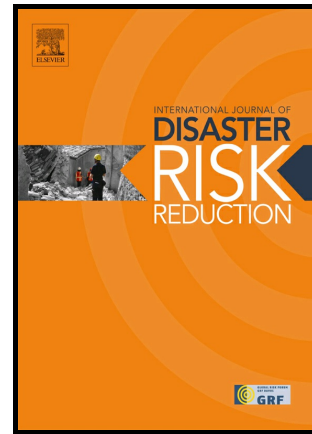


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The impact of an exhibition on risk awareness of the general public in mountainous areas

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of an exhibition on natural hazards on risk awareness of the inhabitants of the Ubaye Valley in southern France. Risk communication practices need to be effective to contribute to disaster reduction, but their impact is rarely evaluated. Using a pre-test/post-test research design as well as a longitudinal study, changes in awareness of adults, teenagers and children were measured. The responses to a questionnaire were analyzed using non-parametric tests. The questionnaire dealt with several factors determining or influencing awareness: attitudes to risk, previous experiences of emergencies, exposure to awareness raising, ability to mitigate/prepare/respond, worry level, self-reported awareness, hard knowledge and demographic characteristics. Generally, risk awareness was higher after visiting the exhibition. The exhibition had most impact on visitors that had experienced few natural hazards or that were little informed a priori. In contrast to teenagers and children, the awareness of adults increased only for risk in general and not for specific natural hazards. Moreover, the results show that the exhibition was

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