
Meta-Statistics and Internet

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Abstract

Meta-Statistics is a term used synonymously for popular term meta-analysis, which refers to analysis of analyses. It is a statistical procedure of accumulating results across independent studies on similar topic. Unlike conventional methods, meta-analysis uses the summary statistics from individual studies as the data points. For example, if study Y reported a mean decrease in serum cholesterol of 10 mg/dl in 45 subjects and study Z reported a mean decrease of 6 mg/dl in 60 subjects, total n for analysis would be 2, however, these data would be based on a total of 105 subjects. Meta-analysis may prove to be a strong alternative to the more traditional review methods allowing quantitative conclusions to be reached. In conventional studies also a researcher while discussing the results incorporates exclusively similar relevant findings of other previous publications. Broadly speaking, the terms merger and integration reflect the spirit of meta-analysis and conventional review methodology respectively.

Application of meta-analysis techniques is now fast growing,

becoming popular and gaining acceptability. Internet has brought revolution in meta-analytic approach of research. Earlier, searching literature manually required enough time and patience, and sometimes due to non-availability, certain important publications could not be accumulated in meta-analyses. Internet search engine has now enabled fast search of literature and easy availability of full text of atleast recent publications. This has led to substantial increase in meta-analytic approach of accumulating research findings across studies. Meta-statisticians may feel obliged rather say, indebted of the Internet that is providing speedy and free access of the basic raw materials for shaping their conceptualization.

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References

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