9. Hypothesis testing: two groups

LPO.8800: Statistical Methods in Education Research

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Hypothesis testing thus far

- ullet Hypothesis tests for a population mean μ (σ known or unknown)
- \bullet Hypothesis tests for a population proportion π
- Null and alternative hypotheses (H₀ and H₁)
- One vs. two-sided alternative hypotheses
- Significance levels (α) and p-values
- Type I and Type II errors
- Power of a test
- Practical significance and effect size

Statistical tests for comparing two groups

Hypothesis tests are frequently used to make inferences about how two population parameters compare:

- Do female executives earn less on average than males?
- Do 4th graders in an experimental reading program perform differently on standardized reading tests than 4th graders not in the program?
- Are women more likely to vote for Democratic candidates than men?
- Do subjects participating in a 6-week weight loss program lose more weight over time than those who do not participate in the program?
- Has obesity among children aged 10-12 increased between 2000 and 2016?
- Are COVID infection rates higher in counties without a mask mandate than counties with them?

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Statistical tests for comparing two groups

One can think of these examples as **bivariate analyses** involving two variables:

• Group identifier: a binary explanatory variable

• Outcome: the response

Statistical tests for comparing two groups

Each of the above examples is a comparison of two parameters. For example:

- A comparison of means across groups (μ_1 and μ_2)
- A comparison of proportions across groups $(\pi_1 \text{ and } \pi_2)$
- A comparison of means or proportions over time
- A comparison of means of the same group pre- and post-treatment ("within subject")

When making comparisons of two parameters we usually construct a test for the *difference* in those parameters (e.g., $\mu_2 - \mu_1$, or $\pi_2 - \pi_1$).

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Statistical tests for comparing two groups

The steps for conducting a test comparing two groups are the same as those for the test of a single parameter. The most common null hypothesis is that there is *no difference* between the two population means:

$$H_0: \mu_1 = \mu_2$$

Or equivalently,

$$H_0: \mu_2 - \mu_1 = 0$$

Note: it doesn't matter which mean you subtract from the other, as long as you keep track and are consistent in your ordering throughout the test.

Statistical tests for comparing two groups

The alternative hypothesis H_1 is that there is a difference (a two-sided alternative) or that one mean is greater than the other (a one-sided alternative):

Two-sided alternative:

$$H_1: \mu_2 - \mu_1 \neq 0$$

One-sided alternatives:

$$H_1: \mu_2 - \mu_1 > 0$$

$$H_1: \mu_2 - \mu_1 < 0$$

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Hypothesis test steps

- Determine H_0 and H_1 .
- Determine the probability of obtaining your observed test statistic if H₀ is true (the p-value), and draw a conclusion.

The standard error of $\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1$ depends on how the two samples were drawn (next slide).

Independent vs. dependent samples

The design of a study—and in particular, whether the two samples being compared are independent or dependent—is important to statistical testing, because standard errors depend on how the samples were drawn.

- Samples are dependent when there is a natural matching between subjects in each sample. Examples include repeated measures on the same subjects (a longitudinal study), siblings, marriage partners, etc.
- Samples are independent when there is no such matching (e.g., random draws from two populations). Selection of subjects into one sample has no effect on the selection of subjects into the second.

With dependent samples, pairs of outcomes do not represent independent draws from a population—they are likely to be correlated.

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Experimental vs. observational group assignment

- In experimental designs, subjects are randomly assigned to groups (e.g., treatment and control).
- In observational designs, subjects are in naturally-occurring groups that they may or may not have control over (e.g., gender vs. political affiliation).

The distinction is important for causal inference and interpretation, though not for statistical inference (e.g., comparing means in the population).

