

# FACTORS INFLUENCING MEDIA USE IN THE EVACUATION DECISION-MAKING PROCESS DURING APPROACHING CYCLONES IN THE BAHAMAS

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## ABSTRACT

A survey of Bahamians living on the island of New Providence (N = 381) explored the different factors that influence media use in the evacuation decision-making process along with investigating the different outlets used in the process. Results of the survey showed that Bahamians preferred to use state media (both television and radio), Internet sources, and television generally when making the decision to evacuate. Personal factors such as false alarm experience, threat knowledge, and perceived quality of the home had no influence on media use in the evacuation decision-making process. However the results showed that affective response (fear/worry) and information insufficiency both increased media use in the evacuation process (specifically state media). The results of the study are discussed in light of the uses and gratification paradigm along with several segments of the risk information seeking and processing model.

*Keywords:* Bahamas, hurricanes, tropical storms, cyclones, media use, television, radio, newspapers, RISP, false alarm experience, Caribbean, uses and gratification, risk information seeking and processing, information insufficiency, Bahamians.