

# Package ‘bmlm’

February 21, 2019

**Title** Bayesian Multilevel Mediation

**Version** 1.3.11

**Date** 2019-02-21

**Description** Easy estimation of Bayesian multilevel mediation models with Stan.

**URL** <https://github.com/mvuarre/bmlm/>

**BugReports** <http://github.com/mvuarre/bmlm/issues/>

**License** GPL (>= 3)

**LazyData** true

**NeedsCompilation** yes

**Depends** R (>= 3.4.0), Rcpp (>= 0.12.0)

**Imports** rstan (>= 2.18.1), ggplot2 (>= 2.0.0), methods

**Suggests** qgraph, knitr, rmarkdown, reshape2, dplyr

**LinkingTo** StanHeaders (>= 2.18.0), rstan (>= 2.18.1), BH (>= 1.66.0),  
Rcpp (>= 0.12.0), RcppEigen

**RoxygenNote** 6.1.1

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**SystemRequirements** GNU make

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|-------|---|
| BLch9 | <i>Relationship between work stressors, work dissatisfaction, and relationship dissatisfaction.</i> |
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### Description

Simulated data from Intensive Longitudinal Methods: An Introduction to Diary and Experience Sampling Research. (Bolger, & Laurenceau, 2013, chapter 9; <http://www.intensivelongitudinal.com/index.html>).

### Usage

```
data(BLch9)
```

### Format

A data frame with 2100 rows and 8 variables:

**id** ID of study participant  
**time** Time  
**fwkstrs** Number of work stressors  
**fwkdis** Work dissatisfaction rating  
**freldis** Relationship dissatisfaction  
**x** Subject-mean deviated number of work stressors  
**m** Subject-mean deviated work dissatisfaction rating  
**y** Subject-mean deviated relationship dissatisfaction

### Source

<http://www.intensivelongitudinal.com/datasets.html>

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|      |   |
|------|---|
| bmlm | <i>bmlm: Easy estimation of Bayesian multilevel mediation models with Stan.</i> |
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### Description

See <https://mvuorre.github.io/bmlm/> for a short tutorial.

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|---------|--|
| isolate | <i>Create isolated within- (and optionally between-) person variables.</i> |
|---------|--|

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### Description

Creates variables that represent pure within- and between-person predictors.

### Usage

```
isolate(d = NULL, by = NULL, value = NULL, z = FALSE,
        which = "within")
```

### Arguments

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| d     | A data.frame.  |
| by    | A vector of values in d by which the data is clustered. i.e. a vector of unique participant IDs.   |
| value | Names of columns in d to isolate. Multiple values can be given by value = c("var1", "var2", "var3").   |
| z     | Should the created values be standardized (defaults to FALSE).   |
| which | Which component to return. "within" (default) returns within-person deviations only; "between" returns between-person means only; "both" returns both. |

### Value

A data.frame with additional columns for the within- and between-person variables. The new columns are labelled `_cw` for centered-within and `_cb` for centered-between.

### Author(s)

Matti Vuorre <mv2521@columbia.edu>

### Examples

```
# Create within-person deviations of work stressors in BLch9.
data(BLch9)
BLch9 <- isolate(BLch9, by = "id", value = "fwkstrs")
head(BLch9) # Now has new column for within-person work stressors.
```

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MEC2010

*Judgments of performance in a video game*

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### Description

Data from an experiment where participants rated their performance in a video game in two conditions. (Experiment 1 in Metcalfe, Eich, & Castel, 2010; <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0010027710001113>).

### Usage

```
data(MEC2010)
```

### Format

A data frame with 344 rows and 4 variables:

**subj** Subject id number.

**lag** Lag condition (0 = no lag, 1 = 250ms lag).

**hr** Hit rate.

**jop** Judgment of Performance.

### Source

Metcalfe, J., Eich, T. S., & Castel, A. D. (2010). Metacognition of agency across the lifespan. *Cognition*, 116(2), 267-282. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2010.05.009>

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mlm

*Estimate a multilevel mediation model*

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### Description

Estimates a Bayesian multilevel mediation model using Stan.

### Usage

```
mlm(d = NULL, id = "id", x = "x", m = "m", y = "y",  
     priors = NULL, binary_y = FALSE, ...)
```

**Arguments**

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <code>d</code>        | A <code>data.frame</code> or a <code>data_frame</code> .  |
| <code>id</code>       | Column of participant IDs in data.  |
| <code>x</code>        | Column of X values in data.   |
| <code>m</code>        | Column of M values in data.   |
| <code>y</code>        | Column of Y values in data.   |
| <code>priors</code>   | A list of named values to be used as the prior scale parameters. See details.   |
| <code>binary_y</code> | Set to <code>TRUE</code> if <code>y</code> is binary and should be modelled with logistic regression. Defaults to <code>FALSE</code> ( <code>y</code> treated as continuous.) This feature is experimental. |
| <code>...</code>      | Other optional parameters passed to <code>rstan::stan()</code> .  |

**Details**

Draw samples from the joint posterior distribution of a multilevel mediation model using Stan.