Sampling distribution of $\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1$

Over repeated samples, the difference in two means drawn from independent samples will have a mean of $\mu_2 - \mu_1$ (the difference in the *true* means—it is an *unbiased* estimator) and a standard error of:

$$se_{\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1} = \sqrt{\frac{\sigma_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{\sigma_2^2}{n_2}}$$

Notice this is a larger number than either of the individual standard errors alone (for \bar{x}_1 or \bar{x}_2)! Also note this is expression is: $\sqrt{(se_1)^2 + (se_2)^2}$

Intuitively, $(\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1)$ is often further from $(\mu_2 - \mu_1)$ than \bar{x}_1 is from μ_1 or \bar{x}_2 is from μ_2 .

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Sampling distribution of $\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1$

If the samples are independent and the sample sizes n_1 and n_2 are sufficiently large, then we can also say the sampling distribution of $\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1$ (divided by its standard error) has an approximately normal distribution.

In practice, σ_1 and σ_2 are unknown, so the sample standard deviations are used in their place (s_1 and s_2):

$$se_{\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1} = \sqrt{\frac{s_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{s_2^2}{n_2}}$$

We then refer to the t-distribution instead of the standard normal. (Which df to use is discussed momentarily).

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Confidence interval for $\mu_2 - \mu_1$

With this information, a $(1-\alpha)\%$ confidence interval for the difference in population means $\mu_2 - \mu_1$ is:

$$(\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1) \pm t_{\alpha/2}(se_{\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1})$$

As before, a $(1-\alpha)$ % confidence interval can be used to test two-sided alternative hypotheses with significance level α .

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Hypothesis test for $\mu_2 - \mu_1$

Alternatively, a test statistic can be calculated for a specific hypothesis. For example:

$$H_0: \mu_2 - \mu_1 = 0$$

$$H_1: \mu_2 - \mu_1 \neq 0$$

Under the assumption that H_0 is true, the test statistic is as follows, using the standard error formula given above:

$$t = \frac{\left(\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1\right) - 0}{se_{\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1}}$$

Use the t distribution to find the p-value associated with this t. If the two sample sizes are large enough, the standard normal (z) distribution can be used instead of t.

Hypothesis test for $\mu_2 - \mu_1$

The degrees of freedom for the t-statistic in this case is complex (can use the Welch-Satterthwaite approximation). However, if we assume that the two distributions from which the samples are drawn have *equal variances*, the degrees of freedom will be $df = n_1 + n_2 - 2$. (Note Stata will use the correct df).

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Welch-Satterthwaite approximation

FYI the Welch-Satterthwaite approximation for the degrees of freedom in a two-sample independent t-test is

$$df = \frac{\left(\frac{s_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{s_2^2}{n_2}\right)^2}{\frac{1}{n_1 - 1}\left(\frac{s_1^2}{n_1}\right)^2 + \frac{1}{n_2 - 1}\left(\frac{s_2^2}{n_2}\right)^2}$$

Hypothesis test for $\mu_2 - \mu_1$

Note: if we assume equal variances, then we can also use a pooled estimate of the variance (s_ρ^2) using the two groups combined, and the standard error for $\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1$ simplifies to:

$$se_{ar{x}_2-ar{x}_1}=\sqrt{s_p^2\left(rac{1}{n_1}+rac{1}{n_2}
ight)}$$

The pooled variance estimate is a weighted average of s_1^2 and s_2^2 :

$$s_p^2 = \frac{(n_1 - 1)s_1^2 + (n_2 - 1)s_2^2}{(n_1 - 1) + (n_2 - 1)}$$

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Example 1

What is the impact of alcoholism during pregnancy on the IQ of infants? IQs of infants of 6 women with alcoholism (group 1) were compared with those of infants of 46 women without alcoholism (group 2).

