Big Data and Artificial Intelligence Modeling for Drug Discovery

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Kim SangJin
Department of Big Data Science, Korea University Graduate School

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Genetics based putative drug targets of several brain diseases

Motivation & Background

Brain diseases such as schizophrenia (SPR), amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), and Alzheimer's disease (AD) pose significant therapeutic challenges, making it essential to identify effective drug targets and repurposing opportunities. In our study, we utilize Two-sample Mendelian randomization [1, 2], which leverages summary statistics from independent genome-wide association studies (GWAS) [3], to examine both qualitative and quantitative traits related to the diseases, including gene expression (eQTL) [4,5]. Additionally, we employ MetaXcan to predict gene expression effects in disease-relevant tissues using GWAS and eQTL data, thereby linking disease-associated gene expression patterns to functional outcomes (Table 1) [6]. By integrating these approaches, we aim to accelerate drug target discovery and repurposing by linking genetically driven expression changes to therapeutic potentials in human brain disorders.

Table 1. Information About the Dataset Used

Disease	GWAS Dataset	eQTL Dataset
SPR	ieu-b-5099	GTEx eQTL (49 tissues)
ALS	ieu-a-1085	
AD	ukb-b-14699	

Method

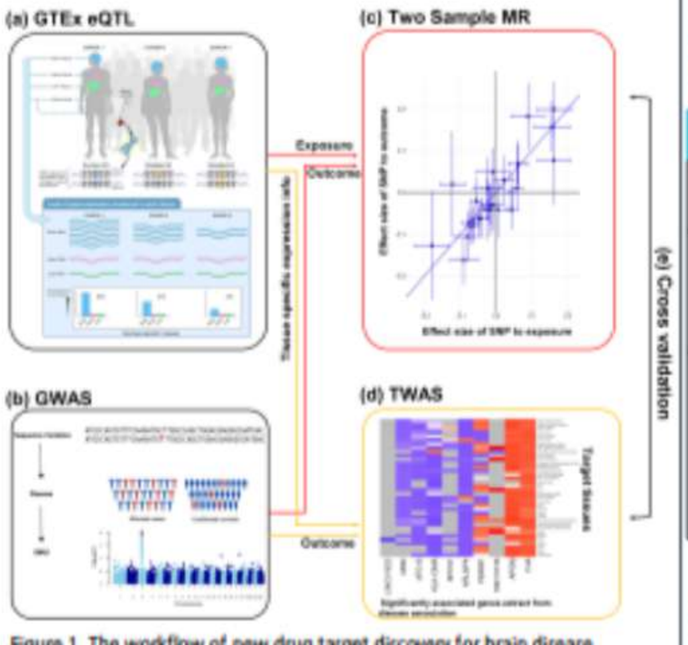


Figure 1. The workflow of new drug target discovery for brain disease

Result

We obtained GWAS summary statistics datasets for each disease (schizophrenia, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, and Alzheimer's disease) from the MRCIEU database, and tissue-specific eQTL data from GTEx for conducting MR and TWAS analyses (Figure 1, Table 1).

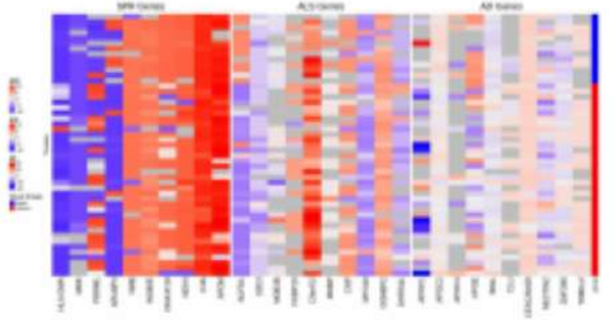


Figure 2. Heatmaps of gene expression z-score from MetaXcan results for SPR, ALS, and AD.

Each heatmap presents the z-scores of genes associated with SRP (left), ALS (middle), and ALS (right), as obtained from MetaXcan analysis. The z-scores indicate the strength and direction of the association between gene expression levels based on GWAS data and disease onset. Positive z-scores suggest that increased expression of the gene is associated with a higher risk of disease, while negative z-score indicate that increased expression is associated with a lower risk.

Table 2. Putative drug targets identified by Two-sample MR and MetaXcan analysis.

Disease	Genes	MR beta	MR pval	MetaXcan Brain tissue	Drug Target Potential
SPR	INO80E	1.34E-01	2.49E-13	7.500	
	C4A	1.79E-01	4.54E-26	10.206	
ALS	SCFD1	5.39E-02	9.69E-07	5.517	
	FKBP10	5.36E-03	2.35E-05	4.135	
	C9orf72	2.53E-02	1.90E-03	10.097	
	MYO19	3.91E-03	5.89E-05	4.203	
AD	APOC1	8.91E-03	4.81E-04	35.650	
	APOC2	1.49E-03	4.83E-02	5.022	
	APOC4	1.61E-03	5.02E-02	9.983	
	APOE	2.93E-02	8.55E-59	17.320	
	CEACAM19	6.14E-03	2.78E-03	5.890	
	TOM1L2	1.20E-02	1.06E-03	4.947	

Through integrated MR and TWAS analyses using GWAS and eQTL data, we identified novel drug target genes for schizophrenia, amyotrophic lateral

1. Project

Discovery and Validation of Drug Targets for Complex Diseases Based on Genetic Epidemiology

