Meta-analysis enables researchers to synthesize the results of independent studies so that the combined weight of evidence can be considered and applied. Increasingly meta-analysis is being used in medicine and other health sciences, in the behavioral and educational fields to augment traditional methods of narrative research by systematically aggregating and quantifying research literature.

Meta-analysis requires several steps prior to statistical analysis: formulation of the problem, literature search, coding and evaluation of the literature, after which one can address the statistical issues.

We here review some of the history of meta-analysis and discuss some of the problematic issues such as various forms of bias that may exist. The statistical techniques that have been used are nonparametric methods combining proportions, the use of different metrics, and combining effect sizes from continuous data.

For directions please refer to http://www.ics.uci.edu/about/visit/
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