

A COMPARISON OF WILLINGNESS TO PAY TO PREVENT CHILD MALTREATMENT DEATHS IN ECUADOR AND THE UNITED STATES

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Background Assessing societal willingness-to-pay (WTP) is one approach for monetising potential benefits of an intervention. In the field of child maltreatment (CM), such estimates are scarce and have rarely been compared between populations from different countries.

Aims/Objectives/Purpose This study estimates WTP for an intervention intended to reduce the mortality risk associated with CM, comparing an Ecuadorian to US population.

Methods We used the contingent valuation method to ask WTP in increased annual taxes (in US\$) for a 50% reduction in CM mortality risk. The US population (n=117) was selected by random-digit dial in 2008. The Ecuadorian population (n=78) was selected by convenience from different shopping districts in 2012. The 2008 WTP estimates were inflated to 2012 US\$ for comparison. The maximum likelihood function was estimated using interval regression in STATA. Other covariates tested in the model included age, gender, race, and history of CM abuse.

Results/Outcomes The WTP for a 50% reduction in the risk of a child being killed by a caretaker or parent was \$167 (\$146–\$190, 95% CI) in Ecuador, and \$215 (\$185 to \$246, 95% CI) in the US, which was significantly different at $p=0.08$ when tested in the reduced model. In the full model, none of the covariates including country were significant.

Significance/Contribution to the Field WTP to prevent CM death varies marginally from one population to another, likely tempered by differences in purchasing power. Given the overall low probability of CM death, the value placed on a life saved from CM in either population is considerable.