1. Project

Framework

Data Collection

Exposure

Outcome

GWAS Catalog

The NHGRI-EBI Catalog of human genome-wide association studies

ieu open gwas project

Data preprocessing

Input data preparing

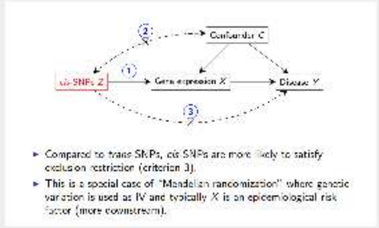
R GitHub

Split the gene into 50 chunk

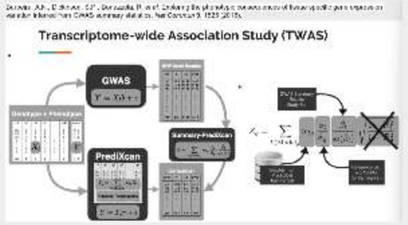
BASH THE BOURNE-AGAIN SHELL

Running Methods

MR

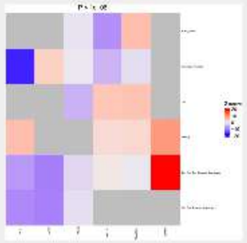


TWAS



Results validation

Visualization

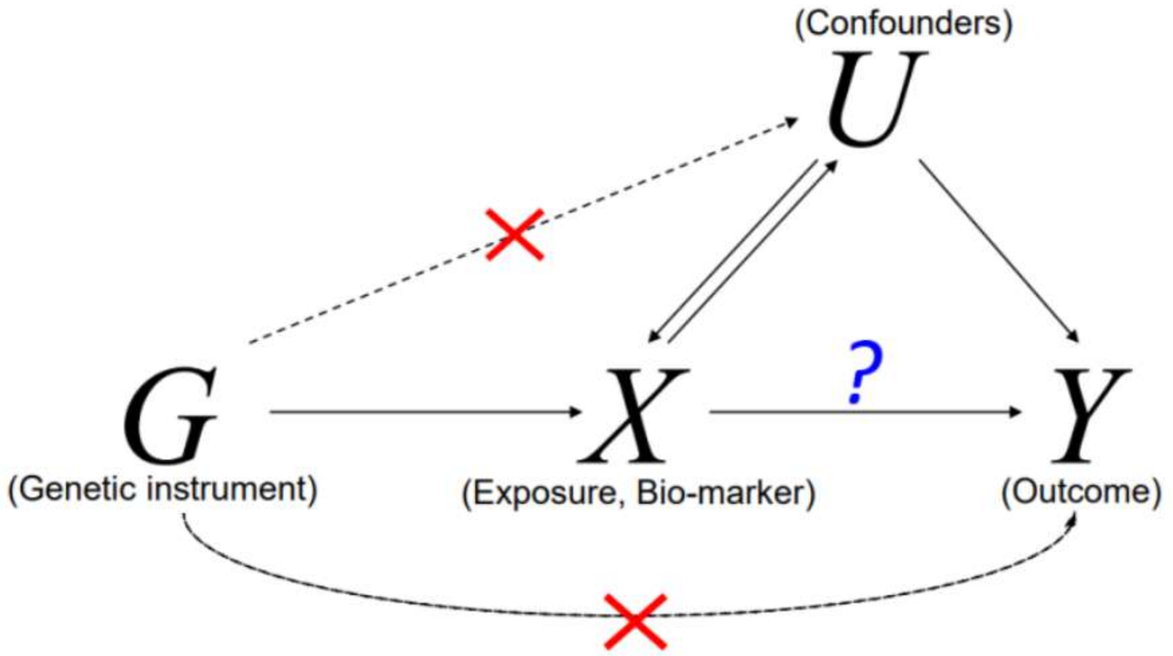


Searching DB

GeneCards® THE HUMAN GENE DATABASE

DRUGBANK Online

2. Method: Mendelian Randomization



Mendelian Randomization(MR) is an epidemiological research method that uses genetic variants to explain how modifiable exposures causally affect various outcomes. It is based on Mendel's laws of inheritance and utilizes instrumental variable (IV) estimation methods to reduce confounding and infer causal effects.

Virtual Environment Set up

System Langauge: Linux

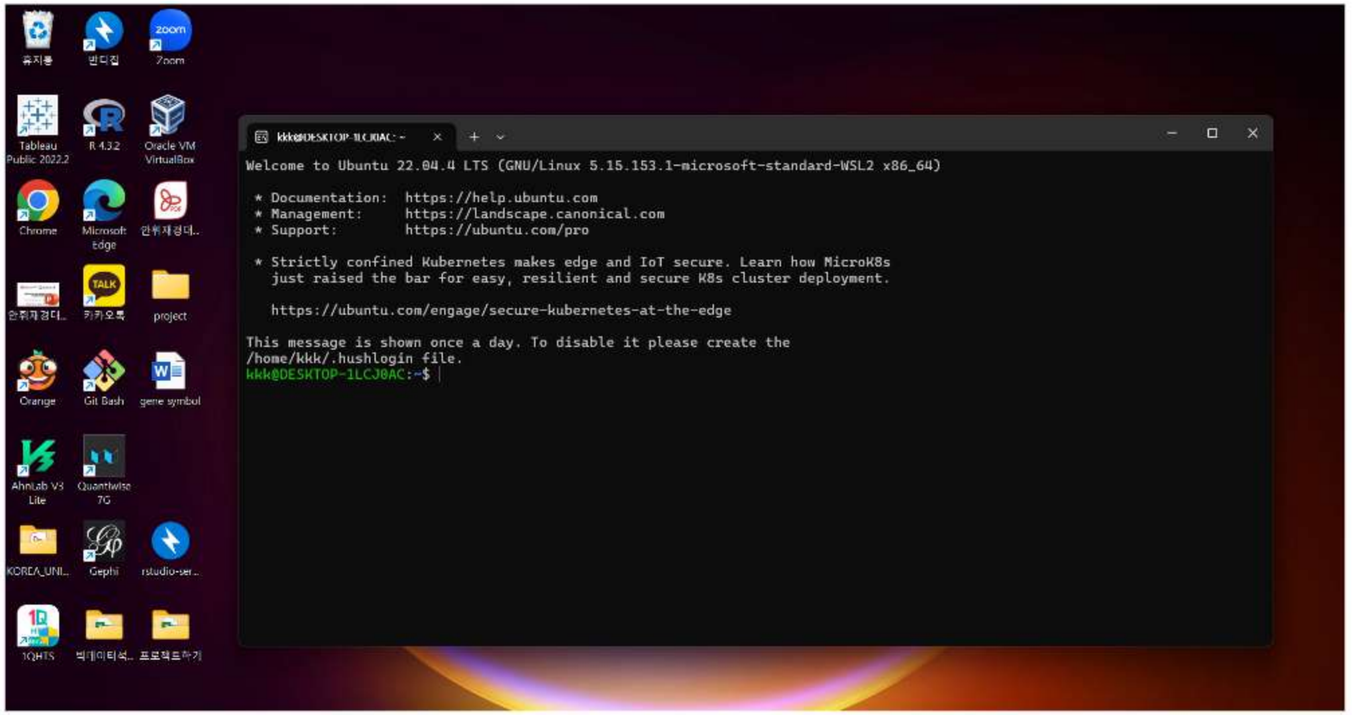
Many development tools and packages (e.g., Git, Python, Node.js) are better supported or easier to install on Linux. Using WSL allows for easy access to these tools.

