

MEASURING AND IMPROVING THE PUBLIC PERCEPTIONS ON NUCLEAR ENERGY

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to measure the public's perception on risk and benefit of nuclear power and to find ways to improve the perceptions. Latent Class Analysis is adopted for the perception measures, which quantify people's perception and reveal the perception structure. The measures resulted from Latent Class Analysis show that women perceive risks to be more existent and benefits to be less than men do. Moreover there is a tendency that if education level is high, perceived risk is low and perceived benefit is high. The perception of risk and benefit also depends on different channels through which people get information about nuclear energy. Comparing seven different information channels, the most effective ways of communicating with people to improve the risk and benefit perception of nuclear energy are found to be the visit to nuclear plants and the education through the regular schooling. Information dissemination through mass media is only effective to the benefit perception.