Day 5: Probability

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Today

- Today
 - Probability
 - ▶ Random variable
 - Probability distribution
 - ▶ (if time permits) Probability distributions in R

Why Probability?

- Foundation of statistical inference
- Formal modeling/game theory: describe uncertainty

Probability and Statistics



- Probability: explains how likely each event occurs based on the known data generating process (DGP)
- Statistical inference: infer the DGP based on the data (= collection of events)

Probability

- **Sample space** (S): A set/collection of all possible outcomes from some process.
 - ▶ Outcomes of sample space can be countable (\approx discrete) or uncountable (\approx continuous).
- **Event**: Any set of possible outcomes from the process. Any subset of the full set of possibilities (= sample space), including the full set itself.
- Partition: a sequence of disjoint events A_1, A_2, \cdots, A_n where

$$A_1 \cup A_2 \cup \cdots \cup A_n = S$$

- Probability is a function that maps events to a real number and follows the axioms of probability below.
 - 1. For any event A, $Pr(A) \geq 0$.
 - 2. Pr(S) = 1.
 - 3. For any sequence of disjoint events A_1, A_2, \cdots

$$\Pr(A_1 \cup A_2 \cup \cdots) = \Pr(\bigcup_{i=1} A_i) = \sum_{i=1} \Pr(A_i)$$

• Example 1: Let A_i denote the event of getting hand i in the game of poker. Then, probability of hand i can be defined as

$$Pr(A_i) = \frac{Frequency of getting hand i}{Number of all possible outcomes}$$



- Example 2: Ikuma is novice in archery. Assuming that he can always hit the target (!), what is the probability of scoring point i?
- Let A_i denote the event of scoring i,

$$\Pr(A_i) = \frac{\text{Area of region } i}{\text{Total area}}$$

- Properties of probability operation
 - 1. $\Pr(\emptyset) = 0$.
 - 2. $0 \le \Pr(A) \le 1$
 - 3. $Pr(A^c) = 1 Pr(A)$
 - **4**. If $A \subseteq B$, $Pr(A) \le Pr(B)$

Counting

- Counting with replacement or without replacement
- Ordering is important or not
- Below let's think of a case in which we select k out of n.

Counting (cont.)

 Ordered, with replament: in this case, the number of different outcomes is

$$n^k$$

 Ordered, without replament: in this case the number of different outcomes is

$$n \times (n-1) \times (n-2) \times \dots \times (n-k+1) = \frac{n!}{(n-k)!}$$

Counting (cont.)

Unordered, without replament: as there is k! ways to order k
objects, the number of different outcomes in this case is

$$\frac{n \times (n-1) \times (n-2) \times \dots \times (n-k+1)}{k!} = \frac{n!}{k!(n-k)!} = \binom{n}{k}$$

(n) is called the binomial coefficient

Counting (cont.)

- Example: What is the probability of getting full house?
 - ▶ Denominator: the number different ways to select 5 cards out of 52 is $\binom{52}{5}$.
 - Numerator: we need to choose 3 cards from one face value, and 2 cards from another face value. Therefore, the number of distinct hands is

$$\binom{13}{1} \binom{4}{3} \binom{12}{1} \binom{4}{2}$$

▶ Therefore, the probability of getting full house is

$$\frac{13 \cdot 4 \cdot 12 \cdot 6}{\frac{52 \cdot 51 \cdot 50 \cdot 49 \cdot 48}{5 \cdot 4 \cdot 3 \cdot 2 \cdot 1}} = \frac{6}{4165} \approx 0.00144$$

Counting: Exercises

- 1. (de Mere's problem) Which is higher:
 - 1.1 the probability of getting at least one "6" in 4 rolls of a 6-sided die
 - 1.2 the probability of at least one double-six in 24 rolls of two dice
- 2. (Birthday problem) Suppose 20 individuals are randomly selected. Find the probability that at least two of them have the same birthday.

Conditional Probability

• Conditional probability $\Pr(A|B)$ is the probability of event A given that the event B occurred, which is defined as

$$\Pr(A|B) = \frac{\Pr(A \cap B)}{\Pr(B)}$$

- If $Pr(B) \neq 0$, $Pr(A \cap B) = Pr(A|B) Pr(B)$
- If Pr(A|B) = Pr(A), events A and B are said to be **independent**.
 - ▶ Equivalently, if A and B are independent, $Pr(A \cap B) = Pr(A) Pr(B)$

Conditional Probability (cont.)

