

Assessing Software Quality with Time Domain Pareto Type II using SPC

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ABSTRACT

As the usage of software is getting increased day by day, there is a need for software reliability and for this several software reliability growth models exist that are capable of finding the occurrence of errors. It is also possible to find the reliability of time domain models based on order statistics with Non-Homogeneous Poisson Process (NHPP). The conditional failure rate is an important factor for software and order statistics can be used in various applications like characterization of problems, detecting outliers, linear estimation, study of system reliability, life testing, survival analysis, data compression and many others. Using Statistical Process Control (SPC), we can monitor when the software failures occurs, that helps in improving the reliability of software. In this paper, we proposed a control mechanism Pareto Type II model with an order statistics based on NHPP and the observations are considered for time domain failure data. The unknown parameters are estimated using a well-known estimation method known as Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE). The model is analyzed using live data sets.

Keywords

Order Statistics, Statistical Process Control, Pareto Type II, NHPP, MLE, Control charts.

1. INTRODUCTION

Software Reliability plays an important role in software quality. As more and more software is creeping into the embedded system, reliability has become an essential characteristic for the software. The probability that a given program will work as intended by the user without failures in a specified environment and for a specified duration can be termed as software reliability [13]. Software Reliability can prevent major faults that have the possibility of taking human life, money and time. For this a number of models have been developed for better predictions. A common approach for measuring software reliability is by using an analytical model whose parameters are generally estimated from available software failure data. Reliability quantities have been defined with respect to time, although it is possible to define them with respect to other variables. We have taken inter failures time data of Musa (1975) [10] and Michael [9]. In reliability study there are two characteristics of a random process: 1) the probability distribution of the random variables, i.e., Poisson and 2) the variation of the process with time. A random process whose probability distribution varies with time is called non homogeneous. The random process for time variation we can define two functions, the mean value function $m(t)$, as the average cumulative failures associated with each time point and the failure intensity function as the rate of change of mean value function.

1.1 Statistical Process Control

Statistical Process Control (SPC) is an important tool with which we can monitor the reliability of developed software. For monitoring the software reliability, software failure data is very much essential that is available in two different types. The time domain data records the time of the failure occurrences and interval domain data records the number of failures in a given time interval. In this paper, we want to monitor the reliability of a software using SPC based on order statistics for time domain data. The main intention of this paper is to give a systematic procedure to show how SPC can be used to monitor the software reliability. In recent years, several authors have recommended the use of SPC for software process monitoring. A few others have highlighted the potential pitfalls in its use [1]. Over the years, SPC has come to be widely used among others, in manufacturing industries for the purpose of controlling and improving the quality of a product [11]. The SPC is applied in the development of software product with the intention to improve the reliability and quality of software [2]. It was proved that SPC can be applied successfully to various processes for development of software, including software reliability process. SPC is traditionally so well adopted in manufacturing industry. In general software development activities are more process centric than product centric which makes it difficult to apply SPC in a straight forward manner. The utilization of SPC for software reliability has been the subject of study of several researchers. A few of these studies are based on reliability process improvement models. They turn the search light on SPC as a means of accomplishing high process maturities. Some of the studies furnish guidelines in the use of SPC by modifying general SPC principles to suit the special requirements of software development [2] (Burr and Owen[3]; Flora and Carleton[4]). It is especially noteworthy that Burr and Owen provide seminal guidelines by delineating the techniques currently in vogue for managing and controlling the reliability of software. Significantly, in doing so, their focus is on control charts as efficient and appropriate SPC tools. It is accepted on all hands that statistical process control acts as a powerful tool for bringing about improvement of quality as well as productivity of any manufacturing procedure and is particularly relevant to software development. SPC is a method of process management through application of statistical analysis, which involves and includes the defining, measuring, controlling, and improving of the processes [5].

2. ORDER STATISTICS

Order statistics are used in a wide variety of practical situations. Their use in characterization problems, detection of outliers, linear estimation, study of system reliability, life-testing, survival analysis, data compression and many other fields can be seen from the many books [6]. Order statistics deals with properties and applications of ordered random

