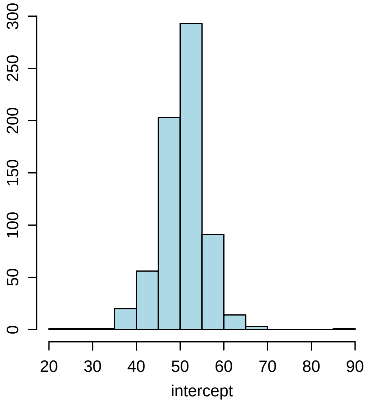
Linear Mixed Effects Models

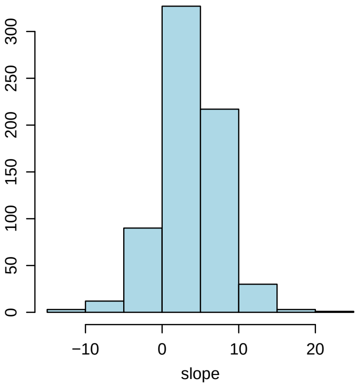
Peter Hoff
Duke STA 610

Heterogeneity of $\hat{\beta}_j$'s for the NELS data

$$\hat{\beta}_j = (\mathbf{X}_j^T \mathbf{X}_j)^{-1} \mathbf{X}_j^T \mathbf{y}_j$$

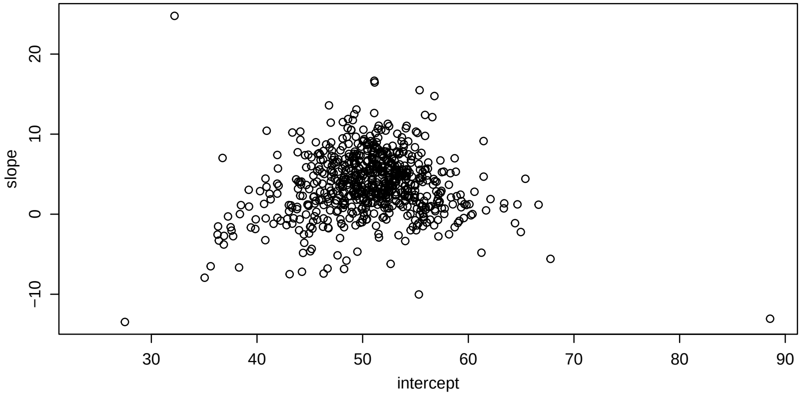
```
hist(BETA.OLS[,1]) hist(BETA.OLS[,2])
```





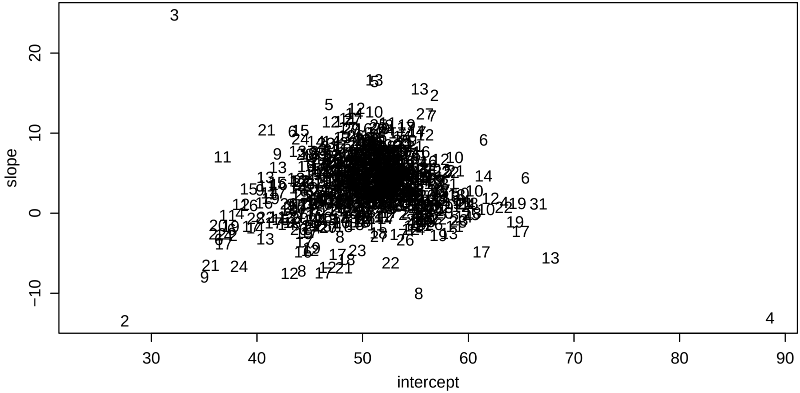
Heterogeneity of $\hat{\beta}_j$'s

```
plot(BETA.OLS)
```



$$\text{Var}[\hat{\beta}_j] = \sigma^2(\mathbf{X}_j^T\mathbf{X}_j)^{-1}$$

Heterogeneity as a function of sample size



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Modeling heterogeneity

In the hierarchical normal model:

$\theta_j = \{\mu_j, \sigma^2\}$

$y_{i,j} = \mu_j + \sigma^2$, $\{\epsilon_{i,j}\} \sim$ i.i.d normal(μ_j, σ^2)

$\mu_1, \ldots, \mu_m \sim$ i.i.d. normal (μ, τ^2)

What should we do for a hierarchical regression model?

$\theta_j = \{\beta_j, \sigma^2\}$

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$\beta_1, \ldots, \beta_m \sim$ i.i.d. $p(\beta_j)$

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HLM

MVN model for across-group heterogeneity:

$$\boldsymbol{\beta}_1, \ldots, \boldsymbol{\beta}_m \sim \text{i.i.d. multivariate normal}(\boldsymbol{\beta}, \Sigma_\beta)$$

The parameters in this model include

- $\boldsymbol{\beta}$, an across-group mean regression vector
- Σ_β, a covariance matrix describing the variability of the $\boldsymbol{\beta}_j$'s around $\boldsymbol{\beta}$.