 Example: what is the probability of choosing the Ace of heart given that the selected card is red? Let

$$A = \{ \text{Choose Ace of Heart} \}$$

 $R = \{ \text{Choose Red} \},$

the probability of interest is

$$\Pr(A|R) = \frac{\Pr(A \cap R)}{\Pr(R)} = \frac{\Pr(A)}{\Pr(R)} = \frac{1}{26}$$

Bayes Rule

• Law of Total Probability: Let B_1, B_2, \dots, B_n be the partition of S. For some event A in S, we can represented the set as the union of disjoint subsets

$$A = (A \cap B_1) \cup (A \cap B_2) \cup \cdots \cup (A \cap B_n).$$

Therefore, from the axiom of probability,

$$\Pr(A) = \Pr(A \cap B_1) + \Pr(A \cap B_2) + \dots + \Pr(A \cap B_n) = \sum_{i=1}^n \Pr(A \cap B_i)$$

Bayes Rule (cont.)

• Example: the probability of choosing a heart is

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\begin{array}{lll} \Pr(\text{Choose Heart}) &=& \Pr(\text{Choose Heart} \cap \text{Choose A}) \\ &+& \Pr(\text{Choose Heart} \cap \text{Choose 2}) \\ &+& \cdots \\ &+& \Pr(\text{Choose Heart} \cap \text{Choose King}) \end{array}
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Bayes Rule (cont.)

• Bayes rule: Let B_1, B_2, \dots, B_n be the partition of S. Based on the definition of conditional probability and the law of total probability,

$$\Pr(B_k|A) = \frac{\Pr(A \cap B_k)}{\Pr(A)} = \frac{\Pr(A|B_k)\Pr(B_k)}{\sum_{i=1}^n \Pr(A|B_i)\Pr(B_i)}$$

- $ightharpoonup \Pr(B_k)$ is called the prior probability.
- ▶ Bayes rule describes how $Pr(B_k)$ changes with additional information.

Bayes Rule: Example

- Example: (Monty Hall problem) You are on a game show and asked to choose between three doors. Behind each door, there is either a car or a goat. After you choose a door, the host, Monty, opens another door, shows a goat, and gives you a chance to change your choice. Should you change your choice?
 - Answer: let's name the three doors A, B, and C, and represent the event that a car is behind the corresponding door. Let X_M $(X \in \{A, B, C\})$ denote the event that Monty opens the door X. For generality, let's assume you pick the door A and Monty opens the door B. Therefore, we need to compare the probability $\Pr(A|B_M)$ and $\Pr(C|B_M)$. Here, let's also assume that

$$\Pr(A) = \Pr(B) = \Pr(C) = \frac{1}{3}.$$

(continue from the previous slide)

Applying the Bayes rule,

$$\Pr(A|B_M) = \frac{\Pr(B_M|A)\Pr(A)}{\Pr(B_M|A)\Pr(A) + \Pr(B_M|B)\Pr(B) + \Pr(B_M|C)\Pr(C)}$$
$$= \frac{\frac{\frac{1}{2} \cdot \frac{1}{3}}{\frac{1}{2} \cdot \frac{1}{3} + 0 + 1 \cdot \frac{1}{3}} = \frac{1}{3}$$

and

$$\Pr(C|B_M) = \frac{\Pr(B_M|C)\Pr(C)}{\Pr(B_M|A)\Pr(A) + \Pr(B_M|B)\Pr(B) + \Pr(B_M|C)\Pr(C)} \\
= \frac{1 \cdot \frac{1}{3}}{\frac{1}{2} \cdot \frac{1}{3} + 0 + 1 \cdot \frac{1}{3}} = \frac{2}{3}$$

Therefore, you should switch the door you choose from A to C.

Bayes Rule: Exercise

• In Orange County, 51% of adults are men. One adult is randomely selected for a survey, and the selected survey subjest was smoking cigarettes. Based on administrative data, we know that 16% of men smoke cigarettes, whereas 12% of women do so. What is the probability that the selected subject is a man?

Random Variable

- Random variable (or stochastic variable) is a function from a sample space to real numbers.
- We use capital letters (e.g., X) to represent random variables and small letters (e.g., x) to denote their realizations (concrete values they take).
- We can also define probability for a random variable.

$$\Pr(X = x_i) = \Pr(\{s_j \in S | X(s_j) = x_i\})$$

- Discrete v. Continuous
 - ▶ A random variable X is discrete if it takes finite or countably infinite number of values
 - ▶ A random variable *X* is **continuous** if it can take any real numbers in the domain
 - continuous sample space does not necessarily lead to continuous random varialbe (see example)

Example 1: we can assign scores to poker hands as follows:

Hand	Score (X)
No pair	0
One pair	1
Two pair	2
Three of a kind	3
Straight	4
Flush	5
Full house	6
Four of a kind	7
Straight flush	8

Here, outcomes in the sample space (= combination of 5 cards) are mapped to real numbers (score X).

ullet Example 2: For the example of archery we saw earlier, we can define the random variable X as

$$X(\{Arrow \text{ hits the region } i\}) = i.$$

In this case, even though the sample space is continuous, the random variable \boldsymbol{X} is discrete.

