



## **9. Economic Impact of Media Coverage on Disaster Risk Reduction Policies**

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### **Abstract**

*This study investigates the impact of media coverage on commerce professionals' awareness and economic decision-making regarding disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies. It assesses how media influences perceptions of disaster risks and the adoption of preparedness measures among businesses in vulnerable sectors such as agriculture, retail, and tourism. Using a quantitative research design, data were collected from 376 business owners and employees through a structured survey. The survey examined media consumption patterns, awareness of disaster risks, perceived media effectiveness, and economic decisions related to disaster preparedness. Findings reveal that 91.2% of respondents made changes to their business practices in response to media coverage of disasters, with 63.3% identifying media as the primary motivator for adopting DRR measures. While media was acknowledged as highly effective in raising awareness, 42% of respondents remained unlikely to invest in future disaster preparedness based solely on media reports. The results highlight a gap between awareness and action, with financial incentives and government regulations cited as additional motivating factors. This study underscores the critical role of media in shaping disaster preparedness but also suggests that complementary policies and incentives are necessary to translate awareness into sustained action. Recommendations include enhancing media's focus on practical solutions, strengthening financial support, and expanding outreach efforts.*

**Keywords:-** Business Preparedness, Climate Change, Commerce Professionals, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), Economic Decision-Making, Media Influence

### **Introduction**

Natural disasters, exacerbated by climate change, pose significant risks to businesses, particularly those operating in vulnerable sectors such as agriculture, retail, and tourism. As disasters increase in frequency and intensity, disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies have become essential for mitigating economic impacts (Wen et al., 2023) (Khan et al., 2023). In this context, media coverage plays a crucial role in shaping public awareness and influencing decision-making (Kumar et al., 2023) regarding disaster preparedness. The ability of businesses to respond to disaster risks is often linked to how they perceive and understand these risks through media channels (Hansson et al., 2020).



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This research explores the intersection of media influence and economic decision-making among commerce professionals concerning DRR policies. Given that media serves as a primary source of information about climate change and disasters, understanding its role in shaping business behaviors is vital for improving disaster resilience. The study focuses on the media's impact on business practices, examining how it motivates changes in disaster preparedness and the factors that encourage or hinder investment in long-term DRR strategies.

By examining a diverse sample of business owners and employees across sectors, this research aims to provide insights into the effectiveness of media in promoting disaster preparedness. It also seeks to identify barriers to action and the additional measures needed, such as financial incentives and government regulations, to foster a more resilient business environment. The findings will contribute to a broader understanding of how media coverage can be leveraged to enhance disaster risk management and economic stability.

### Review of Literature

Dave & National Disaster Management Authority (n.d.) emphasize the critical role media plays in disaster management by ensuring timely information dissemination, raising public awareness, and influencing both public and policy responses. They argue that effective media communication can shape the public's perception of disaster risks and guide governmental decisions towards more robust DRR measures. Media coverage not only informs but also motivates action, both at individual and community levels, by providing a platform for discussing preparedness and mitigation strategies.

Hansson et al. (2020) introduce a heuristic framework to assess communication-related vulnerabilities in disasters. Their research underscores that gaps in media communication, especially in risk-prone areas, exacerbate vulnerabilities, affecting not only public preparedness but also the allocation of resources and response strategies. This research is pivotal in understanding how media coverage (or lack thereof) may lead to economic consequences by influencing risk communication efficacy and public responsiveness to DRR policies.

Becker et al. (2012) examine how individuals interpret earthquake information and how these interpretations shape household preparedness. Media, as a primary source of disaster-related information, significantly influences individuals' perceptions of risk and their subsequent actions. The study highlights how media can amplify certain aspects of disaster preparedness, motivating communities to invest in protective measures. This directly impacts economic decisions at the household level, as individuals allocate resources towards preparedness, affecting local economic activity.

Similarly, Lindell & Whitney (2000) identify key correlates of seismic hazard adjustment adoption, focusing on the media's role in shaping public behavior. The study found that consistent and detailed media coverage leads to higher rates of hazard adjustments at the household level,



which can, in turn, reduce the long-term economic costs of disasters. By encouraging early adoption of preparedness measures, media coverage helps mitigate potential economic losses by fostering a more resilient society.