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Ad-hoc estimates

```
## rough estimate of beta
apply(BETA.OLS,2,mean,na.rm=TRUE)

## (Intercept)          xj
##   50.618228    3.672483
```

This estimator of β equally weights all schools.
Generally, we want to assign a lower weight to schools with less data.

```
## rough estimate of Sigma_beta
cov(BETA.OLS,use="complete.obs")

##             (Intercept)        xj
## (Intercept)   26.795851  1.001585
## xj             1.001585 15.818939
```

This is a *very rough* estimate of Σ_β:

- It ignores sample size differences;
- It ignores the variability of $\hat{\beta}_j$ around β_j.

$$\text{Var}[\hat{\beta}_j\text{'s around } \hat{\beta}\ ] \approx \text{Var}[\beta_j\text{'s around } \beta\ ] + \text{Var}[\hat{\beta}_j\text{'s around } \beta_j\text{'s }]$$

$$\text{Sample covariance of } \hat{\beta}_j\text{'s} \approx \quad \Sigma_\beta \quad + \quad \text{Estimation error}$$

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Fixed and random effects

Recall the following:

$$\mu_j \sim N(\mu, \tau^2) \Leftrightarrow \mu_j = \mu + a_j, \; a_j \sim N(0, \tau^2)$$

Analogously,

$$\boldsymbol{\beta}_j \sim N(\boldsymbol{\beta}, \Sigma_\beta) \Leftrightarrow \boldsymbol{\beta}_j = \boldsymbol{\beta} + \boldsymbol{b}_j, \; \boldsymbol{b}_j \sim N(\mathbf{0}, \Sigma_\beta)$$

Therefore, our hierarchical model says that

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{y}_j &= \mathbf{X}_j \boldsymbol{\beta}_j + \epsilon_j \\ &= \mathbf{X}_j(\boldsymbol{\beta} + \boldsymbol{b}_j) + \epsilon_j \\ &= \mathbf{X}_j \boldsymbol{\beta} + \mathbf{X}_j \boldsymbol{b}_j + \epsilon_j \end{aligned}$$

- $\boldsymbol{\beta}$ is sometimes called a *fixed effect*, as it is fixed across all groups.
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A model with fixed and random effects is called a *mixed-effects model*.

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Within-group covariance

Recall the HNM:

$$y_{i,j} = \mu + a_j + \epsilon_{i,j}$$

What was the within-group covariance?

$$\begin{aligned}
\mathrm{Cov}[y_{i_1,j}, y_{i_2,j}] &= \mathrm{E}[(y_{i,j} - \mu)(y_{i_2,j} - \mu)] \\
&= \mathrm{E}[(a_j + \epsilon_{i_1,j})(a_j + \epsilon_{i_2,j})] \\
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&= \mathrm{E}[a_j^2] + 0 + 0 + 0 \\
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Within-group covariance, matrix form

More generally, we might want the *within-group covariance matrix*:

$$\mathbf{y}_j = \begin{pmatrix} y_{1,j} \\ \vdots \\ y_{n,j} \end{pmatrix} \quad \mathrm{Cov}[\mathbf{y}_j] = \begin{pmatrix} \mathrm{Var}[y_{1,j}] & \mathrm{Cov}[y_{1,j}, y_{2,j}] & \cdots & \mathrm{Cov}[y_{1,j}, y_{n,j}] \\ \mathrm{Cov}[y_{1,j}, y_{2,j}] & \mathrm{Var}[y_{2,j}] & \cdots & \mathrm{Cov}[y_{2,j}, y_{2,j}] \\ \vdots & & & \vdots \\ \mathrm{Cov}[y_{1,j}, y_{n,j}] & \mathrm{Cov}[y_{2,j}, y_{n,j}] & \cdots & \mathrm{Var}[y_{n,j}] \end{pmatrix}$$

Our calculations have shown that for the HNM

$$\mathrm{Cov}[\mathbf{y}_j] = \begin{pmatrix} \sigma^2 + \tau^2 & \tau^2 & \cdots & \tau^2 \\ \vdots & & & \vdots \\ \tau^2 & \tau^2 & \cdots & \sigma^2 + \tau^2 \end{pmatrix}$$

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Dependence and conditional independence

