

Re: Experienced Statistician to help decide whether a regression is legitim

## Re: Experienced Statistician to help decide whether a regression is legitim

---

*Source:* <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.stat.math/2006-10/msg00725.html>

---

- *From:* "Reef Fish" <[large\\_nassua\\_grouper@xxxxxxxxxx](mailto:large_nassua_grouper@xxxxxxxxxx)>
  - *Date:* 27 Oct 2006 17:33:03 -0700
- 

Anahita wrote:

I didn't realize how long a single conversation we had! For this reply, I'll cut out MOST of what we had discussed already and comment only on a few.

.. however as a devils advocate... some malpractice is really based on "ignorance" (which is bliss!)– and this ignorance is "good faith"...

Most malpractice ARE based on "ignorance", but I was talking about my experience in THIS group, that after the malpractice had been explained and re–explained a dozen times, the same person continues to argue that it's not malpractice — that's ignorance of a different kind — refusal to LEARN, because I always point to reputable books and articles that corrects the malpractice, but the few frequent malpractioners in sci.stat.math seldom ever read those references and continued to wallow in their BLISS of ignorance.

C'est la difference. That's what you say in France. ;)

Yes then one should dig and search.. but not everyone has the mindset of a "researcher"... Some of this malpractice is a consequence of a lack of modesty as well...

Most of the malpractice I found here are NOT in research, but merely executing simple applied tasks that can hardly be considered research. So it really are deficiencies that resulted in malpractice. I think what I've seen here (for the most part) are beyond a lack of modesty.

Re: Experienced Statistician to help decide whether a regression is legitim

There have been Executive Programs in Business Schools throughout the country, in their MBA programs in which ONLY high level managers and company CEOs are admitted. They are taught not only how to recognize what is good and what is bad, but actually DO many of the analysis themselves.

I had no knowledge of that.. and if this is true this is wonderful..

I was aware of this kind of program from my colleagues at the University of Chicago, Harry Roberts in particular, who told me many of the things the Executives do in their classes. I didn't teach any of the Exec Program courses until 1982 when I was a Visiting Prof at the MBA Exec Program at Vanderbilt. It was a most rewarding experience to find the eager-to-learn EXECS (most CEO and high level managers) who were NOT the brightest students in statistics, yet they were genuinely interested in learning, and they show their appreciation and above all, they don't blame what they don't grasp on ME (as most of the undergrads do). That was the only time in my academic career that I had an Exec student writing me after the course was all over and he received a D how he appreciated my efforts. In some way, that was A high point of my career, to be genuinely thanked by a student who made a "D" in my course. Elsewhere I've been taken to the bonfire for lynching when the students did not get the grade they thought they deserve but didn't.

It makes a whole world of difference between the RESPONSIBLE execs (which is why they got to their positions in the first place) and the irresponsible brats (now common in all colleges). That group of MBA Execs invited me back to their Reunion (at their expense, and I was the only one so invited out side of Vanderbilt) 5 years later, when I was a Visiting Prof at Harvard.

however I see a few points I can state here:

first it does take quite a lot of perspiration to become a mathematician or a statistician.. so going through a few courses if it might enlighten you somewhat doesn't make you all of a sudden a "magus of statistics"..

Of course not. But at the hands of good profesors such as Harry Roberts and a few others, they are orders of magnitude better than those managers who had NOT been through the few courses of education on how statistics is properly used.

Re: Experienced Statistician to help decide whether a regression is legitim

Re: Experienced Statistician to help decide whether a regression is legitim

Second those managers who have/take their spare time to go through these courses might be mostly those who think it matters... (selection bias?)...

Possibly. But if they are already CEOs, it becomes mostly one of the desire to learn and be a BETTER CEO. There are always exceptions of course.

So even there.... there would be matter for debate or?

My >co-author and former colleague

Harry V. Roberts of the University of Chicago had been a strong moving force in that program at Chicago as well as in the movement to educate the Management.

Send him my belated congratulations for his dedication.

Perhaps you didn't have a web browser to read what's in the URL. I regret to say that it is too belated. Because the page was an obituary of his death in 2004. That was during the YEARS of my complete disassociation with ALL statisticians and ALL statistics (from about 2000 to 2005 when I re-started in sci.stat.math) because of my disgust with what the Educational Institutions did to reward the professors who did not TEACH but gave out high grades -- and they are the CAUSE of so many mal-practice statisticians we see today. The statistics professor did LITTLE if ANY to try to right the wrong.

So, it was my deepest regret that I didn't even know John Tukey died until two years later, and that I didn't know Harry died until fairly recently.

The whole thing is certainly a good idea and shows he was persuasive enough.

He was a remarkable human being. The webpage highlighted that he was a Bayesian which not many people knew. I've stated several times in this group that I learned my Bayesian Statistics from L.J. Savage, Harry Roberts, and few other very reputable Bayesians when some Illywhacker and other complete NON-Bayesians made all kinds of noise challenging

Re: Experienced Statistician to help decide whether a regression is legitim

Re: Experienced Statistician to help decide whether a regression is legitim

me about my knowledge about Bayesian stat. when they were the ones who were completely bankrupt in said knowledge.

He even taught principles management that are much more management than statistics.