**Priors:**

Users may pass a list of named values for the `priors` argument. The values will be used to define the scale parameter of the respective prior distributions. This list may specify some or all of the following parameters:

**dy, dm** Regression intercepts (for Y and M as outcomes, respectively.)

**a, b, cp** Regression slopes.

**tau\_x** Varying effects SDs for above parameters (e.g replace `x` with `a`.)

**lkj\_shape** Shape parameter for the LKJ prior.

See examples for specifying the following: Gaussian distributions with  $SD = 10$  as priors for the intercepts, Gaussians with  $SD = 2$  for the slopes, Half-Cauchy distributions with scale parameters 1 for the varying effects SDs, and an LKJ prior of 2.

**Value**

An object of S4 class `stanfit`, with all its available methods.

**Author(s)**

Matti Vuorre <mv2521@columbia.edu>

**Examples**

```
## Not run:
## Run example from Bolger and Laurenceau (2013)
data(BLch9)
fit <- mlm(BLch9)
mlm_summary(fit)

### With priors
Priors <- list(dy = 10, dm = 10, a = 2, b = 2, cp = 2,
              tau_dy = 1, tau_dm = 1, tau_a = 1, tau_b = 1, tau_cp = 1,
```

```

      lkj_shape = 2)
fit <- mlm(BLch9, priors = Priors)

## End(Not run)

```

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mlm\_pars\_plot

*Plot estimated parameters of multilevel mediation model*


---

### Description

Plot the model's estimated parameters as histograms or a coefficient plot.

### Usage

```

mlm_pars_plot(mod = NULL, type = "hist", color = "black",
  p_shape = 15, p_size = 1.2, level = 0.95, nrow = 3,
  pars = c("a", "b", "cp", "covab", "me", "c", "pme"))

```

### Arguments

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| mod     | A Stanfit model estimated with <code>mlm()</code> .                                |
| type    | Type of the plot, <code>hist</code> , <code>coef</code> , or <code>violin</code> . |
| color   | Color (and fill) for plots.  |
| p_shape | Shape of points for <code>coefplot</code> .  |
| p_size  | Size of points for <code>coefplot</code> .   |
| level   | X level for Credible Intervals. (Defaults to <code>.95</code> .)                   |
| nrow    | Number of rows for multiple histograms.  |
| pars    | Which parameters to plot.  |

### Details

The point estimate for the coefficient plot is the posterior mean.

### Value

A `ggplot2` object.

### Author(s)

Matti Vuorre <mv2521@columbia.edu>

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|---------------|--|
| mlm_path_plot | <i>Plot bmlm's mediation model as a path diagram</i> |
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## Description

Plots a path diagram for an estimated multilevel mediation model.

## Usage

```
mlm_path_plot(mod = NULL, xlab = "X", ylab = "Y", mlab = "M",  
  level = 0.95, random = TRUE, text = FALSE, id = NULL,  
  digits = 2, ...)
```

## Arguments

|        |   |
|--------|---|
| mod    | A Stanfit model estimated with <code>m1m()</code> .                   |
| xlab   | Label for X   |
| ylab   | Label for Y   |
| mlab   | Label for M   |
| level  | "Confidence" level for credible intervals. (Defaults to .95.)         |
| random | Should the "random" effects SDs be displayed? (Default = TRUE)        |
| text   | Should additional parameter values be displayed? (Defaults to FALSE.) |
| id     | Plot an individual-level path diagram by specifying ID number.        |
| digits | Number of significant digits to show on graph. (Default = 2.)         |
| ...    | Other arguments passed on to <code>qgraph::qgraph()</code> .          |

## Details

Plots a path diagram of the mediation model, with estimated parameter values and credible intervals. Can also be used to draw a template diagram of the mediation model by not specifying input to the `mod` argument.

To modify various settings of the underlying `qgraph` object, see [qgraph](#).

## Value

A `qgraph` object.

## Author(s)

Matti Vuorre <mv2521@columbia.edu>

## Examples

```
# Draw a template path diagram of the mediation model  
mlm_path_plot()
```

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mlm\_spaghetti\_plot      *Plot fitted values of M and Y from multilevel mediation model*


---

### Description

Plot population-level fitted values and X values, for M and Y.