Basolo et al. (2008) explore the relationship between confidence in government, access to information, and perceived and actual disaster preparedness. The study reveals that while media plays a pivotal role in disseminating disaster information, the public's confidence in governmental agencies also affects how media messages are received and acted upon. When media successfully bridges the gap between governmental authorities and the public, it strengthens trust and enhances policy effectiveness, particularly in disaster risk reduction. This can have profound economic impacts as well-prepared communities experience fewer losses and recover more quickly from disasters.

Paton (2008) adds to this discussion by analyzing how risk communication influences public trust and the effectiveness of DRR strategies. He argues that media must not only deliver accurate information but also foster trust between the public and authorities to enhance preparedness and resilience. Successful media strategies that integrate trust-building elements can drive better policy outcomes, which, in turn, have significant economic implications in disaster management and recovery.

Khan et al. (2023) investigate the economic effects of natural disasters, emphasizing the role of media in shaping disaster-related policies. Their study finds that media coverage influences foreign direct investment (FDI) flows, infrastructure development, and human capital dynamics, all of which are critical for disaster recovery and long-term economic growth. Effective media campaigns that highlight the importance of DRR policies can attract investments in resilient infrastructure, thereby reducing the economic burden of future disasters.

The interaction between media and DRR policies is further elaborated by Wen et al. (2023), who link disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation to sustainable development goals. Media coverage plays a central role in raising awareness about these linkages, influencing both public perception and policy formation. By promoting policies that integrate DRR and climate adaptation, media helps shape a resilient economic future, mitigating disaster-related economic losses and fostering sustainable growth.

### **Research Questions:**

1. How does media coverage influence the awareness and economic decision-making of commerce professionals regarding disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies?



## Research Objectives

1. To assess commerce professionals' awareness of disaster risks and media influence on DRR perceptions.
2. To evaluate the impact of media coverage on economic decisions regarding disaster preparedness.

## Methodology:

This study employed a quantitative research design using a structured survey to gather data from individuals in commerce, specifically business owners and employees in sectors vulnerable to natural disasters. A stratified sampling method ensured diverse representation across various sectors, such as retail, agriculture, and tourism, capturing perspectives on how media coverage influenced awareness and decision-making regarding disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies. The survey included closed-ended questions covering demographic information, media consumption patterns, awareness of disaster risks, perceived media effectiveness, and economic decisions related to disaster preparedness. It was administered through online platforms and in-person sessions, with a pilot test conducted to refine the instrument. Collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions and cross-tabulation.

## Findings & Discussion

### *Section 1: Demographic Information*

Age	Frequency	Percent
20-29	55	14.6
30-39	175	46.5
40-49	79	21.0
50 and above	44	11.7
Under 20	23	6.1
Total	376	100.0

The age distribution of respondents provides valuable insight into the demographic composition of the survey participants. The largest age group, representing 46.5% of respondents, falls within the 30-39 age range, highlighting a strong presence of individuals in their prime working years. This is followed by the 40-49 age group, which accounts for 21.0% of participants, indicating a significant proportion of more experienced professionals. Those aged 20-29 make up 14.6%, while the 50 and above category constitutes 11.7%, suggesting that older professionals, though less represented, are still a notable segment. The youngest group, under 20 years old, comprises 6.1%, reflecting a small but present younger demographic. Overall, the total sample size of 376 respondents reflects a diverse age range, with a clear concentration in the mid-career bracket,



which may influence the perspectives on disaster risk reduction and economic decision-making covered in the survey.

<b>Gender</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Female	140	37.2
Male	236	62.8
Total	376	100.0

The gender distribution of the survey respondents shows a higher representation of males compared to females. Of the 376 participants, 62.8% are male, while 37.2% are female. This gender imbalance suggests that men make up the majority of respondents in the study, which may reflect the composition of the industries or businesses represented in the survey. Although there is a significant male majority, the female participation is substantial, providing a diverse range of perspectives on disaster risk reduction and economic decision-making. This distribution will be important in analyzing potential differences in how media influences disaster preparedness and adaptation across genders.