• Example 3: Define the random variable T to denote the time until the next train arrives at the station. Here, T is a continuous random variable since it can take any real numbers.

- Randomness does not mean lack of pattern/structure/order.
 - ▶ Randomness means that the outcome of some process/realization of the variable is not deterministic.
 - Pattern/structure/order of the process is characterized by probability.

Probability Distribution

- Probability distributions specify the relationship between the random variable and probabilities.
- Below I'll introduce two types of functions describing a probability distribution.

Probability Mass/Density Function

 Probability mass function (PMF) for a discrete random variable X describes the probability that X takes a specific value x.

$$f(x) = \Pr(X = x)$$

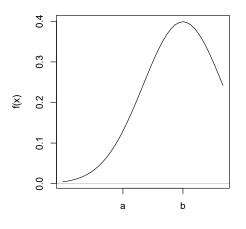
• We can also consider similar function f(x) for a continuous random variable X, which is called the **probability density function (PDF)**.

Probability Mass/Density Function (cont.)

• Example: Let X be the sum of numbers we get by rolling two dice. Assuming that these dice are fair, the PMF f(x) is

$$f(x) = \Pr(X = x) = \frac{6 - |7 - x|}{36}$$

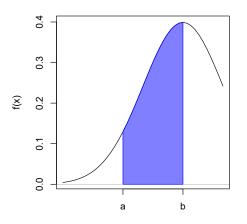
Probability Mass/Density Function (cont.)



- For a continuous random variable, we cannot allow a point X=x to have probability larger than 0!
- f(x) describes the *relative* likelihood that X equals to x.

 Instead, for a continuous distribution we define probability for an interval in the domain.

Probability Mass/Density Function (cont.)



• The probability of X falling between (a,b) equal to

$$\Pr(a < x < b) = \int_{a}^{b} f(x)dx$$

 As the probability of a single point is 0,

$$\Pr(a < x < b) = \Pr(a \le x \le b)$$

Cumulative Density Function

- Cumulative density function (CDF) describes the probability that the random variable X is smaller than or eugal to x.
 - For a discrete random variable, CDF is defined as

$$F(x) = \Pr(X \le x) = \sum_{i \le x} f(i)$$

For a continuous random variable, CDF is defined as

$$F(x) = \Pr(X \le x) = \int_{-\infty}^{x} f(t)dt$$

Cumulative Density Function (cont.)

 For a continuous random variable, from the fundamental theorem of calculus,

$$F'(x) = f(x)$$

- CDF of a discrete distribution is a step function, whereas CDF of a continuous distribution is a continuous function.
- Properties of CDF
 - 1. F(x) is a non-decreasing function of x
 - 2. $\lim_{x\to-\infty} F(x) = 0$ and $\lim_{x\to\infty} F(x) = 1$
 - 3. F(x) is right-continuous, meaning that, for every x_0 in the domain $\lim_{x\to x_0^+} F(x) = F(x_0)$

Cumulative Density Function: Exercise

 Draw the CDF of the random variable for a single roll of a fair die.

Joint Probability Distribution

- A probability distribution where multiple random variables are considered together is called a joint probability distribution.
- If

$$f(x,y) = f(x)f(y)$$

for all x and y in the support, we say X and Y are independent.

Joint Probability Distribution (cont.)

ullet Example: Let's define a random variable X as the number you get from a single roll of die, and Y is the face value you get when you pick a card from a deck. Their distributions are independent, as

$$\Pr(X = 1, Y = 1) = \Pr(X = 1) \cdot \Pr(Y = 1) = \frac{1}{6} \cdot \frac{1}{13}$$

$$\Pr(X = 1, Y = 2) = \Pr(X = 1) \cdot \Pr(Y = 2) = \frac{1}{6} \cdot \frac{1}{13}$$

$$\vdots$$

$$\Pr(X = 2, Y = 1) = \Pr(X = 2) \cdot \Pr(Y = 1) = \frac{1}{6} \cdot \frac{1}{13}$$

$$\vdots$$

$$\Pr(X = 6, Y = 13) = \Pr(X = 6) \cdot \Pr(Y = 13) = \frac{1}{6} \cdot \frac{1}{13}$$

