

From the definition of maximal element and best element, it is clear that if an element is a best element of a set, then it is also maximal element. So, the choice set is a subset of maximal set.

$$C(S, R) \subset M(S, R).$$

A maximal element may not be best element. Suppose $S = \{x, y, z\}$ and $R = \{(x, y), (z, y)\}$. In this example we have xPy and zPy . We do not have xRz and zRx . So The set of best element is empty. We have maximal elements $x, z \in M(S, R)$.

This implies that $M(S, R)$ is not a subset of $C(S, R)$.

We can have situations where both choice set and maximal set is empty.

Suppose $S = \{x, y, z\}$ and $R = \{(x, y), (y, z), (z, x)\}$. We have xPy , yPz and zPx . We don't have any $x \in S$ such that xRy for all $y \in S$. There is always an x such that xPz for all y . So maximal set is empty.

Indifference relation

for all $x, y \in S$, xRy and yRx then xIy

Preference relation

for all $x, y \in S$, xRy and $\sim yRx$ then xPy

Some results on strict preference and indifference

If R is an ordering, then for all $x, y, z \in S$

- 1) $xIy \ \& \ yIz \rightarrow xIz$.
- 2) $xPy \ \& \ yIz \rightarrow xPz$.
- 3) $xIy \ \& \ yPz \rightarrow xPz$.
- 4) $xPy \ \& \ yPz \rightarrow xPz$.

Proof of 1). $xIy \ \& \ yIz \rightarrow (xRy \ \& \ yRx) \ \& \ (yRz \ \& \ zRy)$.
 $\rightarrow (xRy \ \& \ yRz) \ \& \ (zRy \ \& \ yRz)$
 $\rightarrow xRz \ \& \ zRx$ from transitivity
 $\rightarrow xIz$.

Proof of 2. $xPy \ \& \ yIz \rightarrow (xRy \ \& \ \sim yRx) \ \& \ (yRz \ \& \ zRy)$.

We have $xRy \ \& \ yRz$ implying xRz from transitivity.

Suppose zRx it implies xIz . We have yIz . Therefore using the first result we get xIy . We are given xPz . A contradiction. Therefore zRx is not true. We have xRz and $\sim zRx$, it implies xPz .

The proof of 3 is similar to the proof of 2.

Proof of 4. $xPy \ \& \ yPz \rightarrow (xRy \ \& \ \sim yRx) \ \& \ (yRz \ \& \ \sim zRy)$.

It implies $(xRy \ \& \ yRz)$. It implies xRz from transitivity.

Suppose zRx . We get zIx . Take yPz and zIx . Using the second result we have yPx . It is a contradiction because we have xpy .

Thus, we cannot have zRx . Therefore, we have xRz and $\sim zRx$. It implies xPz .

Result:

Any finite quasi ordered set has at least one maximal element.

Proof. Suppose the set of maximal set is empty. It implies that that for every $y \in S$ there exist one x such that xPy . Take for example $x_1, x_2, x_3 \in S$. From above we have x_1Px_2 , x_2Px_3 and x_3Px_1 . This implies that it violates transitivity. Therefore, R is not quasi ordered. This implies that set of maximal element is not empty.

We define choice function.

A choice function $C(S, R)$ defined over S is a functional relation such that the choice set $C(S, R)$ is non-empty for every non empty subset s of S .

It means that there is a non-empty choice set or there are best elements for every non-empty subset of S .

We have seen that whenever completeness is violated, choice set is empty. It implies that choice function does not exist.

If reflexivity is violated then also choice set is empty . For single element set, reflexivity is required for non-empty choice set.

If transitivity is violated, choice set can be empty. Example xPy , yPz and zPx . In this situation choice set is empty for $\{x, y, z\}$. We cannot have a choice function for this subset of S .

If R is an ordering defined over a finite set S , then a choice function $C(S, R)$ is defined over S .

Proof: Suppose the choice set over S is empty. This means that choice function is not defined. If choice set is empty it implies that it violates any one of the following property; completeness, reflexivity, or transitivity.

This implies that R is not an ordering if anyone of the above property is violated. This implies that choice set is not empty since R is an ordering. Thus, choice function defined fo S .