Bivariate Relationships Between Variables

ECO 230: Business and Economics Research

Goals

- Detect *relationships* between variables.
- Be able to prescribe appropriate statistical methods for measuring relationship based on scale of measurement.

Correlation

Correlation

Correlation: when two variables move together in some fashion.

Correlations measure *monotonic relationships*.

- Positive: When one variable increases, the other tends to increase.
- Negative: When one variable increases, the other tends to decrease.

Common Focus: Linear Relationships

Linear relationships: Visually illustrated with a straight line

Common monotonic relationships, but not linear:

- Employment experience and income
- Employment experience and productivity
- Wealth and consumer spending

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Pearson vs Spearman Correlation

Pearson linear correlation coefficient

- Measure of the strength of the **linear relationship**
- Parametric test for interval or ratio data
- Null hypothesis: zero linear correlation between two variables.
- Alternative hypothesis: linear correlation exists (either positive or negative) between two variables.

Spearman linear correlation coefficient

- Measure of the strength of a **monotonic relationship**
- Non-parametric test for ordinal, interval, and ratio data
- Pearson computation with *ranks* instead of actual data
- Same hypotheses.

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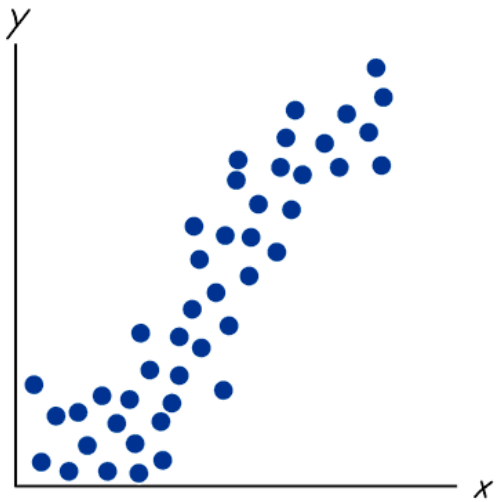
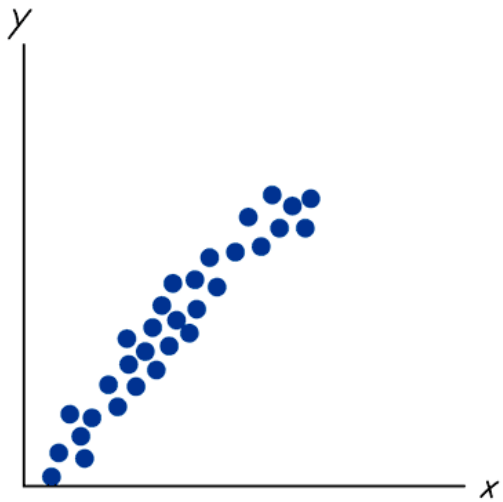
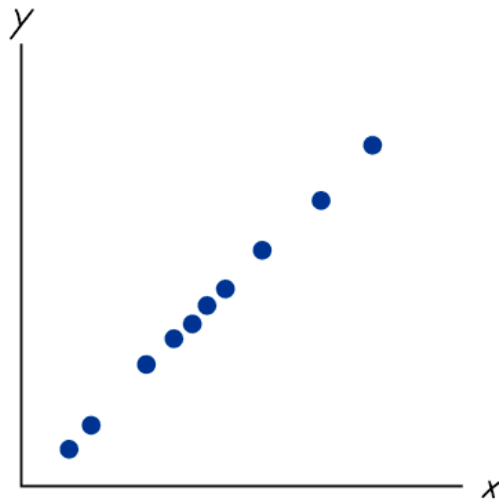
Positive linear correlation



(a) Positive correlation between x and y



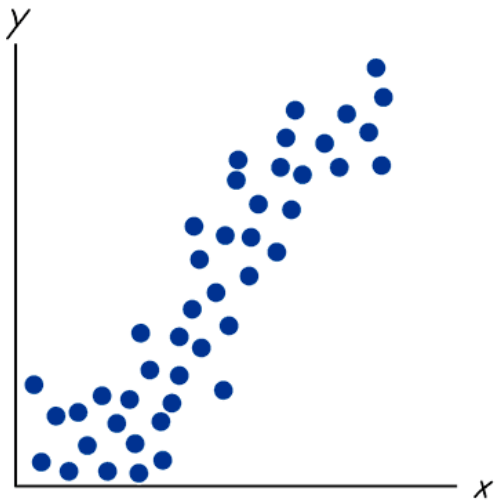
(b) Strong positive correlation between x and y



