

Meta-analysis of multinomial outcomes when categories are combined

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Meta-analysis of multinomial outcomes with variously grouped contiguous categories is a situation that typically arises when there is uncertainty as to how many categories is optimal for the outcome of interest. This may occur, for example, in the early stages of development of a standard categorical index, for example, a threshold standard. A Bayesian analysis that allows the estimation of individual category parameters, including any combined categories is presented, and illustrated with an example based on a cytogenetic technique.