variables and of functions of these variables. The use of order statistics is significant when failures are frequent or inter failure time is less. Let X denote a continuous random variable with probability density function $f(x)$ and cumulative distribution function $F(x)$, and let (X_1, X_2, \dots, X_n) denote a random sample of size n drawn on X . The original sample observations may be unordered with respect to magnitude. A transformation is required to produce a corresponding ordered sample. Let $(X_{(1)}, X_{(2)}, \dots, X_{(n)})$ denote the ordered random sample such that $X_{(1)} < X_{(2)} < \dots < X_{(n)}$; then $(X_{(1)}, X_{(2)}, \dots, X_{(n)})$ are collectively known as the order statistics derived from the parent X . The various distributional characteristics can be known from Balakrishnan and Cohen [7]. The inter-failure time data represent the time lapse between every two consecutive failures. On the other hand if a reasonable waiting time for failures is not a serious problem, we can group the inter-failure time data into non overlapping successive sub groups of size 4 or 5 and add the failure times with in each sub group. For instance if a data of 100 inter-failure times are available we can group them into 20 disjoint subgroups of size 5. The sum total in each subgroup would devote the time lapse between every 5th order statistics in a sample of size 5. In general for inter-failure data of size 'n', if r (any natural no) less than 'n' and preferably a factor n , we can conveniently divide the data into 'k' disjoint subgroups ($k=n/r$) and the cumulative total in each subgroup indicate the time between every r th failure. The probability distribution of such a time lapse would be that of the r^{th} ordered statistics in a subgroup of size r , which would be equal to r^{th} power of the distribution function of the original variable ($m(t)$). The whole process involves the mathematical model of the mean value function and knowledge about its parameters. If the parameters are known they can be taken as they are for the further analysis, if the parameters are not known they have to be estimated using a sample data by any admissible, efficient method of estimation. This is essential because the control limits depend on mean value function, which in turn depends on the parameters. If software failures are quite frequent keeping track of inter-failure is tedious. If failures are more frequent order statistics are preferable [5].

3. MODEL DESCRIPTION

For calculating the parameters and the control limits using ordered Statistics approach, we consider here the Pareto Type II distribution [8].

The mean value of Pareto Type II distribution [8] representing the number of failures experienced by the time t is given by

$$m(t) = a \left(1 - \frac{c^b}{(t+c)^b} \right) \quad 3.1$$

In order to group the Time domain data into non overlapping successive sub groups of size r , we need to take $m(t)$ to the power r

$$m(t) = \left(a \left(1 - \frac{c^b}{(t+c)^b} \right) \right)^r \quad 3.2$$

Differentiating with respect to t of equation 3.2

$$\begin{aligned} m'(t) &= \frac{d}{dt} \left[a - \frac{ac^b}{(t+c)^b} \right]^r \\ &= r \left[a - \frac{ac^b}{(t+c)^b} \right]^{r-1} * \left[abc^b * (t+c)^{-(b+1)} \right] \\ M'(t) &= r \left[a - \frac{ac^b}{(t+c)^b} \right]^{r-1} * \left[\frac{abc^b}{(t+c)^{b+1}} \right] \end{aligned} \quad 3.3$$

The Likelihood function L can be written as

$$L = e^{-m(t)} * \prod_{i=1}^n m'(t_i) \quad 3.4$$

Substituting equations 3.1 and 3.3 in 3.4 we get

$$= e^{-\left[a - \frac{ac^b}{(t+c)^b} \right]^r} * \prod_{i=1}^n r \left[a - \frac{ac^b}{(t_i+c)^b} \right]^{r-1} \left[\frac{abc^b}{(t_i+c)^{b+1}} \right]$$

Applying log on both sides:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{LogL} &= - \left[a - \frac{ac^b}{(t+c)^b} \right]^r \\ &+ \sum_{i=1}^n \log \left[r \left(a - \frac{ac^b}{(t_i+c)^b} \right)^{r-1} \left(\frac{abc^b}{(t_i+c)^{b+1}} \right) \right] \\ \log L &= -a^r \left[1 - \frac{c^b}{(t+c)^b} \right]^r \\ &+ \sum_{i=1}^n \log r + \sum_{i=1}^n (r-1) \log \left[a - \frac{ac^b}{(t+c)^b} \right] \\ &+ \sum_{i=1}^n [(\log a + \log b + \log c) - (b+1) \log (t_i+c)] \end{aligned} \quad 3.5$$

Differentiating with respect to 'a'

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \log L}{\partial a} &= -ra^{r-1} \left[1 - \frac{c^b}{(t+c)^b} \right]^r + 0 \\ &+ \sum_{i=1}^n (r-1) \frac{1}{\left(a - \frac{ac^b}{(t+c)^b} \right)} \\ &\left[1 - \frac{c^b}{(t+c)^b} \right] + \frac{n}{a} \\ &= -ra^{r-1} \left[1 - \frac{c^b}{(t+c)^b} \right]^r + \frac{n(r-1)}{a} + \frac{n}{a} \\ \frac{\partial \log L}{\partial a} &= 0 \Rightarrow \\ a^r &= n * \left[\frac{(t+c)^b}{(t+c)^b - c^b} \right]^r \end{aligned} \quad 3.6$$