### Usage

```
mlm_spaghetti_plot(mod = NULL, d = NULL, id = "id", x = "x",
  m = "m", y = "y", level = 0.95, n = 12, binary_y = FALSE,
  mx = "fitted", fixed = TRUE, random = TRUE, h_jitter = 0,
  v_jitter = 0, bar_width = 0.2, bar_size = 0.75, n_samples = NA)
```

### Arguments

|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| mod       | A multilevel mediation model estimated with <code>mlm()</code> .                                |
| d         | A <code>data.frame</code> or a <code>data_frame</code> used in fitting model.                   |
| id        | Name of id variable (identifying subjects) in data (d).   |
| x         | Name of X variable in data.   |
| m         | Name of M variable in data.   |
| y         | Name of Y variable in data.   |
| level     | X level for Credible Intervals. (Defaults to .95.)  |
| n         | Number of points along X to evaluate fitted values on. See details.                             |
| binary_y  | Set to TRUE if the outcome variable (Y) is 0/1.   |
| mx        | Should the X axis of the M-Y figure be "fitted" values, or "data" values. Defaults to "fitted". |
| fixed     | Should the population-level ("fixed") fitted values be shown?                                   |
| random    | Should the subject-level ("random") fitted values be shown?                                     |
| h_jitter  | Horizontal jitter of points. Defaults to 0.   |
| v_jitter  | Vertical jitter of points. Defaults to 0.   |
| bar_width | Width of the error bars. Defaults to 0.2.   |
| bar_size  | Thickness of the error bars. Defaults to 0.75.  |
| n_samples | Number of MCMC samples to use in calculating fitted values. See details.                        |

### Details

If `n = 2`, the fitted values will be represented as points with X line with a Confidence Ribbon instead. If a very large model is fitted with a large number of MCMC iterations, the function might take a long time to run. In these cases, users can set `n_samples` to a smaller value (e.g. 1000), in which case the fitted values (and the CIs) will be based on a random subset of `n_samples` MCMC samples. The default value is NA, meaning that all MCMC samples are used.



**Value**

A list of two ggplot2 objects.

**Author(s)**

Matti Vuorre <mv2521@columbia.edu>

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mlm\_summary

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*Print a summary of the estimated multilevel mediation model*


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**Description**

Prints the estimated parameters (numerical summaries of the marginal posterior distributions).

**Usage**

```
mlm_summary(mod = NULL, level = 0.95, pars = c("a", "b", "cp", "me",
  "c", "pme"), digits = 2)
```

**Arguments**

|        |  |
|--------|--|
| mod    | A stanfit object obtained from mlm()   |
| level  | "Confidence" level; Defines the limits of the credible intervals. Defaults to .95 (i.e. displays 95% CIs.) |
| pars   | Parameters to summarize. Defaults to main average-level parameters. See Details for more information.      |
| digits | How many decimal points to display in the output. Defaults to 2.   |

**Details**

After estimating a model (drawing samples from the joint posterior probability distribution) with mlm(), show the estimated results by using mlm\_summary(fit), where fit is an object containing the fitted model.

The function shows, for each parameter specified with pars, the posterior mean, and limits of the Credible Interval as specified by level. For example, level = .91 shows a 91% Credible Interval, which summarizes the central 91% mass of the marginal posterior distribution.

**Parameters:** By default, mlm() estimates and returns a large number of parameters, including the varying effects, and their associated standard deviations. However, mlm\_summary() by default only displays a subset of the estimated parameters:

- a** Regression slope of the X -> M relationship.
- b** Regression slope of the M -> Y relationship.
- cp** Regression slope of the X -> Y relationship. (Direct effect.)
- me** Mediated effect ( $a * b + \sigma_{a_j b_j}$ ).
- c** Total effect of X on Y. ( $cp + me$ )

**pme** Percent mediated effect.

The user may specify `pars = NULL` to display all estimated parameters. Other options include e.g. `pars = "tau"` to display the varying effects' standard deviations. To display all the group-level parameters (also known as random effects) only, specify `pars = "random"`. With this argument, `mlm_summary()` prints the following parameters:

**tau\_a** Standard deviation of subject-level  $a_{js}$ .

**tau\_b** Standard deviation of subject-level  $b_{js}$ .

**tau\_cp** Standard deviation of subject-level  $c \setminus ' _js$ .

**covab** Estimated covariance of  $a_j$  and  $b_{js}$ .

**corrab** Estimated correlation of  $a_j$  and  $b_{js}$ .

To learn more about the additional parameters, refer to the Stan code (`cat(get_stancode(fit))`).

### Value

A data.frame summarizing the estimated multilevel mediation model:

**Parameter** Name of parameter

**Mean** Mean of parameter's posterior distribution.

**Median** Median of parameter's posterior distribution.

**SE** Standard deviation of parameter's posterior distribution.

**ci\_lwr** The lower limit of Credible Intervals.

**ci\_upr** The upper limit of Credible Intervals.

**n\_eff** Number of efficient samples.

**Rhat** Should be 1.00.

### Author(s)

Matti Vuorre <mv2521@columbia.edu>

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