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Georgia Southern Examines Social Media Use During Disasters

August 25, 2016



Social media allows users to share information and communicate interpersonally during natural disasters, environmental disasters, and other environmental concerns. Finch and colleagues conducted a scoping review of the literature to examine how social media is used during these environmental concerns, determine what the implications are for public health officials, and identify research gaps.

They retrieved thirty-four articles for the review. From these articles, four main questions were answered: How can social media be used to disseminate information to others? How is social media used for data prediction and early warnings? How is social media used for environmental awareness and health promotion? Lastly, how can social media be used as an indicator of public participation in social media during environmental concerns?

They found evidence supporting social media as a useful surveillance tool during natural disasters, environmental disasters, and other environmental concerns. Public health officials can use social media to gain insight into public opinions and perceptions. Social media allows public health workers and emergency responders to act more quickly and efficiently during crises. Further research is needed to improve the use of social media during natural disasters, environmental disasters, and other environmental concerns.

[“Public health implications of social media use during natural disasters, environmental disasters, and other environmental concerns,”](#) was published in *Natural Hazards*.

Ms. Kathryn C. Finch, Ms. Cassandra R. Snook, and Ms. Carmen H. Duke, MPH epidemiology students at the Jiann-Ping Hsu College of Public Health, Georgia Southern University took the lead on this research mentored by Assistant Professor of Epidemiology, Dr. Isaac Chun-Hai Fung.

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