

Teaching Applied Statistical Courses Using MS Excel

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Abstract: Teaching applied statistical courses, instructor ought to solve technique-oriented and problem-oriented examples and exercises. Using software with clickable interfaces like SPSS, Minitab and SAS are good tools to solve problem-oriented examples but they are not appropriate to solve technique-oriented examples as they do not provide insight about the techniques. Instructors must communicate with the computing tools rather getting all the statistical results by clicking tabs. Traditionally, instructors used scientific calculators to solve such examples. With availability of educational technology tools in classrooms this days, there is no way to compare advantages of MS Excel over any scientific calculator. Available Excel Add-ins make MS Excel as an appropriate statistical and computational tool for solving technique-oriented and problem-oriented examples in a visual manner. The free software R is an alternative but it is not stress-free for average students to use and to follow it in the classroom. In this paper, I will share my seven year experiences of using MS Excel in different statistical courses. I particularly find MS Excel to be an ideal software that one can use in the introductory statistical course. I believe that MS Excel is the most appropriate statistical and computational tools for teaching statistics to high school students for two reasons: 1) its availability 2) its visual nature.