(c) Perfect positive correlation between x and y

- Positive correlation: move in the same direction.
- Stronger correlation: closer to 1.0
- Perfect positive correlation: $\rho = 1.0$

Positive linear correlation



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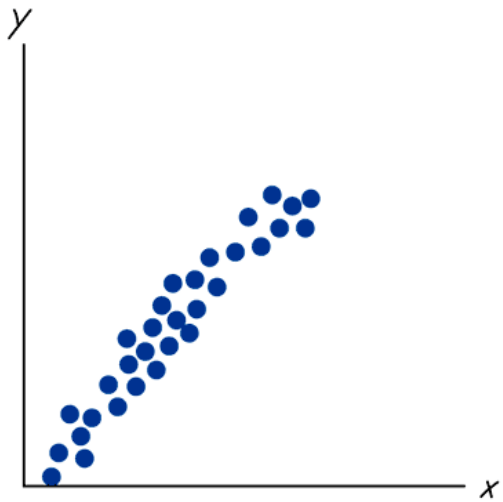

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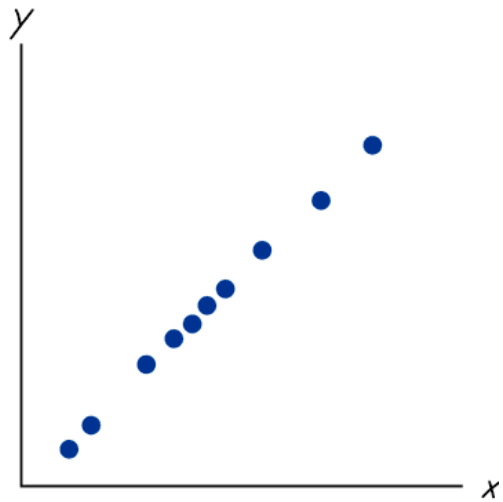

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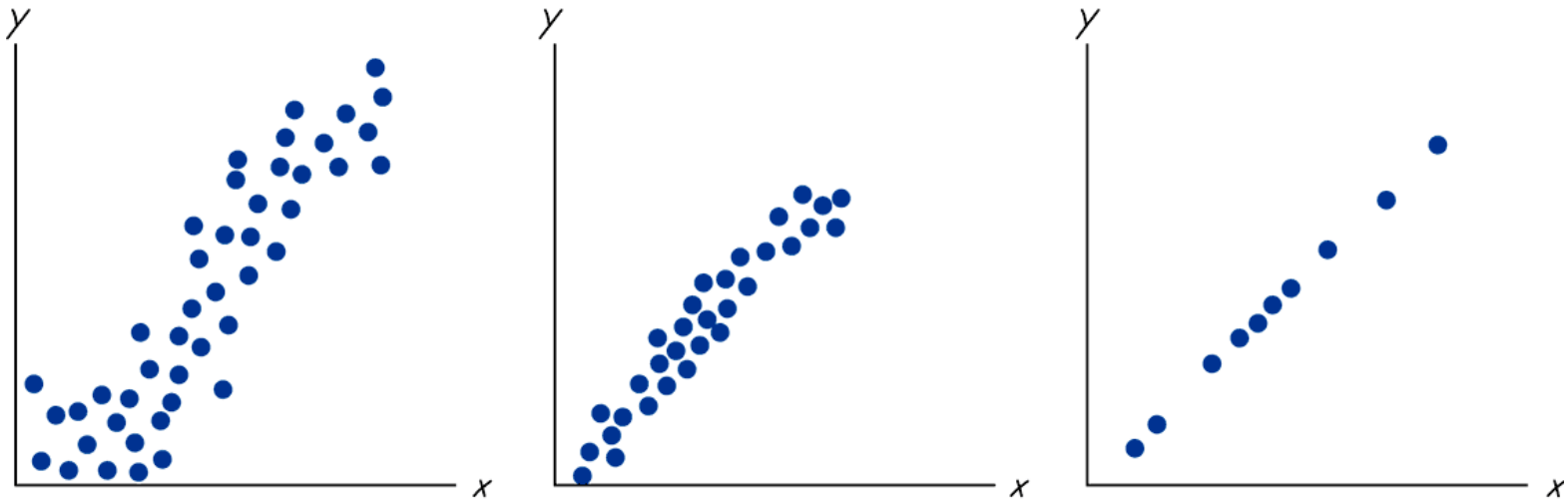

