Supplementary Handout for Dis 8: Sampling Distributions

1 Motivation

- Prior to this week, we discussed random variables, and the possible probability distributions that such random variables could follow.
- As we learned from Dis 5 and 6,
  - A random variable assign a number to each possible outcome.
  - A discrete probability distribution describes the point probability at all possible values for a discrete random variable.
  - A continuous probability distribution describes the density (PDF) at all possible values for a continuous random variable.

  Thus, these measures are related to the population.
- However, in reality, what we get to work with is often the sample data, which means we need to relate statistics obtained from samples to the population ($\Rightarrow$ process of statistical inference).
- This is why we need to look at the distribution of sample statistics, i.e. **sampling distributions**

2 Examples of Sampling Distribution

2.1 Sampling distribution of the mean

- Statistic of interest: $\bar{X} = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n} X_i$, obtained from simple random sampling
- How $\bar{X}$ is distributed depends on the distribution of X_i:
  - If each X_i is normally distributed, then $\bar{X} \sim N(\mu_{\bar{X}}, \sigma^2_{\bar{X}})$ with certainty
  - If each X_i is NOT normally distributed, we might be able to approximate $\bar{X}$ using a normal distribution (i.e. $\bar{X} \overset{a}{\sim} N(\mu_{\bar{X}}, \sigma^2_{\bar{X}})$) based on central limit theorem.

  > **Definition 1** (Central limit theorem (CLT)). The mean of a random variable drawn from any population is approximately normal for a sufficiently large sample size.

  In practice, we use $n \geq 30$ as the cutoff:
    * For non-normally distributed X_i, if $n \geq 30$, then CLT can be invoked, and $\bar{X} \overset{a}{\sim} N(\mu_{\bar{X}}, \sigma^2_{\bar{X}})$
    * For non-normally distributed X_i, if $n < 30$, then CLT cannot be invoked, so the distribution of $\bar{X}$ is undetermined.
- To summarize, for random variable X, **the sampling distribution of the mean is the following**:

	X **is normally distributed**	X **is NOT normally distributed**
Sample size is small ($n < 30$**)**		
Sample size is large ($n \geq 30$**)**		

- What is $\mu_{\bar{X}}$ and $\sigma^2_{\bar{X}}$?
  - $\mu_{\bar{X}}$ is the expected value of $\bar{X}$:

$$\mu_{\bar{X}} = E[\bar{X}] = E\left[\frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n} X_i\right] = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n} E[X_i] = \frac{1}{n} \times n \times \mu_X = \mu_X$$

  - $\sigma^2_{\bar{X}}$ is the variance of $\bar{X}$, and it depends on the population size:
    * If population size is infinitely large (in practice, if $N \geq 20n$),

$$\sigma^2_{\bar{X}} = V(\bar{X}) = V\left(\frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n} X_i\right) = \left(\frac{1}{n}\right)^2 \sum_{i=1}^{n} V(X_i) = \frac{1}{n^2} \times n \times \sigma^2_X = \frac{\sigma^2_X}{n}$$

    * If population size is not infinitely large (in practice, if $N \geq 20n$), then a **finite population correction factor** needs to be added:

$$\sigma^2_{\bar{X}} = \frac{\sigma^2_X}{n} \cdot \frac{N-n}{N-1}$$

2.2 Sampling distribution of the proportion (from a binomial experiment)

- Say that we have a random variable $X \sim \text{Binomial}(n, p)$ recording the number of successes in n trials where the probability of success in each trial is p.
- Turns out, under certain conditions, X can be well approximated by a normal distribution.

Conditions for normal approximation of a binomial random variable X:

1. $np \geq 5$, and
2. $n(1-p) \geq 5$

If the aforementioned conditions are satisfied, then

$$X \overset{a}{\sim} N(\mu_X, \sigma^2_X)$$

where, based on binomial distribution properties,

$$\mu_X = E(X) = np$$
$$\sigma^2_X = V(X) = np(1-p)$$

Aside: A binomial X is a discrete random variable. However, the approximation approximates $X \overset{a}{\sim} N(np, np(1-p))$, which is a continuous distribution.

Thus, a **correction factor for continuity** is needed when calculating probability using the normal approximation.

Exercise. Accounting for the correction factor for continuity, how should the following probabilities be expressed for a binomial random variable X?

1. $P(X = 3) =$
2. $P(X \geq 3) =$
3. $P(X > 3) =$
4. $P(X \leq 3) =$
5. $P(X < 3) =$

- Why is this needed? $\Rightarrow$ helps us approximate the sampling distribution of the proportion!
  - As long as a binomial distributed X can be approximated using a normal distribution (i.e. $np \geq 5$ and $n(1-p) \geq 5$), then the proportion of successes ($\hat{p}$) can be approximated using a normal distribution:

$$\hat{p} = \frac{X}{n} \overset{a}{\sim} N(\mu_{\hat{p}}, \sigma^2_{\hat{p}})$$

  - What is $\mu_{\hat{p}}$ and $\sigma^2_{\hat{p}}$?

$$\mu_{\hat{p}} = E(\hat{p}) = E\left(\frac{X}{n}\right) = \frac{1}{n}E(X) = p$$
$$\sigma^2_{\hat{p}} = V(\hat{p}) = V\left(\frac{X}{n}\right) = \left(\frac{1}{n}\right)^2 V(X) = \frac{p(1-p)}{n}$$

2.3 Sampling distribution of the difference between two means

- Statistic of interest: $\bar{X} - \bar{Y}$, where $X \sim N(\mu_X, \sigma^2_X)$, and $Y \sim N(\mu_Y, \sigma^2_Y)$, and X is independent of Y
- From subsection 2.1, assuming that the population sizes are sufficiently large, we know that

$$\bar{X} \sim N(\mu_X, \frac{\sigma^2_X}{n_X}) \qquad \bar{Y} \sim N(\mu_Y, \frac{\sigma^2_Y}{n_Y})$$

- Since the sum of two normal distributions is still a normal distribution, we have

$$\bar{X} - \bar{Y} \sim N(\mu_{\bar{X}-\bar{Y}}, \sigma^2_{\bar{X}-\bar{Y}})$$

where

$$\mu_{\bar{X}-\bar{Y}} = E(\bar{X} - \bar{Y}) = E(\bar{X}) - E(\bar{Y}) = \mu_X - \mu_Y$$
$$\sigma^2_{\bar{X}-\bar{Y}} = V(\bar{X} - \bar{Y}) = V(\bar{X}) + V(\bar{Y}) - 2\underbrace{Cov(\bar{X}, \bar{Y})}_{=0 \text{ by indep}} = \frac{\sigma^2_X}{n_X} + \frac{\sigma^2_Y}{n_Y}$$