

2018 Final Professional Development Grant Report

43rd Annual Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop

July 8 – July 11, 2018

Broomfield, Colorado

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B. Professional Enhancement Opportunity:

I participated at the 43rd Annual Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop in Broomfield, Colorado, by presenting my two research papers in two sessions during the 4-day workshop. The research papers that I presented were:

- Communicating Post-Disaster Risks and Return-Entry Information in the Aftermath of a Disaster. Panel Presentation
- Social Media Use in a Post-Disaster Context: An Examination of Risk Communication at an Organizational Level. Poster Presentation

Included with this report are the evidences indicating my attendance at the workshop. The sessions I presented were on July 8, 9, and 11.

C. Brief Review:

The Annual Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop is among the premier conferences in the areas of hazards, disasters, and emergency management that brings together researchers and practitioners from across the world to discuss the most current challenges and best practices in the emergency management field. The theme for the 43rd Annual Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop was “Twenty Questions: Looking for Answers to Reduce Disaster Risk”. As indicated in the theme, this year’s workshop focused on twenty big questions that highlighted the emergency management challenges and prospects to reduce disaster impacts and to improve the quality of life for all. My research presentations focused on disaster risk communication at an organizational level. In my panel presentation, I discussed the challenges emergency management organizations experience while communicating risk information to the public in the immediate aftermath of a disaster. Likewise, my poster presentation examined the barriers and opportunities associated with social media use in disaster risk communication. My research presentations went very well, and I received valuable comments and feedback from other researchers and practitioners.

D. Summary of Experience:

The 43rd Annual Natural Hazards Research and Applications Workshop provided me an opportunity to network with prominent scholars in the emergency management field. I was very pleased to represent Arkansas Tech University in an international platform. My research was well-received by EM scholars and attendees of the workshop and I received valuable feedback from them. I have incorporated this feedback in my publication (work-in-progress). The workshop was also a good venue to learn about current research and practical focus of the emergency management field.

E. Conclusions and Recommendations:

I am extremely grateful to the ATU Professional Development committee and the Office of Academic Affairs for covering my conference expenses. The Professional Development Grant enabled me to share my research findings with other scholars and practitioners of the EM field. I strongly believe that Tech should continue funding the opportunity for faculty to participate in national and international conferences for their professional development and to promote the university's scholarly activities.

Evidence of Conference Attendance/Presentations



[Workshop Info](#) ▾ [Schedule](#) [Registration](#) ▾ [Travel](#) ▾ [Posters & Highlights](#) ▾
[Special Events](#) ▾ [Researchers Meeting](#) ▾

Hazards Research by New Professionals

Wed. 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., Interlocken A

This session features new research by students and recent graduates in the hazards and disaster field.

Moderator



[Eleanore Hajian, Department of Homeland Security](#)

Presenters



[Abdulhadi Al Ruwaithi, University of Delaware](#)

A Methodology for Estimating Flood Risk: A Case Study of Long-Term Care Facilities



[Shadi Azadegan, Colorado State University](#)

Dimensions of Vulnerability, Resilience, and Social Justice in a Low-Income Hispanic Neighborhood During Disaster Recovery



[Virginia Berndt, University of Delaware](#)

Compromised Contraceptive Access in Disaster Settings: An Analysis of State-Level Contraceptive Policies, Title X Clinic Availability, and Emergency Refill Laws in North Carolina and Illinois



[Sydney Eiss, University of Colorado Boulder](#)

Measuring Exposure for a Better Tomorrow: An Analysis of Hazard Mapping and Survey Data as Methods to Measure Risk



[Rejina Manandhar, Arkansas Tech University](#)

Communicating Post-Disaster Risks and Return-Entry Information in the Aftermath of a Disaster

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Rejina Manandhar, Arkansas Tech University

Social Media Use in a Post-Disaster Context: An Examination of Risk Communication at an Organizational Level

Social media has become a vital risk communication channel in emergency management. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Flickr have been extensively used during recent disasters and have enabled the public and emergency managers to gather and distribute risk information on hazards and disasters. While numerous studies have examined social media use and behaviors of the public during a disaster, the use of social media platforms by emergency management organizations has received little scholarly attention. The examination of how emergency management organizations perceive and utilize social media platforms can provide an understanding of creative strategies to use social media effectively during and after a disaster. Using semi-structured telephone interviews with emergency managers in New Jersey, this study investigates the use, perceptions, and challenges pertaining to social media in the immediate aftermath of Superstorm Sandy. The study findings suggest that social media was used for information gathering, dissemination and monitoring public response following Superstorm Sandy. Although many informants considered social media to be a useful risk communication tool, some informants completely avoided information from social media as they believed it to be less credible than compared to the official information sources. Furthermore, informants also reported challenges such as network connectivity, power outage, and misinformation to hinder risk communication via social media.
