



Series editor
Joseph G. Nellis

Principles of

APPLIED STATISTICS



Michael C. Fleming and Joseph G. Nellis

Principles of Applied Statistics

Michael C. Fleming
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Principles of Applied Statistics

Statistics and data can be daunting for anyone, but it is vital for managers to know the broad basis of statistical techniques in order to manage information efficiently. More importantly, managers need to interpret the results and draw out implications for effective decision-making. This book guides the reader through the principles of such areas as the presentation of statistical data, probability, statistical significance, regression and correlation analysis, forecasting and time series analysis, smoothing out the intricacies and emphasizing the practical applications. The authors illustrate the techniques with extensive reference to one of the most popular computer-based statistical packages, MINITAB. They show how easy it is to manage information successfully to help develop the organization.

Michael C. Fleming is Professor of Economics at Loughborough University. **Joseph G. Nellis** is Professor of International Management Economics at Cranfield School of Management, Cranfield University. The authors have extensive experience in the application of statistical methods both as lecturers and as consultants to a wide range of public and private sector organizations. They were jointly responsible for the research and development of the UK's most well-known house price analysis systems, employed by the two largest building societies, the Halifax and Nationwide. They have published extensively in professional and academic journals.

This book is dedicated to Kathleen Mary Rosamond Nellis who weighed in at 3.49 kg during the preparation of the manuscript, becoming a unique statistic of the UK population and a potential statistics user.

A judicious man looks at Statistics not to get knowledge but to save himself from having ignorance foisted on him.

Thomas Carlyle

Series editor's preface

In recent years there has been a dramatic increase in management development activity in most Western countries, especially in Europe. This activity has extended across a wide spectrum of training initiatives, from continuing studies programmes of varying durations for practising managers to the provision of courses leading to the award of professional and academic qualifications. With regard to the latter the most prominent developments have been in terms of the Master of Business Administration (MBA) and Diploma in Management Studies (DMS) programmes, particularly in the UK where virtually every university now offers some form of post-graduate and/or post-experience management qualification.

However, the explosion of formal management training programmes such as the MBA and DMS has tended to be in advance of suitably tailored management textbooks. Many of the core functional areas of these programmes have had to rely on some of the more specialized and thus more narrowly focused textbooks, which are more appropriate for undergraduate requirements. They have generally not provided a suitable balance between academic rigour and practical, business-related relevance. The Routledge series covering the principles of management has been specifically developed to service the needs of an expanding management audience. The series deals with the full range of core subjects as well as many of the more popular elective courses that one would expect to find in most MBA and DMS programmes. Many of the books will also be attractive to those students taking professional examinations, for example in accountancy, banking, etc., as well as to managers attending a wide range of development courses. Each book in the series is written in a concise format covering the key principles of each topic in a pragmatic style which emphasizes the balance between theory and application. Case studies, exercises and references for further reading are provided where appropriate.

It gives me pleasure to express my thanks to the staff of Routledge for the commitment and energy which they have devoted to the development of this series, and in particular to Francesca Weaver who has skilfully steered each book through the minefield of production from beginning to

Preface

This book provides a general introduction to statistical theory and methods and is aimed at a wide range of potential users. The emphasis throughout is on the applied nature of statistics and, to this end, the use of formal and complex mathematics is avoided to ensure that the book is made as user-friendly as possible. We live in the midst of an information explosion. We are all bombarded virtually every day by the media with information (and mis-information) about virtually every aspect of life, much of it of a statistical nature. At the same time, many people have a direct need as part of their working or private lives to analyse and present statistical information. This explosion in information has gone hand in hand with the development of information technology (IT) in many guises, including the proliferation of small but powerful personal computers (PCs and hand-held calculators) over recent years. This development has brought the possibility of processing and analysing data within the reach of a wide range of people. For all these reasons there is a need to understand and apply basic statistical terminology and principles.

The boom in IT has made the PC into a common piece of equipment at all levels of the education and business worlds and is increasingly bringing it into the home. At the same time there has been an equally explosive growth in the development and availability of special statistical software packages which eliminate the need to understand anything at all about computer programming. In recognition of these developments in both computer hardware and software, we have incorporated a large number of computer-based applications illustrating the principles of each topic wherever possible using a very popular and inexpensive statistical package called MINITAB. However, it is also possible to use this book without reference to MINITAB as each computer application stands alone.

While the book has been written with the needs of a wide range of users in mind, it will be especially attractive to three groups in particular:

- to students taking formal courses in statistics in universities and colleges as part of degree and other programmes;

end. I would also like to express my gratitude to my secretary Christine Williams for maintaining her joviality throughout the development of the 'Principles' series.

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- to those studying for professional and vocational qualifications such as banking and accountancy examinations;
- to people following general post-graduate courses such as the Master of Business Administration (MBA) and Diploma in Management Studies (DMS), as well as practising managers and others following continuing studies programmes.

To serve the needs of different user groups, the book has been broken down into a large number of relatively small chapters so that they can be bundled together to satisfy the requirements of different examining bodies. For many users, for whom the use of statistics is not a regular need, the book will serve as a concise reference and *aide-mémoire*.

As authors, it is always a pleasure to formally record our appreciation for the help and support given by others. This book is certainly no exception. We are most grateful to Su Spencer, Lorraine Whittington, Christine Williams and Denise Simpson for typing and correcting various drafts of the manuscript. Without knowing it, many students have also had a hand in pointing out areas of difficulty and confusion and we are therefore grateful to them. We would also like to express our thanks to our friends M. and Mme Ferrière who, once again, provided moral support and hospitality during a particularly intensive period of writing. As ever, the authors' families deserve the greatest thanks for their support, understanding and forgiveness.

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Loughborough

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