. It caused collective trauma and anxiety after a subsequent event. In US history, it was a huge massacre after World War II, and it left a huge impact on the social and psychological health of people. It also affected the economy of the country, after this attack, the stock markets were nosedived and all the sectors of the economy were affected. The US economy was already suffering from the recession, and this incident has added further disadvantages to the business community (Ahem, 2018). The war against terrorism after this brutal incident has affected the economy of the country. Unemployment and inflation rates have risen after this attack. The airline industry was facing a recession until 2005 because people were reluctant to use airlines domestically.

Conclusion

Due to this incident, the whole world trembled, and it had long-term effects on the physical and mental health of the people. In history, we have fewer examples of such drastic events. It has changed the whole scenario of politics, international relations, security, and the economy of America, and also its effects were found around the world. This was an alarming incident for the whole world. Americans were not exposed to such events, so this incident has caused them more damage. According to the research by Cone et al. (2015), average Americans cannot tolerate any violence around them. It has also affected the economy and business of the country. Excessive media exposure after this event has raised many mental and physiological problems. It became a cause of an endless war against terrorism to eradicate the world from this curse and stop the chances of such brutal incidents anywhere in the world. Nevertheless, America and other countries are spending huge

budgets to overcome the threats of terrorist attacks and destroy their camps in certain developing countries, especially in Muslim countries in Asia and Africa (Gabriel & Smith, 2017).

References

- Ahern, K. R. (2018). The importance of psychology in economic activity: Evidence from terrorist attacks (No. w24331). National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Bowler, R. M., Kornblith, E. S., Li, J., Adams, S. W., Gocheva, V. V., Schwarzer, R., & Cone, J. E. (2016). Police officers who responded to 9/11: Comorbidity of PTSD, depression, and anxiety 10–11 years later. *American journal of industrial medicine*, 59(6), 425-436.
- Cone, J. E., Li, J., Kornblith, E., Gocheva, V., Stellman, S. D., Shaikh, A., ... & Bowler, R. M. (2015). Chronic probable PTSD in police responders in the World Trade Center Health Registry ten to eleven years after 9/11. *American Journal of Industrial Medicine*, 58(5), 483-493.
- Eric Levenson, C. (2019). 18 years later, Americans stop to remember the September 11 attacks. CNN. Retrieved 21 September 2019, from <https://edition.cnn.com/2019/09/11/us/911-attack-remembrances/index.html>
- Gabriel, T., & Smith, J. I. (2017). *Islam and the West Post 9/11*. Routledge.
- Hall, T. H., & Ross, A. A. (2015). Affective politics after 9/11. *International Organization*, 69(4), 847-879.
- Hansen, B. T., Østergaard, S. D., Sønderskov, K. M., & Dinesen, P. T. (2016). The increased incidence rate of trauma-and stressor-related disorders in Denmark after September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States. *American journal of epidemiology*, 184(7), 494-500.
- Li, J., Zweig, K. C., Brackbill, R. M., Farfel, M. R., & Cone, J. E. (2018). Comorbidity amplifies the effects of post-9/11 posttraumatic stress disorder trajectories on health-related quality of life. *Quality of Life Research*, 27(3), 651-660.
- Stewart, R. (2009). *The Impact of 9/11 on the Media, Arts, and Entertainment: The Day that Changed Everything?*. Springer.