

Contents

Acknowledgments	13
Foreword by Donald T. Campbell	15
1. Introduction to Regression-Discontinuity	45
The Basic Regression-Discontinuity Design	47
Some Assumptions of Regression-Discontinuity	53
Social Policy and Research Design	57
2. A Short History of Regression-Discontinuity	67
The Academic Tradition	69
The Compensatory Education Tradition	73
<i>Frequency and Location of Use</i>	77
<i>Reasons Cited for Not Using Model C</i>	77
<i>Reasons Cited in Favor of Using Model C</i>	84
Summary of Use Issues	86
3. Design Variations	87
Assignment Variations	88
Measurement Variations	94
Program Variations	95
Postprogram Measure Variations	96
Aggregation Variations	100
Post Hoc Analysis	104
Summary	104
4. Regression-Discontinuity and Allocation Formulas	107
Types of Federal Grants	108
Examples of Allocation Formula Designs	112
Problems in Allocation Formula Designs	115

5. The Statistical Analysis of the Regression-Discontinuity Design	121
A Statistical Model for Regression-Discontinuity	122
Model Specification	128
Design Variations and Analytic Implications	133
<i>Multiple Cutoff Points</i>	134
<i>Random Assignment in Regression-Discontinuity Designs</i>	135
<i>The Use of Covariates</i>	137
<i>Composite Pretest Measures</i>	137
<i>Pretest Homogeneity in the Program Group</i>	138
<i>Separate Within-Group Distributions</i>	138
Illustrative Analyses	139
<i>Second Grade Reading Program</i>	140
<i>Fourth Grade Math Program</i>	145
Summary of Regression-Discontinuity Analysis	148
The Analysis of the “Fuzzy” Regression-Discontinuity Design	153
<i>The Relative Assignment Approach</i>	156
<i>Illustrative Simulations</i>	162
<i>Illustrative Real Data Analysis</i>	166
<i>Conclusions</i>	172
6. The “Negative Gain” Controversy	175
Background	175
The Pattern of Results	177
Some Likely Sources of the Discrepancy in Results	179
<i>Three Potentially Biasing Factors in Model A</i>	181
<i>Residual Regression Artifacts in Model A</i>	181
<i>Attrition Bias in Model A</i>	187
<i>Time-of-Testing Bias in Model A</i>	191
<i>Three Potentially Biasing Factors in Model C</i>	195
<i>Misassignment Bias in Model C</i>	195
<i>Measurement-Related Bias in Model C</i>	202
<i>Data Preparation Problems in Model C</i>	205
Summary of the Negative Gain Issue	209
7. The Implementation of Regression-Discontinuity	211
Assignment Issues	212
<i>Placement of the Cutoff Value</i>	212

<i>Selection of the Cutoff Value</i>	213
<i>Measures Used for Assignment</i>	214
<i>Adherence to the Cutoff</i>	216
<i>Assignment Problems and the Estimate of Gain</i>	219
Measurement Issues	220
<i>Test Administration</i>	221
<i>Test Characteristics</i>	223
<i>Test Problems</i>	225
<i>Data Maintenance and Access</i>	227
Program Issues	231
<i>Identifying Recipients of the Program</i>	232
<i>Amount of Service Received</i>	233
<i>Type of Program Received</i>	234
Data Preparation Issues	236
<i>Background and Prevalence of Exclusions</i>	237
<i>Common Exclusions</i>	240
<i>Data Processing Issues</i>	244
Summary of Research Implementation Issues	245
Appendix A: Computer Analysis of Regression-Discontinuity	
<i>Data</i>	249
MINITAB Analysis of Regression-Discontinuity Data	250
SPSS Analysis of Regression-Discontinuity Data	251
Conclusion	253
Appendix B: Regression-Discontinuity Simulation Exercises	255
The Regression-Discontinuity Design: Part I	255
The Regression-Discontinuity Design: Part II	261
References	267
About the Author	272