

Economics 103 – Statistics for Economists

Francis J. DiTraglia

University of Pennsylvania

Lecture # 9

Discrete RVs – Part II

Linearity of Expectation

Holds for Continuous RVs as well, but proof is different.

Let X be a RV and a, b be constants. Then:

$$E[a + bX] = a + bE[X]$$

This is one of the most important facts in the course: the special case in which $E[g(X)] = g(E[X])$ is $g = a + bX$.

Proof: Linearity of Expectation For Discrete RV

$$\begin{aligned}E[a + bX] &= \sum_{\text{all } x} (a + bx)p(x) \\&= \sum_{\text{all } x} p(x) \cdot a + \sum_{\text{all } x} p(x) \cdot bx \\&= a \sum_{\text{all } x} p(x) + b \sum_{\text{all } x} x \cdot p(x) \\&= a + bE[X]\end{aligned}$$

Variance and Standard Deviation of a RV

The Defs are the same for continuous RVs, but the method of calculating will differ.

Variance (Var)

$$\sigma^2 = \text{Var}(X) = E[(X - \mu)^2] = E[(X - E[X])^2]$$

Standard Deviation (SD)

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\sigma^2} = \text{SD}(X)$$

Key Point

Variance and std. dev. are *expectations of functions of a RV*

It follows that:

1. Variance and SD are constants
2. To derive facts about them you can use the facts you know about expected value

How To Calculate Variance for Discrete RV?

Remember: it's just a function of X !

$$\text{Recall that } \mu = E[X] = \sum_{\text{all } x} xp(x)$$

$$\text{Var}(X) = E[(X - \mu)^2] = \sum_{\text{all } x} (x - \mu)^2 p(x)$$

Shortcut Formula For Variance

This is *not* the definition, it's a shortcut for doing calculations:

$$\text{Var}(X) = E[(X - \mu)^2] = E[X^2] - (E[X])^2$$

We'll prove this in an upcoming lecture.

Variance of Bernoulli RV – via the Shortcut Formula

Step 1 – $E[X]$

$$\mu = E[X] = \sum_{x \in \{0,1\}} p(x) \cdot x = (1-p) \cdot 0 + p \cdot 1 = p$$

Step 2 – $E[X^2]$

$$E[X^2] = \sum_{x \in \{0,1\}} x^2 p(x) = 0^2(1-p) + 1^2 p = p$$

Step 3 – Combine with Shortcut Formula

$$\sigma^2 = \text{Var}[X] = E[X^2] - (E[X])^2 = p - p^2 = p(1-p)$$

Variance of Bernoulli RV – Without Shortcut

You will fill in the missing steps on Problem Set 5.

$$\begin{aligned}\sigma^2 &= \text{Var}(X) = \sum_{x \in \{0,1\}} (x - \mu)^2 p(x) \\ &= \sum_{x \in \{0,1\}} (x - p)^2 p(x) \\ &\vdots \\ &= p(1 - p)\end{aligned}$$

Variance of a Linear Function



Suppose X is a random variable with $\text{Var}(X) = \sigma^2$ and a, b are constants. What is $\text{Var}(a + bX)$?

- (a) σ^2
- (b) $a + \sigma^2$
- (c) $b\sigma^2$
- (d) $a + b\sigma^2$
- (e) $b^2\sigma^2$

Variance and SD are *NOT* Linear

$$\text{Var}(a + bX) = b^2\sigma^2$$

$$\text{SD}(a + bX) = |b|\sigma$$

These should look familiar from the related results for sample variance and std. dev. that you worked out on an earlier problem set.

Variance of a Linear Transformation

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Var}(a + bX) &= E \left[\{(a + bX) - E(a + bX)\}^2 \right] \\&= E \left[\{(a + bX) - (a + bE[X])\}^2 \right] \\&= E \left[(bX - bE[X])^2 \right] \\&= E[b^2(X - E[X])^2] \\&= b^2 E[(X - E[X])^2] \\&= b^2 \text{Var}(X) = b^2 \sigma^2\end{aligned}$$

The key point here is that variance is defined in terms of expectation and expectation is linear.

Binomial Random Variable

What we get if we sum a bunch of indep. Bernoulli RVs



Question

Suppose we flip a fair coin 3 times. What is the probability that we get exactly 2 heads?

Answer

Three basic outcomes make up this event: $\{HHT, HTH, THH\}$.

Each of these has probability $1/8 = 1/2 \times 1/2 \times 1/2$ so, since

basic outcomes are mutually exclusive we sum to get $3/8 = 0.375$

A More Complicated Example

Question

Suppose we flip an *unfair* coin 3 times, where the probability of heads is $1/3$. What is the probability that we get exactly 2 heads?