<http://chronicle.uchicago.edu/041007/obit-roberts.shtml>

That is the page about Harry Roberts. Perhaps that line was truncated so that you couldn't access it because I can see the "l" of shtml dangling below. :0)

l  
#> Toward the end of his career, Roberts helped develop a curriculum in  
#> Total Quality Management at the GSB.

Harry even had success in persuading several major companies to REQUIRE their upper level management positions to be filled by only those who had several advanced courses in statistics.

Here, with all due respect, are you sure that this is a good criterion? After all division of labor is about everybody should be doing that for which he is best qualified.. I guess managers should manage and statistician "statisticize"

Yes, but in an industry which so much depends on the research and study BASED on statistical data, such a requirement would not TAX any high level manager -- management is a skill that can almost be learned WITHOUT any formal study whereas statistics is a skill that CANNOT be learned without a very carefully supervised LEARNING experience.

hmmm that was my reason to leave academia... this "tolerant" attitude to "low or nonsensical" research ...

Me too. So, we have at least that much IN COMMON for our reasons to leave academia. :-) Publish or perish is ALMOST as bad as "Give grades to please the students because they pay the tuition -- forget about teaching them anything."

Re: Experienced Statistician to help decide whether a regression is legitim

Re: Experienced Statistician to help decide whether a regression is legitim

They are much more ready to criticize ME for pointing out the malpractice than criticizing those who malpractice.

I have not followed the debate. It is thus a courageous attitude of yours to defend and try to point out malpractice... one is seldom rewarded for that. It takes on top a communicator talent

That is not restricted to any particular debate. That has been the PREVAILING atmosphere ever since I stepped in sci.stat.math about 5,000 posts ago. :-)

But being human (or pescan?)

Ah, that's Spanish for "the fish", and I thought you were French. For a second, I thought you were referring to some poster who pasted with the name "pescaand" who first thanked me profusely in 2005 for being so patient in teaching her/him about what a Linear Model was, and then suddenly re-appeared in 2006 to post the most bitter, unwarranted, and vicious attack on me because I had made a passing remark about a UK student who was apparently his/her girlfriend/boyfriend, who had dropped out of that discussion long ago.

you know very well how difficult to us all it is to admit that one errs....

It is VERY easy for me because I seldom err, and if I do, and was pointed out, I immediately accept it. If you can't do that, then you lose ALL credibility.

Even some of my CRITICS (of my no-nonsense way of blunt communication as is my trademark in academia) readily point out to others my trademark phrase "I stand corrected" on those FEW occasions I did err and was pointed out by others, whether the error was large or small.

so then Mr. Reef Fish, humans remain humans even if dealing with statistics..you cannot expect that those you enlighten do not go through the tortures of realizing that what they believed they knew might have benn illusory..

It becomes a torture ONLY when they refuse to LISTEN and at least TRY to understand WHERE they erred. In m00es's case, which was an "extremely" of such a case, he couldn't wait when I said "read it in my next post" (and he had already made the SAME

Re: Experienced Statistician to help decide whether a regression is legitim

Re: Experienced Statistician to help decide whether a regression is legitim

NOISE posting exactly the same that he had erred).

Those who continued arguing when they SHOULD have known how they erred are the ones who brought torture to themselves. In the end, instead of losing ONCE (admit and move on), they lose 100 TIMES and leave a permanent record in the archives of their ignorance and obnoxiousness, not to mention the pollution of an entire newsgroup.

It is more difficult to be a top level APPLIED statistician than a brain surgeon. If a brain surgeon is obviously incompetent, his patients DIE and is easily observable. :-)

ahahah...

Thank you for being a receptive audience on that. :)

When applied statisticians malpractice and have strong influence on CEOs of companies, the effect is not as readily visible.

Companies ALWAYS have the option to hire competent statisticians to help do the job their own in-house statistics staff is incapable of handling properly or well.

Well there you are... they do in theory, but in practice.. it is slightly more complex... first you have to understand what kind of specialist you hire, and then screening humans is difficult you know that as well..

That's why the EXEC program CEOs and upper level managers are in a better position to know whom to hire.

and then it takes time to discover that your team doesn't know how to work ( especially if you have not been through the courses listed above...).. which is the case in the issue I am talking about... and then if the hired consultants also fail to "see" the problem...

All of that is certainly possible! The more ignorant the management, the more probable. :-)

C'est la vie. We are not living in Utopia. We have both seen the Real World. Kicking a strawman is easy to do. Recognizing and appreciating a solid statistician is a much harder task.

Re: Experienced Statistician to help decide whether a regression is legitim

Re: Experienced Statistician to help decide whether a regression is legitim

Another French say says: "avec des si on met Paris en bouteille" meaning that with a causal chain of "if2s you can even bottle "Paris".. i.e. manage the impossible..

That sounds like my mentor's favorite saying against Fisher's idea of randomization: "What if you throw up a group of blocks of letters and it fell spelling 'C H R I S T M A S'"?

One of the things one learns is how to recognize a BAD book.

agreed....

In any case thank you for your refreshing thoughts and the story of the courses for manager.. the US is always in advance!

Touche. The US is in advance in some small areas. The US remains forever behind in the math and science areas in spite of having the best in the same areas. That's because the best FEW are at the tail of the dog. They cannot wag the dog, the ever content we-are-the-best majority even if they ranked FAR behind most countries, even a few in the 3rd world, on math related areas.

— Reef Fish Bob.