

STAT 593

Robust statistics:

Depth and robust estimators

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Outline

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Estimators based on depth

1D case ($p = 1$)

Here, $X = [x_1, \dots, x_n]$ is 1-dimensional : $\forall i \in [n], x_i \in \mathbb{R}$

Definition

For a fixed dataset X and for any point $x \in \mathbb{R}$, we defined the **depth**¹ of x w.r.t. X as

$$\text{depth}_1(x, X) = \min(\#\{i \in [n] : x_i \leq x\}, \#\{i \in [n] : x_i \geq x\})$$

Interpretation: the depth of a point in a dataset X is the minimum number of data points x_i on the left and on the right of x .

- ▶ $\text{depth}_1(x, X) = 0$ if $x > \max_{i=1, \dots, n} (x_i)$ or $x < \min_{i=1, \dots, n} (x_i)$
- ▶ $\text{depth}_1(x, X) = 1$ if² $x = \max_{i=1, \dots, n} (x_i)$ or $x = \min_{i=1, \dots, n} (x_i)$
- ▶ $\text{depth}_1(\text{Med}_n(x), X) \approx \frac{n}{2}$

¹J. W. Tukey. "Mathematics and the picturing of data". In: *Proceedings of the International Congress of Mathematicians, Vancouver, 1975*. Vol. 2. 1975, pp. 523–531.

²when extrema are reached by only one point

Generalization in higher dimension

Notation: for a dataset X and a vector u , $\langle u, X \rangle$ is the dataset:

$$\langle u, X \rangle = [\langle u, x_1 \rangle, \dots, \langle u, x_n \rangle]$$

Definition

For a fixed dataset X and for any point $x \in \mathbb{R}^o$, we defined the depth of x w.r.t. X as

$$\text{depth}_p(x, X) = \min_{\|u\|=1} \text{depth}_1(\langle u, x \rangle, \langle u, X \rangle)$$

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where we write $H_{u,x} = \{y \in \mathbb{R}^p : \langle u, y \rangle \leq \langle u, x \rangle\}$ for the half-space parametrized by a point x and a direction u , with $\|u\| = 1$

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Definition

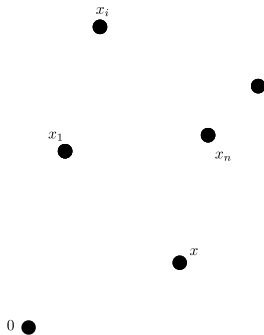
For a fixed dataset X and for any point $x \in \mathbb{R}^o$, we defined the depth of x w.r.t. X as

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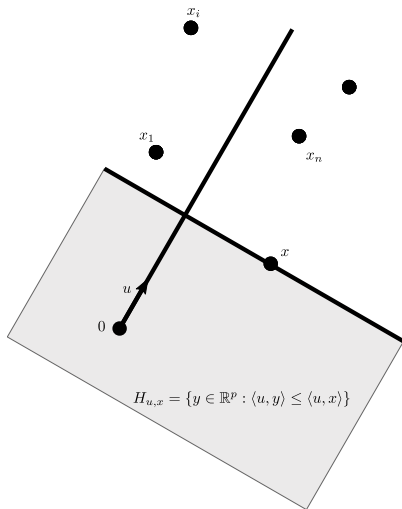
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Interpretation: this is the least depth of x after any projection of the dataset on a space of dimension 1.

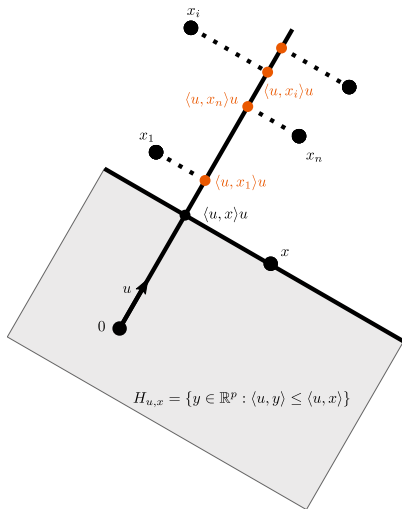
Visualization:



