

Introduction to Statistics - Young Researchers Fellowship Program

Lecture 2 - More on descriptive statistics & statistical data visualization

Daniel Sánchez Pazmiño

Laboratorio de Investigación para el Desarrollo del Ecuador

September 2024

Recap

- So far, we covered univariate descriptive statistics:
 - Measures of central tendency
 - Measures of dispersion
 - Measures of position
 - Measures of distributional shape
- We must also look at descriptive statistics in other contexts:
 - Categorical data descriptive stats
 - Bivariate descriptive stats (measures of association)
 - Statistical data visualization: boxplots, histograms, scatter plots, etc.

Categorical data descriptive statistics

Describing categorical data

- Our univariate descriptive statistics applied quite well to numerical data.
- However, for categorical data, would we be able to calculate a mean?
 - No, because categories are not numbers.
- There are specific descriptive stats, some of them which mirror numerical data stats, which should be reviewed for categorical data.
 - The frequency of each category
 - Frequency tables
 - Relative frequencies

Frequency of occurrence

- The frequency of occurrence of a category is the number of times it appears in the dataset.

$$f = \sum_{i=1}^n I(x_i = c)$$

where f is the frequency of category c , n is the number of observations, and I is the indicator function. - $I(x_i = c)$ is 1 if $x_i = c$ and 0 otherwise.

- This can be called the *absolute frequency* of a category.

Frequency of occurrence

- Notice that if a variable in a dataset is categorical, it may have two or more categories within itself.
 - sex may have two categories: male and female
 - ethnicity may have multiple categories: mestizo, afroecuadorian, indigenous, etc.
- Each category of a categorical variable would have its own frequency of occurrence.

Relative frequency

- The relative frequency of a category is the proportion of times it appears in the dataset.

$$rf = \frac{f}{n}$$

where rf is the relative frequency of category c , f is the frequency of category c , and n is the number of observations.

- This is given to you in *proportion* form.
 - For example, if the relative frequency of male is 0.6, then 60% of the dataset falls under the male category.
 - Proportions are always between 0 and 1.
 - Find a percentage by multiplying by 100, however, it is recommended to keep it in proportion form for easier calculations.

Frequency tables

- A frequency table is a table that shows the frequency of each category in a categorical variable.
- It is a way to summarize the distribution of a categorical variable.
- For example, consider the SUPERCIAS dataset. We can calculate the frequency of each category in the `region` variable.

Var1	Freq
COSTA	105744
GALÁPAGOS	1340
ORIENTE	7257
SIERRA	95277

Frequency tables

- A frequency table can be presented with both the absolute frequency and the relative frequency.
- The relative frequency is calculated by dividing the absolute frequency by the total number of observations.
- The relative frequency is a proportion, so it is always between 0 and 1.

Frequencies with R

- We can use the `table()` function in R to calculate the frequency of occurrence of each category in a categorical variable (i.e. a table of frequencies).
 - Works similarly to the numerical data `table()` function.
- Alternatively, use `count` from `dplyr` to calculate the frequency of occurrence of each category in a categorical variable.
 - This is a shorthand for `group_by()` and `summarize()` for a variable which isn't numerical.
- We may extract a specific category frequency by subsetting the table or using `pull()` from `dplyr`.

Example: SUPERCIAS dataset

- The code for the previous frequency table is as follows:

```
supercias$region %>%  
  table()
```

```
·  
      COSTA GALÁPAGOS    ORIENTE    SIERRA  
105744      1340       7257    95277
```

Example: SUPERCIAS dataset

- A tidyverse workflow for the frequency table is as follows:

```
## Relative frequencies
```

```
supercias %>%  
  count(region)
```

```
# A tibble: 4 x 2  
  region      n  
  <chr>    <int>  
1 COSTA    105744  
2 GALÁPAGOS 1340  
3 ORIENTE   7257  
4 SIERRA    95277
```

R implementation for relative frequencies

- For a relative frequency table, we may add an additional column to the frequency table with `mutate()`.
 - This column will be the relative frequency of each category.
- A base R implementation would be passing the `table()` call to `prop.table()`.

