

PubHlth 540 Fall 2009
Unit 4 – Bernoulli and Binomial

Help with page 18 of the lecture notes

Setting and Question

A roulette wheel lands on each of the digits 0, 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9 with probability = 0.10. Write down an expression for the calculation of the following: “the probability of “5 or “6” exactly 3 times in 20 spins”

This setting is appropriately modeled using the Binomial distribution

Each spin of roulette wheel qualifies as a separate trial.

$N = \# \text{ trials} = 20$

The outcomes of the separate spins are mutually independent.

The outcome of each spin has no influence on the outcome of other spins.

There is a “yes/no” event of interest.

We say event has occurred if the wheel lands on a “5 or 6”

Probability [event] = $\pi = 0.20$

So we can define our Binomial random variable X as

$X = \# \text{ occurrences of event of “5 or 6” in 20 trials where } \pi = 0.20$

The desired probability is “5 or 6” exactly 3 times in 20 spins”

Translation: $\text{Probability} [X = 3] = \binom{20}{3} \pi^3 (1-\pi)^{20-3}$

Solution for $\binom{20}{3}$

$$\binom{20}{3} = \frac{20!}{3! 17!} = \frac{(20)(19)(18) 17!}{3! 17!} \text{ by a little unravelling of the } 20!$$

$$= \frac{(20)(19)(18)}{3!} \text{ by canceling the } 17! \text{ top and bottom}$$

$$= \frac{(20)(19)(18)}{(3)(2)(1)} \text{ by unravelling the } 3!$$
$$= 1140$$

Solution for π^3

$$\pi^3 = .20^3 = .008$$

Solution for $(1 - \pi)^{20-3}$

$$(1-\pi)^{20-3} = (1-.20)^{17} = .80^{17} = 2.2517998 \times 10^{-2} = .02252$$

The desired probability is thus

$$\binom{20}{3} \pi^3 (1-\pi)^{20-3}$$

$$= (1140)(.008)(.02252)$$

$$= .2054$$