We can use Linux through WSL (Windows Subsystem for Linux).

Virtual Environment Set up

Using WSL (Windows Subsystem for Linux), you can install several Linux distributions at MS store, one of which is Ubuntu. Ubuntu is one of the most popular Linux distributions, known for being user-friendly and easy to install and use.

Virtual Environment Set up



Ubuntu terminal and shell

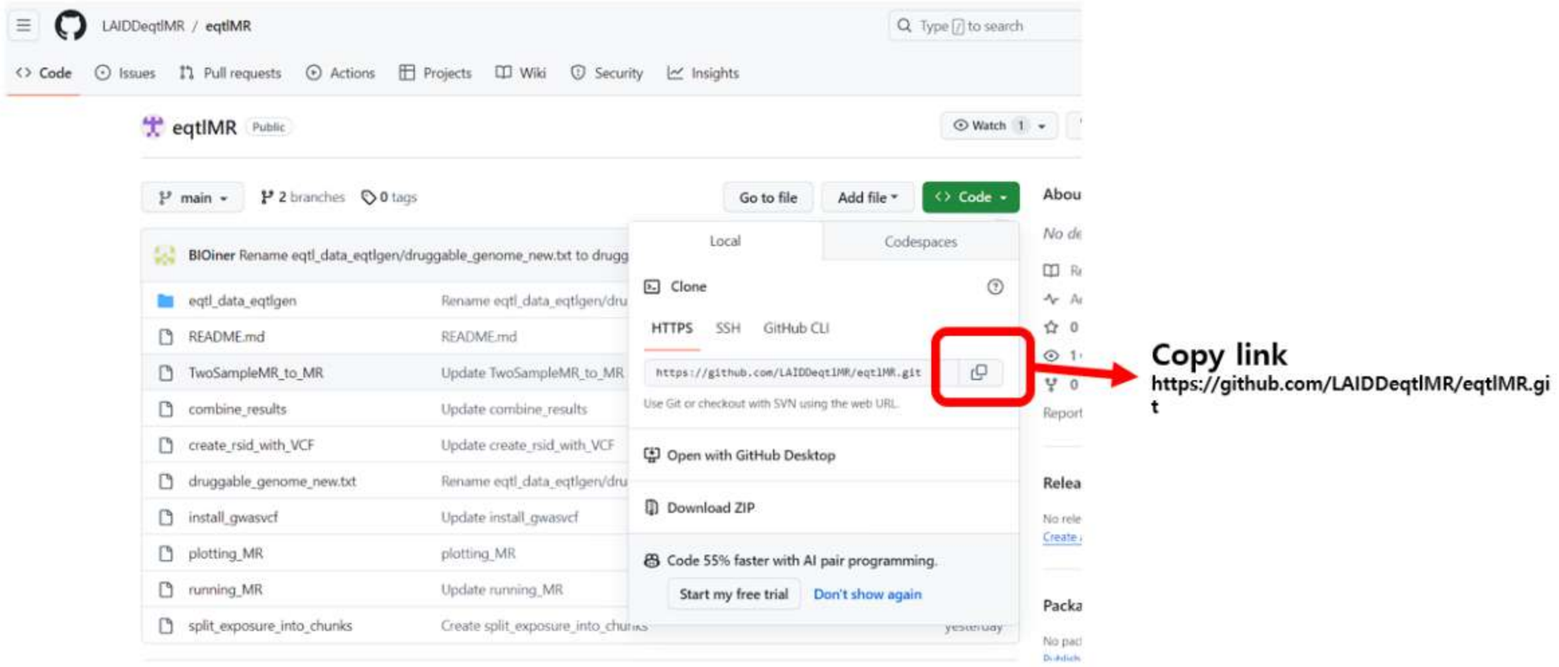
When a command is entered through the CLI(command line interface) in the terminal, the shell interprets it and passes it to the operating system for execution. The most widely used shell scripting language is Bash.

Virtual Environment Set up

Programming Language: R

Install R Studio on Ubuntu and install the necessary libraries for the project.

Virtual Environment Set up



https://github.com/LAIDDeqtlMR/eqtlMR

File Scripts from GitHub

Download the file for preprocessing and analysis from GitHub and modify it later as needed.

