**Checklist for designing quality stated preference valuation studies**

Use the checklist below to inform/guide the design of a stated preference valuation study or assess a study designed by a consultant. The checklist provides the different criteria/features of a study and indicates whether the criteria/feature is essential, preferred or additional and why. The checklist should be used to support the selection of a primary valuation study technique and can also help test the quality of preceding studies and their usefulness for inclusion in a benefit transfer study.

| Feature | Essential | Preferred | Additional | Key Considerations |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Survey Pre-Testing |  |  |  | Has pre-testing of the Stated Preference survey been carried out – for example via focus groups or one-on-one interviews? |
| Survey Piloting  |  |  |  | Has a survey pilot been undertaken to assess the information presented (ideally using 25 to 100 respondents)?  |
| Survey Method |  |  |  | Does the questionnaire design match the data collection method (e.g. telephone surveys do not work where visual aids are necessary and face-to-face interviews are preferred for complex, unfamiliar goods)? |
| Survey Sample Selection |  |  |  | Has a “probabilistic” design for sample selection been used (e.g. simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified sampling, cluster sampling)? |
| Survey Sample Size |  |  |  | Have the following number of respondents been surveyed, at a minimum? 250 - for ‘open ended’ Contingent Valuation (where respondents offer an unprompted, unrestricted willingness to pay);500 - for ‘closed ended’ (‘discrete choice’ or ‘referendum’) Contingent Valuation where respondents are presented with a ‘take it or leave it at this price’. The willingness to pay measure, and average and median willingness to pay are derived from all answers; and200 - per survey for Choice Modelling, depending on the number of attributes presented. |
| Survey - Split samples |  |  |  | Has a split sample approach to the key hypothesis testing been done (different people presented with different information to prove the impact of the difference)? If so, were the sample sizes of the subgroups considered large enough? The overall sample size in these cases should be larger than in ‘sample size’ above. This may be reduced where more information per respondent it collected (i.e. in Choice Modelling) |
| Survey Population covered: use and non-use  |  |  |  | Is it clear as to what populations the non-market values being measured relate to?  |
|  |  |  | For non-use surveys: is distance from the site in question determined for respondents, and then used appropriately in the analysis (i.e. testing for non-use ‘distance decay’ where more distance from the impact correlates with lower willingness to pay)? For user surveys: is distance from the site in question determined for respondents, or the frequency that they visit the site? |
| Information provision on good -nature/extent  |  |  |  | Is the information provided about the change being valued reasonably clear and unambiguous, with an appropriate use of aids such as text, photos, maps, charts etc.? |
|  |  |  | Has additional time been given to respondents to consider what they are being asked to value? For example, after being asked the valuation questions, were respondents asked to provide their answer once they have completed the rest of the survey or are they contacted at a later date to give their answer to the valuation question? |
| Policy Scenario |  |  |  | Is the policy change described clearly and is it likely to be perceived as realistic and feasible? For example, willingness to pay, rather than willingness to accept, tends to (but does not always) create a more credible scenario where respondents are more likely to believe the change proposed. |
| Multi-dimensional policy  |  |  |  | If the policy change is part of a more encompassing multidimensional policy that involves simultaneous or sequential change, is this recognised and addressed in the questionnaire design? For example, are respondents first asked to value the more inclusive policy and then to partition that total value across its components, or are at least made aware of the issue? |
| Payment Vehicle credibility |  |  |  | Is the payment vehicle clearly described and likely to be employed in real life decisions?  |
| Question format |  |  |  | Does the study use either a payment card or dichotomous choice question format? (Note: all payment vehicles have pros and cons associated with their use however these two are recommended) |
| Time period |  |  |  | Is it clear over what time period people have to pay (e.g. each visit, one off, every year, over x years)?  |
| Unit of value |  |  |  | Is the unit of value clearly defined? (e.g. $/visit, or $/visitor/yr, or $/household/yr)  |
| Substitutes |  |  |  | Is the issue of substitute availability addressed (e.g. are respondents reminded that alternative ‘goods, sites, experiences’ exist)? |
| Income constraints |  |  |  | Have people been reminded of their income constraints and the other things they may wish to spend their money on? |
| WTP positive bid analysis  |  |  |  | Have the reasons for positive bids been identified and dealt with appropriately in the analysis (e.g. strategic bids omitted)? |
| WTP protest bid analysis |  |  |  | Have the reasons for bids of ‘zero WTP’ been ascertained and their responses dealt with appropriately in the analysis (e.g. were protest bids omitted)? How high was the ‘protest rate’? Did it indicate a lack of acceptance of the scenario presented? |
|  |  |  | Have respondents been allowed to give their own reason (i.e. in the form of an open-ended question) rather than selecting from a list of predefined reasons why they gave a zero bid? |
| WTP understanding and ‘ex-post’ testing  |  |  |  | Have respondents been asked at the end about their understanding of questions and the credibility of the willingness to pay questions? |
|  |  |  | Have respondents been contacted after the survey and asked to confirm their willingness to pay values and reliability of their responses? It is recognised that respondents may have changed their values since the survey; however, confirmation of original responses could add a level of confidence to the results. |
| Biases/Aggregation issues |  |  |  | Does the study discuss and adjust for potential sampling biases in willingness to pay values? For example, skewed respondent age, employment or income classes, and interviewer bias etc. |
| Publication  |  |  |  | Have the details/results of this study been published in a refereed journal? A study would need to be reviewed and approved by 3 recognised experts to be published. If the study was completed by a non-academic group (e.g. consultants), this criterion is likely to be not applicable.  |