

Cheat Sheet: independent t Test

Measurement and Evaluation of HCC Systems

Scenario

Use the t test if you want to test the difference in continuous outcome variable $varY$ between levels A and B of a dichotomous variable $varX$. In this scenario $varX$ is usually an experimental manipulation with two conditions (but it can be any dichotomous variable, such as gender, etc). If each participant is randomly assigned to one condition, use an independent t test.

Power analysis

- Use Test family “ t tests”, “Means: Difference between two independent means (two groups)”.
- A power analysis has four variables: Effect size, α (usually .05), power (usually .85), and N . If you know three of these, G*Power will calculate the fourth. Select the correct type of power analysis, based on the information you have, and what you want to find out.
- “Tail(s)” depends on your hypothesis. If you have a non-directional hypothesis (i.e. you hypothesize that $A \neq B$, without hypothesizing which one is larger), you should choose Two. Otherwise (i.e. you hypothesize a specific direction), you should choose One.
- “Allocation ratio $N2/N1$ ” is the ratio of number of participants that receive each condition. Usually we try to balance this, which makes the allocation ratio 1.
- By clicking on “Determine”, you can compute the effect size d from the expected mean and standard deviation in each group.
- Click on “Calculate” to calculate the missing parameter.

Plotting a bar chart and a box plot

- Use the `ggplot2` package to plot a bar chart with error bars.

```
ggplot(data, aes(varX, varY)) + stat_summary(fun.y=mean, geom="bar", fill="white", color="black") + stat_summary(fun.data=mean_cl_normal, geom="errorbar", width=0.2)
```
- Plot a boxplot:

```
ggplot(data, aes(varX, varY)) + geom_boxplot()
```

Pre-testing assumptions

- In a t test, Y should be independent, continuous, and unbounded. The error variance should be normally distributed, which is true if Y is normally distributed for each level of X .
- If your N is small:
 - o Test for significant skewness, kurtosis, and Shapiro-Wilk test within each group using `stat.desc` in the `pastecs` package and the `by` function.
`by(data$varY, data$varX, stat.desc, basic=F, norm=T)`
 - o Multiply `skew.2SE` and `kurt.2SE` by 2 to get the Z-scores of skewness and kurtosis. Compare these values to typical cut-off values ($Z > \pm 1.96$: $p < .05$, $Z > \pm 2.58$: $p < .01$, $Z > \pm 3.29$: $p < .001$). The significance of the Shapiro-Wilk test is listed under `normtest.p`.
- If your N is large:
 - o Subset the data into two groups based on `varX`:
`Adata <- subset(data, data$varX == "A")`
`Bdata <- subset(data, data$varX == "B")`
 - o Draw the histogram for `varY` in `Adata`, overlaid with a normal curve (using `ggplot2`), and visually inspect whether it follows the normal distribution:
`ggplot(Adata, aes(varY)) + geom_histogram(aes(y=..density..),
binwidth=1, color="black", fill="white") + stat_function(fun = dnorm,
args = list(mean = mean(Adata$varY), sd = sd(Adata$varY)))`
 - o Change the `binwidth` setting based on what is suitable for your data.
 - o Draw normal a Q-Q plot, and visually inspect whether the data follows the diagonal line:
`qplot(sample = Adata$varY, stat="qq")`
 - o Do the same for `Bdata`.
- If your data has positive skew, and your data only has positive values, you can possibly fix this by transforming your Y variable:
 - o Log transform:
`data$varYlog <- log(data$varY + 1)`
 - o Or, square root transform:
`data$varYsqrt <- sqrt(data$varY)`
- In other cases of violations of assumptions (e.g. outliers), you can conduct a robust test (see below).

Running the test

- Run the t test as follows:
`result <- t.test(varY ~ varX, data = data)`
- Display the result:
`result`

- The t -statistic and its p -value tells us whether there is a significant difference between the two groups. Divide the p -value by 2 if you were conducting a one-sided test
- The test also produces a confidence interval.
- You can get the effect size r using the formula $r = \sqrt{t^2 / t^2 + df}$:


```
t <- result$statistic[[1]]
df <- result $parameter[[1]]
r <- sqrt(t^2/(t^2+df))
round(r, 3)
```

(optional) Robust versions

- You can use functions in the [WRS2](#) package to run trimmed and/or bootstrapped versions of the t test.
- Robust t test using 10% trimmed means (change the percentage if desired):


```
yuen(varY ~ varX, data = data, tr = 0.1)
```
- Robust t test using 10% trimmed means and 2000 bootstrap samples:


```
yuenbt(varY ~ varX, data = data, tr = 0.1, nboot = 2000)
```
- Robust t test using an M-estimator:


```
pb2gen(varY ~ varX, data = data, est = "mom")
```

Reporting

- Use the following format to report on an independent t test (replace the full names (not just the variable names) of A, B and varY, and replace the xx'es with the actual numbers):

“On average, participants in the [A] condition experienced a [higher/lower] level of [varY] ($M = xx$, $SE = xx$) than participants in the [B] condition ($M = xx$, $SE = xx$), $t(xx) = x.xx$, $p = .xxx$, $r = .xxx$.”
- If varX presents a trait (e.g. gender) rather than an experimental manipulation, “participants in the [A] condition” should be replaced with “[A] participants”.