Files and Data

```
kkk@DESKTOP-1LCJ0AC:~/project$ ls
'aws copy folder'   eqtlMR
kkk@DESKTOP-1LCJ0AC:~/project$ cd eqtlMR
kkk@DESKTOP-1LCJ0AC:~/project/eqtlMR$ ls
AD                                TwoSampleMR_to_MR.R
MetaXcan_Heatmap_yh241022.R       eqtl_data_eqtlgen
PD                                plotting_MR.R
README.md                         running_MR.log
TGZ                               split_exposure_into_chunks
```

Download the entire script files from GitHub

~/project$ git clone https://github.com/LAIDDeqtlMR/eqtlMR.git

Download the data files from Web

~/project/eqtlMR/eqtl_data_eqtlgen$ wget https://molgenis26.gcc.rug.nl/downloads/eqtlgen/cis-eqtl/2019-12-11-cis-eQTLsFDR0.05-ProbeLevel-CohortInfoRemoved-BonferroniAdded.txt.gz

Files and Data

```
# Upload gene list to be excluded
if( file.exists("EXPOSURES.exclude") ) {
        EXPOSURES.exclude <- read.delim("EXPOSURES.exclude", head=F)[,1]
        print( paste( length(EXPOSURES.exclude), "genes to be excluded in the analysis" ) )
} else {
        EXPOSURES.exclude <- NULL
}

suppressPackageStartupMessages( {
  library(ieugwasr)
  library(gwasvcf)
  library(gwasglue)
  library(VariantAnnotation)
  library(dplyr)
  library(TwoSampleMR)
} )
source("~/project/eqtlMR/TwoSampleMR_to_MR.R")

# Use bundled binaries in genetics.binaRies
set_bcftools()
set_plink()

eQTLfolder <- '../eqtl_data_eqtlgen'
vcfFile <- 'ieu-b-7.vcf.gz'
vcfRSidx <- sub('.gz', '.rsidx', vcfFile)
```

Modify the file according to the research objectives.

~/project/eqtlMR/PD$ vi running_MR.R

Files and Data

```
kkk@DESKTOP-1LCJ0AC:~/project/eqtlMR$ cd eqtl_data_eqtlgen
kkk@DESKTOP-1LCJ0AC:~/project/eqtlMR/eqtl_data_eqtlgen$ ls
2018-07-18_SNP_AF_for_AlleleB_combined_allele_counts_and_MAF_pos_added.txt.gz
2019-12-11-cis-eQTLsFDR0.05-ProbeLevel-CohortInfoRemoved-BonferroniAdded.txt.gz
SPLIT
data_prep_eqtlgen.R
druggable_genome_new.txt
eqtlgen_exposure_dat_snps_5kb_window.txt
exposures.RData
prep_exposure_Rdata.R
readme.md
kkk@DESKTOP-1LCJ0AC:~/project/eqtlMR/eqtl_data_eqtlgen$ Rscript data_prep_eqtlgen.R
```

Execute a R file in a Linux environment

~/project/eqtlMR/eqtl_data_eqtlgen$ Rscript data_prep_eqtlgen.R
~/project/eqtlMR/eqtl_data_eqtlgen$ Rscript Prep_exposure_Rdata.R

Files and Data

```
kkk@DESKTOP-1LCJ0AC:~/project/eqtlMR/eqtl_data_eqtlgen$ ll
total 612208
drwxrwxrwx 1 kkk kkk      4096 Nov  5 14:59 ./
drwxrwxrwx 1 kkk kkk      4096 Oct 26 10:09 ../
-rwxrwxrwx 1 kkk kkk 240045342 Sep 12  2020 2018-07-18_SNP_AF_for_AlleleB_combined_allele_counts_and_MAF_pos_added.txt.gz*
-rwxrwxrwx 1 kkk kkk 322775879 Sep 12  2020 2019-12-11-cis-eQTLsFDR0.05-ProbeLevel-CohortInfoRemoved-BonferroniAdded.txt.gz*
drwxrwxrwx 1 kkk kkk      4096 Sep  7 11:15 SPLIT/
-rwxrwxrwx 1 kkk kkk      3618 Aug 24 19:24 data_prep_eqtlgen.R*
-rwxrwxrwx 1 kkk kkk    579245 Aug 24 19:24 druggable_genome_new.txt*
-rwxrwxrwx 1 kkk kkk  53222689 Aug 31 22:48 eqtlgen_exposure_dat_snps_5kb_window.txt*
-rwxrwxrwx 1 kkk kkk  10261073 Aug 31 23:43 exposures.RData*
-rwxrwxrwx 1 kkk kkk       518 Aug 24 19:24 prep_exposure_Rdata.R*
-rwxrwxrwx 1 kkk kkk      2363 Aug 24 19:24 readme.md*
```

Split Large File to several chunks

In Ubuntu, we analyzed the data file "eqtlgen_exposure_dat_snps_5kb_window.txt" in R. However, since the file size is large, it may take more than a day to run on a personal laptop. To avoid potential errors during this long process, we splited the file into several smaller files.

