

Pranks (Seriesly): Sequential selection based on ranks

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ABSTRACT

Often, when sitting in a hiring committee, a question asked is: “Does the candidate improve the quality (average/median/etc.) of the department?” In general, the problem we consider in this talk is sequential selection of items (or people) that show up in a random fashion, where a decision must be made whether or not to accept a given item before other items are observed. Once a decision is made on an item, it cannot be revisited. The procedures we consider are primarily based on ranks: an item is accepted based on its rank with respect to other items previously observed. We consider selection rules that improve the upper p -percent of the retained group (hence “PRANKS”). We describe the evolution of the quality of the series (hence “SERIESLY”) of retained items and how quickly the size of the retained group grows. Other types of rules will also be considered as time permits.

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