

USABILITY

Design Issues with Microsoft Excel

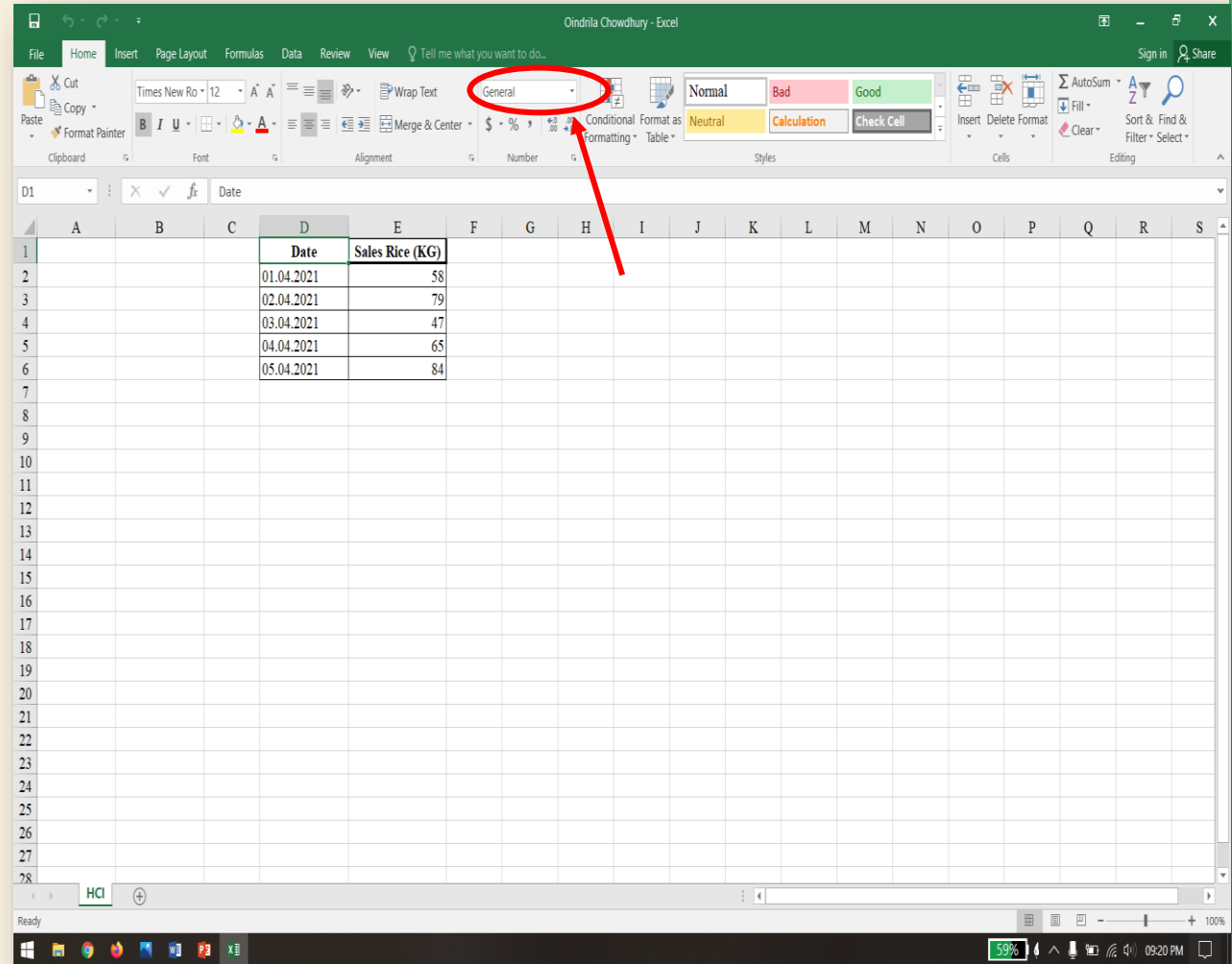
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ID:17-35431-3 Sec:C

AFFORDANCE

It is quality or property of an object that determines its potential uses or clarifies how it can or should be used.