Files and Data

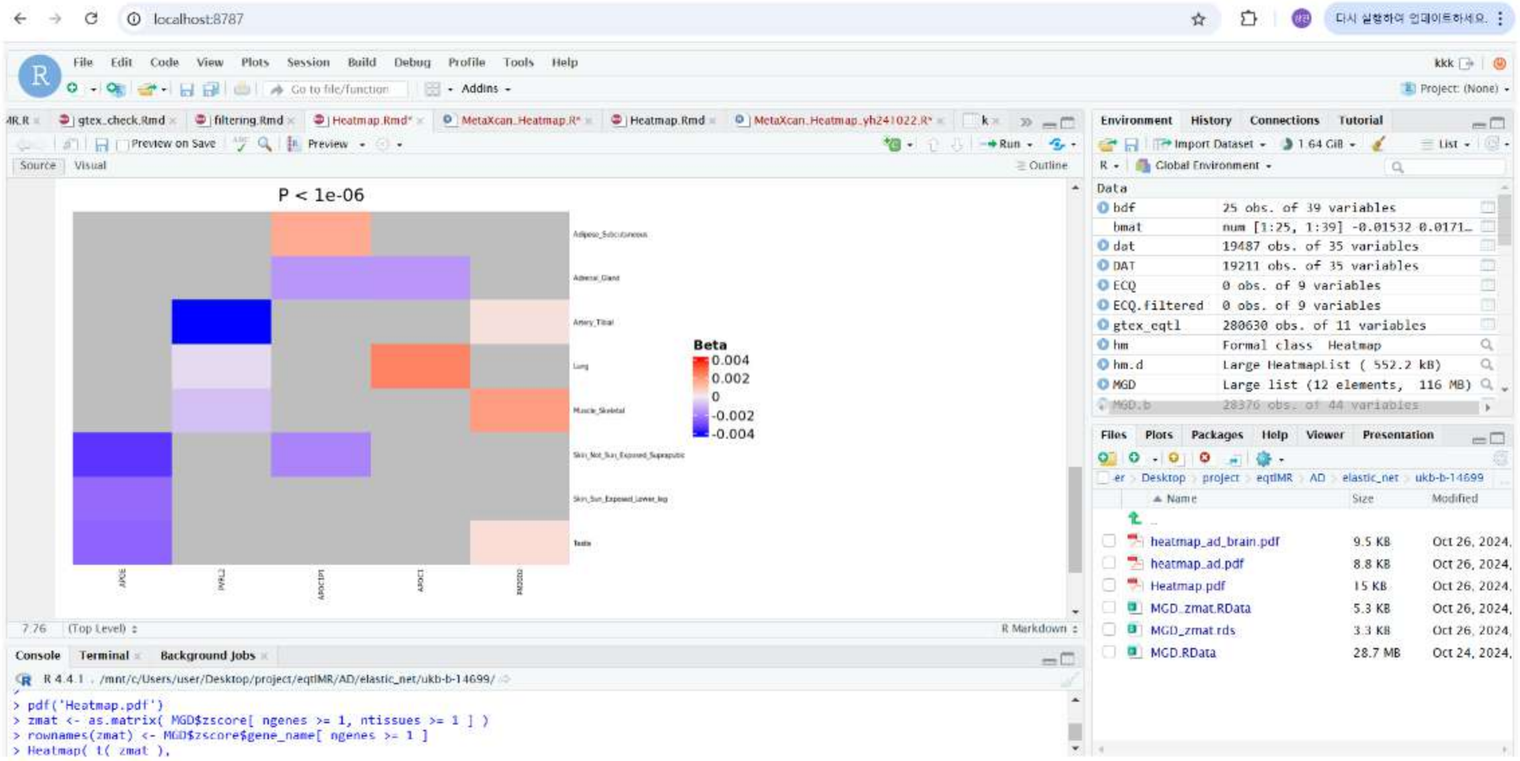
```
Converting:
 - exposure: BMP8A
 - outcome: ieu-b-7
 - obtaining LD matrix
Converting:
 - exposure: BMP8B
 - outcome: ieu-b-7
 - obtaining LD matrix
Converting:
 - exposure: C1QB
 - outcome: ieu-b-7
 - obtaining LD matrix
Converting:
 - exposure: C1QC
 - outcome: ieu-b-7
 - obtaining LD matrix
Converting:
 - exposure: CD52
 - outcome: ieu-b-7
 - obtaining LD matrix
Converting:
 - exposure: CNR2
 - outcome: ieu-b-7
 - obtaining LD matrix
Converting:
 - exposure: COL8A2
 - outcome: ieu-b-7
 - obtaining LD matrix
```

Recording specific outputs to a log file

By logging error outputs to the file, it becomes possible to trace and analyze problems that occur during exection. This is very useful in the debugging process.

~/project/eqtlMR/PD$ Rscript running_MR.R 100 151 2> running_MR.log

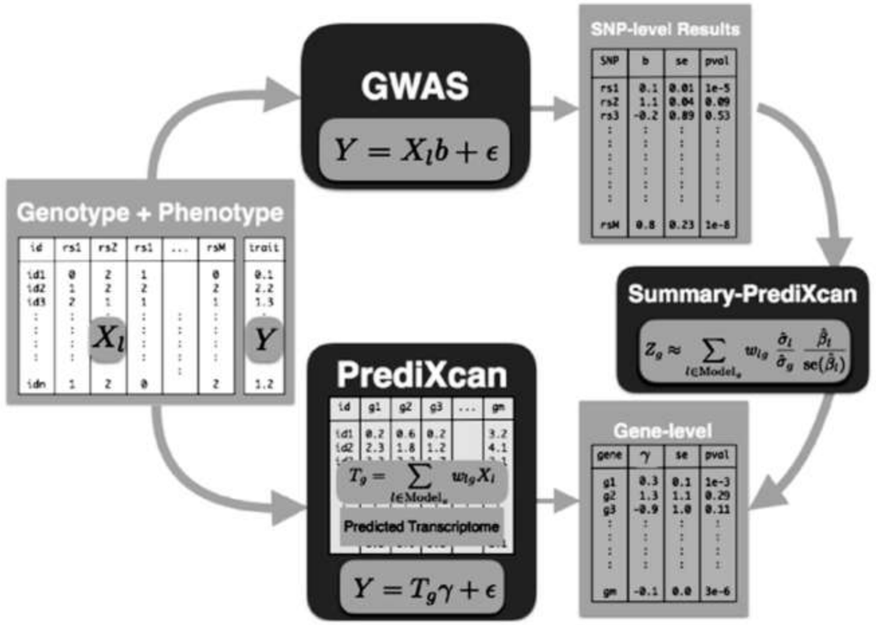
Visualizaton



To perform data visualization using RStudio

check the location of input data and the current working directory, and then execute the file

