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Natural Hazard Mitigation Strategies Review: Actor Network Theory and the Eco-Based Approach Understanding in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

This paper presents the literature reviewed on the evolution of the natural hazard mitigation perspective and an overview of its progression to date. It demonstrates how the Actor-Network Theory (ANT) theoretical framework can be applicable to Muzarabani in Zimbabwe as a tool for analysing and elaborating hazard mitigation strategies. ANT is gradually becoming influential, but still a bone of contention mainly because of its radical approach. ANT treats humans and non-humans as equal actors. In spite of its limitation, studies have shown that an ANT grounded approach is useful in providing a framework for the comprehension of the complexities of daily life during natural hazard episodes and the dynamic role of *Ziziphus mauritiana* in the network in Muzarabani of Zimbabwe. The theory can demonstrate its importance in respect of how social results are produced as a result of linkages among diverse actors (human and non-human) in a network. The chief significance of this consideration is that ANT offers a lens through which to assess the role of *Ziziphus mauritiana* as an actor in determining social processes and relations. Attention to this decisive role can contribute to an all-inclusive appreciation of the complexity of actors in semi-arid regions. *Ziziphus mauritiana*, an eco-resource, like other non-human phenomena, is introduced as an important and neglected actor in natural hazard mitigation discourse. Literature accessed has also affirmed that ANT can also demonstrate the dual value of rendering a theoretically informed method of sampling by mapping on actors that are linked to the eco-resource in question, *Ziziphus mauritiana* and analysis. The paper draws on contemporary empirical work in Muzarabani and the recurrent nature of natural hazards in this semi-arid landscape to explain noticeable results of the interactions between the human and non-human actors in hazard mitigation. The paper argues that if ANT is used logically it is useful in examining eco-based natural hazard mitigation approaches in semi-arid regions.

Keywords: Actor network theory, adaptation, commodity chain frameworks, ecological, hazard mitigation