Thus $p(\mathbf{y}_j|\boldsymbol{\beta}, \Sigma_\beta, \sigma^2)$, unconditional on $\mathbf{b}_j$, is

$$\mathbf{y}_j \sim \text{multivariate normal}(\mathbf{X}_j\boldsymbol{\beta}, \mathbf{X}_j\Sigma_\beta\mathbf{X}_j^T + \sigma^2\mathbf{I}).$$

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Dependence and conditional independence

Marginal dependence: If I don't know $\boldsymbol{\beta}_j$ (or $\mathbf{b}_j$), then knowing $y_{i_1,j}$ gives me a bit of information about $\boldsymbol{\beta}_j$, which in turn gives me information about $y_{i_2,j}$, and so the observations are dependent: My information about $y_{i_2,j}$ depends on the value of $y_{i_1,j}$ if I don't know $\boldsymbol{\beta}_j$.

Conditional independence: If I know $\boldsymbol{\beta}_j$, then knowing $y_{i_1,j}$ doesn't give me any information about $y_{i_2,j}$, and so they are independent. My information about $y_{i_2,j}$ does not depend on the value of $y_{i_1,j}$ if I know $\boldsymbol{\beta}_j$.

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Consider the case that $\mathbf{x}_{i,j} = \{1, x_{i,j}\}$ and $\boldsymbol{\beta}_j = \{\beta_{0,j}, \beta_{1,j}\}$.

- $\mathbf{X}_j$ is $n_j \times 2$
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\text{Cov}[y_{1,j}, y_{2,j}] &= \mathbf{x}_{1,j}^T \Sigma \mathbf{x}_{2,j} \\
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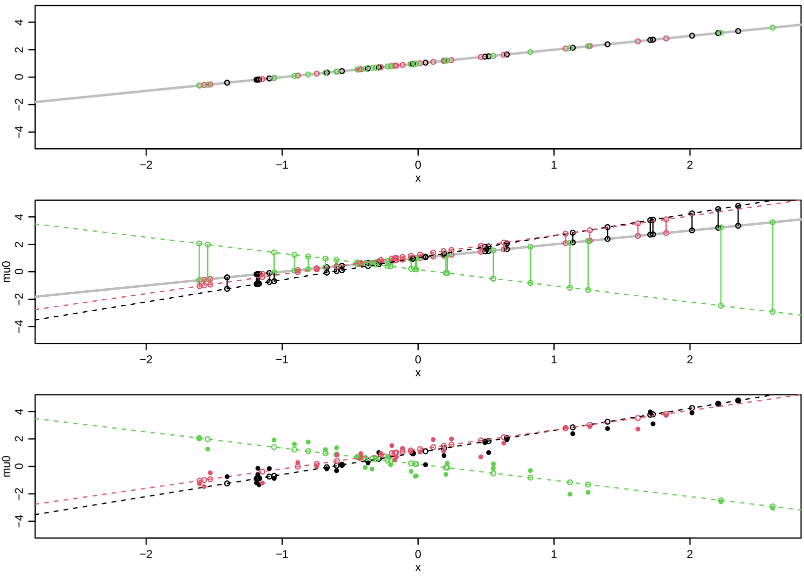
Sources of variation and correlation



Fitting a HLM

Assuming data are independent *across* groups, the likelihood at a value $(\boldsymbol{\beta}, \Sigma_\beta, \sigma^2)$ can be computed as follows:

0. Set `ll`= 0.
1. Set `ll`= `ll` + `ldmvnorm`($\mathbf{y}_1$, $\mathbf{X}_1\beta$, $\mathbf{X}_1\Sigma_\beta\mathbf{X}_1 + \sigma^2\mathbf{I}$).
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m. Set `ll`= `ll` + `ldmvnorm`($\mathbf{y}_m$, $\mathbf{X}_m\beta$, $\mathbf{X}_m\Sigma_\beta\mathbf{X}_m + \sigma^2\mathbf{I}$).

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Fitting the HLM with lmer

```
library(lme4)
fit.lme<-lmer( y.nels ~  ses.nels + (ses.nels | g.nels),REML=FALSE)
```

```
summary(fit.lme)

## Linear mixed model fit by maximum likelihood  ['lmerMod']
## Formula: y.nels ~ ses.nels + (ses.nels | g.nels)
##
##      AIC      BIC   logLik deviance df.resid
##  92553.1  92597.9 -46270.5  92541.1    12968
##
## Scaled residuals:
##     Min      1Q  Median      3Q     Max
## -3.8910 -0.6382  0.0179  0.6669  4.4613
##
## Random effects:
##  Groups   Name        Variance Std.Dev. Corr
##  g.nels   (Intercept) 12.223   3.496
##           ses.nels     1.515   1.231    0.11
##  Residual             67.345   8.206
## Number of obs: 12974, groups:  g.nels, 684
##
## Fixed effects:
##             Estimate Std. Error t value
## (Intercept)  50.6767     0.1551  326.70
## ses.nels      4.3594     0.1231   35.41
##
## Correlation of Fixed Effects:
##          (Intr)
## ses.nels 0.007
```

