



The Evolution of Nonparametric Statistics

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A nonparametric statistical method is a statistical technique that has desirable properties that hold under relatively mild assumptions regarding the populations from which the data are obtained. In particular, nonparametric methods do not make the assumption that the underlying populations follow normal distributions. Distribution-free methods (a subset of nonparametric methods) are procedures that have an exact probability property that holds for a wide class of distributions. We sketch the history of nonparametric methods dating back to the 18th century. The advantages of the nonparametric approach are highlighted and examples from various fields are presented.

Keywords: distribution-free methods; asymptotically-distribution free methods ; history; advantages.