Risk perception amongst individuals with to hierarchical orientations

Cultural Theory argues that "thoughts about nature and other people are interwoven with worldviews and way of life" (Oltedal et al., 2004, p. 19). Concerning this idea, Thompson and associates (Thompson et al., 1990) analysed people's attitudes towards ecological systems by making a typology of different worldviews (i.e. ways of life): individualists, egalitarians, hierarchical culture, and fatalists. However, some people do not fit this pattern: "they have cut all relations to their social environment and live more or less like 'hermits'" (Oltedal et al., 2004, p. 21). The research of Thompson and his colleagues (Thompson et al., 1990) have shown that different views have different practical implications for risk perception. For example, people with hierarchical orientations are believed to accept risk as long as those risks are justified by the authorities. Individualists may perceive risks as opportunities (for example, risks related to new technologies). Egalitarians may oppose risks which could affect a large number of people or future generations, while Fatalists may try not to worry about things they cannot control (see Thompson et al., 1990, p. 62).

Note: See source document for full reference.

Applicable to:

Stakeholders: Worldviews, Attitudes toward authorities

Disaster Phases: Prevention

Types of Actors Concerned: Non-active citizens

Hazards: Natural hazards, Man-made non-intentional hazards or emergency situations, Man-made intentional hazards

Recommendations:

- Develop risk assessments methodologies, which consider cultural factors, the manner in which people cognitively process information and which employ a gender perspective

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Source

Deliverable D4.2 "Report on 'risk cultures' in the context of disasters" (page 18)