Differentiating with respect to 'b'

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial \log L}{\partial b} &= ar \left(1 - \left(\frac{c}{t+c} \right)^b \right)^{r-1} \left(\frac{c}{t+c} \right)^b \log \left(\frac{c}{t+c} \right) \\ &+ \sum_{i=1}^n [(r-1) * \frac{(t+c)^b}{(t+c)^b - c^b} \\ &* - \left(\frac{c}{t+c} \right)^b \log \left(\frac{c}{t+c} \right)] + \sum_{i=1}^n \left[\frac{1}{b} + \log c - \log (t_i+c) \right] \\ \frac{\partial \log L}{\partial b} &= nr \left[\frac{(t+c)^b}{(t+c)^b - c^b} \right] \left(\frac{c}{t+c} \right)^b \log \left(\frac{c}{t+c} \right) + \sum_{i=1}^n [(r \\ &- 1) * \frac{(t+c)^b}{(t+c)^b - c^b} \\ &* - \left(\frac{c}{t+c} \right)^b \log \left(\frac{c}{t+c} \right)] + \sum_{i=1}^n \left[\frac{1}{b} + \log c - \log (t_i+c) \right] \end{aligned}$$

Taking $c=1$,

$$\begin{aligned}
 &= nr \left[\frac{1}{(t+1)^b - 1} \right] \log \left(\frac{1}{t+1} \right) + \sum_{i=1}^n (r-1) \log(t_i) \\
 &\quad + 1) \frac{1}{[(t_i+1)^b - 1]} + \frac{n}{b} \\
 &\quad - \sum_{i=1}^n \log(t_i + 1) \\
 g(b) &= \frac{nr}{(t+1)^b - 1} \log \left(\frac{1}{t+1} \right) + \sum_{i=1}^n (r-1) \log(t_i) \\
 &\quad + 1) \frac{1}{[(t_i+1)^b - 1]} \\
 &+ \frac{n}{b} - \sum_{i=1}^n \log(t_i + 1) \quad 3.7 \\
 g'(b) &= nr \log \left(\frac{1}{t+1} \right) (-1) * \frac{(t+1)^b \log(t+1)}{[(t+1)^b - 1]^2} - \\
 &\sum_{i=1}^n (r-1) \log(t_i + 1) (t_i + 1)^b \log(t_i + 1) [(t_i + 1)^b - 1]^{-2} \\
 &\quad - \frac{n}{b^2} \quad 3.8
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 \log L &= -a^r \left[1 - \frac{c^b}{(t+c)^b} \right]^r \\
 &\quad + \sum_{i=1}^n \log r + \sum_{i=1}^n (r-1) \log \left[a - \frac{ac^b}{(t+c)^b} \right] \\
 &\quad + \sum_{i=1}^n [(\log a + \log b + \log c) - (b+1) \log(t_i + c)]
 \end{aligned}$$

Substitute a^r value in this equation and Differentiate with respect to 'c',

$$\begin{aligned}
 \frac{\partial \log L}{\partial c} &= -nr \left[\frac{(t+c)^b}{(t+c)^b - c^b} \right]^r \left[\frac{(t+c)^b - c^b}{(t+c)^b} \right]^{r-1} \left[-b \left(\frac{c}{t+c} \right)^{b-1} \right. \\
 &\quad \left. * \frac{t}{(t+c)^2} \right] \\
 &+ \sum_{i=1}^n (r-1) * \frac{(t+c)^b}{(t+c)^b - c^b} \left[-b \left(\frac{c}{t+c} \right)^{b-1} * \frac{t}{(t+c)^2} \right] + \frac{nb}{c} \\
 &\quad - \sum_{i=1}^n \left(\frac{b+1}{t_i + c} \right)
 \end{aligned}$$