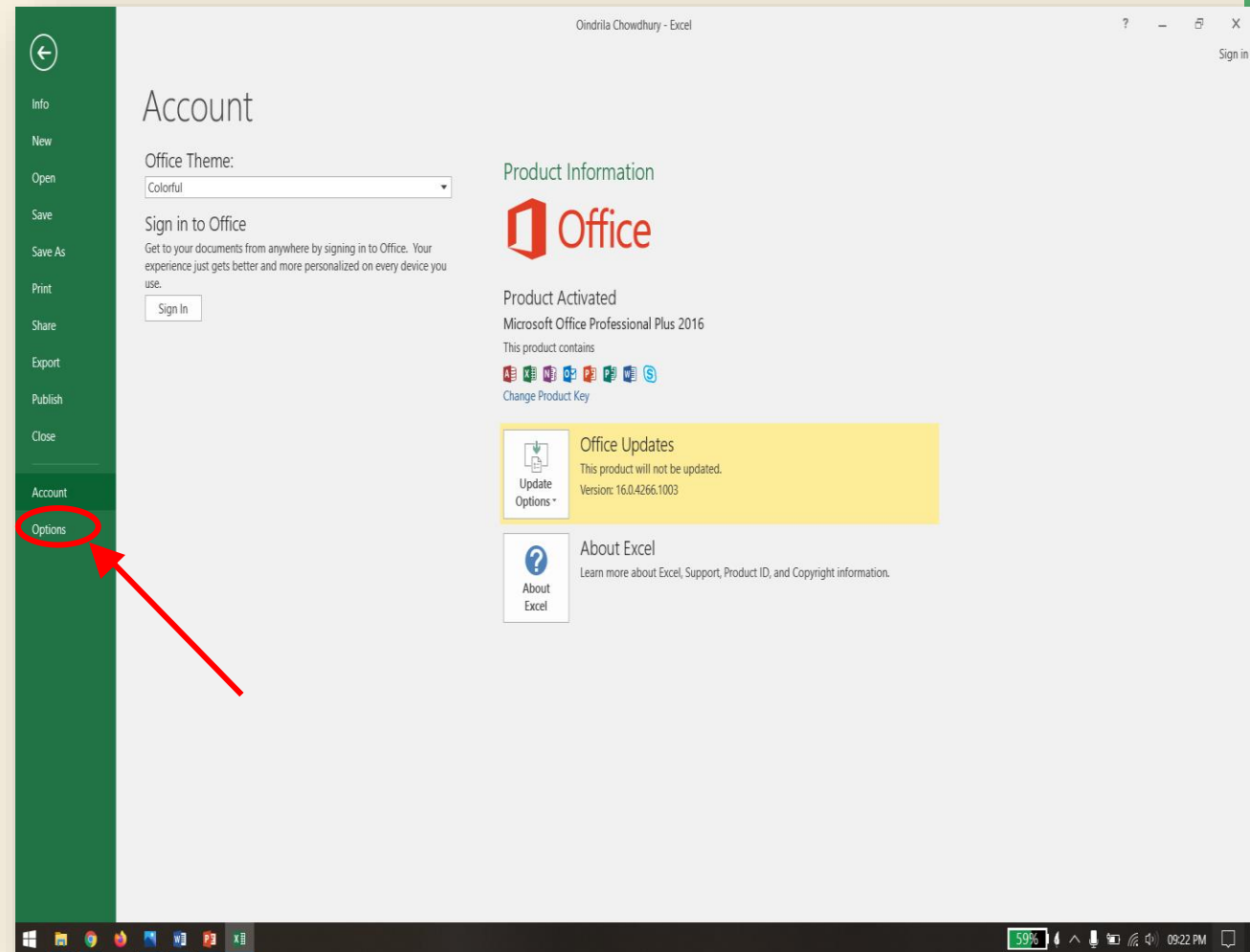
At the very beginning of the first use of MS Excel, I had to add dates manually. I didn't know how to automatically fill dates chronologically by just using the "Date Format" from "Number" menu. The first time I opened Excel, I saw the option called "General" though there should have any option that might indicate of having more number formats. If I knew about the additional formatting options just below the "General" option, it might have saved a lot of my valuable times by chronologically adding dates in the below cells. I could not make the potential use of the "Number" option in the beginning days of MS Excel usage.



