Combating Stataphobia

Stataphobia: Fear of statistics and not having experts to help.

We in epidemiology are all confronted by stataphobia. Statistics is a foundation to our field. Luckily for most of us we have a statistics group close by to answer our questions. Even with this, we are often stumped by statistical questions. Our efforts have been endorsed by the American statistical Association, the Royal Statistical Society and the International Biometrics Society.

There is an enormous problem in Developing countries. Only 3% of the world's literature come from these countries, despite the fact there are brilliant researchers. The major problem is stataphobia, where statistical help might be 1000 kms away. It is little wonder that their articles are turned down, as 80% of the time an article is rejected it is due to research methods problems.

During the last year the library if Alexandria in Egypt has developed a free web site designed to answer questions worldwide about statistics and research methods. http://ssc.bibalex.org/helpdesk/introduction.jsf This site has become the largest virtual library for research methods. In addition we currently are collecting abo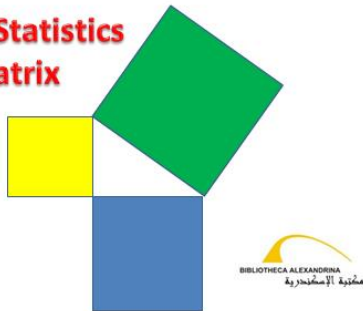ut 6000 research methods books that shortly will by taken to the library by cargo ship. This will be the largest virtual and research methods site. As part of this there is a help desk where 200 grey haired/no haired experts can answer questions. It is designed to be a one stop statistical shopping plaza. Statistics is difficult to learn, it is

especially difficult to learn in a foreign language (eg. English). We therefore have some of our materials translated into Arabic, Spanish, Russian, Hebrew, Farsi, Chinese and Japanese.

The library has also developed a second brand new feature to help people learn statistics. This is the BA Euclid Matrix. For anyone of us who have taught statistics, there always is 15% of the class that just does not "Get It". We were thinking that wouldn't it be wonderful if we could bring in Rosner to teach a class on variance, if they had difficulty learning from us. This obviously is impossible in the classroom.

However, youtube has amazing statistical lecture videos among the dancing cats, and singing dogs. WE have therefore scoured the Internet to find outstand lectures, and created the Euclid Matrix. This can be seen below

	Kahn	Foltz	Serageldin	LaPorte
Intro to stat				
Frequency Dist				
Variance				
Hypothesis testing.				

The concept is simple, if a student has difficult with my lecture on Variance, they can hop over the Kahn's lecture, and then look at Foltz, etc. In this manner a student can have 5 different leading teachers of statistics, rather than just my presentation.

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