

Problem 1

(1)

Solving the maximum entropy distribution with constraints is essentially

$$\begin{aligned} \max \int p(x) \ln p(x) dx \\ \text{s.t. } \int p(x) dx = 1 \\ \int xp(x) dx = 0 \\ \int x^2 p(x) dx = 1 \end{aligned} \quad (1)$$

Lemma(functional derivative): We first show how to take the derivative of a function. Suppose we have

$$F(p(x)) = \int p(x)f(x)dx. \quad (2)$$

By substituting $p(x)$ with $p(x) + \epsilon\eta(x)$, we have

$$F(p(x) + \epsilon\eta(x)) = \int p(x)f(x)dx + \epsilon \int \eta(x)f(x)dx, \quad (3)$$

and thus,

$$\frac{\partial F}{\partial p(x)} = f(x). \quad (4)$$

Similarly, we have

$$\begin{aligned} G(p(x)) &= \int p(x) \ln p(x) dx \\ \frac{\partial G}{\partial p(x)} &= \ln p(x) + 1. \end{aligned} \quad (5)$$

From the fact that the above optimization question is a concave maximization one, we construct its Lagrangian function and set its derivative w.r.t. λ to zero.

$$\begin{aligned} L(x, \lambda) &= \int p(x) \ln p(x) dx - \lambda_1 \left(\int p(x) dx - 1 \right) - \lambda_2 \int xp(x) dx - \lambda_3 \left(\int x^2 p(x) dx - 1 \right) \\ \frac{\partial L}{\partial \lambda} &= \ln p(x) + 1 - \lambda_1 - \lambda_2 x - \lambda_3 x^2 \\ &= 0. \end{aligned} \quad (6)$$

We obtain

$$p(x) = \exp(-1 + \lambda_1 + \lambda_2 x + \lambda_3 x^2) \quad (7)$$

To solve λ , we substitute the above $p(x)$ into constraints

$$\begin{aligned} \int \exp(-1 + \lambda_1 + \lambda_2 x + \lambda_3 x^2) dx &= 1 \\ \int x \exp(-1 + \lambda_1 + \lambda_2 x + \lambda_3 x^2) dx &= 0 \\ \int x^2 \exp(-1 + \lambda_1 + \lambda_2 x + \lambda_3 x^2) dx &= 1 \end{aligned} \quad (8)$$

We notice that $\lambda = (1 - \frac{1}{2} \ln(2\pi\sigma^2), 0, \frac{1}{2\sigma^2})$ from $N(0, 1)$ does satisfy above equations (and thus no need to check conditions for Lagrangian method).

This shows that $X \sim N(0, 1)$ is the maximum entropy distribution under such constraints.

(2)

Similar to (1), we have

$$\begin{aligned} p(x) &= \exp(-1 + \sum_0^n \lambda_i x^i) \\ \text{s.t. } \int p(x) dx &= 1 \\ \int x^i p(x) dx &= m_i \quad \text{for } 1 \leq i \leq n \end{aligned} \tag{9}$$

Notice that in some cases, such distribution does not exist and the maximum entropy only serves as an upper bound.