

Review of: "PERSPECTIVE: Improving Measurement of Public Objective Knowledge About Hazards"

Andrea Marchesi¹

¹ University of Bologna

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This article constitutes an accurate literature review which focuses on the best practices for measuring objective knowledge about risks. Although the author did not provide empirical analyses of the methods discussed, the article provides useful insight for those attempting to study people's objective knowledge. Nevertheless, few points should be addressed to increase the quality of this article, together with the correction of typos.

As concerns the introduction, I would suggest to account for the perspectives of authors such as Lupton and Slovic, in order to provide the readers with an accurate definition of objective knowledge about hazards and with the differences between this concept and that of subjective knowledge. Not few authors, such as the two mentioned, also account for the role of “experts” and for the public perception of the authority of such “experts” to define hazards. Furthermore, the author's position in the debate should be better clarified.

Turning to the second section, the author accounts for a wide set of empirical studies. However, including also theoretical perspectives to the analysis of the empirical associations may add further elements to the discussion (in particular, as concerns the differences between risk beliefs and objective knowledge). It should also be highlighted the role that objective knowledge plays in affecting attitudes and behaviour adopting a theoretical outlook, before introducing the relevant empirical examples and evidence.

The third section includes interesting and prominent discussions of the assumptions backing the main measurement approaches. Such a discussion is well organized and accounts for a wide range of assumptions. Yet, the section that focuses on content salience should better explain why action-related knowledge constitutes a fundamental concept for OK measurement and its application. Moreover, a deeper discussion about the limits of the so-called binary assumption in developing a OK scale (not limited to the “true/false/don't know” issue) and the factor analysis performed (focusing on both the concept of dimensionality and its mentioned variation across waves) may add value to the final version of the article. To conclude, for what concerns the fourth section, the recommendation entitled “Address logistical burdens and barriers” should be clarified and connected to previous paragraphs. Also the point which focuses on reliability measures needs to be deepened, providing suitable alternatives to Cronbach's Alpha.