•
$$n_1 = 6$$
, $\bar{x}_1 = 78$, $s_1^2 = 361$

•
$$n_2 = 46$$
, $\bar{x}_2 = 99$, $s_2^2 = 256$

$$H_0: \mu_2 - \mu_1 = 0$$

$$H_1: \mu_2 - \mu_1 \neq 0$$

Example 1

The 95% confidence interval is

$$(\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1) \pm t_{\alpha/2}(se_{\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1})$$

Assuming equal variances, the *t*-statistic here is t(50, 0.025) = 2.01, where $df = n_1 + n_2 - 2$. The standard error is:

$$s_p^2 = \frac{(n_1 - 1)s_1^2 + (n_2 - 1)s_2^2}{(n_1 - 1) + (n_2 - 1)} = \frac{(5)361 + (45)256}{5 + 45} = 266.5$$

$$se_{\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1} = \sqrt{s_\rho^2 \left(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}\right)} = \sqrt{266.5 \left(\frac{1}{6} + \frac{1}{46}\right)} = 7.086$$

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Example 1

So:

$$(\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1) \pm t_{\alpha/2}(se_{\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1})$$

$$(99-78) \pm 2.01(7.086) = (6.757, 35.242)$$

The confidence interval does not contain zero so we can reject H_0 at the lpha=0.05 significance level.

Example 1

Alternatively, can calculate the test statistic:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1 - 0}{se_{\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1}}$$

$$t = \frac{99 - 78 - 0}{7.086} = 2.964$$

The reference distribution for looking up the *p*-value is t(50). In Stata: display ttail(50,2.964) = 0.0023. Since $p < \alpha$, we reject H_0 .

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Example 1: Using Stata ttesti

Can use the *t*-test calculator in Stata to obtain these results. Syntax below or use the drop-down menus. Default assumes equal variances, and *n*, *m*, *s* below refer to the two group sample sizes, means, and standard deviations.

ttesti n1 m1 s1 n2 m2 s2

×	6	78	7.756718	19	58.06072	97.9392
Y	46	99	2.359071	16	94.24859	103.751
combined	52	96.57692	2.430458	17.52628	91.69758	101.456
diff		-21	7.085912		-35.23247	-6.76752

Example 2: Using Stata

Use NELS to test the hypothesis that male and female college-bound high school graduates in the South have equal years of preparation in high school math (unitmath). Use $\alpha{=}0.05$. Let group 2 be males and group 1 be females.

$$H_0: \mu_2 - \mu_1 = 0$$

 $H_1: \mu_2 - \mu_1 \neq 0$

Note: in the NELS, college-bound is edexpect >= 2 and the South is region == 3.

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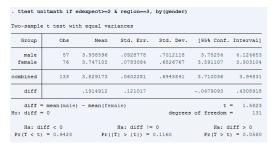
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Example 2: Using Stata

In Stata use ttest *varname*, by(*groupvar*). The default assumes equal variances. Use the unequal option otherwise (this will affect the standard error calculation).



Example 2: Using Stata

From the above Stata output:

$$\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1 = 0.1915$$

$$se_{\bar{x}_2-\bar{x}_1}=0.1210$$

$$t = 1.582$$

$$p = 0.116$$

Conclusion: do not reject H_0 , since $p > \alpha$.

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Example 2: Using Stata

In practice, standard errors, test statistics and *p*-values will be similar whether assuming equal variances or not, **if**:

- \bullet n_1 and n_2 are similar or
- s_1^2 and s_2^2 are similar

Sampling distribution of $\hat{\pi}_2 - \hat{\pi}_1$

Over repeated samples, the difference in two proportions drawn from independent samples will have a mean of $\pi_2 - \pi_1$ (the *true* difference in means) and a standard error of:

$$se_{\hat{\pi}_2 - \hat{\pi}_1} = \sqrt{\frac{\hat{\pi}_1(1 - \hat{\pi}_1)}{n_1} + \frac{\hat{\pi}_2(1 - \hat{\pi}_2)}{n_2}}$$

If the samples are independent and the sample sizes n_1 and n_2 are sufficiently large, then we can also say the sampling distribution of $\hat{\pi}_2 - \hat{\pi}_1$ has an approximately normal distribution. (I assume this below, in using z in the confidence interval).