VISIBILITY

The basic theory of visibility is that the more visible an element is, the more likely users will be aware of it and know how to use it. Most of the times, software designers struggle with implementing this theory.

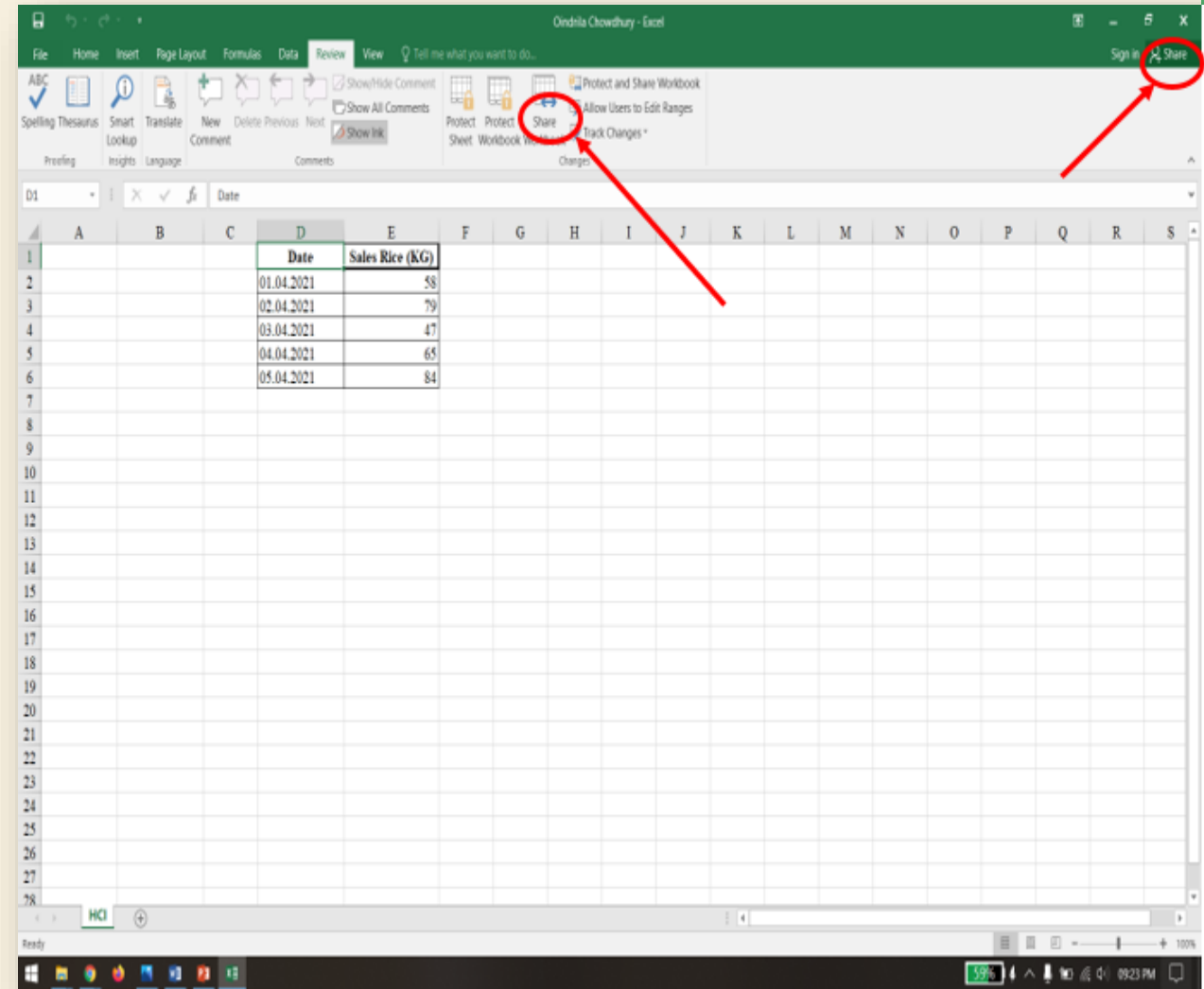
When I was first using MS Excel, I didn't want to update the software as that can change the interface and options of the software. Being an amateur, I wanted to stick with the version I installed. Since I wanted to disable the auto update option of MS Excel, I clicked the "Option" menu to stop the automatic updates. But I did not find anything related to update options or so on. But when I clicked the 'Account' option, there was an option named "Update Options". I turned the auto updates off from that menu. But this option should have been in the "Options" menu as amateur users will click the "Options" menu to make changes in the software. This was a visibility error of MS Excel as it somehow lacks users to find out and know about the update option of MS Office as well as aware of this scenario.