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Extracting results - fixed effects

```
### fixed effects
beta.hat<-fixef(fit.lme)
beta.hat

## (Intercept)    ses.nels
##   50.676702    4.359396
```

```
### variance-covariance of fixed effects estimates
VBETA<-vcov(fit.lme)
VBETA

## 2 x 2 Matrix of class "dpoMatrix"
##              (Intercept)     ses.nels
## (Intercept) 0.0240607576 0.0001310263
## ses.nels    0.0001310263 0.0151611175
```

```
### standard errors
sqrt(diag(VBETA))

## (Intercept)    ses.nels
##   0.1551153   0.1231305

### t-values
beta.hat/sqrt(diag(VBETA))

## (Intercept)    ses.nels
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Extracting results - variance components

```
### within-group variance
s2.hat<-sigma(fit.lme)^2
```

```
### across-group variance
VarCorr(fit.lme)$g.nels
```

```
##             (Intercept)  ses.nels
## (Intercept)  12.2232568 0.4888068
## ses.nels      0.4888068 1.5148390
## attr(,"stddev")
## (Intercept)    ses.nels
##    3.496177    1.230788
## attr(,"correlation")
##             (Intercept)  ses.nels
## (Intercept)   1.0000000 0.1135954
## ses.nels      0.1135954 1.0000000
```

```
### remove the S4 ugliness
VB<-matrix(VarCorr(fit.lme)$g.nels,2,2)

VB
```

```
##            [,1]      [,2]
## [1,] 12.2232568 0.4888068
## [2,]  0.4888068 1.5148390
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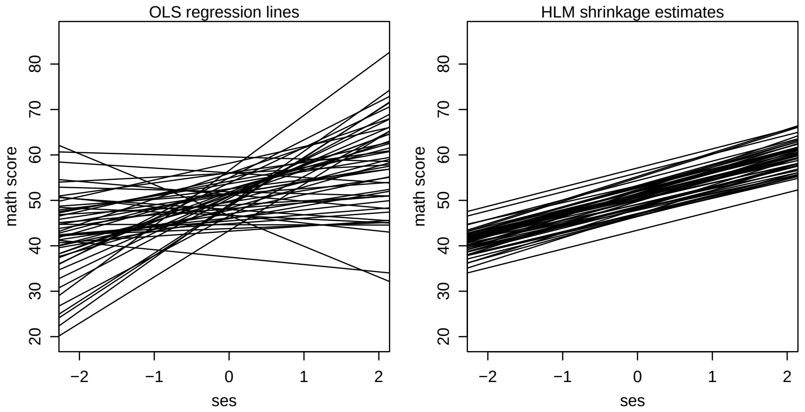
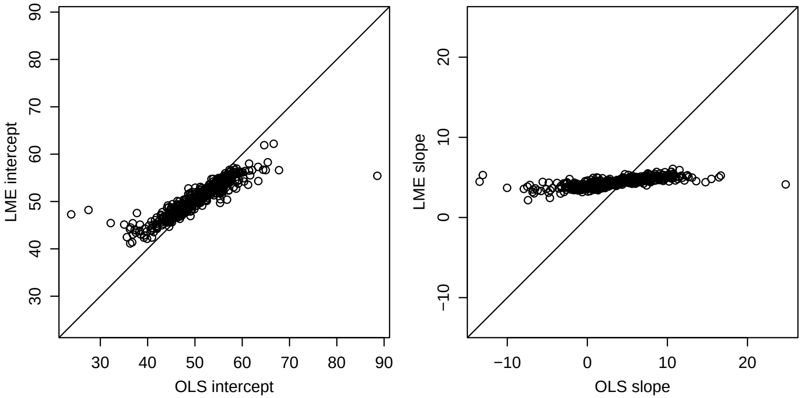
```

Random effects estimates

