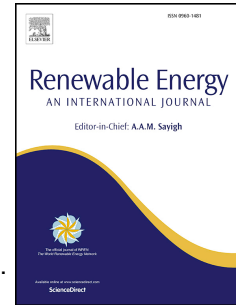


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# Social Acceptance of Renewable Energy Projects: A Contingent Valuation Investigation in Western Greece

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## ABSTRACT

National and international policies recognize that the simultaneous increase in energy demand and the negative impact of fossil fuels on the environment underscore the need for energy production from renewable energy sources. This research investigated the attitudes and willingness-to-pay for electricity from renewable electricity sources of communities in Western Greece. Questionnaires were collected from over 200 households. Cluster analysis revealed the presence of two groups, the second of which contained younger, better educated, and richer respondents with a more positive attitude to renewable energy. Multiple linear regression models predicted actual electricity payments and the willingness-to-pay for renewable energy projects using socioeconomic and attitudinal characteristics. Canonical Correlation Analysis allowed simultaneous assessment of socioeconomic and attitudinal characteristics with actual electricity payments and willingness-to-pay. Age, family size, and awareness on renewable energy were the variables more strongly associated with actual electricity payments, whereas age, income, and attitudes towards the future role, impacts and obstacles to renewable energy projects were more strongly associated with willingness-to-pay. The use of willingness-to-pay analyses to provide socio-economic context to renewable electricity policy was extensively discussed.

**Keywords:** Renewable Energy Sources; Contingent Valuation Method; Willingness to Pay; Social Acceptance.

## 1. Introduction

The availability of cheap fossil fuel energy has boosted the economic development of industrialized countries, but it has also contributed to environmental degradation and global climate change [1], which tends to impact poor population groups more

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