Measures Characterizing Distributions

- Expectation
- Variance
- Covariance

Expectation

- ullet Expected value of random variable X is the average of its values weighted by their probability/density.
 - ▶ Expected value of a discrete random variable *X* is given by

$$E(X) = \sum_{x} x \Pr(X = x)$$

lacksquare Expected value of a continuous random variable X is given by

$$E(X) = \int_{x} x f(x) dx$$

▶ We can consider expected value of a function of *X* as

$$\begin{split} & \mathrm{E}[g(X)] &= \sum_{x} g(x) \Pr(X=x) \; (X \; \mathrm{is \; discrete}) \\ & \mathrm{E}[g(X)] &= \int_{x} g(x) f(x) dx \; (X \; \mathrm{is \; continuous}) \end{split}$$

Expectation (cont.)

ullet Example: Let X be the sum of numbers from two rolls of dice. Then

$$E(X) = 2 \times \frac{1}{36} + 3 \times \frac{2}{36} + \dots + 12 \times \frac{1}{36} = 7$$

and

$$E(X^{2}) = (2)^{2} \times \frac{1}{36} + (3)^{2} \times \frac{2}{36} + \dots + (12)^{2} \times \frac{1}{36}$$
$$= \frac{1974}{36} = \frac{329}{6}$$

Expectation (cont.)

- Properties of expectation operator
 - 1. E(c) = c.
 - 2. E(aX + bY) = aE(X) + bE(Y)
 - 3. if X and Y are independent, $\mathrm{E}(XY) = \mathrm{E}(X)\mathrm{E}(Y)$

Variance

- Variance describes the degree of spread of a distribution.
 - ▶ For a discrete random variable X, its variance is defined as

$$Var(X) = \sum_{x} (x - E(X))^{2} Pr(X = x)$$

▶ For a continuous random variable X, its variance is defined as

$$Var(X) = \int_{x} (x - E(X))^{2} f(x)$$

• Alternatively, Var(X) is defined as

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

$$= E(X^{2}) - (E(X))^{2}$$
(1)

• Square root of Var(X) is called the **standard deviation**.

Variance (cont.)

• Example: Let's use the example of rolling two dice again. The variance of X can be calculated as

$$Var(X) = (2-7)^2 \times \frac{1}{36} + (3-7)^2 \times \frac{2}{36} + \dots + (12-7)^2 \times \frac{1}{36}$$
$$= \frac{210}{36} = \frac{35}{6}.$$

Equivalently,

$$Var(X) = \frac{329}{6} - (7^2) = \frac{35}{6}.$$

Variance (cont.)

• Let's derive the equation (1) we saw earlier.

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

$$= E[(X - E(X))(X - E(X))]$$

$$= E[X^{2} - 2E(X)X + (E(X))^{2}]$$

$$= E(X^{2}) - E[2E(X)X] + E[(E(X))^{2}]$$

$$= E(X^{2}) - 2E(X)E(X) + (E(X))^{2}$$

$$= E(X^{2}) - (E(X))^{2}$$

Covariance

 Covariance describes the degree to which two random variables vary together, which is defined as

$$Cov(X,Y) = E[(X - E(X))(Y - E(Y))]$$
$$= E(XY) - E(X)E(Y)$$

- ▶ By definition, Cov(X, X) = Var(X).
- ▶ If X and Y are independent, Cov(X,Y) = 0.

Properties of Variance & Covariance

- Properties of variance & covariance operators
 - 1. Var(c) = 0
 - 2. $Var(cX) = c^2 Var(X)$
 - 3. $\operatorname{Var}(aX + bY) = a^2 \operatorname{Var}(X) + b^2 \operatorname{Var}(Y) + 2ab \operatorname{Cov}(X, Y)$
 - 4. Cov(aX, bY) = abCov(X, Y)
 - 5. Cov(X + a, Y + b) = Cov(X, Y)
 - 6. $\operatorname{Cov}(X + Z, Y + W) = \operatorname{Cov}(X, Y) + \operatorname{Cov}(X, W) + \operatorname{Cov}(Z, Y) + \operatorname{Cov}(Z, W)$

Measures Characterizing Distributions: Exercise

• A random variable X follows a distribution whose PDF is defined as

$$f(x) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{b-a} & (x \in [a, b]) \\ 0 & \text{(otherwise)} \end{cases}$$

Find the expectation and variance of this distribution.

Distributions Frequently Used in Social Science

- Here I introduce some probability distributions often used in social science research.
- We can determine the exact forms of their PMF/PDF by specifying the values of the parameters.
- Additional terms
 - ▶ We say random variable X follows some specific probability distribution to mean that the values of X are determined according to the PMF/PDF of the corresponding probability distribution
 - ▶ **Support** of the probability distribution is the subset of its domain where probability/density is not 0.