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Confidence interval for $\pi_2 - \pi_1$

With this information, a $(1-\alpha)\%$ confidence interval for the difference in population proportions $\pi_2-\pi_1$ is:

$$(\hat{\pi}_2 - \hat{\pi}_1) \pm z_{\alpha/2} (se_{\hat{\pi}_2 - \hat{\pi}_1})$$

A $(1-\alpha)\%$ confidence interval can be used to test two-sided alternative hypotheses with significance level α .

Hypothesis test for $\pi_2 - \pi_1$

Alternatively, a test statistic can be calculated for a specific hypothesis. For example:

$$H_0: \pi_2 - \pi_1 = 0$$

$$H_1: \pi_2 - \pi_1 \neq 0$$

Under the assumption that H_0 is true, the test statistic is as follows, using a modified standard error se_0 (see next slide).

$$z = \frac{\hat{\pi}_2 - \hat{\pi}_1 - 0}{se_0}$$

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Hypothesis test for $\pi_2 - \pi_1$

Under H_0 the two population proportions are the same. This directly implies equal variances, since for proportions the variance is $\pi(1-\pi)$. If H_0 is true, we can use a *pooled estimate* of π in the standard error formula that uses the combined samples rather than separate estimates of π_2 and π_1 . The standard error using the pooled estimate is:

$$se_0 = \sqrt{\hat{\pi}(1-\hat{\pi})\left(rac{1}{n_1}+rac{1}{n_2}
ight)}$$

where $\hat{\pi}$ is the overall proportion equal to one in the combined sample. This is used in the test statistic (z) above.

Example 3

In the latest YouGov poll (Oct 25, 2020), 44% of 674 men and 36% of 826 women stated that they intend to vote for Donald Trump. Construct a 95% confidence interval for the difference in these two population proportions (men - women).

$$(\hat{\pi}_2 - \hat{\pi}_1) \pm z_{\alpha/2} (se_{\hat{\pi}_2 - \hat{\pi}_1})$$

$$(0.44 - 0.36) \pm 1.96(se_{\hat{\pi}_2 - \hat{\pi}_1})$$

$$se_{\hat{\pi}_2 - \hat{\pi}_1} = \sqrt{\frac{\hat{\pi}_1(1 - \hat{\pi}_1)}{n_1} + \frac{\hat{\pi}_2(1 - \hat{\pi}_2)}{n_2}} = \sqrt{\frac{0.36(0.64)}{826} + \frac{0.44(0.56)}{674}} = 0.0254$$

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Example 3

So:

$$(\hat{\pi}_2 - \hat{\pi}_1) \pm z_{\alpha/2} (se_{\hat{\pi}_2 - \hat{\pi}_1})$$

$$(0.44-0.36)\pm1.96 (0.0254)$$

$$0.08 \pm 1.96 \\ (0.0254) = (0.030, 0.130)$$

The confidence interval does not contain zero so we can conclude there is a statistically significant difference in support for Donald Trump between men and women.

Example 3: using Stata prtesti

Can use the t-test calculator in Stata (for proportion) to obtain these results. Syntax below or use the drop-down menus. n, p refer to the two group sample sizes and proportions.

prtesti n1 p1 n2 p2

. prtesti 674	0.44 826 0.3	6				
Two-sample tes	<pre>x: Number of obs = y: Number of obs =</pre>					
	Mean	Std. Err.	z	P> z	[95% Conf.	Interval]
x y	.44	.0191201 .0167013			. 4025253 . 327266	. 4774747 . 392734
diff	.08 under Ho:	.0253873	3.15	0.002	.0302419	.1297581
					Z	= 3.1514
Ha: diff < Pr(Z < z) = 0		Ha: diff != 0 Pr(Z > z) = 0.0016				iff > 0) = 0.0008

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Example 4: Using Stata

Use NELS to test the hypothesis that male and female high school students differ in their propensity to binge drink. The variable *alcbinge* is equal to 1 if the student has ever binged on alcohol, and equal to 0 otherwise. Use α =0.05. Let group 2 be males and group 1 be females.

$$H_0: \pi_2 - \pi_1 = 0$$

$$H_1: \pi_2 - \pi_1 \neq 0$$

Example 4: Using Stata

In Stata use ttest varname, by(groupvar). (Do not use the unequal option in this case).