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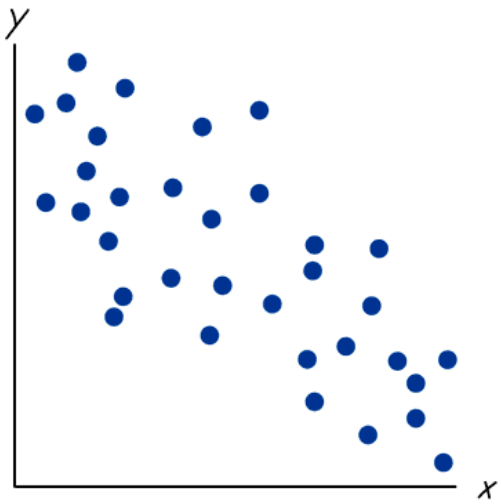

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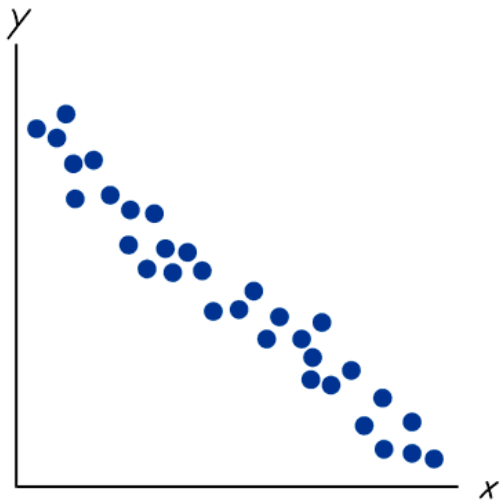

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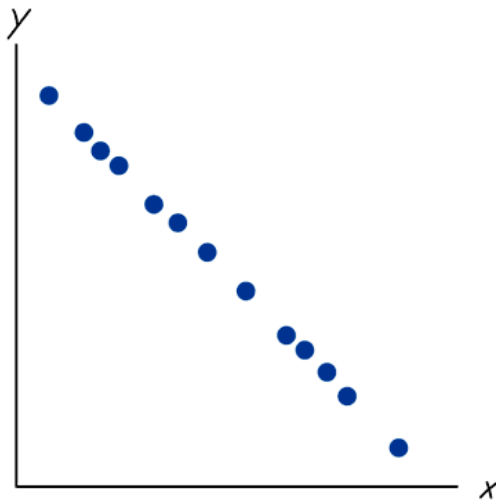

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- Negative correlation: move in opposite directions.
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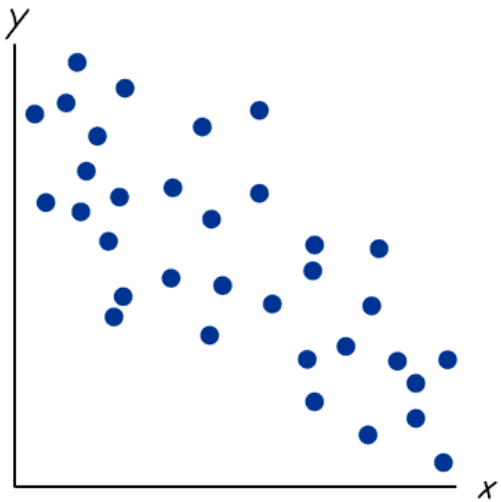

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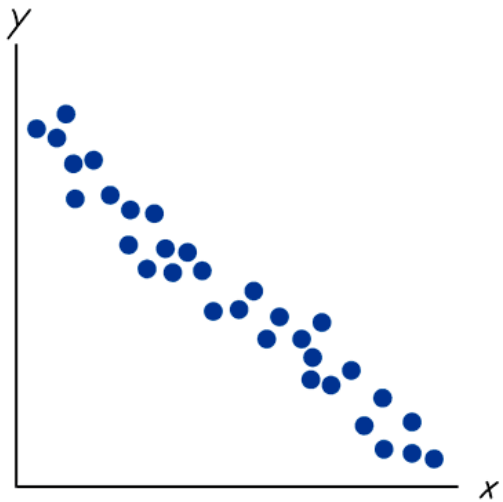

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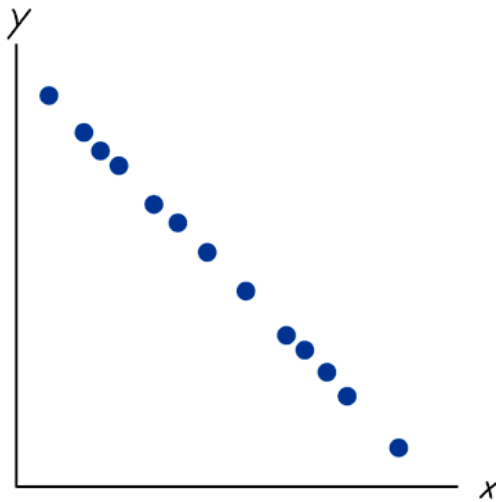

