Panic phenomenon and crowd reaction.

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Panic / Crowd

• Panic (English Dictionary) - an overwhelming feeling of fear and anxiety

• Panic (in psychology) sudden mass fear and anxiety over anticipated events; "panic in the stock market"; "a war scare"; "a bomb scare led them to evacuate the building," it can cause crazy escape from real or unreal danger.

• Crowd (English Dictionary) a large number of things or people considered together, it does not have interior organisation or integration.
Typical places in witch panic can strike:

- Stadiums, markets, undergrounds, schools, hospitals
- Cinemas, theatres, concerts, churches,
- Trains, ships, planes
- Elevators, buildings
- And other multitudes (demonstrations, etc)
Situations that cause panic strike:

- Terrorist attacks
- Catastrophes
- Fires
- Accident/damage
- Floods
- Warfares
- Unexpected sounds (especially: shooting, screaming, panic reactions of other people)
Other conditions:

- Bad visibility (night, fog, smoke,)
- Bad weather condition (rain, snow, low/high temperature)
- Number of people
- Possibility of evacuation (available fire-escapes)
- Aggressive and unfriendly crowd
- Nervous behaviour of Rescuers Teams
How people behave in panic? (psychologically)

- People lose sense of time
- Lose an ability to control themselves
- Do not react to orders
- Do not react to persuasion
- They behave in an irrational way
How people behave in panic? (sociologically)

• Open for suggestion (bahave the same as other people in panic)
• They are focused on the same thing or idea
• Crowd gives power
• Fear of law and punishment is lower
• There is „WE” instead of „I”
• Crowd guarantee impunity and anonymity
There are different crowd and individual reactions and behaviours

- G. Le Bon in his book “Crowd Psychology” says: „human in crowd is not himself, he becomes similar to crowd”
- G.W. Allport thinks that „human in crowd is even more himself”
- Human is closer to his masked personality structure
- There is no social control
- Responsibility is shared between the people in the crowd
- „People around are doing the same”
There are different crowd and individual reactions and behaviours.

- Whenever people fly off the handle or arouse hate there is high possibility of lynch or massive demonstration.
- When the crowd is cheerful and excited there is possibility of street party and celebrations.
How to prevent panic phenomenon?

- Force with shock impulse
- Diffuse the crowd
How to prevent panic phenomenon?

- Immediately and safely leaving the building or vehicle
- Efficient rescue action
How to prevent panic phenomenon?

• Separate leaders from the crowd.
• Isolate people who manifest fear, so that their behaviour and emotions cannot influence others.
References:


• Elias Cannetti, Crowds and Power, Penguin, 1962

Thank you for coming

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