

DATA ANALYSIS : THEN AND NOW

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The techniques of analysing data are always being modified by the statisticians and researchers. The methods of analysis employed one or two decades ago are modified with a view to gaining more efficiency. The development of these techniques is accelerated by the introduction of calculators and computers.

This paper investigates three statistical techniques employed by Kusuma Gunawardena in her PhD thesis, written at the University of Cambridge in 1964. These are (i) Calculation of correlation coefficient and fitting a regression model (ii) Testing for normality and (iii) Probit analysis. These analyses were carried out according to the new statistical techniques using modern facilities on the same sets of data.

This investigation shows that although the earlier methods lack the accuracy of the methods used today, the results obtained then were substantially similar to those obtained now. Modern statistical techniques facilitate advanced data analysis and frequently demand computer facilities. However the use of the computer tends to encourage the user to proceed to obtain results before gaining a clear understanding of the nature of the data.