

Healthcare Providers attitudes towards Cesarean Section

Maternal healthcare researchers were interested in surveying health care providers, including nurses, doctors and midwives, concerning their attitudes about child-birth. They were particularly interested in attitudes towards surgical delivery (using a procedure known as cesarean section) rather than delivering the baby more naturally. To pursue this objective they developed a long set of statements to be evaluated by participants.

For each item, respondents are requested indicate their choice from seven possibilities:

1. strongly disagree
2. disagree
3. mildly disagree
4. no opinion
5. mildly agree
6. agree
7. strongly agree

This kind of ordinal choice structure is known as a *likert scale*.

Their intention was to try to represent the attitudes by combining responses to various questions in numerical scores (e.g. averages) . Following that, they wished to compare provider groups on those scores. They also wished to establish the validity of their survey as a measure of attitudes.

What statistical advice can be offered?

Sample Questions

- Childbirth usually requires medical intervention
- If a woman has had a previous cesarean section, a scheduled repeat cesarean section is safer for the baby.
- Women who want a cesarean section in the absence of a medical indication should have to pay for it.
- For a woman, having a naturally managed birth is a more empowering experience than delivering by cesarean section.
- It is a woman's right to choose a cesarean section for herself, even in the absence of medical indication.
- If a woman has had a previous cesarean section, a scheduled repeat cesarean section reduces the chance of litigation.
- Home birth is more dangerous than hospital birth, even in an uncomplicated pregnancy.
- When a woman is in labour, the safest place for her to be is in the hospital.
- If available, for women at no apparent risk, I believe out-of-hospital birth centres can provide safe maternity care.
- Women should be encouraged to develop a birth plan.
- Women who deliver their baby by cesarean section miss an important life experience.