```
B.LME<-as.matrix(ranef(fit.lme)$g.nels)
BETA.LME<-sweep( B.LME , 2 , beta.hat, "+" )
```



Range of shrinkage estimates



Formula for shrinkage estimates

Intuitively:

$$\tilde{\boldsymbol{\beta}}_j = w_j \hat{\boldsymbol{\beta}}_j + (1 - w_j)\hat{\beta}$$

where w_j depends on Σ_b and $\sigma^2(\mathbf{X}_j^T \mathbf{X}_j)^{-1}$:

- w_j is big if $\sigma^2(\mathbf{X}_j^T \mathbf{X}_j)^{-1}$ small compared to Σ_b;
- w_j is small if $\sigma^2(\mathbf{X}_j^T \mathbf{X}_j)^{-1}$ large compared to Σ_b.

This is almost right. Averaging has to be done using matrices. The BLUP is:

$$\tilde{\boldsymbol{\beta}}_j = \left(\mathbf{X}_j^T \mathbf{X}_j / \sigma^2 + \Sigma_\beta^{-1}\right)^{-1} \left(\mathbf{X}_j \mathbf{y}_j / \sigma^2 + \Sigma_\beta^{-1} \boldsymbol{\beta}\right)$$

In practice, $\sigma^2, \Sigma_\beta, \boldsymbol{\beta}$ are usually replaced with $\hat{\sigma}^2, \hat{\Sigma}_\beta, \hat{\boldsymbol{\beta}}$.

Quiz: How does $\tilde{\beta}_j$ vary with $\mathbf{X}_j$, σ^2 and Σ_β?

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where w_j depends on Σ_b and $\sigma^2(\mathbf{X}_j^T \mathbf{X}_j)^{-1}$:

- w_j is big if $\sigma^2(\mathbf{X}_j^T \mathbf{X}_j)^{-1}$ small compared to Σ_b;
- w_j is small if $\sigma^2(\mathbf{X}_j^T \mathbf{X}_j)^{-1}$ large compared to Σ_b.

This is almost right. Averaging has to be done using matrices. The BLUP is:

$$\tilde{\beta}_j = \left(\mathbf{X}_j^T \mathbf{X}_j / \sigma^2 + \Sigma_\beta^{-1}\right)^{-1} \left(\mathbf{X}_j \mathbf{y}_j / \sigma^2 + \Sigma_\beta^{-1} \boldsymbol{\beta}\right)$$

In practice, $\sigma^2, \Sigma_\beta, \boldsymbol{\beta}$ are usually replaced with $\hat{\sigma}^2, \hat{\Sigma}_\beta, \hat{\boldsymbol{\beta}}$.

