

Series Editor's Note

Categorical data are ubiquitous across the social, behavioral, and biological sciences. Indicators of constructs, when they are categorical in nature, require specialized approaches to correctly estimate latent constructs. Outcomes, when they are categorical (e.g., Likert scales, diagnosis, race/ethnicity, and so on) also require special analysis approaches. Fortunately, my colleague and friend Kevin Grimm has risen to the occasion and provided all of us with the definitive and readily accessible resource for all things categorical (and count), including regression models and latent variable structural equation modeling (SEM). In fact, this is the first book devoted to SEM with categorical data. Drawing upon a rich background in conducting sold-out workshops on the topic, this book is extremely clear and well organized. The examples are real world with well-annotated syntax in *Mplus* and *lavaan* (and SAS code).

Kevin utilized a convention I started in the first edition of my longitudinal SEM book: equation boxes. Equations are necessary to provide a comprehensive presentation of the statistics. Equation boxes are a way to present the equations and thoroughly explain what each element of the equation represents without disrupting the flow of the narrative. They are a way to complement the discourse and allow Kevin to use his voice in a way that is clear, knowledgeable, and understandable. Pedagogically, he has organized the book to scaffold the concepts and techniques for handling categorical, count, and time-to-event data. Models covered run the gamut from manifest variable regression and path models to latent variable SEM, growth, and mixture models. Not only does Kevin provide annotated code for each model, he also explicates how to interpret the results of the analyses.

The regression and SEM approaches to categorical data span disciplines from education, psychology, sociology, and family studies to management, biology, public health, and social work. Graduate students and professionals will rely on this work as they handle

categorical data. I will add this resource to my own courses on SEM and place it within arm's reach for quick access.

As always, enjoy!

TODD D. LITTLE, PhD

Taking advantage of a snow day near Big Hole River in Melrose, Montana

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