. ttest alcbinge, by(gender)

Two-sample t test with equal variances

Group	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf.	Interval]
male	227	.2907489	.0302068	. 4551114	.2312259	.3502719
female	273	.1538462	.0218768	.3614638	.1107768	.1969155
combined	500	.216	.0184219	. 4119264	.1798059	. 2521941
diff		.1369027	.0365263		.0651382	. 2086673
diff =	mean(male	t	= 3.7481			

Ho: diff = 0 degrees of freedom = 498

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Example 4: Using Stata

From the above Stata output:

$$\hat{\pi}_2 - \hat{\pi}_1 = 0.1369$$

$$se_{\hat{\pi}_2 - \hat{\pi}_1} = 0.0365$$

$$t = 3.748$$

$$p = 0.0002$$

Conclusion: Reject H_0 , since $p < \alpha$. There is a statistically significant difference in the propensity to binge drink between males and females.

Paired sample t-test

- Suppose instead our samples are dependent, or paired.
- One advantage of a paired design is the ability to control for some external differences between the two samples.
- Independent samples will differ for a lot of idiosyncratic reasons ("noise")
 - Paired samples allow you to "difference out" some of the noise that produces differences in independent sample means
 - One example: the pre-post design. Comparing the same individuals before and after some intervention eliminates many of the external differences that cause samples to differ

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Paired sample t-test

With paired samples, we can conduct a test for the the average within pair difference, rather than the difference in two sample means. Here a null hypothesis of a zero difference in means is stated as:

$$H_0: \mu_d = 0$$

$$H_1: \mu_d \neq 0$$

where μ_d is the mean within-pair difference, or mean "difference score." A test of this hypothesis is simply the one-sample t-test for $\bar{\mathbf{x}}_d$, the sample mean within-pair difference (calculated using each matched pair).

Paired sample *t*-test

The t-statistic for the paired sample t-test is:

$$t = \frac{\bar{x}_d - 0}{se_{\bar{x}_d}}$$

with n-1 degrees of freedom, where n is the number of matched pairs. The standard error of the mean difference is calculated as:

$$se_{\bar{x}_{J}} = s_{\bar{x}_{J}}/\sqrt{n}$$

 $s_{\bar{x}_d}$ is the standard deviation of the paired differences.

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Example 5

In Everitt (1994), 17 girls treated for anorexia were weighed before and after treatment. Difference scores were calculated for each participant, with the following results: $\bar{x}_d = 7.26$, $s_{\bar{x}_d} = 7.16$. Test the null hypothesis that there was no change in weight.

$$H_0: \mu_d = 0$$

$$H_1: \mu_d \neq 0$$

Example 5

The test statistic is:

$$t = \frac{7.26 - 0}{7.16/\sqrt{17}} = 4.17$$

With df=16 the probability of obtaining by chance a t-statistic of 4.17 or larger is p < 0.01. With a significance level of α = 0.05 we reject H_0 . The change in weight was statistically significant.

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Example 5 - confidence interval approach

Assuming a significance level of $\alpha=0.05$ we can alternatively construct a 95% confidence interval as:

$$egin{aligned} ar{x}_d & \pm t(df)_{lpha/2}(se_{ar{x}_d}) \ ar{x}_d & \pm t(16)_{0.025}(s_{ar{x}_d}/\sqrt{n}) \ 7.26 & \pm 2.12\left(rac{7.16}{\sqrt{17}}
ight) \end{aligned}$$

 $(3.57,\,10.95)$ - this interval does not contain zero, so we reject H_0 . (The change in weight was statistically significant, or significantly different from zero).