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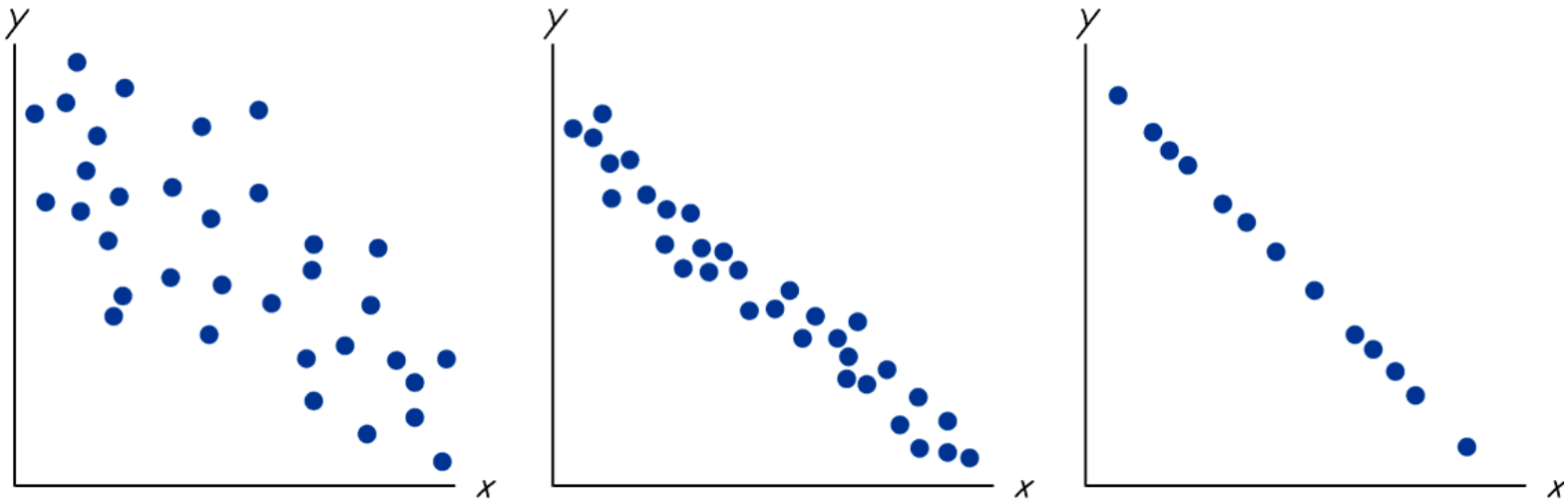

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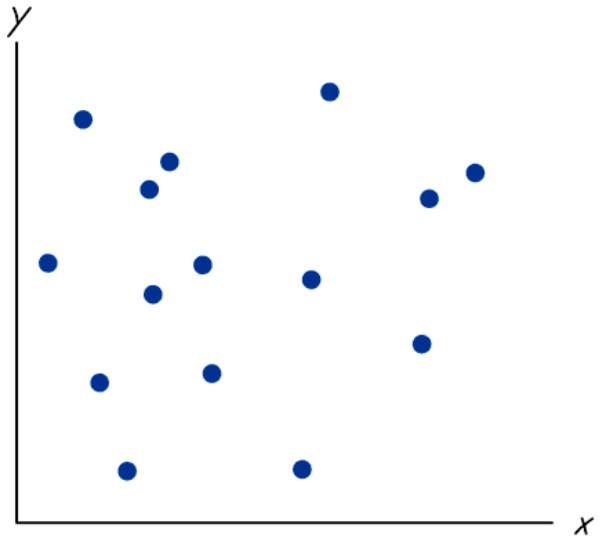