MAPPING

Mappings are nothing but connections or relations between different options or features in a system.

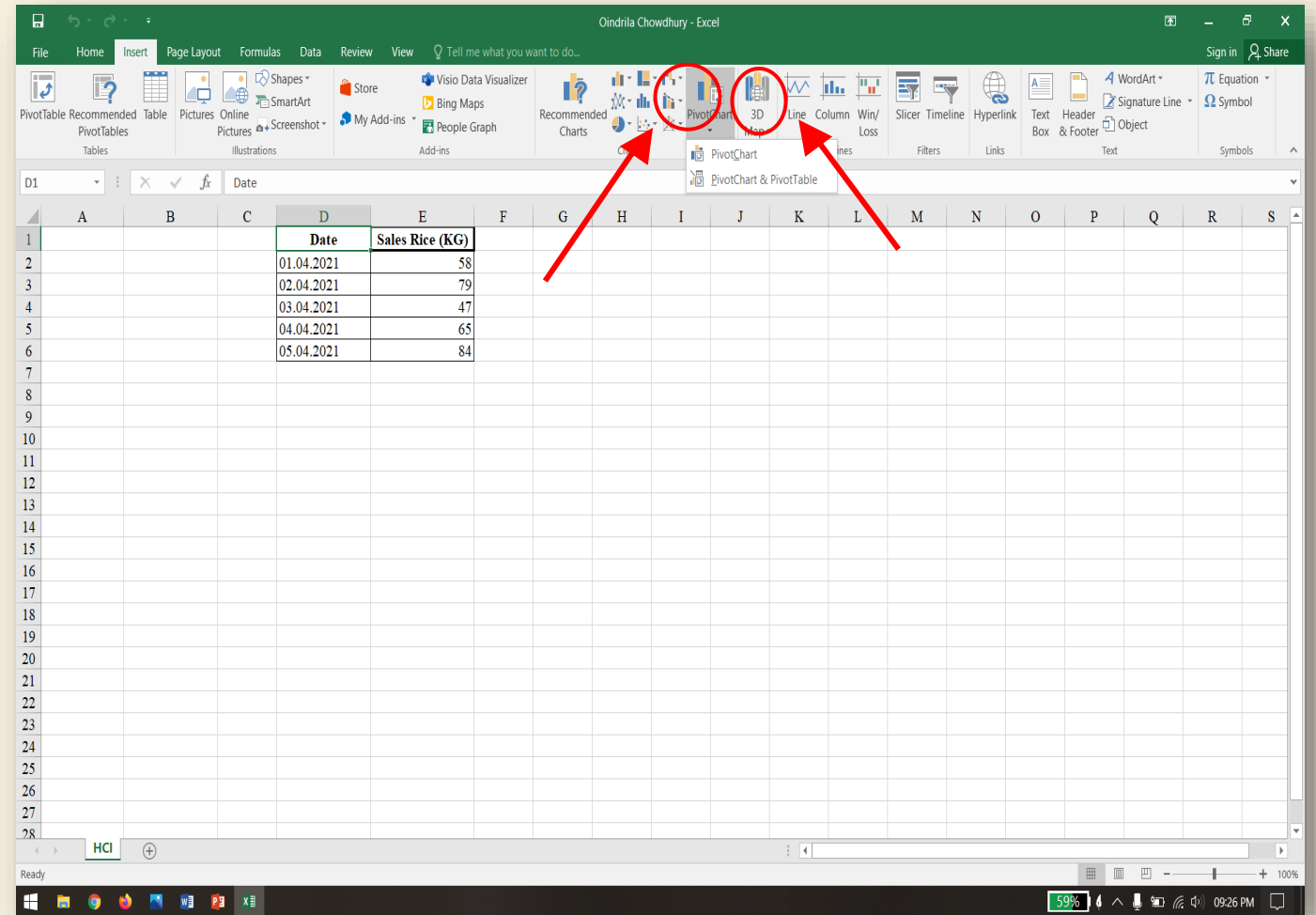
At the early days of learning MS Excel, I wanted to share a spreadsheet with one of my friend. But when I searched for an option to share my spreadsheet, it took me a lot of time to find the share option of MS Excel. It was on the “Review” tab. But as sharing is a prime option, it should be in the “Home” tab as it is much easier to find and execute any operation from the “Home” tab. Besides, after searching for a while, I found another “Share” option at the top right corner of the spreadsheet with having similar font size alike different options. It should have been in a larger font size with a slightly different colour format so that users can distinguish the option from a bunch of different other options. In MS Excel, this is a mapping error in designing the software as users might suffer to find share option in the “Review” tab.



