

## STUDY ON THE ATTITUDE OF NUCLEAR TECHNIQUE USERS

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This paper presents the results of a study on the attitude of nuclear technique users towards nuclear applications. The study was performed in Cuba during the period 2004-2006.

This study responds to the need of the Cuban Nuclear Energy Agency and Advanced Technologies to determine the public awareness and acceptance regarding nuclear applications and to identify the information needs of the public for communication design strategies.

On the other hand, studies performed by the International Energy Agency on the potential market for non-electric applications of nuclear energy in different countries, shows the different publics in Cuba with a non-defined attitude towards nuclear energy at present [1].

Considering this fact, a production research was designed and implemented with a social and psychological diagnostic character that allowed to identify the needs of the public object of study and to elaborate a communication strategy for the Cuban Nuclear Energy Agency and Advanced Technologies. This communication strategy was designed, for the first time, from the viewpoint of the public that is the object of this research.

Specialists and technicians were selected as the object of study public, also identified as a priority in the IAEA-TECDOC-1076 [2]. This public comprises all those people using radiations in their work place under the supervision of regulatory authorities, i.e. users and operators of nuclear technologies in the country in industrial institutions, health care, agriculture and in the environment.

The first stage of the research was to elaborate a methodology with specially designed tools for the mentioned study. The methodological research tools used in the research were a questionnaire (survey) and a semi-structured interview: The latter was aimed at obtaining complementary information of qualitative character [3]. The analysis of the results was made using the SPSS statistical processor.

The methodology allowed assessing the opinion of users regarding nuclear applications in terms of agreement or disagreement, acceptance or rejection, based on the questions answered on their knowledge, assessment and behaviour.

The main results of the study were the following:

- The image of nuclear applications is related to health and medicine (44,4), radiations (10%), negative associations 4,4%.
- 100% of the surveyed specialists and technicians accept the use of nuclear techniques and consider it as **very important** for medical diagnosis (94%), cancer therapy (93%) and for sterilizing medical tools and/or appliances (67%).

- The main information channels are the workers of the nuclear energy branch (74%), the educational system (72%) and in 3<sup>rd</sup> place the mass media (57%).
- The information on the use of nuclear techniques is **insufficient** in the country, (80%).

The research is a reference tool for future studies on public opinion related to nuclear energy in the country and it allowed elaborating a communication strategy for the Cuban Nuclear Energy and Advanced Technologies Agency which will favour its work as the leading authority of the Cuban nuclear programme.

#### REFERENCES

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