3. Method: MetaXcan using Elastic-net



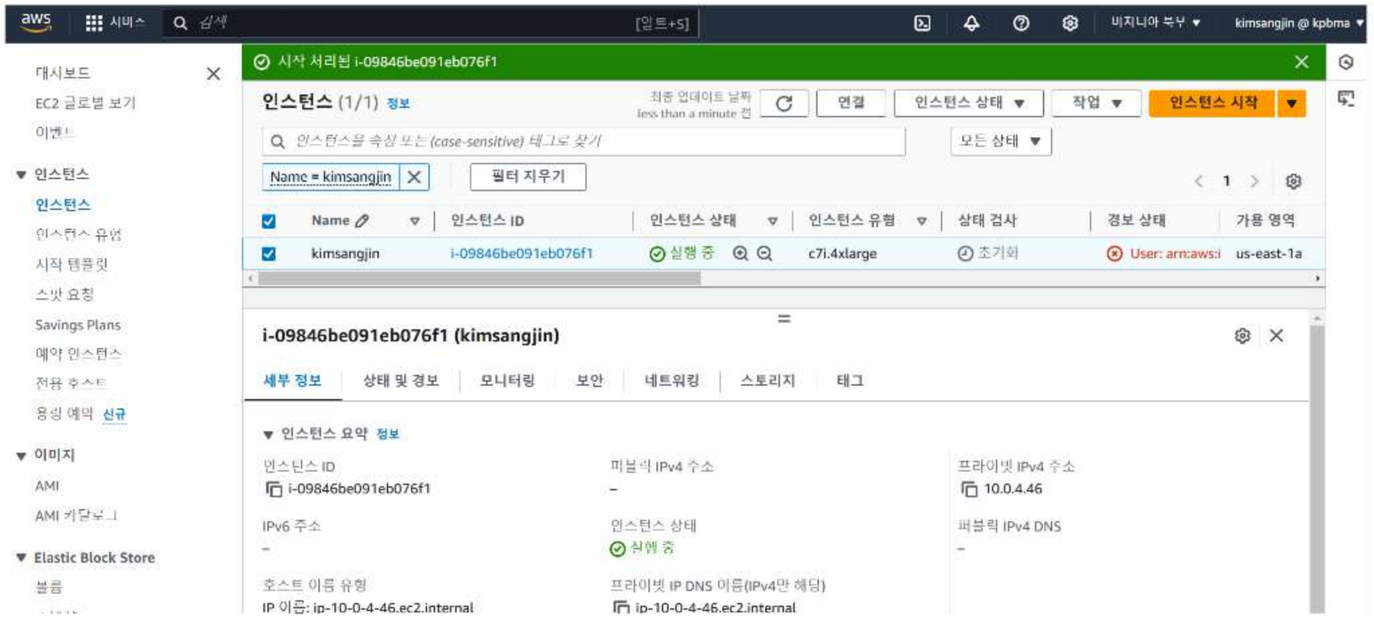
While Mendelian Randomization (MR) analyzes causal relationships to assess the impact of specific exposures (e.g., genetic variants) on outcomes (e.g., diseases), MetaXcan focuses on estimating the relationship between gene expression and phenotypes, primarily predicting phenotypes through changes in gene expression. MetaXcan uses Elastic Net regression to enable more accurate predictions through variable selection and model generalization.

AWS EC2

AWS EC2 (Amazon Elastic Computer Cloud)

Amazon EC2 was to shared data and files and to facilitate efficient work processes. In AWS EC2, instances can be configured according to specific needs by selecting CPU, memory, storage capacity, and more. In a team project, team members are assigned different instance IDs, and they can use Amazon S3, an object storage service accessible from multiple instances, to store and share data.

AWS EC2



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AWS EC2

```
exec /bin/bash

cd
$ (base) ssm-user@ip-10-0-4-46:/var/snap/amazon-ssm-agent/7993$
(base) ssm-user@ip-10-0-4-46:/var/snap/amazon-ssm-agent/7993$ cd
(base) ssm-user@ip-10-0-4-46:~$ aws s3 ls s3://c1-kimsangsu/
                           PRE BMI/
                           PRE GTEx_eQTL_v6/
                           PRE GTEx_eQTL_v8/
                           PRE Scripts/
                           PRE eqtlMR/
                           PRE imgyeongtae/
                           PRE jeonyoonkyoung/
                           PRE kimhanseol/
                           PRE kimsangjin/
                           PRE kwageunsang/
                           PRE leesangbin/
                           PRE leesangwoo/
                           PRE leeyoungho/
                           PRE ohsangho/
                           PRE seojeongwoo/
                           PRE seoyujin/
2024-09-19 01:34:44 1562828800 GTEx_Analysis_v8_eQTL.tar
2024-09-19 01:52:59  761794560 GTEx_v8_finemapping_DAPG.tar
2024-10-10 09:33:08   64383709 ieu-b-40.vcf.gz
2024-10-10 09:33:00    1436138 ieu-b-40.vcf.gz.tbi
```

AWS EC2 (Amazon Elastic Computer Cloud)

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AWS EC2

```
name: imlabtools
channels:
  - defaults
  - conda-forge
  - moble
  - bioconda
dependencies:
  - python=3.7
  - pandas=0.25.3
  - scipy=1.4.1
  - numpy=1.18.1
  - bgen_reader=3.0.2
  - cyvcf2=0.20.0
  - pyliftover=0.4
  - statsmodels=0.11.1
  - h5py=2.10.0
  - pyarrow=0.11.0

conda_env.yaml (END)
```

Virtual environment set up

In AWS EC2, you can create a virtual environment for analysis, download the necessary packages, and activate that environment.

