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FULL AND PARTIAL PTSD AMONG YOUNG ADULT SURVIVORS AFTER THE L'AQUILA 2009 EARTHQUAKE: GENDER DIFFERENCES

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**Introduction:** Earthquakes are one of the most frequently occurring natural disasters and lot of studies have been conducted on exposed populations, particularly to evaluate post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). On April 6th 2009, the town of L'Aquila, central Italy, was struck by an earthquake, with a strength of 5.9 on the Richter scale, and 309 people have died, 1600 were injured and more than 65000 were displaced.

**Objectives:** To investigate the impact of PTSD in a sample of L'Aquila's people.

**Aims:** To evaluate the prevalence rates of PTSD, either full-blown or partial, among 512 students attending the last year of high school in L'Aquila, 10 months after the earthquake.

**Methods:** Assessments included the trauma and loss spectrum-self report (TALS-SR) and the Impact of Event Scale (IES). Gender differences in the symptoms reported were investigated. Partial PTSD is defined as the presence of symptoms in the DSM-IV Criterion B and C or D for PTSD diagnosis.

**Results:** Our results showed the presence of PTSD in 192 (37.5%) of the students examined, with significantly ( $p=.000$ ) higher rates in women than men ( $N=120$ , 51.7% and  $N=72$ , 25.7%, respectively). Moreover, 153 (29.9%) students reported partial PTSD (75, 32.3% women and 78, 27.9% men respectively). Significantly higher PTSD symptoms were reported by women with respect to men.

**Conclusions:** Our results show high rates of full or partial PTSD in adolescents survived to L'Aquila's earthquake. Women resulted more affected than men. These results highlight the need to carefully explore these conditions.