Example: SUPERCIAS dataset

- The code for the relative frequency table is as follows:

```
supercias$region %>%  
  table() %>%  
  prop.table()
```

```
.  
      COSTA  GALÁPAGOS      ORIENTE      SIERRA  
0.504460495 0.006392581 0.034620119 0.454526806
```

Example: SUPERCIAS dataset

- A tidyverse workflow for the relative frequency table is as follows:

```
supercias %>%  
  count(region) %>%  
  mutate(relative_frequency = n / sum(n))
```

A tibble: 4 x 3

	region <chr>	n <int>	relative_frequency <dbl>
1	COSTA	105744	0.504
2	GALÁPAGOS	1340	0.00639
3	ORIENTE	7257	0.0346
4	SIERRA	95277	0.455

- Note how the denominator, n , is the sum of the frequencies, $\text{sum}(n)$.

Dichotomous variables

- A dichotomous variable is a categorical variable with only two categories, which in some cases can be represented as 0 and 1.
 - These are also called binary or dummy variables.
- For example, sex can be represented as male and female, which can be coded as 0 and 1, respectively.
 - It's important to read the variables dictionary in a dataset to understand the coding of dichotomous variables.

Dichotomous variables

- The reason why dichotomous variables are important is that they can be used in statistical models.
 - It is beneficial to understand the category of interest as a 1 and the other category as a 0.
 - We will talk more about these in other lectures and the Econometrics module.
- For now, know that *if you take the mean of a dichotomous variable, you are calculating the proportion of the category of interest in the dataset.*

$$f_{dic} = \bar{x} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n x_i$$

where \bar{x} is the mean of the dichotomous variable dic , n is the number of observations, and x_i is the value of the dichotomous variable for observation i .

Dealing with dichotomous variables in R

- If a variable is dichotomous, we may want to recode it to its original values for better interpretation.
 - For example, 1 and 0 can be recoded to male and female, respectively.
- This can be done using `case_when()` from `dplyr` in a `mutate()` call.
- This would also allow you to do the reverse, recoding a categorical variable to a dichotomous variable.

Dealing with dichotomous variables in R

- Other solutions exist for recoding dichotomous variables, such as `recode()` from `dplyr` or `if_else()` from `dplyr`.
- However, R allows for the use of factors, which are a much more effective way to deal with categorical variables for statistical models.
 - These maintain the categories and their levels (order, if applicable or a numerical value) at the same time.
- We can convert a dichotomous variable to a factor using `as.factor()`.
 - This is a base R solution.
- The `forcats` package from the tidyverse is a specialized package for dealing with factors.
 - It has functions for reordering levels, recoding levels, and other factor-related tasks.

Example: Dichotomous variable in SUPERCIAS dataset

- We can manually create dummies for dichotomous variables in the SUPERCIAS dataset through a `mutate()` call and `if_else()`.
 - For example, we can create a dummy for region being SIERRA.

```
supercias_dummies <-  
  supercias %>%  
  mutate(region_sierra = if_else(region == "SIERRA", 1, 0))
```

- The proportion of SIERRA in the dataset can be calculated by taking the mean of the dummy variable.

```
supercias_dummies$region_sierra %>%  
  mean()
```

```
[1] 0.4545268
```

Example: Dichotomous variable in SUPERCIAS dataset

- We can verify the proportion above is correct with a frequency table.

```
table(supercias_dummies$region) %>% prop.table()
```

COSTA	GALÁPAGOS	ORIENTE	SIERRA
0.504460495	0.006392581	0.034620119	0.454526806

Descriptive statistics for bivariate data

Measures of association

- Measures of association are used to describe the relationship between two variables.
 - Also called bivariate descriptive statistics.
- These are:
 - Covariance
 - Correlation
 - Contingency tables

Covariance

- Covariance measures association between two variables in terms of their deviation from the mean.

$$\text{cov}(x, y) = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})(y_i - \bar{y})$$

where $\text{cov}(x, y)$ is the covariance between variables x and y , n is the number of observations, x_i and y_i are the values of the variables for observation i , and \bar{x} and \bar{y} are the means of the variables.

