

Introduction

Having introduced stated preference and qualitative methods in the last section, this section considers the results of mixed method studies. The section contains two chapters, the first of which provides a general analysis of the results from qualitative studies. The second gives specific consideration to the important validity issue of scope sensitivity. Through consideration of both chapters the reader is able to form an opinion regarding the applicability of stated preference methods to the valuation of environmental goods and services. Innovative use of group-based methods to address some of the difficulties raised within this part are considered within Part III.

Summarizing the chapters in more detail, Chapter 5 is the longest chapter in this book. Prior to considering the results of qualitative studies, the chapter provides a framework for considering difficulties encountered using stated preference methods. This framework is then used to systematically review the results of a wide range of qualitative studies which have used qualitative methods to better understand the meaning of valuation responses and general public reaction to the methods used. Within the context of the findings from qualitative studies, Chapter 5 provides an indication of the type of scenarios which are most/least likely to be applicable to stated preference research.

Chapter 6 considers the issue of scope sensitivity over which there has been much debate and is seen by critics to be a key concern regarding the validity of stated preference methods. Whilst opinions remain divided over whether stated preference research provides valuations sensitive or sufficiently sensitive to the characteristics of the goods and services considered, Chapter 6 does not debate this further but instead explores through the use of mixed methods the reasons why a proportion of respondents do seem to neglect the specifics of the scenarios considered.