Taking $b=1$,

$$\begin{aligned}
 &= \frac{nrct}{(t+c)^1 - c^1} * \frac{1}{c} * \frac{1}{t+c} - \sum_{i=1}^n t * \frac{(r-1)c}{(t+c)^1 - c^1} * \frac{1}{c} * \frac{1}{t+c} \\
 &\quad + \frac{n}{c} - \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{2}{t_i + c} \\
 g(c) &= \frac{nr}{t+c} - \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{(r-1)}{(t_i+c)} + \frac{n}{c} - \sum_{i=1}^n \left(\frac{2}{t_i+c} \right) \quad 3.9
 \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 g'(c) &= \\
 &\frac{-nr}{(t+c)^2} + \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{(r-1)}{(t_i+c)^2} - \frac{n}{c^2} + \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{2}{(t_i+c)^2} \quad 3.10
 \end{aligned}$$

4. MONITORING TIME BETWEEN FAILURES BY DEVELOPING CONTROL CHARTS

Several types of SPC charts are available that uses statistical techniques. It is very much important to select proper charts for implementing statistical process control based on given data, situation and need [9]. Advanced charts are also available that helps us to analyse the statistics very effectively. Variable control charts and Attribute control charts are the basic type of advanced charts that are available and can be used depending on the type of data and nature. Variable control charts are designed to control product or process parameters which are measured on a continuous measurement scale. X-bar, R charts are variable control charts. Attributes are characteristics of a process which are stated in terms of good or bad, accept or reject, etc. Attribute charts are not sensitive to variation in the process as variables charts. For attribute data there are : p-charts, c-charts, np-charts, and u-charts. The control charts are named as Failure Control Charts that helps to assess the software failure phenomena on the basis of the given inter-failure time data.

5. ESTIMATION OF CONTROL LIMITS AND PARAMETERS

Parameter estimation is a statistical method trying to estimate parameters for time domain data based on ordered statistics. Given the data observations and sample size, using the equations 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, 3.9, & 3.10, the parameters 'a', 'b' and 'c' can be computed by using the popular Newton Rapson method. To compute the parameters a program is developed in C language. The equation for mean value function of Pareto Type II Distribution is given by

$$m(t) = a \left(1 - \frac{c^b}{(t+c)^b} \right)$$

The Control limits are obtained as follows: Delete the term 'a' from the mean value function. Equate the remaining function successively to 0.99865, 0.00135, 0.5 and solve the value of 't', for Pareto Type II Distribution, in order to get the usual Six sigma corresponding Upper Control limit, Lower Control limit, Central line.

$$F(t) = 1 - \frac{c^b}{(t+c)^b} = 0.99865$$

$$\Rightarrow \frac{c^b}{(t+c)^b} = 1 - 0.99865$$

$$\Rightarrow \frac{c^b}{(t+c)^b} = 0.00135$$

$$\Rightarrow (t+c)^b = \frac{c^b}{0.00135}$$

Apply log on both sides

$$b \log(t+c) = b \log c - \log 0.00135$$

$$\log(t+c) = \log c - (1/b) * \log 0.00135$$

$$t+c = e^{\{\log c - (\frac{1}{b}) * \log 0.00135\}}$$

$$t = e^{\{\log c - (\frac{1}{b}) * \log 0.00135\}} - c = t_U \quad 5.1$$

$$t = e^{\{\log c - (\frac{1}{b}) * \log 0.99865\}} - c = t_L \quad 5.2$$

$$t = e^{\{\log c - (\frac{1}{b}) * \log 0.5\}} - c = t_C \quad 5.3$$

The control limits are defined in such a way that the point above the $m(t_U)$ (5.1) Upper Control Limit (UCL) is an alarm signal. A point below $m(t_L)$ (5.2) Lower Control Limit (LCL) is an indication specifying that the quality of software is

better. A point within the control limits indicates that the process is stable.

5.1 Developing Failure Charts

Given the n inter-failure data the values of $m(t)$ at t_C, t_U, t_L and at the given n inter-failure times are calculated. Then successive differences of the $m(t)$'s are taken, which leads to $n-1$ values. The graph with the said inter-failure times 1 to $n-1$ on X-axis, the $n-1$ values of successive differences $m(t)$'s on Y-axis, and the 3 control lines parallel to X-axis at $m(t_L)$, $m(t_U)$, $m(t_C)$ respectively constitutes failures control chart to assess the software failure phenomena on the basis of the given inter-failures time data.

6. ILLUSTRATION

The procedure of generating the failures control charts for failure software process is illustrated considering the live data sets [9][10]. The results have given the +ve recommendations that software reliability can be assessed and the failures are detected at an early stage.

