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MI 320

Assignment 01

***Dear Data***

**Background**

Over the course of two weeks I collected data about my music listening habits at large. I utilized google forms to log every time I actively listened to music. If it was in the car, at my apartment, or on the way to class I logged it as soon as I finished a listening session. By recording how frequently and how I listened, I revealed some interesting patterns about myself and how I consume media as a whole.

**Data Collection**

As mentioned above, the method used to record the data was a google form with several questions related to music listening:

* What music genre(s) were you listening to?
* What activities were you doing while listening?
* Where were you listening?
* How long did you listen?
* What service(s) did you utilize?

These questions helped me collect specific data while keeping the form short enough that I could complete it within a few seconds. This made it easier to fill out when I was occupied with other tasks. I would only record an entry using the form when I was actively listening to music I wanted to listen to. Listening to Spotify at the gym is something I voluntarily did and I was in control of the type(s) of music I wanted to listen to at that time. If I was at Meijer and they were playing music over the PA system that was not counted because it was ambient music that I was passively listening to rather than actively.

The form responses were automatically logged to a Google Sheets spreadsheet which made exporting the data easy once the collection was completed for future reporting in any number of programs (mainly R Studio). Because the data was recorded and stored digitally it made it easy to log and interpret from a number of devices that I was using at any given time.

**Data Visualization**

Once the data was collected it is not entirely useful in its current form as a spreadsheet. Sure, one can see the entire dataset as rows and columns but deriving meaning from that is challenging. To solve this problem, I created a postcard that served to visualize the data so that patterns were easier to see. For the most part I placed one categorical variable (music type, music service) on the x axis then used counts or relative percentages for the y axis to make trends apparent.

My visualization included several charts including

**Overall Experience**

The experience overall was especially interesting. I have built reporting on data about myself before but it was mainly financial. Recording something more interesting like my music listening habits made the experience more enjoyable. I learned that I listen to music much more in the car than I thought I did which was surprising to me.

The data collected also showed when I would take long car rides to and from my home to go fishing as indicated by 60+ listening sessions while driving. In addition to my driving habits, the study also gave me insight into what days I listen to music and even what type for that matter. I found it unusual that I listen to music mostly on Wednesdays and Saturdays but then again this was a small sample of ~13 entries so that could simply be attributed to the small sample size. The small sample size was due simply because I don’t listen to music every day. Does that make me weird? Perhaps, but that that is what I was able to infer from the data collected.