Evaluation of the probability of causation approach for lung cancer: Scoping review

Snowball citation retrieval

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# OpenAlex snowball citation retrieval

The full dataset screened with ASReview includes n = 1128 records, out of which n = 23 were labeled as relevant.

After fetching metadata from OpenAlex for the 23 relevant records using their DOIs, a total n = 22 records with complete OpenAlex metadata were identified. This means that one record[1](#ref-Choudat2003) from the relevant dataset was not included for snowball citation retrieval.

The openalexR package was used to perform citation snowballing to identify additional relevant studies by searching both cited references and citing papers for the relevant records and converted snowball search results into a structured dataframe format for further processing. The initial snowball dataset contains n = 1058 records.

Retracted papers were excluded and only articles and preprints were kept, resulting in the exclusion of 1 review paper from the initial set of relevant papers,[2](#ref-guidotti2002) for which nonetheless all its relevant citations had already been obtained. Therefore, the size of the snowball dataset was n = 840 records, out of which:

* seed papers (relevant in ASReview dataset) n = 21,
* citing papers (forward citations) n = 445,
* referenced papers (backward citations) n = 366, and
* papers connected in both directions n = 8.

The original OpenAlex records from the PoC search (n = 550) was loaded to deduplicate previously identified records.

Those records in the original OpenAlex dataset screened with ASReview were removed from the new snowball citation dataset, resulting in (n = 813) remaining records.

# Deduplication

The combined set of studies (PubMed + Embase + OpenAlex) screened with ASReview (n = 1128) with the snowball citations (n = 813) contains **n = 1941 records**. These will be deduplicated using the Automated Systematic Search Deduplicator (ASySD).[3](#ref-ASySD2023)

Automatic deduplication resulted in n = 1927 unique records and n = 12 potential duplicates requiring manual review.

After manual deduplication, the dataset contained n = 1917 records.

Remaining duplicate records sharing the same DOI (n = 6) were identified.

Hierarchical deduplication by DOI, title, and abstract with source priority (PubMed > Embase > OpenAlex) was appliead and HTML tags from abstracts were cleaned, followed by filtering out records with malformed abstracts. Subsequently, new records from snowball search (those with URL-based IDs) were identified and processed, resulting in the removal of those already present in the ASReview dataset, followed by assigning new sequential duplicate IDs. As a result, there were n = 588 new snowball records to be added.

# Final dataset

The original dataset was combined with the retrieved snowball records to create the final dataset. The final combined dataset has **n = 1716 records** (original: n = 1128, new: n = 588).

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For specific information on the operating system, R version, and R package versions used, please refer to the R/session folder in the GitHub repository.