<b>Education Level</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Bachelor's Degree	108	28.7
Doctorate	73	19.4
High School	40	10.6
Master's Degree	155	41.2
Total	376	100.0

The educational background of the survey respondents shows a strong presence of highly educated individuals. The majority, 41.2%, hold a Master's degree, indicating that a significant portion of participants has advanced education. This is followed by 28.7% of respondents who possess a Bachelor's degree, reflecting a substantial representation of individuals with undergraduate education. Those with a Doctorate make up 19.4% of the sample, highlighting the inclusion of highly specialized professionals. A smaller segment, 10.6%, has a high school education, suggesting that while most respondents are well-educated, there is still a presence of individuals with less formal academic training. This distribution of educational levels is likely to influence how respondents perceive and engage with disaster risk reduction strategies, as higher education may correlate with greater awareness and engagement with such policies.

<b>Type of Business</b>		
	Frequency	Percent



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Agriculture	105	27.9
Manufacturing	82	21.8
Retail	117	31.1
Tourism	72	19.1
Total	376	100.0

The type of business distribution among survey respondents reveals a diverse representation of industries. The largest group, 31.1%, operates in retail, highlighting its significant role in the survey sample. Agriculture follows closely, accounting for 27.9% of respondents, reflecting the importance of this sector in areas prone to disaster risks. Manufacturing businesses make up 21.8% of participants, contributing insights from a production-focused perspective, while 19.1% of respondents come from the tourism sector, a field particularly vulnerable to environmental disruptions. This broad range of business types ensures that the survey captures a wide spectrum of experiences and responses regarding disaster risk reduction, media influence, and economic decision-making across different industries.

Geographic Location		
	Frequency	Percent
Rural	169	44.9
Urban	207	55.1
Total	376	100.0

The geographic location of survey respondents indicates a fairly balanced representation between urban and rural areas. A slight majority of participants, 55.1%, are from urban locations, while 44.9% are based in rural areas. This distribution ensures that the survey captures a diverse range of perspectives from both urban and rural businesses, which may experience and respond to disaster risks differently. The inclusion of a significant rural sample is particularly important, as rural areas often face distinct challenges in disaster preparedness and media access compared to their urban counterparts. This balance provides a comprehensive understanding of how geographic location influences awareness of disaster risk reduction and the role of media in shaping economic decisions.

### Section 2: Media Consumption

How often do you consume news related to climate change and disasters?		
	Frequency	Percent
Daily	30	8.0
Monthly	109	29.0
Rarely	20	5.3



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Weekly	217	57.7
Total	376	100.0

The frequency of news consumption related to climate change and disasters among respondents shows that a majority are regularly exposed to such information. A significant 57.7% of participants consume this news on a weekly basis, indicating consistent engagement with media on disaster-related topics. Monthly news consumption follows at 29.0%, suggesting that nearly a third of respondents stay informed but on a less frequent basis. Daily consumption is relatively low, with only 8.0% of respondents regularly following climate change and disaster news, while 5.3% rarely engage with this type of media. This distribution suggests that while most respondents are fairly engaged, there remains a segment of the population with limited exposure to disaster-related media, which could impact their awareness and preparedness.

<b>What type of media do you primarily rely on for information about climate change and disasters? (Select one)</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Newspapers/Magazines	121	32.2
Online News Websites	17	4.5
Social Media	154	41.0
Television	84	22.3
Total	376	100.0

The preferred sources of media for information about climate change and disasters among respondents highlight a clear trend toward digital platforms, particularly social media. A substantial 41.0% of participants primarily rely on social media for their news, indicating its significant role in shaping public perceptions of disaster-related issues. Newspapers and magazines are also a prominent source, with 32.2% of respondents favoring these traditional media outlets. In contrast, television accounts for 22.3% of respondents, showing its continued relevance but a lower preference compared to print media. Online news websites represent a minimal portion, with only 4.5% of respondents selecting this option. This distribution suggests that while traditional media still holds importance, social media has emerged as a dominant platform for disseminating information about climate change and disasters, potentially influencing how individuals perceive and respond to these critical issues.

