Adam Harris

Having already agreed to supervise three students who approached me early, I have two/three further projects on offer. Minimal details are below, please contact me if you are interested and we can have a quick chat.

1) A collaboration with Mr Simon Gane, consultant rhinologist and Ear, Nose and Throat surgeon. Effective communication of probabilities is clearly important for eliciting fully informed consent prior to surgical procedures. In this project, we will undertake a survey to determine the way in which surgeons communicate such information to their patients. Subsequently, this will be compared with the understanding of these communications by members of the general public, as well as the implications for hypotethical consent (or otherwise) for a surgical procedure. Whilst this is the general idea behind the project, there is scope for the student to have plenty of involvement in determining the direction of the project.

2) An investigation into the effect of making multiple probability judgments on eventual cumulative judgments and decisions. As an example: if asked the likelihood of winning the lottery before the age of 80, an individual’s estimate is predicted to be lower than if asked to estimate the chance of winning it by age 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, and THEN 80. Whilst theorisinng can rely on Tversky and Koehler’s (1994) Support Theory, our initial effect might well be explained via more purely statistical mechanisms. We have initial evidence in support of this hypothesis, and are keen to demonstrate it in relation to a consequential outcome, within an applied setting. This applied setting will be betting behavior (e.g., cumulative bets).

An alternative follow-up to this work, would be to investigate the interplay of this effect with a simple framing manipulation. For example, people provide higher likelihood estimates for living to certain ages, when asked to evaluate the likelihood of ‘living to x years’ than ‘dying by x years’ (Payne et al., 2013).

This project will involve collaboration with Dr Magda Osman at Queen Mary University London, and Cat Rebak (user researcher at Deliveroo, and previous graduate of CoDeS).

REFERENCES

Payne, J. W., Sagara, N., Shu, S. B., Appelt, K. C., & Johnson, E. J. (2013). Life expectancy as a constructed belief: Evidence of a live-to or die-by framing effect. *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty, 46,* 27-50.

Tversky, A., & Koehler, D. J. (1994). Support theory: A nonextensional representation of probability judgment. *Psychological Review, 101,* 547–567.