



From paper to Facebook, travelling through the natural hazards divulgation

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In a society so greatly influenced by the media as ours, and with new global meteorological risks such as climate change, scientists should work together with the media to make their research known to the general public, as, in its turn, to use the media as source of information. Press articles can be used as indicator to obtain an indirect estimation of the natural risks in order to build data bases on this matter (Llasat et al, 2009a). The media, and particularly the press, can also be used to estimate the social perception of natural risks and climate change (Tábara, 2008): usually the press reflects the dominant patterns and beliefs in a particular society, and, in its turn, has a strong influence on the collective construction of the risk perception, independently of the multiple individual perceptions and experiences of the same event or risk. Usually press focuses more on the vulnerability to risks and less on the actual danger, and it is necessary to assess in each case all the situational factors involved in the publication of a news item, since the spatial and temporal location of the event need to be taken into account too (Llasat-Botija et al., 2007). Then, when public perception and the natural risk evolution are analyzed through the press information, it is necessary to distinguish between the different factors that could be involved in it and their potential changes. Particularly, a change in the socio-cultural paradigm approach and in the mass media strategy should be taken into account.

These changes in the communication strategy have also to be taken into account when we consider the different tools used for sensitization and education in front of natural risks. Starting from conferences, seminars or demonstrations (Malamud, 2008), web pages (Llasat-Botija et al, 2008), educative dossiers and videos, in the recent years new tools in internet are increasing in importance. This is the case of social networks, blogs, you-tube, distribution lists and other applications like the webquests mainly focused on scholar population.

This contribution starts from the analysis of the newspaper articles on natural hazards and climate change published between 1982 and 2007 by a Spanish journal (Llasat et al, 2009b) and analyzes the breakpoint produced on last years as a consequence of the introduction of news and newspapers in internet (digital, on-line information, and so on) and certain changes in the headlines philosophy. The contribution also shows a benchmarking about the application of the new tools in internet in relation to natural hazards. The last objective is to establish new and innovative ways to transfer the natural hazards knowledge to practitioners, to overpasses the short term interest in natural disasters during the non-crisis period, and to improve the disaster risk reduction approach following the Hyogo recommendations.