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# **Pain of Disasters: The Educational Cost of Exogenous Shocks**

## **Evidence from Tangshan Earthquake in 1976**

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### **1. Introduction**

An earthquake, as a sudden natural disaster, not only causes immeasurable losses of the social and economic development, but also has sustained and far-reaching effects on the accumulation of human capital such as education, nutrition and health, as well as the social welfare such as income and consumption (Baez et al., 2010).

Researchers have found that earthquakes can result in temporary reduction in income and lessen the level of consumption (Baez and Santos, 2008; Gignoux and Menéndez, 2014). Some studies have shown that earthquakes significantly reduce the individuals' educational attainment. For example, earthquakes decrease enrollment rate and increase the probability of being a child labor (Santos, 2007). Besides, through early-life malnutrition, earthquakes also have negative impacts on children's cognitive development and academic achievement (Bustelo et al., 2012). Some literatures concern the consequences of earthquakes from the aspects of physical and mental health. For instance, earthquakes evidently increase the mortality rate, raise the incidence of infectious diseases through destroying the health facilities, and cause people's depression, anxiety and other pathological behaviors (Chen et al., 2002; Roussos et al., 2005; Bathia, 2008; Şalcioğlu and Başoğlu, 2008). Some recent studies on intergenerational transmission of earthquakes suggest that the children whose parents suffered from earthquakes receive lower human capital (Caruso, 2015; Caruso and Miller, 2015).

In addition, some literatures pay close attention to other natural disasters such as

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