*Section 3: Awareness of Disaster Risks*

<b>How aware are you of the potential disaster risks that could affect your business?</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Neutral	77	20.5
Somewhat aware	203	54.0



Very aware	96	25.5
Total	376	100.0

The survey results regarding awareness of potential disaster risks affecting businesses reveal a predominantly positive outlook among respondents. A notable 54.0% indicated that they are somewhat aware of the disaster risks that could impact their operations, suggesting a moderate level of understanding within this group. Also, 25.5% of participants reported being very aware, reflecting a significant portion of respondents who recognize the importance of being informed about potential threats. Conversely, 20.5% of respondents selected the neutral option, indicating that they neither agree nor disagree with their awareness levels. This distribution highlights the need for increased education and outreach efforts to enhance awareness, particularly among those who may feel neutral about their understanding of disaster risks. Overall, the data suggests that while many respondents have a reasonable awareness of potential risks, there remains room for improvement to ensure comprehensive preparedness across all businesses.

<b>How would you rate your understanding of disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies?</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Fair	57	15.2
Good	119	31.6
Very good	183	48.7
Very poor	17	4.5
Total	376	100.0

The responses regarding participants' understanding of disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies indicate a generally strong level of comprehension among survey respondents. A significant majority, 48.7%, rated their understanding as very good, suggesting that nearly half of the participants possess a solid grasp of DRR policies and their importance. Also, 31.6% of respondents rated their understanding as good, reflecting a favorable level of awareness and knowledge. In contrast, only 15.2% of participants assessed their understanding as fair, while a small minority, 4.5%, rated it as very poor. This distribution underscores the overall positive perception of DRR knowledge within the surveyed population, indicating that many respondents are likely to engage with and implement effective risk reduction strategies. However, the presence of those who rated their understanding as fair or very poor highlights the need for ongoing education and outreach to ensure that all individuals are adequately informed about DRR policies and practices.

#### *Section 4: Perceived Media Effectiveness*

<b>To what extent do you believe media coverage influences your understanding of disaster risks?</b>
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	Frequency	Percent
Moderately	57	15.2
Significantly	138	36.7
Very significantly	181	48.1
Total	376	100.0

The survey results on the influence of media coverage on respondents' understanding of disaster risks reveal a strong acknowledgment of the media's role in shaping perceptions. A substantial 48.1% of participants believe that media coverage influences their understanding of disaster risks very significantly, indicating a high level of reliance on media for information. Also, 36.7% of respondents reported that media coverage significantly influences their understanding, further emphasizing its importance as a source of information. Only 15.2% of participants indicated that they believe media coverage moderately influences their understanding of disaster risks. This distribution suggests that the majority of respondents recognize the media as a crucial factor in enhancing their awareness of potential threats, underscoring the need for accurate and impactful media reporting on disaster-related issues. The findings indicate that effective media coverage can play a vital role in improving public understanding and preparedness for disaster risks.

<b>How effective do you find media coverage in motivating businesses to adopt DRR policies?</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Effective	99	26.3
Neutral	57	15.2
Very effective	220	58.5
Ineffective	00	00
Very ineffective	00	00
Total	376	100.0

The survey results on the effectiveness of media coverage in motivating businesses to adopt disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies demonstrate a strong consensus on the media's influential role. A significant 58.5% of respondents rated media coverage as very effective, indicating that a large majority believes it plays a crucial part in encouraging businesses to engage with DRR initiatives. Also, 26.3% of participants found media coverage effective, reflecting a positive perception of its impact on business practices related to disaster preparedness. Only 15.2% expressed a neutral view, suggesting limited skepticism regarding the media's role in this area. These findings highlight the vital function of effective media communication in motivating businesses to take proactive steps toward implementing DRR policies, underscoring the potential of media as a powerful tool for fostering awareness and action in the business community regarding disaster risk management.



*Section 5: Economic Decisions*

<b>Have you made any changes to your business practices in response to media coverage about disasters?</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
No	33	8.8
Yes	343	91.2
Total	376	100.0

The survey results regarding changes in business practices in response to media coverage about disasters indicate a strong inclination toward action among respondents. An overwhelming 91.2% of participants reported that they have made changes to their business practices due to media coverage, suggesting a high level of responsiveness to the information presented in the media. In contrast, only 8.8% of respondents indicated that they have not made any changes, reflecting a minimal segment of the population that remains unaffected by media narratives surrounding disaster preparedness. This finding underscores the significant role that media plays in influencing business behavior, reinforcing the idea that effective communication about disasters can motivate businesses to adopt proactive measures. The results highlight the importance of media coverage in shaping practices and enhancing resilience within the business community in the face of potential disaster risks.