AWS EC2

Activate virtual environment: base -> imlabtools

~$ conda activate imlabtools

AWS EC2

```
(imlabtools) ssm-user@ip-10-0-4-46:~/MetaXcan/data/models/eqtl/elastic_net_models$ sqlite3 en_Whole_Blood.db
SQLite version 3.45.3 2024-04-15 13:34:05
Enter ".help" for usage hints.
sqlite> .tables
extra    weights
sqlite> select * from extra limit 10;
ENSG00000107937.18|GTPBP4|protein_coding|0.5|2104|24|0.0366340298886669|0.0224653310386084|0.0404125602037416|0.0435295174066307|
ENSG00000047056.14|WDR37|protein_coding|0.5|2318|34|0.0491349306695081|0.0217900785169448|0.0579285093268138|0.0532738962927104|0
ENSG00000185736.15|ADARB2|protein_coding|0.5|3230|55|0.537938483086166|0.0351473126676324|0.54685445199173|0.0942968626323208|0.5
ENSG00000067057.16|PFKP|protein_coding|0.5|3147|104|0.352844105799609|0.0306095459062362|0.354936792570739|0.0968548814341331|0.5
ENSG00000107959.15|PITRM1|protein_coding|0.5|3047|149|0.182050778394024|0.0505416509923129|0.200355788815078|0.0928749011165862|0
ENSG00000175395.15|ZNF25|protein_coding|0.5|1127|74|0.067005114761698|0.0216797006126537|0.0735676568750153|0.0346745037954423|0.
ENSG00000075407.18|ZNF37A|protein_coding|0.5|1008|29|0.00590026667060109|0.042129315478544|0.0340513718031655|0.0430130983798336|
ENSG00000196693.14|ZNF33B|protein_coding|0.5|1171|11|0.0878721008623828|0.0279676250631596|0.0983797637389995|0.0756689005194867|
ENSG00000273008.1|RP11-351D16.3|lincRNA|0.5|1801|35|0.0192321270984825|0.0321640745585494|0.0247405734676357|0.0364857199644234|0
ENSG00000196793.13|ZNF239|protein_coding|0.5|2187|46|0.0430923871643102|0.0369885870331947|0.0409975579547647|0.0537591955574293|
```

Using SQL to manage .db files

It is stored as a .db file because it is advantageous for managing complex data structures and allows for easy access to required data through queries. Files that end with .db typically represent database files, and in many cases, they are SQLite database files. These files are used to store and manage structured data.

AWS EC2

```
(imlabtools) ssm-user@ip-10-0-4-46:~/MetaXcan/AD/harmonized$ ll
total 432176
drwxr-xr-x 2 ssm-user ssm-user     4096 Oct 15 13:29 ./
drwxr-xr-x 5 ssm-user ssm-user     4096 Oct 24 07:56 ../
-rwxr-xr-x 1 ssm-user ssm-user      985 Oct 15 13:26 Harmonization.bash*
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 34229299 Oct 15 12:52 ieu-b-5067.vcf.1.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 22497100 Oct 15 13:03 ieu-b-5067.vcf.10.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 21900674 Oct 15 13:04 ieu-b-5067.vcf.11.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 21047683 Oct 15 13:06 ieu-b-5067.vcf.12.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 16137101 Oct 15 13:07 ieu-b-5067.vcf.13.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 14494129 Oct 15 13:08 ieu-b-5067.vcf.14.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 12582006 Oct 15 13:09 ieu-b-5067.vcf.15.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 13710426 Oct 15 13:09 ieu-b-5067.vcf.16.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 11484071 Oct 15 13:10 ieu-b-5067.vcf.17.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 12699903 Oct 15 13:11 ieu-b-5067.vcf.18.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user  9835536 Oct 15 13:12 ieu-b-5067.vcf.19.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 37458666 Oct 15 12:54 ieu-b-5067.vcf.2.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user  9892687 Oct 15 13:13 ieu-b-5067.vcf.20.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user  5867599 Oct 15 13:14 ieu-b-5067.vcf.21.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user  5910930 Oct 15 13:15 ieu-b-5067.vcf.22.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 31827289 Oct 15 12:55 ieu-b-5067.vcf.3.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 32486328 Oct 15 12:56 ieu-b-5067.vcf.4.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 29036832 Oct 15 12:58 ieu-b-5067.vcf.5.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 29498854 Oct 15 12:59 ieu-b-5067.vcf.6.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 25771381 Oct 15 13:00 ieu-b-5067.vcf.7.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 24673443 Oct 15 13:01 ieu-b-5067.vcf.8.dump.harmonized.gz
-rw-r--r-- 1 ssm-user ssm-user 19295309 Oct 15 13:02 ieu-b-5067.vcf.9.dump.harmonized.gz
-rwxr-xr-x 1 ssm-user ssm-user       75 Oct 15 13:20 multirun.bash*
-rw------- 1 ssm-user ssm-user   142032 Oct 15 13:33 nohup.out
```

Large Chromosome data

You need to process the files containing chromosome information for analysis. The total size of all the files is 426 gigabytes, and each chromosome is approximately 20 gigabytes, with the largest being 34 gigabytes. Since processing each chromosome individually is too large, you plan to divide each chromosome into 10 batches, creating batches from 0 to 219. Once the processing is complete, you will regroup them back into sets of 10.