Quiz: How does $\tilde{\beta}_j$ vary with $\mathbf{X}_j$, σ^2 and Σ_β?

Formula for shrinkage estimates

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Derivation of shrinkage formula

- $\hat{\boldsymbol{\beta}}_j | \boldsymbol{\beta}_j \sim N(\beta_j, \sigma^2(\mathbf{X}_j^\top \mathbf{X}_j)^{-1})$
- $\boldsymbol{\beta}_j \sim N(\boldsymbol{\beta}, \Sigma_\beta)$

Then Bayes rule says $\boldsymbol{\beta}_j \sim N(\mathbf{m}, \mathbf{V})$ where

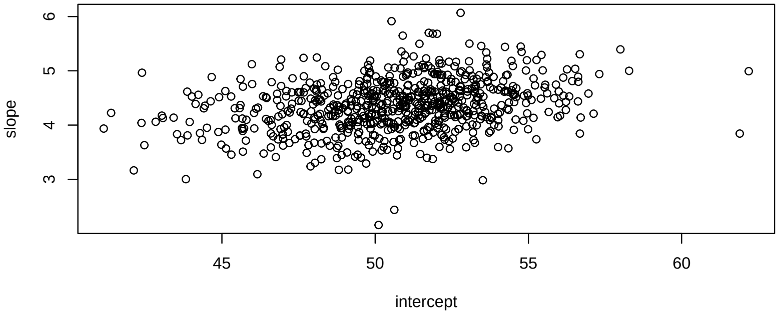
$$\mathbf{V} = (\mathbf{X}_j^\top \mathbf{X}_j/\sigma^2 + \Sigma_\beta^{-1})^{-1}$$
$$\mathbf{m} = V(\mathbf{X}_j^\top \mathbf{y}_j/\sigma^2 + \Sigma_\beta^{-1}\boldsymbol{\beta})$$

The BLUP/Bayes estimator is the conditional expectation:

$$\tilde{\boldsymbol{\beta}}_j = \left(\mathbf{X}_j^T \mathbf{X}_j/\sigma^2 + \Sigma_\beta^{-1}\right)^{-1} \left(\mathbf{X}_j \mathbf{y}_j/\sigma^2 + \Sigma_\beta^{-1}\boldsymbol{\beta}\right)$$

Macro-level effects

LME regression estimates:



Questions:

- What kind of schools have big intercepts?
- What kind of schools have big slopes?

Can we relate *macro-level parameters* to *macro-level effects* ?

Macro-level effects

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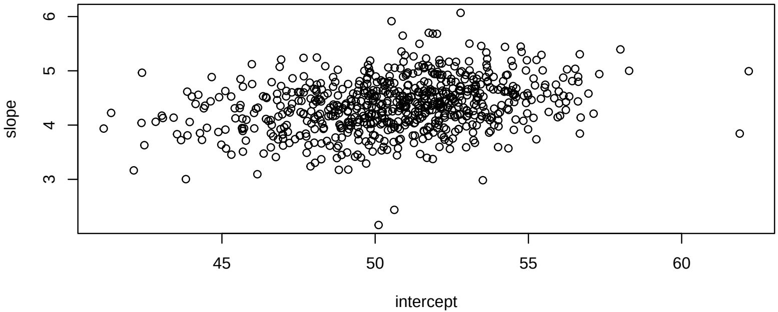

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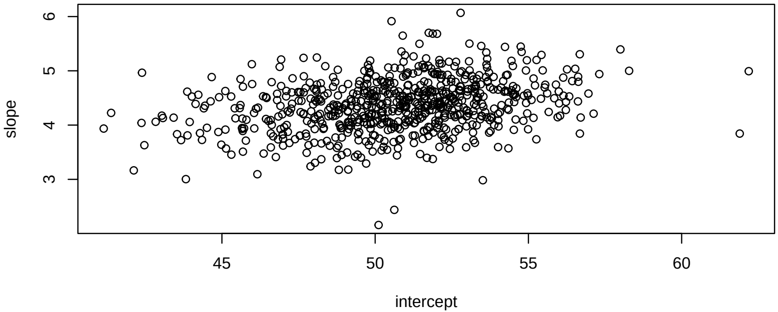

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- What kind of schools have big intercepts?
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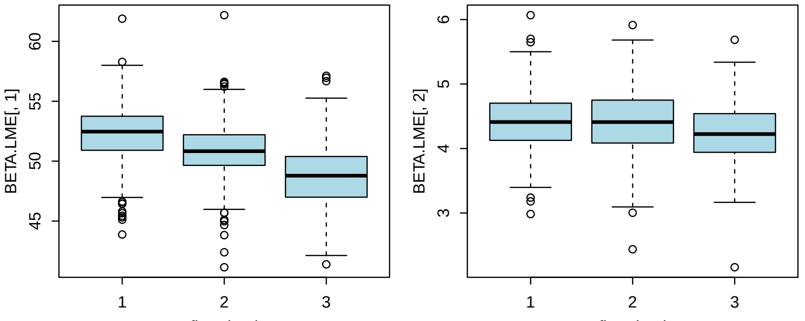
Can we relate *macro-level parameters* to *macro-level effects* ?

Macro-level effects