Answer

The basic outcomes of the experiment are no longer equally likely, but those with exactly two heads *remain so*

$$P(HHT) = (1/3)^2(1 - 1/3) = 2/27$$

$$P(THH) = 2/27$$

$$P(HTH) = 2/27$$

Summing gives $2/9 \approx 0.22$

Starting to see a pattern?

Suppose we flip an unfair coin 4 times, where the probability of heads is $1/3$. What is the probability that we get exactly 2 heads?

HHTT TTHH

HTHT THTH

HTTH THTT

Six equally likely, mutually exclusive
basic outcomes make up this event:

$$\binom{4}{2} (1/3)^2 (2/3)^2$$

Binomial Random Variable

Let X = the sum of n independent Bernoulli trials, each with probability of success p . Then we say that: $X \sim \text{Binomial}(n, p)$

Parameters

p = probability of “success,” n = # of trials

Support

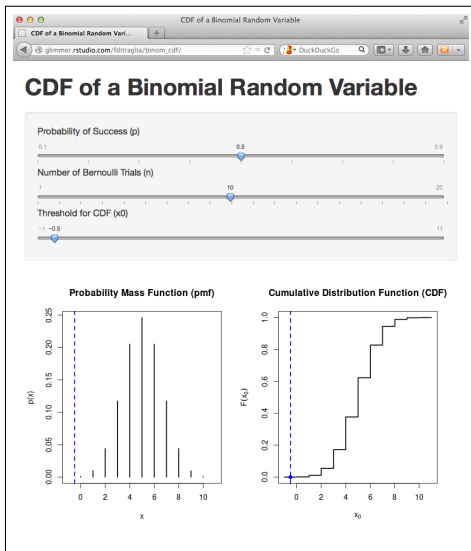
$\{0, 1, 2, \dots, n\}$

Probability Mass Function (pmf)

$$p(x) = \binom{n}{x} p^x (1 - p)^{n-x}$$

http://glimmer.rstudio.com/fditraglia/binom_cdf/

Try playing around with all three sliders. If you set the second to 1 you get a Bernoulli.



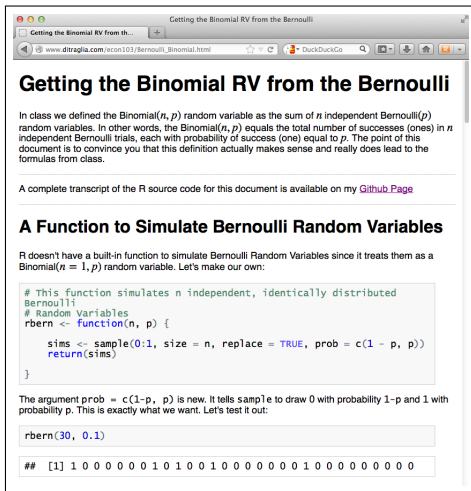
Don't forget this!

A Binomial Random Variable counts up the *total* number of successes (ones) in n independent Bernoulli trials, each with probability of success p .

We'll learn more about the Binomial RV in the coming lectures...

http://fditraglia.github.com/Econ103Public/Rtutorials/Bernoulli_Binomial.html

Source Code on my [Github Page](#)



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the title "Getting the Binomial RV from the Bernoulli". The address bar shows the URL "www.ditraglia.com/Econ103/Bernoulli_Binomial.html". The page content includes a title "Getting the Binomial RV from the Bernoulli", a paragraph explaining the Binomial random variable as the sum of independent Bernoulli trials, a link to a GitHub page for the R source code, a section titled "A Function to Simulate Bernoulli Random Variables", a paragraph explaining the need for a custom R function, an R code block for the function, a paragraph explaining the 'prob' argument, and a code block showing the output of the function.

Getting the Binomial RV from the Bernoulli

In class we defined the $\text{Binomial}(n, p)$ random variable as the sum of n independent $\text{Bernoulli}(p)$ random variables. In other words, the $\text{Binomial}(n, p)$ equals the total number of successes (ones) in n independent Bernoulli trials, each with probability of success (one) equal to p . The point of this document is to convince you that this definition actually makes sense and really does lead to the formulas from class.

A complete transcript of the R source code for this document is available on my [Github Page](#)

A Function to Simulate Bernoulli Random Variables

R doesn't have a built-in function to simulate Bernoulli Random Variables since it treats them as a $\text{Binomial}(n = 1, p)$ random variable. Let's make our own:

```
# This function simulates n independent, identically distributed
# Bernoulli
# Random Variables
rbern <- function(n, p) {
  sims <- sample(0:1, size = n, replace = TRUE, prob = c(1 - p, p))
  return(sims)
}
```

The argument `prob = c(1-p, p)` is new. It tells `sample` to draw 0 with probability $1-p$ and 1 with probability p . This is exactly what we want. Let's test it out:

```
rbern(30, 0.1)
```

```
## [1] 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 0 1 0 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
```