Table 1: Software failure data reported by Musa(1975) [10]

Fault	Time	Fault	Time	Fault	Time
1	3	42	263	83	1800
2	30	43	452	84	865
3	113	44	255	85	1435
4	81	45	197	86	30
5	115	46	193	87	143
6	9	47	6	88	108
7	2	48	79	89	0
8	91	49	816	90	3110
9	112	50	1351	91	1247
10	15	51	148	92	943
11	138	52	21	93	700
12	50	53	233	94	875
13	77	54	134	95	245
14	24	55	357	96	729
15	108	56	193	97	1897
16	88	57	236	98	447
17	670	58	31	99	386
18	120	59	369	100	446
19	26	60	748	101	122
20	114	61	0	102	990
21	325	62	232	103	948
22	55	63	330	104	1082
23	242	64	365	105	22
24	68	65	1222	106	75
25	422	66	543	107	482
26	180	67	10	108	5509
27	10	68	16	109	100
28	1146	69	529	110	10

29	600	70	379	111	1071
30	15	71	44	112	371
31	36	72	129	113	790
32	4	73	810	114	6150
33	0	74	290	115	3321
34	8	75	300	116	1045
35	227	76	529	117	648
36	65	77	281	118	5485
37	176	78	160	119	1160
38	58	79	828	120	1864
39	457	80	1011	121	4116
40	300	81	445	--	--
41	97	82	296	--	--

Table: 2 Parameter estimates and their control limits of 4 and 5 order

Data Set	Order	a	b	c	$m(t_U)$	$m(t_C)$	$m(t_L)$
Musa	4	26.0	1.00	3.96	25.9	13.0	0.03
		268	028	197	916	134	514
a	5	27.0	1.00	4.47	26.9	13.5	0.03
		071	011	055	707	036	646

Table: 3 Successive differences of 4th order $m(t)$'s of

Table 1

Fault	4-order Cumulatives	$m(t)$	Successive Difference's Of $m(t)$'s	Fault	4-order Cumulatives	$m(t)$	Successive Difference's Of $m(t)$'s
1	227	25.57502	0.220341	18	16358	26.02049	0.000664
2	444	25.79536	0.095939	19	18287	26.02116	0.000624
3	759	25.8913	0.038078	20	20567	26.02178	0.000738
4	1056	25.92937	0.045599	21	24127	26.02252	0.000649
5	1986	25.97497	0.013356	22	28460	26.02317	0.00044
6	2676	25.98833	0.015245	23	32408	26.02361	0.000442
7	4434	26.00358	0.002987	24	37654	26.02405	0.000284
8	5089	26.00656	0.001126	25	42015	26.02433	1.63E-05
9	5389	26.00769	0.002966	26	42296	26.02435	0.000302
10	6380	26.01065	0.002311	27	48296	26.02465	0.000153

11	7447	26.0 1296	0.0008 29	28	52042	26.0 248	5.18E- 05
12	7922	26.0 1379	0.0029 58	29	53443	26.0 2486	0.0001 04
13	10258	26.0 1675	0.0008 23	30	56485	26.0 2496	0.0001 79
14	11175	26.0 1757	0.0010 15	31	62651	26.0 2514	5.67E- 05
15	12559	26.0 1859	0.0005 63	32	64893	26.0 252	0.0002 33
16	13486	26.0 1915	0.0008 95	33	76057	26.0 2543	0.0001 93
17	15277	26.0 2005	0.0004 45	34	88682	26.0 2562	