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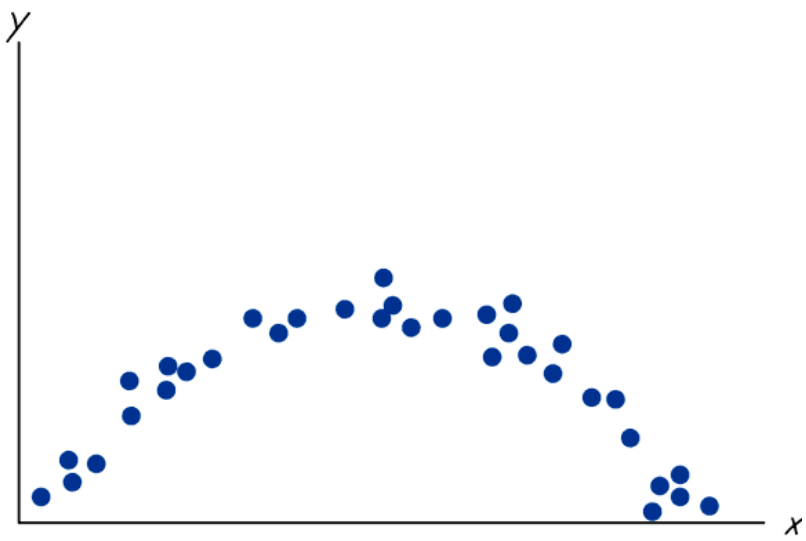
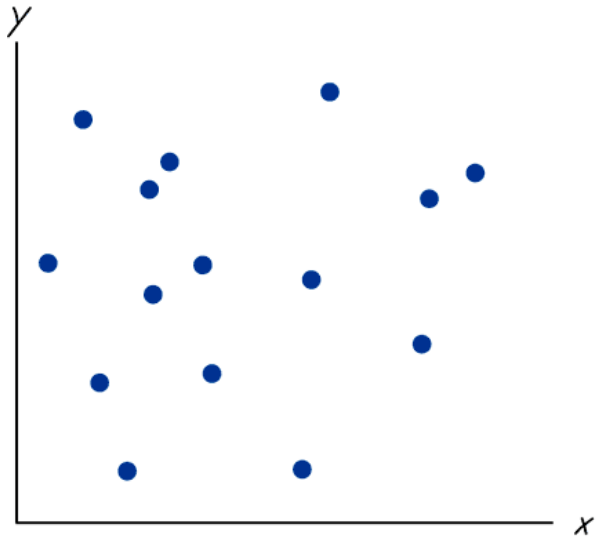


(h) Nonlinear relationship between x and y

- Panel (g): no relationship at all.
- Panel (h): strong relationship, but not a *linear* relationship.
  - Cannot use regular correlation to detect this.

No linear correlation



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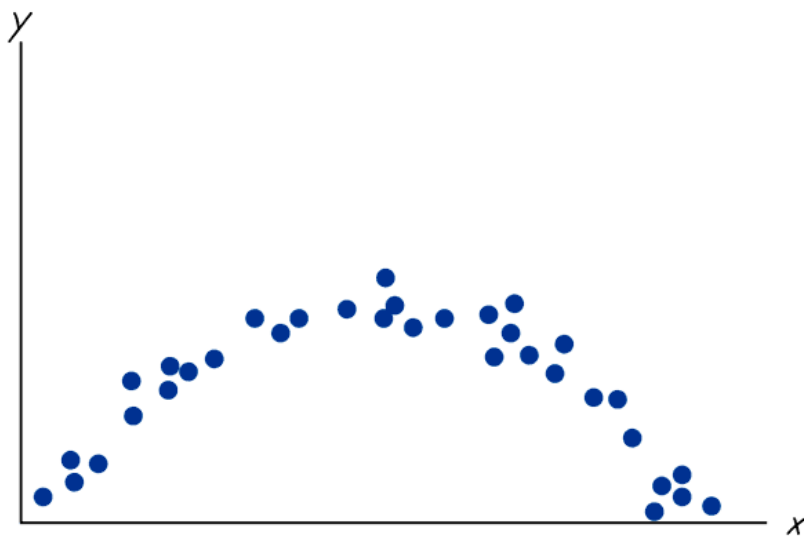

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Chi-Square Test for Independence

- Used to determine if two categorical variables (eg: nominal) are related.
- Example: Suppose a hotel manager surveys guest who indicate they will not return:

	Reason for Not Returning		
Reason for Stay	Price	Location	Amenities
Personal/Vacation	56	49	0
Business	20	47	27

- Data in the table are always frequencies that fall into individual categories.
- Could use this table to test if two variables are independent.

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Chi-Square Test of independence

- **Null hypothesis**: there is no relationship between the row variable and the column variable (independent)
- **Alternative hypothesis**: There is a relationship between the row variable and the column variable (dependent).

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- **Null hypothesis**: there is no relationship between the row variable and the column variable (independent)
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