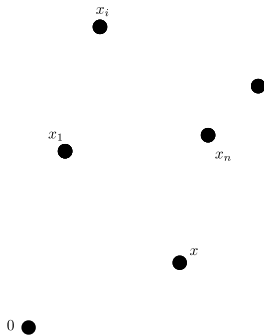
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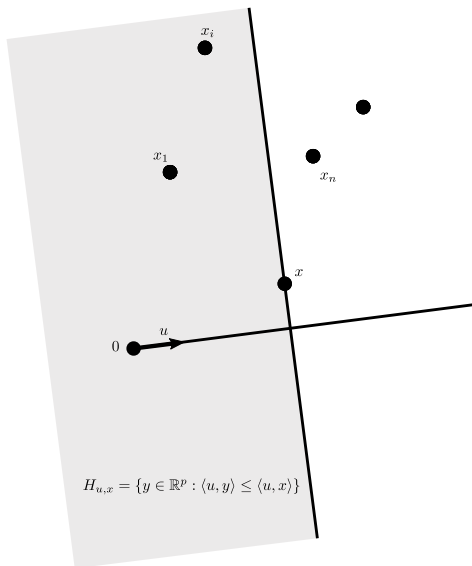
Visualization: $\text{depth}_1(\langle u, x \rangle, \langle u, X \rangle) = 0$



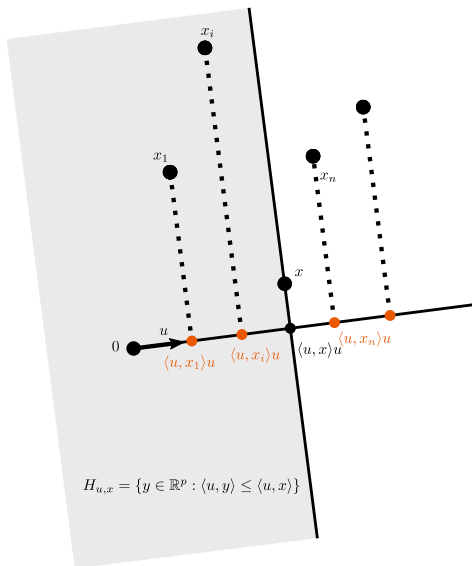
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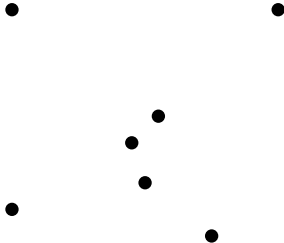
Visualization:



Visualization: $\text{depth}_1(\langle u, x \rangle, \langle u, X \rangle) = 2$



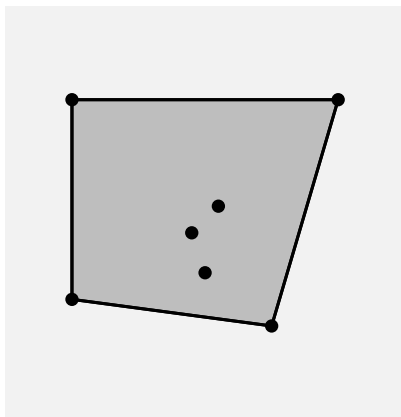
Example of depth values



Example of depth values

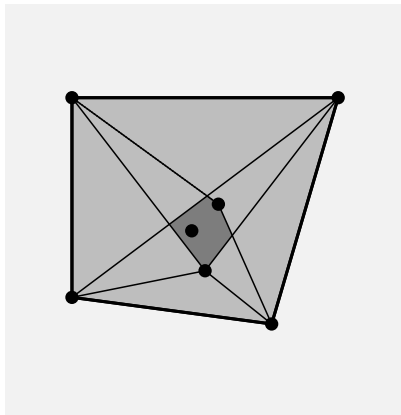





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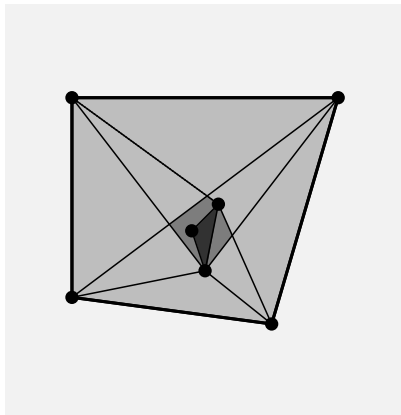
-  $\text{depth} \geq 0$
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Example of depth values



-  $\text{depth} \geq 0$
-  $\text{depth} \geq 1$
-  $\text{depth} \geq 2$

Example of depth values



Super-level set depth

Proposition

For any dataset X the super-level set of $x \mapsto \text{depth}_p(x, X)$, i.e., the sets $\{x \in \mathbb{R}^p : \text{depth}_p(x, X) \geq t\}$ for any $t \geq 0$, are convex.

