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# Risk Perception in a Multi-Hazard Environment: A Case Study of Maraval, Trinidad

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**Abstract:** *An in-depth understanding of perceptions of risk arising from hazards is critical to reducing the socio-economic impacts of hazards. How risk is perceived determines the pivotal decision elements in planning mitigation strategies, which in turn guide policy development and funding allocation. Despite the extreme vulnerability of small island developing states (SIDS) to the impacts of hazards, little is known about how SIDS populations perceive risk in multiple-hazard prone communities. Thus, to determine how risk is perceived and the factors influencing this perception, a survey of 119 persons in Maraval, Trinidad was undertaken. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) and regression analysis showed that risk perception of flooding is influenced significantly by previous experience. Hence, to minimise the development of inappropriate cultural norms, communities must be reminded of the dangers associated with occupying hazard-prone locations. High risk perception towards landslides, storms and earthquakes is significantly affected by low levels of income and education. This suggests that disseminating scientific information through educational programs should change people's beliefs about a hazard, and lead to the adoption of appropriate mitigation strategies. However, this educational initiative should be appropriate, given the preferred data reception mode of each of the income levels. The model did not show any significant relationship between risk perception and demographics such as age, sex or occupation.*

***Keywords:*** *Risk perception, Demographic factors, Disaster, Hazards, Caribbean, Maraval, Trinidad*