- Covariance can be positive, negative, or zero.
 - Positive covariance means that as one variable increases, the other variable also increases.
 - Negative covariance means that as one variable increases, the other variable decreases.
 - Zero covariance means that there is no relationship between the variables.

Covariance

- Covariance is not standardized, so it is difficult to interpret.
 - It is affected by the scale of the variables.
 - It is difficult to compare covariances across different datasets.
- One should simply interpret the sign of the covariance, not the magnitude.

Correlation

- Correlation is a standardized version of covariance.
 - It is a measure of the strength and direction of the **linear relationship** between two variables.

$$\text{corr}(x, y) = \frac{\text{cov}(x, y)}{s_x s_y}$$

- The correlation coefficient is always between -1 and 1.
 - A correlation of 1 means that the variables are perfectly positively correlated.
 - A correlation of -1 means that the variables are perfectly negatively correlated.
 - A correlation of 0 means that there is no linear relationship between the variables.

Correlation

- Notice that the correlation coefficient won't capture non-linear relationships.
 - For example, a correlation of 0 doesn't mean that there is no relationship between the variables, just that there is no linear relationship.

R implementation for covariance and correlation

- The `cov()` function in R calculates the covariance between two variables.
 - It is a base R function.
- The `cor()` function in R calculates the correlation between two variables.
 - It is a base R function.
- Both functions take two vectors as arguments.

Example with mtcars

- We can calculate the covariance between mpg and wt in the mtcars dataset.

```
mtcars %>%  
  select(mpg, wt) %>%  
  cov()
```

	mpg	wt
mpg	36.324103	-5.116685
wt	-5.116685	0.957379

Example with mtcars

- We can calculate the correlation between mpg and wt in the mtcars dataset.

```
mtcars %>%  
  select(mpg, wt) %>%  
  cor()
```

	mpg	wt
mpg	1.0000000	-0.8676594
wt	-0.8676594	1.0000000

Correlation matrices

- A correlation matrix is a table that shows the correlation between each pair of variables in a dataset.
- It is a way to summarize the relationships between variables in a dataset
- Often useful as an exploratory tool to understand the relationships between variables before more complex statistical analysis.

Example with mtcars

```
mtcars %>%  
  select(mpg, disp, hp, wt) %>%  
  cor()
```

	mpg	disp	hp	wt
mpg	1.0000000	-0.8475514	-0.7761684	-0.8676594
disp	-0.8475514	1.0000000	0.7909486	0.8879799
hp	-0.7761684	0.7909486	1.0000000	0.6587479
wt	-0.8676594	0.8879799	0.6587479	1.0000000

Contingency tables

- A contingency table is a table that shows the frequency of each combination of categories in two categorical variables.
- These are also called cross-tabulation tables.

Example with SUPERCIAS data

- We can calculate a contingency table for the region and ultimo_balance variables in the SUPERCIAS dataset.

```
supercias %>%  
  count(region, ultimo_balance)
```

```
# A tibble: 108 x 3  
  region ultimo_balance     n  
  <chr>   <chr>         <int>  
1 COSTA  1995             122  
2 COSTA  1996             121  
3 COSTA  1997             389  
4 COSTA  1998             310  
5 COSTA  1999             218  
6 COSTA  2000             266  
7 COSTA  2001             200  
8 COSTA  2002             206  
9 COSTA  2003             252
```

R implementations

- We may also feed two columns to the `table()` function to calculate a contingency table.
- Depending on the context, you may want to modify the `margin` argument.
- For example, `margin = 1` would give you the relative frequency of each row.
- `margin = 2` would give you the relative frequency of each column.
- The default is `margin = NULL`, which gives you the relative frequency of the entire table.

Statistical data viz

Introduction

- Data visualization is an important part of data analysis itself, however, statistical data visualizations are specifically designed to work well with the methods we've just learned in descriptive statistics.
- The following are common data visualization used for descriptive statistics:
 - Histograms/density plots
 - Boxplots
 - Cumulative distribution plots
 - Scatter plots

Histograms

- A histogram is a graphical representation of the distribution of a numerical variable.
- It typically consists of bars that represent the frequency of each interval of the variable.
- The height of the bars represents the frequency of the interval.
- Very important for evaluating distributional shape!

