test the claim that any set of values are in fact utility weights. Secondly, quality-adjustment weights play a crucial role in determining cost-utility ratios. Different weights are elicited when different utility measurement techniques are used, so that cost-utility ratios can be susceptible to systematic bias depending upon the choice of method used. Examples of this weakness are provided from the published literature and reveal the extent to which cost/QALY ratios can vary in the analysis of a single intervention. Finally, the paper argues for a less technically demanding approach to the determination of preferences in the valuation of health. RESULTS: It specifies the minimum requirements for any quality-adjustment index and proposes the use of stated preference methods that have an established theoretical basis but that are also grounded in the practical day-to-day experiences of ordinary people. The case is demonstrated using VAS data collected in a UK national postal survey (n = 682) designed to establish values for EQ-5D health states but where paired comparisons methods have been used to establish health state values. CONCLUSIONS: The paper concludes that there is no basis for the continued reliance on utility weights in calculating cost/QALY ratios.

**STATISTICAL ISSUES IN DISCRETE CHOICE MODELLING**

**PMC18**

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Discrete choice models are used to elicit preference data from patients, medical and allied healthcare experts, and representative community samples. The resulting data are used in economic evaluation studies to derive health utility values. In most reported studies, statistical methodology issues are usually glossed over and standard assumptions are made. However, statistical properties of discrete choice models present some interesting challenges to these more traditional views. OBJECTIVES: In this presentation we focus on two areas fundamental to the conduct of any discrete choice study: the use of orthogonal designs in experimental design and interpretation of model results, and highlight some misconceptions surrounding their current use. METHODS: More specifically, we highlight, with examples, that important properties of orthogonal designs assumed to underlie methods used in discrete choice studies don’t hold in general. RESULTS: We also discuss implications of applying the usual random effects or conditional models to hold in general.

**DEVELOPMENT OF A NUTRITION RELATED QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE IN CHILDREN**

**PMC20**

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OBJECTIVES: To develop a scale of Nutrition Related Quality of Life (NRQoL) in healthy children of 6 to 12 years old to be used in nutritional interventional studies in Spain. METHODS: The process of development of the DANN scale (Escala DAnone de calidad de vida relacionada con la Nutrición en Niños/as) included a literature review to define potential dimensions, a qualitative research phase for the elicitation of concepts including interviews to clinicians, psychologists, Focus Group with the target population and expert meetings for the item generation (version one). The face and content validity was analyzed by means of a cognitive debriefing process (version two). The quantitative research phase consisted of an evaluation of the scale in 125 children followed by a standard item reduction (version 3). This new version was administered to 500 children from different sites in Spain to evaluate the psychometric properties (reliability, construct-related and content-related validity) of the final version. RESULTS: The internal consistency of the DANN self-administered scale appears satisfactory (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.78). The underlying dimension structure of the scale was conducted by a principal component analysis with varimax rotation. The three first dimensions explained 42% of the total variance and conceptually corresponded to the dimensions initially defined (construct-related validity). The first dimension gathers the attitudes and beliefs related with healthy nutrition, consisting of ten items (23%). The second dimension is related to the physical well-being and includes six items (11%). The third dimension is related to the psychos well-being and contains three...