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Exploring the Archives: A review of Pre-Existing Longitudinal Family Studies with Life Outcomes.

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ABSTRACT:

Although worthwhile, longitudinal studies are time-consuming and expensive. Furthermore, they are not always economically feasible or global events. Thus, repurposing pre-existing data is invaluable. However, many scholars are unaware that genetically informed data exists in public databases. Therefore, we aimed to understand better what family and pedigree data exist. To explore this data, we searched ICPSR and Harvard-Dataverse using terms including “family-trees,” “pedigree,” and “life outcomes.” We limited our search to studies with at least three generations with life outcomes. Although the systematic review is ongoing, we have identified studies from many countries (e.g., USA, China, Netherlands), with many outcomes (e.g., marriage, fertility, mortality, health) and contexts (e.g., geography, weather, culture, SES, century). Although pre-existing data have some notable disadvantages (including missing data), these preexisting datasets can include information on hundreds of thousands of individuals, spanning over 100 years, and thus contain more entries than any one researcher can collect in their lifetime. Indeed, they allow psychologists to study populations beyond their lifetime. In addition to these general observations, we will highlight the China Multi-Generational Panel Datasets (Campbell & Lee, 2017; Lee & Campbell, 2016), which provide data on five generations of individuals.

References:

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