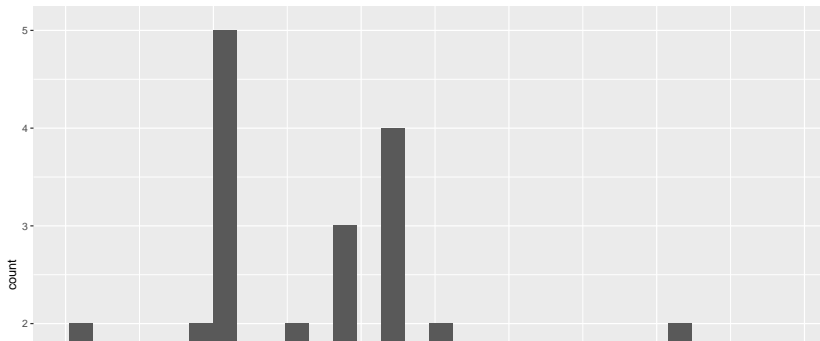
Histograms in R

- The `hist()` function in R is used to create histograms.
 - This is a base R function.
- A tidy alternative is the `geom_histogram()` function from `ggplot2`.
- The `geom_density()` function from `ggplot2` can be used to create a density plot, which is a smoothed version of a histogram.

Example with mtcars

- We can create a histogram for the mpg variable in the mtcars dataset.

```
mtcars %>%  
  ggplot(aes(x = mpg)) +  
  geom_histogram()
```



Boxplots

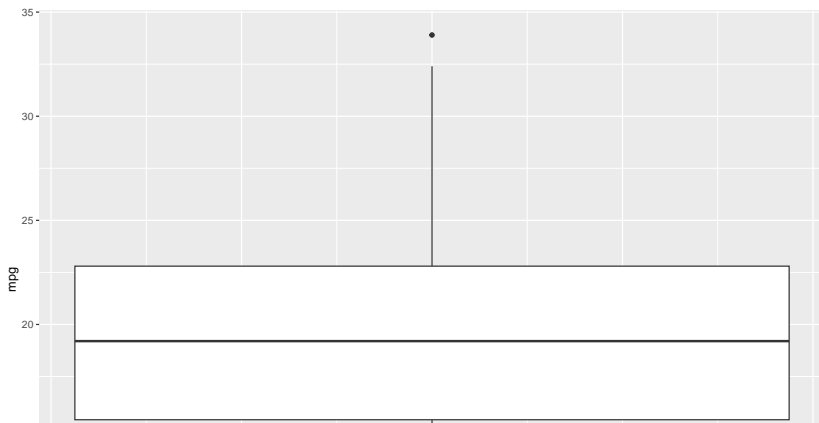
- A boxplot is a graphical representation of the distribution of a numerical variable.
- It consists of a box that represents the interquartile range (IQR) of the variable.
- The line in the box represents the median of the variable.
- The whiskers represent the range of the variable, excluding outliers.

Boxplots in R

- The `boxplot()` function in R is used to create boxplots with base R.
- The tidy alternative is the `geom_boxplot()` function from `ggplot2`.

Example with mtcars

```
mtcars %>%  
  ggplot(aes(x = 1, y = mpg)) +  
  geom_boxplot()
```



Scatter plots

- A scatter plot is a graphical representation of the relationship between two numerical variables.
- It consists of points that represent the values of the two variables.
- The x-axis represents one variable, and the y-axis represents the other variable.
- Scatter plots are useful for identifying relationships between variables.

Scatter plots in R

- The `plot()` function in R is used to create scatter plots with base R.
- The tidy alternative is the `geom_point()` function from `ggplot2`.
 - Sometimes, we include a `geom_smooth()` function to add a regression line to the scatter plot (the “trend line”).

Example with mtcars

```
mtcars %>%  
  ggplot(aes(x = wt, y = mpg)) +  
  geom_point() +  
  geom_smooth(method = "lm")
```