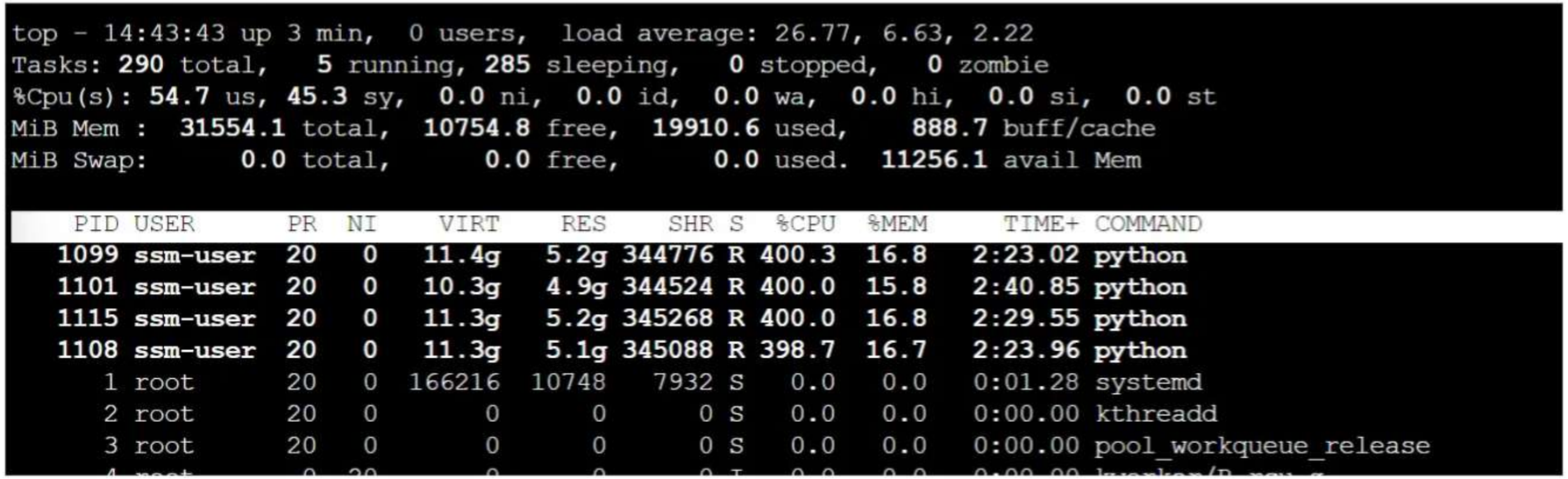
AWS EC2

```
#!/bin/bash

LIST=$1
SCRIPT=$2

JOBmax=4
for L in `cat ${LIST}`
do
        bash ${SCRIPT} $L &
        J=`jobs | grep Running | grep -v parallel.bash | wc -l`
        while [ $J -eq $JOBmax ]
        do
                sleep 60
                jobs > jobs.list
                J=`grep Running jobs.list | grep -v parallel.bash | wc -l`
        done
done

# All jobs submitted, check whether still running
J=`jobs | grep Running | grep -v parallel.bash | wc -l`
while [ $J -gt 0 ]
do
        sleep 60
        jobs > jobs.list
        J=`grep Running jobs.list | grep -v parallel.bash | wc -l`
done
```

Parallel Computing

The JOBmax variable is used to limit the maximum number of jobs that can run simultaneously to n.
This value should be adjusted based on the computer's performance.

AWS EC2



top

To monitor the CPU and memory usage of your currently running code using the top command.

4. Results

Visualization: Heatmap

Result

We obtained GWAS summary statistics datasets for each disease (schizophrenia, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, and Alzheimer's disease) from the MRCIEU database, and tissue-specific eQTL data from GTEx for conducting MR and TWAS analyses (Figure 1, Table 1).

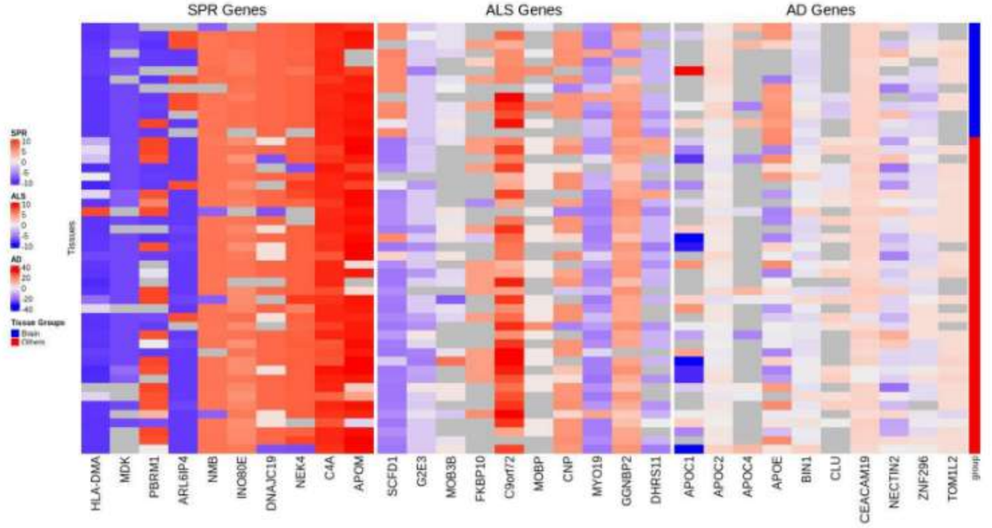


Figure 2. Heatmaps of gene expression z-score from MetaXcan results for SPR, ALS, and AD.

Each heatmap presents the z-scores of genes associated with SRP (left), ALS (middle), and ALS (right), as obtained from MetaXcan analysis. The z-scores indicate the strength and direction of the association between gene expression levels based on GWAS data and disease onset. Positive z-scores suggest that increased expression of the gene is associated with a higher risk of disease, while negative z-score indicate that increased expression is associated with a lower risk.

4. Results

Cross Validation with DataBase

To compensate for the limitations of in-silico methods, validation using public databases or reference literature is necessary.


Linux™


R Studio®


python
Programming


SQL


GitHub


aws

Project Details

You can all see more details about the AIDD project through the QR code above, which links to my Notion page.

More Interest:AlphaFold

If you're curious about simple code for protein structure prediction using AlphaFold and other methods, try using this QR code to access Google Drive.

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Thank You

Kim SangJin
Department of Big Data Science, Korea University Graduate School