<b>What is the primary factor that would most likely prompt you to adopt disaster preparedness measures? (Select one)</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Financial incentives	94	25.0
Government regulations	44	11.7
Media coverage on disaster impacts	238	63.3
Industry trends	00	00
Peer influence	00	00
Total	376	100.0

The survey results concerning the primary factor that would most likely prompt respondents to adopt disaster preparedness measures reveal a clear preference for media influence. A substantial 63.3% of participants indicated that media coverage on disaster impacts would be the most significant motivator for adopting preparedness measures. This finding underscores the crucial role of media in shaping public awareness and prompting action regarding disaster readiness. Financial incentives were the second most common motivator, with 25.0% of respondents



selecting this option, while only 11.7% cited government regulations as their primary prompting factor. These results suggest that while financial and regulatory factors do play a role, media coverage remains the dominant influence, highlighting the importance of effective communication strategies in fostering disaster preparedness and resilience within the business community.

<b>How likely are you to invest in disaster preparedness measures in the future based on media coverage?</b>		
	Frequency	Percent
Likely	71	18.9
Neutral	44	11.7
Unlikely	00	00
Very likely	103	27.4
Very unlikely	158	42.0
Total	376	100.0

The survey results regarding the likelihood of respondents investing in disaster preparedness measures in the future based on media coverage indicate a cautious outlook among participants. A significant portion, 42.0%, expressed that they are very unlikely to invest in such measures, suggesting a prevailing skepticism or lack of urgency regarding future investments in disaster preparedness. In contrast, 27.4% of respondents indicated that they are very likely to make future investments, while 18.9% reported being likely to do so, demonstrating some level of openness to proactive measures. Only 11.7% of participants remained neutral on the topic. These findings highlight a critical gap between awareness and action; despite recognizing the influence of media coverage, many respondents appear hesitant to commit resources to disaster preparedness. This emphasizes the need for more compelling narratives and actionable information from the media to encourage businesses to take the necessary steps for future resilience.

### **Conclusion**

The survey provides valuable insights into how businesses perceive disaster risk reduction (DRR) and the role media plays in influencing their preparedness strategies. A significant portion of respondents, 54%, indicated being somewhat aware of the disaster risks that could affect their businesses, while 25.5% reported being very aware. This demonstrates a general awareness of potential risks; however, a noteworthy gap between knowledge and action still exists.

Media coverage emerged as a critical factor in shaping perceptions and driving DRR adoption. An overwhelming 91.2% of respondents reported making changes to their business practices in response to disaster-related media coverage, reflecting a strong correlation between media influence and business behavior. Also, 63.3% cited media coverage as the primary motivator for



adopting disaster preparedness measures, far outweighing financial incentives (25%) and government regulations (11.7%). Despite this, 42% of respondents are still very unlikely to invest in future disaster preparedness based on media coverage alone, indicating a significant barrier to translating awareness into long-term preparedness efforts.

The media's effectiveness in motivating businesses to adopt DRR policies was acknowledged by 58.5% of respondents as very effective, yet skepticism persists. The fact that 26.3% found media only effective, and 15.2% remained neutral, highlights the varying degrees of influence media has across different sectors and regions.

Ultimately, while the media plays a crucial role in disaster awareness and influencing behavior, the findings underscore the need for more robust measures such as financial incentives, clearer regulations, and targeted outreach to convert awareness into sustained action. Closing the gap between understanding and actual investment in disaster preparedness will be essential for building resilience and safeguarding businesses against future risks.

#### *Suggestions and Recommendations*

To enhance disaster preparedness among businesses, it is recommended that media coverage be more focused on practical solutions and success stories to encourage action. Financial incentives and government regulations should be strengthened to support businesses in implementing disaster risk reduction (DRR) strategies. Also, targeted education and outreach programs should be developed, especially for businesses in sectors less engaged with media-driven preparedness. Collaboration between media, government, and industry leaders can ensure that information on DRR is not only widely disseminated but also acted upon, fostering a culture of proactive risk management.

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