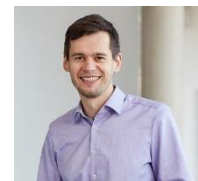


Analyzing local media reporting about heavy precipitation events to improve risk communication and disaster reduction

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Abstract

Following the Fifth Assessment Report of the IPCC, extreme precipitation events will be very likely to increase in frequency and intensity in the mid-latitudes and wet tropical regions. Therefore, many people are faced with a growing threat. Extreme, convective precipitation events are characterized by small spatial ranges, but they can occur in areas which have never been affected before. As risk perception of heavy precipitation, as well as the current state of private and municipal protection is low, there is a need to increase public risk perception and to encourage mitigation behavior. Local newspapers are an important information source for many people, especially for local happenings, like extreme precipitation. Thus, this paper analyzes the three most sold local newspapers in the city of Cologne, Germany, to improve risk communication and to encourage mitigation behavior. Time series and content analysis were conducted between 2016 to 2018. The media reporting about heavy precipitation is high in summer, when people do not expect heavy precipitation. The content analysis of 987 articles shows that warnings are very common in local newspaper articles, but advice and recommendations on how to act in the case of extreme precipitation were predominantly missing. To increase risk perception and to encourage mitigation behavior, a continuous and more powerful dissemination of information about protective measures and tips for handling or behavior is needed.

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Biography:

Leon Netzel is a PhD student from the University of Duisburg-Essen, department urban water and waste management. He studied hydrology at the Technical University of Dresden, wrote his master thesis at the Helmholtz Centre for Environmental Research in Leipzig and worked as a research associate at the