Proof. see [Donoho and Gasko \(1992\)](#)

Proposition

The set $\{x \in \mathbb{R}^p : \text{depth}_p(x, X) \geq 1\}$ is the convex hull of the points x_1, \dots, x_n .

Growth

Proposition

For any dataset X and Y , and any point x :

$$\text{depth}_p(x, X) \leq \text{depth}_p(x, X \cup Y)$$

Interpretation: the depth is non-decreasing w.r.t. merging datasets.

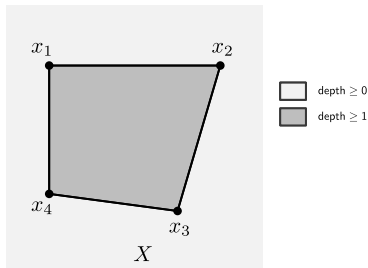
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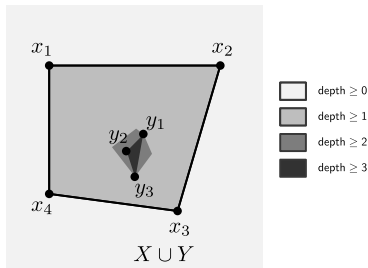
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depth_p is affine invariant

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For any $\mu \in \mathbb{R}^p$ and any non-singular matrix Σ

$$\text{depth}_p(\Sigma x + \mu, \Sigma X + \mu) = \text{depth}_p(x, X)$$

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$$\iff x_i \in H_{\varphi(u), x} \text{ where } \varphi(u) := \frac{\Sigma^\top u}{\|\Sigma^\top u\|}$$

and φ is bijective over $\{u \in \mathbb{R}^p : \|u\| = 1\}$, $\varphi^{-1}(v) = \frac{(\Sigma^{-1})^\top u}{\|(\Sigma^{-1})^\top u\|}$

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Depth

Estimators based on depth

Non-robust estimators

Robust estimators

Maximal depth

Definition

For a dataset X , the **deepest observation level** is

$$k^+(X) = \max_{i=1,\dots,n} \text{depth}_p(x_i, X)$$

Similarly, the depth of X is the largest depth reached by any point (not necessarily an observation)

$$k^*(X) = \max_{x \in \mathbb{R}^p} \text{depth}_p(x, X)$$

Rem: the points reaching such depth level are affine invariant

Special values

Special values can be reached by the depth of the dataset $k^*(X)$:

- ▶ $k^*(X) \leq \frac{n}{2}$
- ▶ $k^*(X) = 0$: the dataset X is contained in a (affine) hyperplane : $\{x_1, \dots, x_n\} \subset \{y \in \mathbb{R}^p : \langle u, y \rangle = \langle u, x \rangle\}$ for some u with $\|u\| = 1$ and $x \in \mathbb{R}^p$
- ▶ $k^*(X) = 1$: there is no x_i in the (relative) interior of $\text{conv}(x_1, \dots, x_n)$, the convex hull of the points x_1, \dots, x_n .

Sub-optimal approach

Definition

$$T_{(k)}(X) = \text{Ave}\{x_i : \text{depth}_p(x_i, X) \geq k\}$$

³D. L. Donoho and M. Gasko. "Breakdown properties of location estimates based on halfspace depth and projected outlyingness". In: *Ann. Statist.* 20.4 (1992), pp. 1803–1827.

Sub-optimal approach

Definition

$$T_{(k)}(X) = \text{Ave}\{x_i : \text{depth}_p(x_i, X) \geq k\}$$

Rem: we write Ave for the averaging operator.

Theorem

The breakdown point for the (affine equivariant) estimator $T_{(k)}(X)$ is bounded by the deepest observation level:

$$\varepsilon^*(T_{(k)}(X), X) = \frac{k^+(X)}{k^+(X) + n}$$

Sketch of proof: put the additional $k^+(X)$ points at the same location, and arbitrary far³.

³D. L. Donoho and M. Gasko. "Breakdown properties of location estimates based on halfspace depth and projected outlyingness". In: *Ann. Statist.* 20.4 (1992), pp. 1803–1827.

