How Did The Residents Of Kagman Prepare For Typhoon Soudelor And Were Their Efforts Effective

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Authors Note

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Abstract

This research paper focuses on the preparation efforts of the largest village on Saipan, Kagman. Not all the residents of kagman prepared for typhoon Soudelor, but most of this was because they assumed that it wasn’t going to be a big storm. This research paper reports the findings obtained through interviews and observations. This paper also states the process in which data was found and recorded. Literature was found on how to prepare for natural disasters and what a person will need in the event of a disaster. The important things one should have when preparing for a natural disaster. Which are food, water, gas, extra cash, and shelter. Food and water should be able to last for about two weeks. In the event that the food does not last two weeks, extra cash should come in handy. It would be very convenient to go to a store and purchase more previsions. That’s where the gas part comes in.

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I awaken by a loud bang and as I exited my room my heart started to beat faster. When I entered the living room I saw my little sister on the floor crying and my father trying to board up the windows. My mother was looking for spare blankets to mop up the water that had come in from the windows. The sounds of loud banging, glass breaking, trees snapping, and my sister crying overwhelmed my ears. The next couple of days were even worse. All the frozen food had gone bad and there was barely any water to drink or to take a shower. We did not have any cash on hand so we mostly relied on relief aid for food and water. Some of our things got wet by the storm, mostly because the house is semi-concrete.

Most of this suffering came from the fact that there was no preparation effort. Kagman is the biggest village on Saipan, therefore, it was the most convenient and appropriate places to conduct interviews and observations. Many homes were destroyed in kagman and a lot of people have been suffering. This paper reports the preparation efforts the interviewees have done and states whether or not their efforts were effective. There were many typhoons before typhoon Soudelor that were supposed to be a big typhoon, but never was. So naturally many people disregarded typhoon Soudelor and did not prepare for it at all. Let’s see if this hypothesis is correct.

**Literature Review**

When preparing for natural disasters it is important that there is enough previsions to last for months. Food and water is very important. Water mostly because the average human can only go three days without drinking water. Having someplace to go to weather the storm is also very important. When seeking shelter it is important to make sure that the house is capable of withstanding a strong storm. If it’s not they should seek shelter with a family member or go to a local shelter. Having extra cash on hand is also important. Usually after a storm, typhoon hurricane, or any type of natural disaster there would be no power. Having no power means citizens cannot use their credit or debit cards. When a natural disaster occurs having a few hundred dollars or so would be a big help. It would be easy for someone to go to a store and purchase a few more previsions if needed.

One way to collect data was collected for this research paper was through observation. When data was collected through observation more than two sets of eyes were involved. In the event where someone misses something the other person might spot it. Observation required the permission of the observed. This research paper required observation of houses. Observation was done through looking and sometimes listening. Observation was taken at a particular house in kagman 3 phase 4. The observer looked through all areas of the house inside and out. Instead of observing to find weak or damaged parts of the house, the observer also looked for any sturdiness of the home. While the observer observed houses notes were also simultaneously taken. Observation was easiest way data was collected for this research paper. Although this method of collecting data is effective, it is not effective as interviews.

Before any interviews were conducted the researcher had a set of questions derived from her research question. These questions were made short and simple. These questions were then looked over by an advanced English instructor. The interviews were then set up by the interviewer through phone and or house visits. A specific time and date was set up to conduct interviews. Some specific clients were free at that time of my arrival and were more than happy to have the interview conducted right then. The research questions were then asked and time was given for the interviewee to answer in details. While the interviewee was answering questions the interviewer was taking notes and jotting down responses. The interviewer also asked some personal questions that were not included in the secondary research question. If the interviewee was comfortable with answering the questions, the answers were greatly appreciated and if not there was no harm done. These specific questions were to their own personal experience during and or after typhoon Soudelor.

Data was collected from different parts of kagman. About ten interviews and observations were conducted. About one out of ten were completely prepared. This interview was taken at Kagman one. The interviewee one had enough can food and water to last for about three weeks. The interviewee also had an almost full tank of gas in their car. The interviewee also had seventy five dollars in cash that aided the interviewee after typhoon Soudelor. The banks were open after the typhoon so the interviewee could’ve gotten more cash if needed. Interviewee ones house was made of concrete. The windows had shutters and there was no damage done to the house by typhoon Soudelor. Interviewee two was also from Kagman one and lived next to interviewee ones house. The house was semi-concrete and sustained little damage from the typhoon. The roof was blown up but not away, water also entered the house but did not destroy anything valuable. Food and water was plenty. Extra cash was out of the question due to the fact that he did not have a job. Gas is also out of the question, because there was no car.

