
Introduction

Esperanza López Vázquez

Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos-UNISEP,
Pico de Orizaba No. 1,
Co. Volcanes,
62350 Cuernavaca, Morelos,
México
Email: esperanzal@buzon.uaem.mx

Nicolás Bronfman Cáceres

Engineering Science Department,
Universidad Nacional Andrés Bello,
Av. República 252, Santiago,
Chile
Fax: +562 661-5833
Email: nbronfman@unab.cl

Complex human behavioural response to different hazards has encouraged psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists and engineers to advance ideas and research behind the theory and practical understanding of the risk perception. Trust has been in risk research of the past decade among the most keenly studied topics. While certain analyses have identified a strong link between perceived risk and trust, other authors have identified the relationship as being tenuous at best. A goal of this Special Issue is to present different theoretical approaches in studying the relationship between perceived risk and trust.

Although opinions may differ with respect to the extent of the relationship between trust and perceived risk, few can question that overlooking trust leaves many risk communications studies wanting. A secondary aim of this issue is to draw together the principal techniques practitioners and researchers have developed to explore the environmental risk perception, the tools they use to design risk communication strategies, and the overall impact on the behaviour and society. A case in point is the effect of communications strategies covering environmental hazards, involving human activities or natural events, which have been hotly debated in scientific and social forums. It has raised a number of issues at all levels, since the devastation of disasters and risks in everyday modern life receives increasing media attention.

Each of the findings and reflections of authors in this Special Issue broach different areas of interest and study areas. We trust the effort of all involved in this special Issue who contributes to risk research literature and to understand how society reacts.