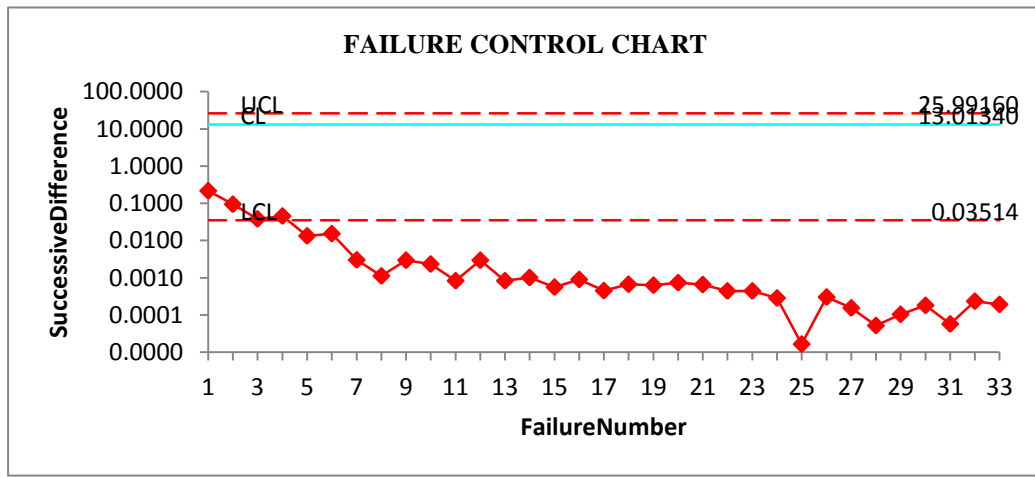


Fig 1 : Failure Control chart of Table 3

Table 4: Successive differences of 5th order m(t)'s of

Table 1

Fa ult	5- order Cumul atives	m(t)	Succes sive Differ ence's Of m(t)'s	Fa ult	5- order Cumul atives	m(t)	Succes sive Differ ence's Of m(t)'s
1	342	26.6 5529	0.1408 7	18	29361	27.0 0302	0.0009 04
2	571	26.7 9616	0.0864 41	19	37642	27.0 0393	0.0003 34
3	968	26.8 826	0.0638 04	20	42015	27.0 0426	0.0002 14
4	1986	26.9 4641	0.0217 91	21	45406	27.0 0447	0.0002 16
5	3098	26.9 682	0.0150 42	22	49416	27.0 0469	0.0001 79
6	5049	26.9 8324	0.0012 34	23	53321	27.0 0487	0.0001 27

7	5324	26.9 8447	0.0037 5	24	56485	27.0 0499	0.0002 1
8	6380	26.9 8822	0.0031 26	25	62661	27.0 0521	0.0003 03
9	7644	26.9 9135	0.0038 24	26	74364	27.0 0551	0.0001 96
10	10089	26.9 9517	0.0009 72	27	84566	27.0 057	- 0.0008 9
11	10982	26.9 9615	0.0013 79	28	52042	27.0 0481	6.08E- 05
12	12559	26.9 9753	0.0014 03	29	53443	27.0 0487	0.0001 22
13	14708	26.9 9893	0.0007 48	30	56485	27.0 0499	0.0002 1
14	16185	26.9 9968	0.0006 6	31	62651	27.0 052	6.65E- 05
15	17758	27.0 0034	0.0009 28	32	64893	27.0 0527	0.0002 73
16	20567	27.0 0127	0.0012 09	33	76057	27.0 0554	0.0002 26
17	25910	27.0 0247	0.0005 47	34	88682	27.0 0577	

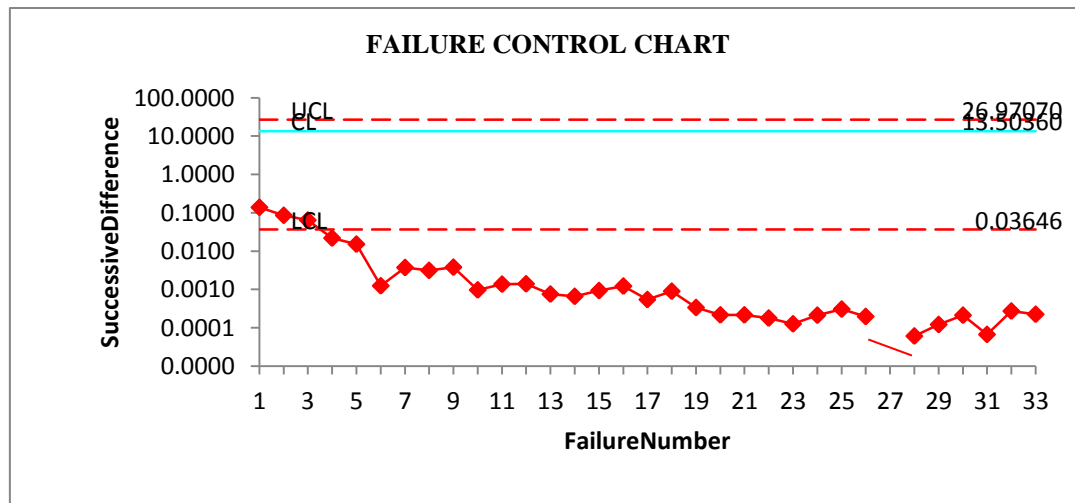


Fig 2 : Failure Control chart of Table 4

7. CONCLUSION

The Failure control charts of Figure 1 and Figure 2 have shown out of control signals i.e., below LCL. By observing Failure Control Charts, it is identified that failures are detected at early stages. The early detection of software failure will considerably improve the software reliability. Hence our method of estimation with order statistics and the control charts are giving a +ve recommendation for their use in monitoring the reliability of a software.

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