Interviewee three was from kagman two and had to abandoned their home to seek shelter at a nearby family members house. This was because interviewee threes house was in no condition to withstand any storm. Basically, there was no preparation efforts other than the fact that they sought shelter somewhere else. They relied on their family members to provide them with food and water. Interviewee three had no car and relied on social security checks. Though interviewee three had already blown through his SSI checks. Interviewee four lived in Kagman three phase four, and lived in a concrete house and did make an effort to prepare for typhoon Soudelor. They borrowed twenty dollars from a family member to buy food and water. Their previsions managed to last them for about a week. They did have a water tank outside their house that was used to collect rain water. This to them was drinkable, it was also used for bathing. Though they did not have money, they did have gas in their vehicle that last them till their payday. They did not board up their windows and in result water came through. Clothes were used to soak up the water for any major damages could occur.

Interviewee five and six have similar cases. They both lived in Kagman 3 and both of their houses were made of tin and wood. Both of their houses also got destroyed. They had no can food only frozen food which went to waste. They sought shelter at Kagman community center and relied on the relief efforts put forth by American Red Cross. They both did not have any transportation and got to the center by walking. Interviewee seven lived in Kagman three phase four. There was no preparation involved but there was plenty of can goods, and three five gallons of water. Interviewee seven lived in a semi-concrete house, little damage was done. Though interviewee seven had a job, he just recently resigned and now spends most of his time at his house helping his neighbors rebuild their homes. He also recently got his last paycheck, but most of it went to paying bills and buying food for his home. Interviewee eight was also from kagman three phase four and had a car full of gas and a fridge full of frozen foods. Of course the frozen food went to waste, but there was also some can food that lasted until money was taken out of the bank to buy more. Water was no issue because interviewee eight worked at Star Water.

Interviewee eight was not at all worried about the damaged that was done to his house because the garage was the only part of the house that was affected. Interviewee nine lives in kagman three. Their two story house was made of concrete, but had an extension made out of wood and tin. That part of the house got blown away. Though they didn’t prepare as much as they should’ve have, no major damages were recorded. They had plenty of food and water, most of which were not frozen. They had just recently gotten paid and changed their check but didn’t deposit any money. So they had a lot of cash on hand, and they had a little over a half a tank of gas. The family did not board up there windows because they knew it would be able to withstand the storm. Though some water managed to get in, and there garage had been blown away, the family wasn’t at all worried. They specifically said “what’s done is done” and “we couldn’t control the weather”

Interviewee ten was from kagman two. The interviewee’s name was Tracy. Tracy has given the interviewer permission to share any information that was taken during the interview. Tracy is a thirty six year old who lives with her ten year old daughter and her forty year old boyfriend. Tracy had not prepared for typhoon Soudelor but had enough food and water for her whole family. Their house was made of concrete, but their roof was made of tin. In the middle of typhoon Soudelor Tracy and her family had to run to a neighbor’s house because their roof had just been blown off by the typhoon. When they were trying to escape to their neighbor’s house their daughter was struck by a large branch. The daughter had fallen and got some scratches on her face and legs, but overall okay. When they got to their neighbors house they were so worried about their daughter that they started blaming themselves. If they were more prepared for this super typhoon their daughter didn’t have to run to their neighbor’s house. They didn’t have to be out in the open during the storm, they could’ve been safe in their own home. After typhoon Soudelor they made sure that they home would be the safest place for their daughter.

All of the interviewees had reported assumptions during the interviews. They believed that the so called “tropical disturbance” was just that, a disturbance. One interviewee who had prepared also reported assumptions about this typhoon and said that the reason he was so prepared was because he learned that “it is better to have it and not need it, than to need it and not have it” which came from a favorite show of his called “Jack and Jill” even though interviewee ones house was very prepared for typhoon Soudelor, his mind was not.

**Conclusion and Future Study**

Overall, the people of Kagman were under the impression that typhoon Soudelor would not be a big storm. Although many people did not prepare they did learn a valuable lesson, always be prepared. Most of the interviewees reported only knowing that typhoon Soudelor was just a tropical disturbance. They were notified late about the intensity and the growing strength of this typhoon. There is a lesson to be learned here and that is to never assume. One should always be prepared for any type of natural disaster because when it comes to Mother Nature nothing is predictable. It is the strongest force on this earth and the only thing that human kind has yet to conquer. More research should be done on this topic because everyone knows it is important to prepare for anything, but very little actually do.

Appendix A