

Let $X_1, \dots, X_\alpha, Z, Y_1, \dots, Y_\beta$ be independent random variables, uniformly distributed over the interval $[0, 1]$, and let A be the event

$$A = \{X_1 < \dots < X_\alpha < Z < Y_1 < \dots < Y_\beta\}.$$

Then,

$$\mathbf{P}(A) = \frac{1}{(\alpha + \beta + 1)!},$$

because there are $(\alpha + \beta + 1)!$ ways of ordering these $\alpha + \beta + 1$ random variables, each order being equally likely, and exactly 1 of them is the order corresponding to event A .

Consider the following two events:

$$B = \{\max\{X_1, \dots, X_\alpha\} < Z\}, \quad C = \{Z < \min\{Y_1, \dots, Y_\beta\}\}.$$

We have, using the total probability theorem,

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbf{P}(B \cap C) &= \int_0^1 \mathbf{P}(B \cap C \mid Z = \theta) f_Z(\theta) d\theta \\ &= \int_0^1 \mathbf{P}(\max\{X_1, \dots, X_\alpha\} < \theta < \min\{Y_1, \dots, Y_\beta\}) d\theta \\ &= \int_0^1 \mathbf{P}(\max\{X_1, \dots, X_\alpha\} < \theta) \cdot \mathbf{P}(\theta < \min\{Y_1, \dots, Y_\beta\}) d\theta \\ &= \int_0^1 \mathbf{P}(X_1 < \theta) \cdots \mathbf{P}(X_\alpha < \theta) \cdot \mathbf{P}(\theta < Y_1) \cdots \mathbf{P}(\theta < Y_\beta) d\theta \\ &= \int_0^1 \theta^\alpha (1 - \theta)^\beta d\theta. \end{aligned}$$

We also have

$$\mathbf{P}(A \mid B \cap C) = \frac{1}{\alpha! \beta!},$$

because given the events B and C , all $\alpha!$ possible orderings of X_1, \dots, X_α are equally likely, and all $\beta!$ possible orderings of Y_1, \dots, Y_β are equally likely.

By writing the equality

$$\mathbf{P}(A) = \mathbf{P}(B \cap C) \mathbf{P}(A \mid B \cap C)$$

in terms of the preceding relations, we finally obtain

$$\frac{1}{(\alpha + \beta + 1)!} = \frac{1}{\alpha! \beta!} \int_0^1 \theta^\alpha (1 - \theta)^\beta d\theta,$$

or

$$\int_0^1 \theta^\alpha (1 - \theta)^\beta d\theta = \frac{\alpha! \beta!}{(\alpha + \beta + 1)!}.$$