How to Make a Systematic Review’s Meta-analysis High Quality?

By Pigott, T.D., & Polanin, J.R.


A meta-analysis synthesizes the quantitative findings of many studies on a given topic. The guidance paper outlined the characteristics that made a meta-analysis in a systematic review high quality, discussing unbiased screening and coding procedures, establishing a protocol for carrying out a review, reasoning the best practices for computing effect sizes, and finally reported the data.

The authors concluded that “the role of researchers using systematic review and meta-analysis is to produce both high-quality analyses and to interpret those results in ways accessible to a wide audience. A high-quality systematic review and meta-analysis is difficult and time-consuming to produce; it is worth the effort to ensure that the results inform future research and policymaking through clear discussion of the results. Researchers should consider preparing different summaries of their review tailored to their audience of researchers, policymakers, and practitioners.”