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Sommario/riassunto

Statistics provides tools and strategies for the analysis of data. While much has been written about the methodology, sometimes without reference to data, little has been said about the data. In this volume we present sets of data obtained from many situations without any direct reference to a particular type of analysis. Our view of the usefulness of bringing together a broad collection of sets of data has been shared by many friends and contributors. Students of statistics need to gain facility with their art by applying their knowledge to many sets of data. Textbook examples tend to be small and selected primarily to illustrate a particular technique, thus failing to demonstrate the questioning, iterative nature of statistical analysis. The situations which gave rise to the more extensive sets of data given in this volume are colourful and interesting, and can be readily understood by laymen, students and research workers with diverse interests. These sets were often chosen for their perverse reluctance to yield under the naive application of standard procedures. They do not have correct solutions. They describe situations where the statistician can develop skills and learn the limitations of statistical methods.
