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- Part III—Searching for Relationships in Education Data: The third part introduces the student to more advanced analytic tools in Microsoft Excel. The primary emphasis is studying relationships between variables. Tools include group comparisons, scatterplots with trend-line analysis, and bivariate and multivariate regression analysis. The end of each chapter contains a narrowly focused problem set that applies the tools presented in the chapter to data ranging from student test scores across classes to state-level data on school funding and student outcomes. At the end of part III, we provide a complex and more comprehensive data set including various school resource measures and student outcomes measures. Students are provided guidance on the process of preparing analyses for a policy brief on relationships in data.
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This informative, interesting book addresses those who need to understand educational data and its place in school leadership and decision-making. It provides a set of practical tools for data analysis and decision-making using spreadsheet software and system dynamic models. Examples of the use of the popular Microsoft® Excel, several system dynamic models created by ITHINK6.0, and an introduction to the development of dynamic simulations all contribute to the reader's understanding of the concepts presented. The use of real data ensures that readers receive a realistic "feel" for handling and manipulating information, guaranteeing an understanding of the broad diversity of financial, demographic, and economic situations that occur. Topics include: information sharing in schools, organizing and manipulating data, system linkages, system dynamics, applied systems thinking, and structured improvisation. An excellent resource for all school administrators, especially those who plan budgets and need to report to school boards and their communities.

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