Example 6: Using Stata

Using the Agresti & Finlay dataset anorexia.dta, test for an effect of cognitive behavioral therapy on the weight of anorexia patients. n = 29 subjects had therapy==b; before is the subject's weight before therapy and after is the subject's weight after therapy.

ttest before-after if therapy"b"							
Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Err.	Std. Dev.	[95% Conf.	Interval]	
before after		82.68966 85.69655		4.845494 8.351924	80.84653 82.51965		
diff	29	-3.006896	1.357155	7.308504	-5.786902	2268896	
mean(diff) = mean(before - after) $t = -2.215$ Ho: mean(diff) = 0 degrees of freedom = 2							
	(diff) < 0 = 0.0175		: mean(diff) T > t) = 0			(diff) > 0 () = 0.9825	

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Example 6: Using Stata

Notice the change in syntax in the ttest command. From the above Stata output:

$$\bar{x}_d = -3.001$$

$$se_{\bar{x}_d} = 1.357$$

$$t = -2.216$$

$$p = 0.035$$

Conclusion: Reject H_0 , since $p < \alpha$. The CBT therapy had a statistically significant effect on the subjects' weight.

Stata ttest syntax recap

Stata ttest syntax:

- Hypothesis test about a single population mean: ttest varname
 ==[#], where [#] is the population mean under H₀.
- Hypothesis test comparing two population means: ttest varname, by(group), where group is the group variable. The null hypothesis H₀ is that the means are equal.
- Paired sample hypothesis test: ttest varname1==varname2, where the null hypothesis H₀ is that the means are equal.
- Using Stata as a t-test calculator, for a single population mean: ttesti #obs #mean #sd #val [, level(#)]

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Power calculation in Stata: two sample test

In Stata: Power analysis for a two-sample means test (independent samples). H_0 : no difference. You select:

- Effect size
- Equal variances or group-specific variances
- ullet Sample size and "allocation ratio" n_2/n_1
- Significance level (α)
- 2- or 1-sided test

Effect size

How should we express an *effect size* for a difference in means, in order to assess practical significance? Can use a Cohen's *d* type measure, expressing the estimated difference in means as a proportion of the overall standard deviation:

$$d=\frac{\bar{x}_2-\bar{x}_1}{5}$$

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Practical vs. statistical significance, revisited

A 10,000 200 25	B 10,000 200	C 9	D 1.000
200	-1	-	1.000
	200		
25		200	200
23	25	100	25
175	199	175	199
225	201	225	201
50	2	50	2
2	0.08	0.5	0.08
Yes	No	Yes (if true)	No
0.5	0.5	66.6	1.58
100	4	0.75	1.26
p<0.0001	p<0.001	p>0.40	p>0.20
Yes	Yes	No	No
$50 \pm 1.96 * 0.5$	$2\pm1.96*0.5$	$50 \pm 2.31*66.6$	$2\pm1.96*1.58$
(49.02, 50.98)	(1.02, 2.98)	(-103.8, 203.85)	(-1.10, 5.10)
	225 50 2 Yes 0.5 100 p<0.0001 Yes 60 ± 1.96 * 0.5	225 201 50 2 2 0.08 Yes No 0.5 0.5 100 \$\rho<0.001\$ Yes 0.1.96 + 0.5 2 ± 1.96 + 0.5 2 ± 1.96 + 0.5 2 ± 1.96 + 0.5	225 201 225 50 2 50 2 50 2 0.08 0.5 Yes No Yes (if true) 0.5 0.5 66.6 100 4 0.75 ρ<0.0001 ρ<0.001 ρ>0.40 Yes No Yes No No 10±1.96 v.55 2±1.96 v.55 50±2.31 v.66.6

Source: Remler & Van Ryzin ch. 8. Note standard error for difference in means is $2*(SD/\sqrt{n})$ where n/2 is the number in each group. Assumes the standard deviation is the same for boys and girls, and an equal number of boys and girls.

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