

# **EXPLORING THE USE OF THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH TO UNDERSTAND PAST EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI EVENTS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This work explores the use of qualitative research methods in communication, specifically phenomenological analysis, combined with technical background in geology, to understand how people give meaning to earthquake and tsunami events. The sources of data are from non-seismological observations of earthquake impacts, mostly documented descriptions of experiences of people, with archival video-documented interviews as the main tool. There is great potential for in-depth analysis of interviews of people who have experienced major events and have vividly described their lived experiences. The phenomenological approach focuses on analyzing and understanding the phenomena from the point of view of the resource persons for person-in-environment contexts based on past events and future expectations (Kitchin and Tate, 2013). This work attempts to use both descriptive and interpretative phenomenological analysis (DIPA) in understanding how people who went through the earthquake and tsunami experience understand, and make meaning of the disaster based on the analysis of their own descriptions. The significance of DIPA as a research methodology lies in its potential contributions to macro-seismic studies and risk communication. Analyzed vivid descriptions would fill in gaps in information on macro-seismic studies such as derived intensities based on descriptions of impacts on people and environment. Understanding "how people understand and ascribe meaning to such past events" will greatly contribute to risk communication planning.*

**Keywords:** *earthquake, tsunami, phenomenological analysis, macro-seismic, risk communication*

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