

EDITOR'S CORNER

Two years ago when I was approached by colleagues Professor Amir Hossain (who was then the director of the Institute of Statistical Research, ISRT) and Professor Mahbub Latif to serve as the guest editor of a special issue on Biostatistics for the Journal of Statistical research (JSR), I gladly accepted the offer. There were two reasons that had prompted me to take such a decision. The first came from a sense of responsibility towards the academic community in Bangladesh, which I left more than a decade ago. The second reason, probably the more important one, was to promote biostatistical methods to the readers of JSR. Thanks to ISRT for giving me this wonderful opportunity.

In a developing nation of more than 150 million people where the term “health care for population” is often just a rhetoric, biostatistics and epidemiology, more generally, the study of public health should take the front seat in the reputed academic institutions. Having this belief in mind, I agreed with my minimal ability to assemble a wide range of articles dealing with contemporary issues in Biostatistical literature. I hope readers of this journal will be benefited from these articles authored by biostatisticians currently regarded among the bests in the discipline. Although this issue mainly focused on the theory and methods in Biostatistics, JSR regular issues entertain articles in both theory and applications of biostatistical methods.

In this special issue, **Professor Anastasios A. Tsiatis of North Carolina State University** shows the construction of locally efficient estimators in the presence of measurement errors in multiple co-variates through Monte-Carlo simulations. **Professor Dylan Small of University of Pennsylvania** deals with mediation analysis without sequential ignorability. He builds on his previous work on the instrumental variable approach in mediation analysis that allows for variation in effects across subjects and discusses assumptions required to obtain consistent estimates. The author also develops a method of sensitivity analysis for violations of the key assumptions. Dr. Small's paper is followed by a commentary by **Elizabeth Ogburn of Harvard University**. **Professor Mark van der Laan and colleagues of the University of California, Berkley** study estimation of the average causal effect of a treatment under experimental designs (randomized trials and observational studies) with treatment allocation potentially dependent on the pre-intervention covariates of all units included in the sample. For this scenario, they have defined efficient targeted minimum loss based estimators and established the desired asymptotic normality of these estimators. **Professor Michael Kosorok of University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill**, and colleagues introduce the Interactive Decision Committee method for classification when high-dimensional feature variables are grouped into feature categories and shows that the proposed method works better than a single large, unaggregated classifier in the presence of interactive feature category information. **Professor Peter Thall of the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center** reviews the conventional paradigm for early phase clinical evaluation of a new agent with several illustrative examples. **Professor M. Ataharul Islam of King Saud University**, and colleagues suggested several test statistics to test for

dependence in repeated binary outcomes. **Professor Jong-Hyeon Jeong of the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health**, and colleagues propose a maximum likelihood method to estimate the weight parameters of Harrington-Fleming's G^{ρ} test statistic from the observed data. The proposed statistic with estimated weights from the data is shown to be more powerful than the commonly used Harrington-Fleming test with $\rho = 1$. Finally, **Dr. Sachiko Miyahara of Harvard University**, and colleague propose two methods based on mixed models and multiple imputations to assess the effect of dynamic treatment regimes in two-stage settings on the longitudinal depression data.

I am confident that these articles, written by the top experts in the respective subject area will generate provocative thoughts among the readers. JSR is proud to present such ensemble of valued authors to the biostatistics community. I am highly indebted to the reviewers of the submitted manuscripts (Yen-Chih Hsu, Xuelin Huang, Jong-Hyeon Jeong, Ruosha Li, Brent Johnson, Eric Laber, Elizabeth Ogburn, Yu Cheng, and Roger Day). Without their dedicated time, it would have been impossible to publish this issue on time. Thanks to JSR Editorial Board and staff members for their hard work for the issue. Also, special thanks to Mahbub Latif for his special effort in keeping me on track.

Finally, due to space constraints, the special issue of JSR can entertain only a limited number of articles. Therefore, we had to reject many articles that would have otherwise made significant contribution. We sincerely apologize for our inability to publish these and hope that the authors will be able to find a home for their work.

On a separate note, in the year 2011, Biostatistics community lost one of its decorated veterans, Thomas Ten Have, who lost his battle with leukemia at the age of 53. Tom has been a good friend, mentor, and promoter of my work. Dr. Dylan Small's article in this issue is dedicated to the memory of Tom.

Rest in peace, Tom! You will always be in our heart.

Abdus S. Wahed
Department of Biostatistics
Graduate School of Public Health
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA 15261, USA
Email: wahed@pitt.edu