```
### FLP variable
flp.school<-tapply( flp.nels , g.nels, mean)
table(flp.school)

## flp.school
##   1   2   3
## 226 257 201

### RE and FLP association
mpar()
par(mfrow=c(1,2))
boxplot(BETA.LME[,1]~flp.school,col="lightblue")
boxplot(BETA.LME[,2]~flp.school,col="lightblue")
```



Macro-level effects

It seems that $\beta_{0,j}$ and possibly $\beta_{1,j}$ are associated with flp_j.

- Testing: Is there evidence for the association?
- Estimation: What is the association?

These questions can be addressed by expanding the model:

Old model:

$$\begin{aligned} y_{i,j} &= \beta_{0,j} + \beta_{1,j} \times ses_{i,j} + \epsilon_{i,j} \\ &= (\beta_0 + b_{0,j}) + (\beta_1 + b_{1,j}) \times ses_{i,j} + \epsilon_{i,j} \end{aligned}$$

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\end{aligned}
$$

- α_0 represents the macro effect of flp_j on the intercept/mean in group j
- α_1 represents the macro effect of flp_j on the slope with $ses_{i,j}$ in group j

Note: α_0 and α_1 do not vary across groups. If they did, they would be confounded with $b_{0,j}$ and $b_{1,j}$.

Note: As they are fixed across groups, they are in fact *fixed effects*:

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Rearranging, we get

$$\begin{aligned} y_{i,j} = &\beta_0 + \alpha_0 \times flp_j + \beta_1 \times ses_{i,j} + \alpha_1 \times flp_j \times ses_{i,j} + \\ &b_{0,j} + b_{1,j} \times ses_{i,j} + \\ &\epsilon_{i,j} \end{aligned}$$

Fixed effects regression: $\beta_0 + \alpha_0 \times flp_j + \beta_1 \times ses_{i,j} + \alpha_1 \times flp_j \times ses_{i,j}$

Random effects regression: $b_{0,j} + b_{1,j} \times ses_{i,j}$

Note:

- The predictors for the two regressions are different.
- Macro-effects do not appear in the random effects regression.

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Macro-level fixed effects

$$y_{i,j} = (\beta_0 + \alpha_0 \times flp_j + b_{0,j}) + (\beta_1 + \alpha_1 \times flp_j + b_{1,j}) \times ses_{i,j} + \epsilon_{i,j}$$

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Group-level representation

Micro-level representation:

$$y_{i,j} = \boldsymbol{\beta}^T \mathbf{x}_{i,j} + \mathbf{b}_j^T \mathbf{z}_{i,j} + \epsilon_{i,j}$$

Combining observations within a group:

$$\begin{pmatrix} y_{1,j} \\ \vdots \\ y_{n,j} \end{pmatrix} = \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{x}_{1,j} \rightarrow \\ \vdots \\ \mathbf{x}_{n,j} \rightarrow \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} \beta_1 \\ \vdots \\ \beta_p \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} \mathbf{z}_{1,j} \rightarrow \\ \vdots \\ \mathbf{z}_{n,j} \rightarrow \end{pmatrix} \begin{pmatrix} b_{1,j} \\ \vdots \\ b_{p,j} \end{pmatrix} + \begin{pmatrix} \epsilon_{1,j} \\ \vdots \\ \epsilon_{n,j} \end{pmatrix}$$

Two-level HLM: General form

$$\mathbf{y}_j = \mathbf{X}_j \beta + \mathbf{Z}_j \mathbf{b}_j + \epsilon_j$$

Note: This formulation allows the *fixed effects predictors* to be different from the *random effects predictors*.

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Two-level HLM: General form

$$\mathbf{y}_j = \mathbf{X}_j \beta + \mathbf{Z}_j \mathbf{b}_j + \epsilon_j$$

Note: This formulation allows the *fixed effects predictors* to be different from the *random effects predictors*.

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$$y_{i,j} = \boldsymbol{\beta}^T \mathbf{x}_{i,j} + \mathbf{b}_j^T \mathbf{z}_{i,j} + \epsilon_{i,j}$$

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This is the general form of a *two-level* hierarchical linear model

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where $\mathbf{b}_j$ and ϵ_j are multivariate normal.

- β are the *fixed effects coefficients*;
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Variance components

$$\mathbf{y}_j = \mathbf{X}_j\boldsymbol{\beta} + \mathbf{Z}_j\mathbf{b}_j + \boldsymbol{\epsilon}_j$$

$$\mathrm{E}\begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{b}_j \\ \epsilon_j \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} \end{bmatrix} \text{ and } \mathrm{Cov}\begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{b}_j \\ \epsilon_j \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \Psi & \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} & \Sigma \end{bmatrix}.$$

Across-group heterogeneity: Ψ is the variance-covariance in $\mathbf{b}_1, \ldots, \mathbf{b}_m$.

Within-group heterogeneity: Σ is the variance-covariance of $y_{1,j}, \ldots, y_{n_j,j}$.

Note: We should write Σ_j instead of Σ, as

$$\mathrm{Cov}[\mathbf{y}_j] = \mathrm{Cov}[\epsilon_j] = \Sigma_j \text{ is an } n_j \times n_j \text{ matrix.}$$

Note: In the examples so far,

$$\Sigma_j = \sigma^2 \mathrm{I}_{n_j}.$$

Question: What other forms for Σ_j might be useful?

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Example: One-way random effects model, aka the HNM

$$y_{i,j} = \mu + a_j + \epsilon_{i,j}$$
$$\{a_j\} \sim \ iid \ N(0, \tau^2)$$
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- Regression parameters:
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fit.0<-lmer(y.nels~ 1 + (1|g.nels), REML=FALSE)
```

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summary(fit.0)

## Linear mixed model fit by maximum likelihood  ['lmerMod']
## Formula: y.nels ~ 1 + (1 | g.nels)
##
##      AIC      BIC   logLik deviance df.resid
##  93919.3  93941.7 -46956.6  93913.3    12971
##
## Scaled residuals:
##     Min      1Q  Median      3Q     Max
## -3.8112 -0.6534  0.0093  0.6732  4.6999
##
## Random effects:
##  Groups   Name        Variance Std.Dev.
##  g.nels   (Intercept) 23.63    4.861
##  Residual             73.71    8.585
## Number of obs: 12974, groups:  g.nels, 684
##
## Fixed effects:
##             Estimate Std. Error t value
## (Intercept)  50.9391     0.2026   251.4
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$$y_{i,j} = \beta^T \mathbf{x}_{i,j} + \mathbf{b}_j^T \mathbf{x}_{i,j} + \epsilon_{i,j}$$
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$$\beta = \beta \;,\; \mathbf{b}_j = \mathbf{b}_j$$

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This is just a special case where $\mathbf{X}_j = \mathbf{Z}_j$.

