Estimation of Causal Effects via Propensity Score Methods

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Large observational data sets are collected in many situations. Despite the fact that the data are observational, it often is of interest to draw inferences about certain causal effects. In this paper, we describe a statistical approach (Rubin's causal model) to the estimation of causal effects based on potential outcomes and propensity scores. Various examples are taken from the literature on observational studies and propensity score methods. Data from a Gallup Organization survey are analyzed.