Gender differentials in healthcare utilization

On average, women utilize more health services than men. One of the reasons could be that women need more care during reproductive ages which results in the gender differences. However, we suppose that such differences in health seeking behavior sustains as they go old as well. To examine that women naturally have better health seeking behavior than men, we conduct a one-sided t-test to see whether the health utilization of female is significantly higher than that of male in the elder age.

Our null hypothesis and althernative hypothesis are shown as below:

H0: Females’ average health utilization is no greater than that of males

Ha: Females’ average health utilization is greater than that of males

For the data processing, we first filter the data with ADM\_H\_MEDSTA to be 2 to insure only individuals with age over 65 are included for analysis. Then, we create a new continuous variable, *healcare utilization****,*** according to the midpoint of all count ranges of ADM\_H\_PHYEVT. With the new continuous variable, we further calculate the weighted average of number of doctor visits for males and females subjects separately. Finally, we conduct the t-test to investigate whether the health utilization differences in gender is significant.

According to the result of t-test, we can reject the null hypothesis. There is significant gender difference in the healthcare utilization, and females’ average health utilization is significantly greater than that of males at 1% level. (t(9996.6) = 2.9599, p = 0.001542)

Furthermore, the weighted average of number of doctor visits for females (7.363652) is greater than that of males (6.956214).

**Table 1 t-test of gender differentials in healthcare utilization**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Female Utilization | Male Utilization |
| Weighted average | 7.363652 | 6.956214 |
| Observations | 5,970 | 4,659 |
| df | 9996.6  2.9599  0.001542 | |
| t Stat |
| p-value |

To sum up, we agree that men are in fact lazier or ignorant in terms of health seeking behavior, and this fact is not necessarily because women are assuming the burden of childbearing and caring when they are in reproductive ages because the pattern continues onto older age as well.