SYSTEM IMAGE

The system image is the definitive combination of all available information is the system itself.

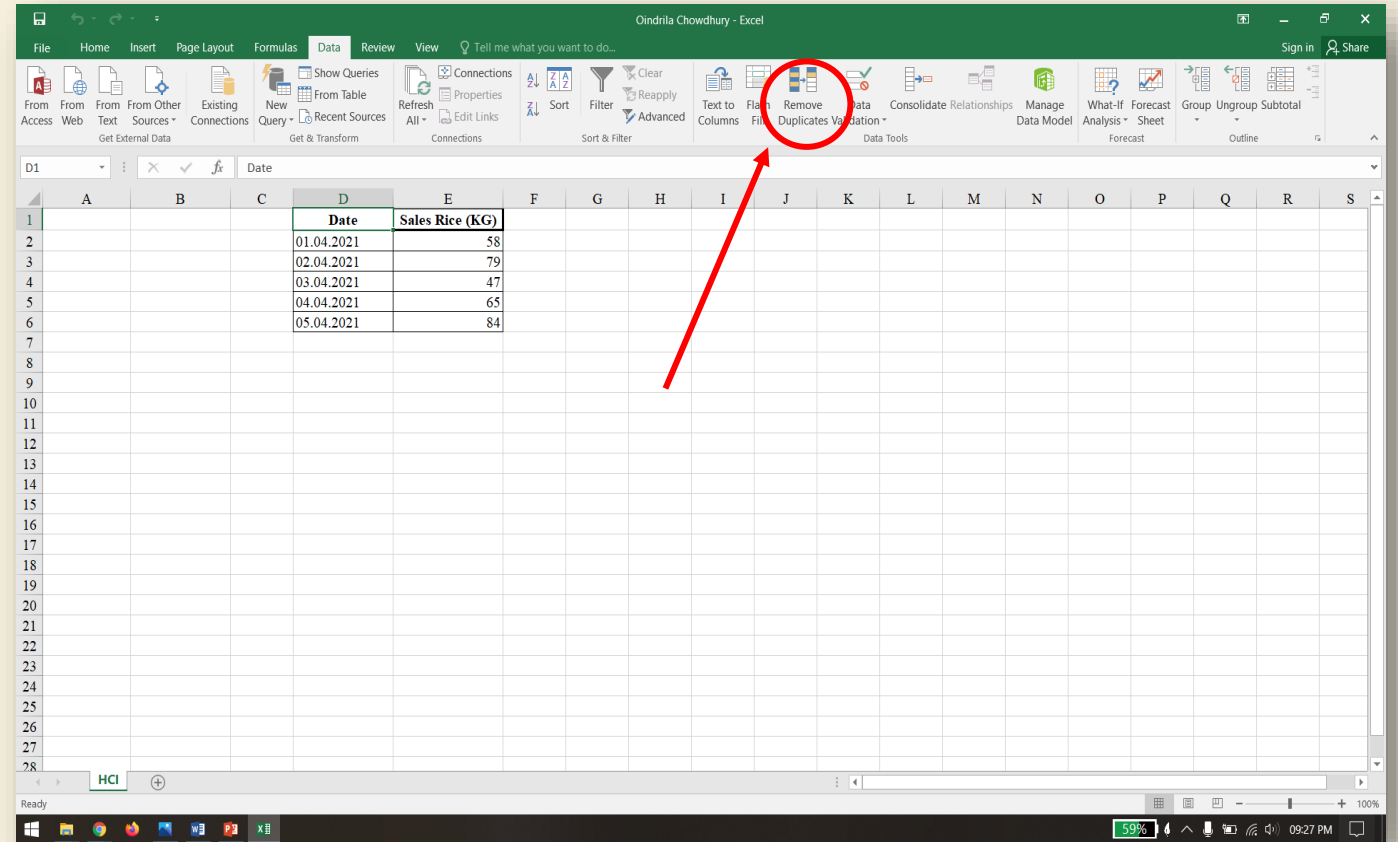
In MS Excel, there are plenty of options with having proper indication of functions of each options. But when I clicked on the “Insert” tab and wanted to make a chart for my table, I found out two options naming “Pivot Chart” and “3D Map”. I hovered my mouse and it was supposed to show the actual features of the items. But they the options didn’t properly showed the features of “Pivot Chart” and “3D Map”. This is an error of system image.



THE GULF OF EXECUTION

The gulf of executions represents the internal space between two things, user's goal for action and the means to execute that goal.