Outlyingness measure

Remind the notation: $\langle u, X \rangle = [\langle u, x_1 \rangle, \dots, \langle u, x_n \rangle]$

Definition

The outlyingness of a point x w.r.t. a data set is defined as

$$r_p(x, X) = \max_{\|u\|=1} \frac{|\langle u, x \rangle - \text{Med}_n(\langle u, X \rangle)|}{\text{MAD}_n \langle u, X \rangle}$$

Optimal robust estimator

We say that $x_1, \dots, x_n \in \mathbb{R}^p$ are in **general position** whenever no more than p points lie in an affine hyperplane (an affine subspace of dimension $p - 1$).

Theorem

Provided that x_1, \dots, x_n are in general position, the estimator

$$\hat{t}_w(X) = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^n w(x_i, X) x_i}{\sum_{i=1}^n w(x_i, X)}, \quad \text{with weights} \quad w(x_i, X) = \frac{1}{r_p(x_i, X)}$$

is affine equivariant with breakdown point $\varepsilon^* = \frac{n-2p+1}{2n-2p+1}$, if $n \geq 2p$.

Proof: see Donoho (1982)

Computational aspects

The problem of computing $\text{depth}_p(x_1, X)$ NP-hard⁴!

A review for computational challenges computing depth is given in [Chen et al. \(2013\)](#), see also [Dyckerhoff and Mozharovskiy \(2016\)](#) and [Mozharovskiy \(2016\)](#)

- ▶ 1D : cost is $O(n)$ to compute $\text{depth}_1(x, X)$; simply count how many points are greater/smaller than x in X .
- ▶ 2D : cost is⁵ $O(n \log(n))$ to compute $\text{depth}_2(x, X)$
- ▶ ...

⁴D. S. Johnson and F. P. Preparata. "The densest hemisphere problem". In: *Theoret. Comput. Sci.* 6.1 (1978), pp. 93–107.

⁵P. J. Rousseeuw and I. Ruts. "Algorithm AS 307: Bivariate location depth". In: *J. R. Stat. Soc. Ser. C. Appl. Stat.* 45.4 (1996), pp. 516–526.

Alternative estimator: Minimum Volume Ellipsoid (MVE)⁶⁷

Definition

For any constant $c > 0$ and $h \in [n]$, \hat{t}_n is the MVE(h, c) location estimator (and scatter estimator \hat{C}_n) are defined by :

$$\begin{aligned}(\hat{t}_n, \hat{C}_n) \in \arg \min_{t \in \mathbb{R}^p, C \in \mathcal{S}_{++}^n} \det(C) \\ \text{s.t. } \#\{i \in [n] : (x_i - t)^\top C^{-1}(x_i - t) \leq c\} \geq h\end{aligned}$$

where \mathcal{S}_{++}^p is the set of positive definite matrices of size p

- the ellipsoid hence created should cover at least h points

⁶P. J. Rousseeuw. "Least median of squares regression". In: *J. Amer. Statist. Assoc.* 79.388 (1984), pp. 871–880.

⁷S. Van Aelst and P. J. Rousseeuw. "Minimum volume ellipsoid". In: *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews: Computational Statistics* 1.1 (2009), pp. 71–82.

Properties of MVE

- ▶ \hat{t}_n is affine equivariant

⁸H. P. Lopuhaä and P. J. Rousseeuw. "Breakdown Points of Affine Equivariant Estimators of Multivariate Location and Covariance Matrices". In: *Ann. Statist.* 19.1 (1991), pp. 229–248.

Properties of MVE

- ▶ \hat{t}_n is affine equivariant
- ▶ $\hat{C}_n(AX) = A^\top \hat{C}_n A$ for any non singular A

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Properties of MVE

- ▶ \hat{t}_n is affine equivariant
- ▶ $\hat{C}_n(AX) = A^\top \hat{C}_n A$ for any non singular A
- ▶ \hat{t}_n and \hat{C}_n both have asymptotically $\varepsilon^* = \frac{1}{2}$ when X is in general position⁸.

⁸H. P. Lopuhaä and P. J. Rousseeuw. "Breakdown Points of Affine Equivariant Estimators of Multivariate Location and Covariance Matrices". In: *Ann. Statist.* 19.1 (1991), pp. 229–248.

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References II

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