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\mathbf{X}_j = \mathbf{Z}_j = \begin{bmatrix} \mathbf{x}_{1,j} \rightarrow \\ \vdots \\ \mathbf{x}_{n_j,j} \rightarrow \end{bmatrix} \quad \text{for each } j \in \{1, \ldots, m\}
$$

- Regression parameters:

$$
\boldsymbol{\beta} = \boldsymbol{\beta} \; , \; \mathbf{b}_j = \mathbf{b}_j
$$

- Covariance terms:

$$
\Psi = \mathrm{Cov}[\mathbf{b}_j], \; \Sigma = \sigma^2 \mathbf{I}
$$

This is just a special case where $\mathbf{X}_j = \mathbf{Z}_j$.

Group-specific linear regression

$$
\begin{aligned}
y_{i,j} &= \beta^T \mathbf{x}_{i,j} + \mathbf{b}_j^T \mathbf{x}_{i,j} + \epsilon_{i,j} \\
\{\mathbf{b}_j\} &\sim \; iid \; N(0, \Psi) \\
\{\epsilon_{i,j}\} &\sim \; iid \; N(0, \sigma^2)
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Exercise: Express this model as $\mathbf{y}_j = \mathbf{X}_j \boldsymbol{\beta} + \mathbf{Z}_j \mathbf{b}_j + \boldsymbol{\epsilon}_j$

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Group-specific linear regression

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fit.1<-lmer(y.nels~ ses.nels + (ses.nels|g.nels), REML=FALSE)
```

```r
summary(fit.1)
```

```
## Linear mixed model fit by maximum likelihood  ['lmerMod']
## Formula: y.nels ~ ses.nels + (ses.nels | g.nels)
##
##      AIC      BIC   logLik deviance df.resid
##  92553.1  92597.9 -46270.5  92541.1    12968
##
## Scaled residuals:
##     Min      1Q  Median      3Q     Max
## -3.8910 -0.6382  0.0179  0.6669  4.4613
##
## Random effects:
##  Groups   Name        Variance Std.Dev. Corr
##  g.nels   (Intercept) 12.223   3.496
##           ses.nels     1.515   1.231    0.11
##  Residual             67.345   8.206
## Number of obs: 12974, groups:  g.nels, 684
##
## Fixed effects:
##             Estimate Std. Error t value
## (Intercept)  50.6767     0.1551  326.70
## ses.nels      4.3594     0.1231   35.41
##
## Correlation of Fixed Effects:
##          (Intr)
## ses.nels 0.007
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* modulo different sample sizes.

Review of benefits of model extension:

- Group-specific regressors should appear in $\mathbf{X}_j$ but not $\mathbf{Z}_j$;
- If $\{b_{k,1}, \ldots, b_{k,m}\}$ shows little variability ($\psi_{k,k}$ small), we may want to remove $x_{i,j,k}$ from the random effects model, and include it as a fixed effect only.
- Within-group covariances other than $\Sigma = \sigma^2 \mathbf{I}$ might be useful:
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General LME

```
fit.2<-lmer(y.nels~ flp.nels + ses.nels + flp.nels*ses.nels + (ses.nels | g.nels), REML=FALSE)
summary(fit.2)

## Linear mixed model fit by maximum likelihood  ['lmerMod']
## Formula: y.nels ~ flp.nels + ses.nels + flp.nels * ses.nels + (ses.nels |
##     g.nels)
##
##      AIC      BIC   logLik deviance df.resid
##  92396.3  92456.0 -46190.1  92380.3    12966
##
## Scaled residuals:
##     Min      1Q  Median      3Q     Max
## -3.9773 -0.6417  0.0201  0.6659  4.5202
##
## Random effects:
##  Groups   Name        Variance Std.Dev. Corr
##  g.nels   (Intercept)  9.012   3.002
##           ses.nels     1.571   1.254    0.06
##  Residual             67.260   8.201
## Number of obs: 12974, groups:  g.nels, 684
##
## Fixed effects:
##                   Estimate Std. Error t value
## (Intercept)        55.3975     0.3860 143.524
## flp.nels           -2.4062     0.1819 -13.230
## ses.nels            4.4909     0.3326  13.500
## flp.nels:ses.nels  -0.1931     0.1587  -1.216
##
## Correlation of Fixed Effects:
##             (Intr) flp.nl ss.nls
## flp.nels    -0.930
## ses.nels    -0.158  0.088
## flp.nls:ss.  0.086 -0.007 -0.926
```