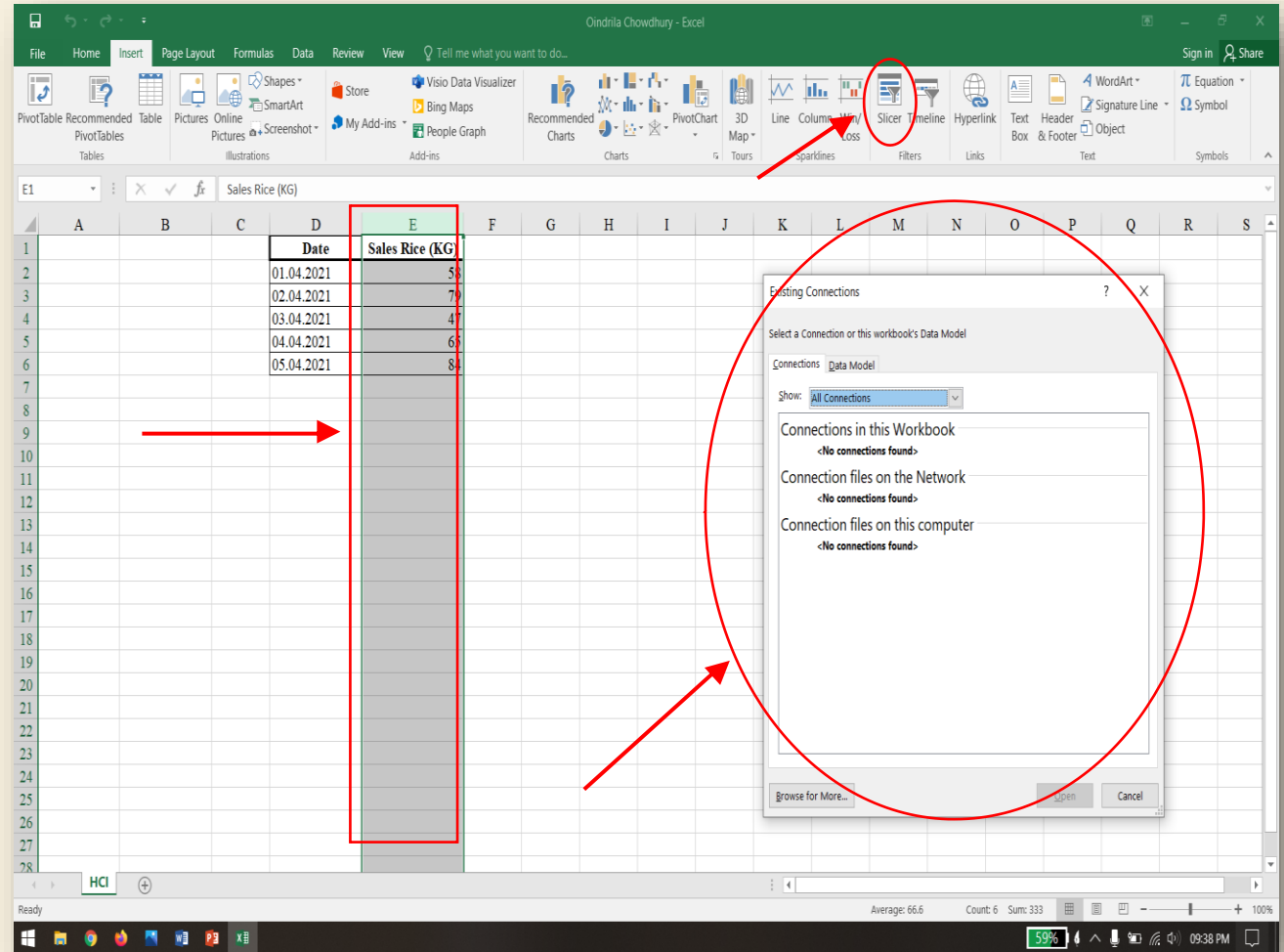
In MS Excel, at the early times when I just started to use Excel, I did input some data with having the same value. This was a mistake by me at a very urgent time. So I search for removing every single duplicate data that I gave input. After searching for a while, I found an option named “Remove Duplicates” in the “Data” tab. Clicking on the “Remove duplicate option I barely found any option to remove my duplicate data and this fell me into a problem for a while. MS Excel’s “Remove Duplicates” option failed to provide action according to my intention at that moment. It is considered as gulf of execution in MS Excel.



GULF OF EVALUATION

The gulf of evaluation represents the amount of effort required to interpret the physical state of the system and determine progress toward the goal.

As a beginner, my intention and goal was to make a column between the “Data” and “Sales Rice (KG)” column. So, when I clicked on the “Insert” tab, there was an option named “Slicer”. So, as an amateur, I selected the “Sales Rice (KG)” column for adding new column at the left side of the selected column and then clicked the “Slicer” option. But instead of adding new column, a window appeared which was instructing connection of the workbook’s data model. At first, “Slicer” means to slice or separate something into multiple units. But here the option shows connection between workbook’s data model and secondly, it did not add any column between my selected column naming “Sales Rice (KG)”. So, MS Excel’s physical representation did not perceive my goals.





THANK YOU