

Krishnamurty Muralidhar

TITLE: A Comparison of Data Masking Procedures for Numerical Microdata

ABSTRACT: Recently, there have been considerable developments in procedures that are used to mask numerical microdata. In this discussion, we attempt to assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of these procedures for the most general case in which there exists a data set consisting of both categorical and numerical variables. The primary objective of any masking procedure is to prevent disclosure of confidential information. The secondary objective of any masking procedure is to provide the highest level of data utility (or lowest level of information loss) when the masked data is used in place of the original data. In this discussion, we perform a comprehensive theoretical evaluation of the approaches for masking numerical data.