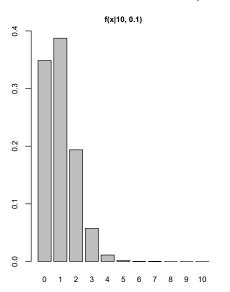
Binomial Distribution

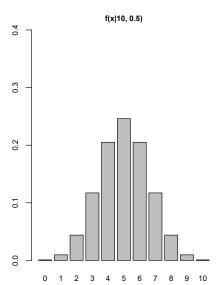
- Binomial random variable X describes the number of "successes" (x=1) out of n identical binary trials, where the probability of success is p (so the probability of "failure" is 1-p).
- Binomial PMF is defined as

$$f(x|n,p) = \Pr(X = x|n,p) = \binom{n}{x} p^x (1-p)^{n-x}$$

- Binomial distribution with parameters n and p is often denoted as B(n,p)
 - $lackbox X \sim B(n,p)$ means that the random variable X follows the binomial distribution with parameters n and p.
- Expectation and variance
 - \triangleright E(X) = np
 - $\operatorname{Var}(X) = np(1-p)$

Binomial Distribution (cont.)





Binomial Distribution (cont.)

• Example: Suppose 14% of US adults smoke cigarettes. If we randomly sample 1,000 individuals from US adults, the number of smokers in the sample, X, is modeled using the binomial distribution as

$$f(x|1000, 0.14) = \Pr(X = x|1000, 0.14) = {1000 \choose x} (0.14)^x \cdot (0.86)^{1000-x}$$

Poisson Distribution

ullet A random variable X follows a Poisson distribution if its PMF is

$$f(x|\lambda) = \Pr(X = x|\lambda) = \frac{e^{-\lambda}\lambda^x}{x!}$$

- Poisson distribution with parameter λ is often denoted as $\operatorname{Pois}(\lambda)$.
- The support of a Poisson random variable is \mathbb{N} , so it is often used to model counts.
- Expectation and variance
 - $ightharpoonup \mathrm{E}(X) = \mathrm{Var}(X) = \lambda$

Continuous Uniform Distribution

• A random variable X follows a continuous uniform distribution on the interval (a,b) if its PDF is given by

$$f(x|a,b) = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{b-a} & (x \in [a,b]) \\ 0 & \text{(otherwise)} \end{cases}$$

- Applications
 - model lack of information
 - random number generation

Normal Distribution

• A random variable X follows a normal distribution (or Gaussian distribution) with expectation μ and variance σ^2 if its PDF is

$$f(x|\mu,\sigma^2) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi\sigma^2}} \exp\left(-\frac{(x-\mu)^2}{2\sigma^2}\right)$$

• Normal distribution with parameters μ and σ^2 is often denoted as $N(\mu,\sigma^2)$

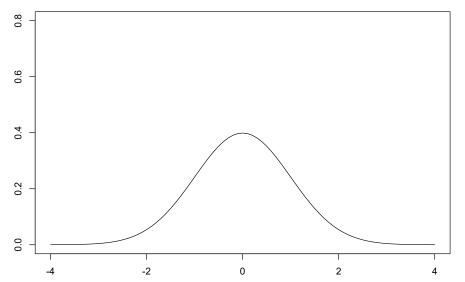
• Normal distribution with $\mu=0$ and $\sigma=1$ is called the **standard** normal distribution, and we often denote its PDF as $\phi(x)$

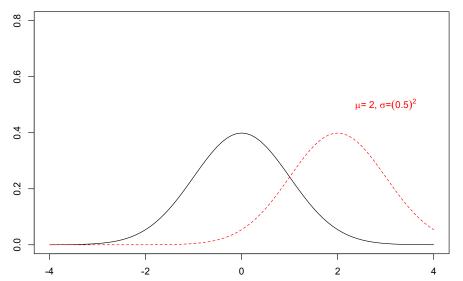
$$\phi(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}} \exp\left(-\frac{x^2}{2}\right)$$

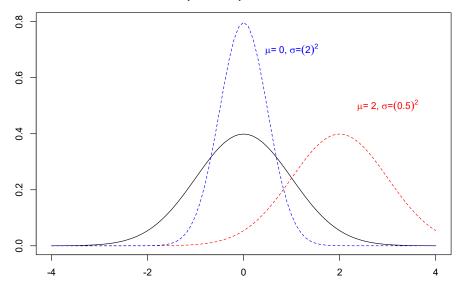
and its CDF as $\Phi(x)$

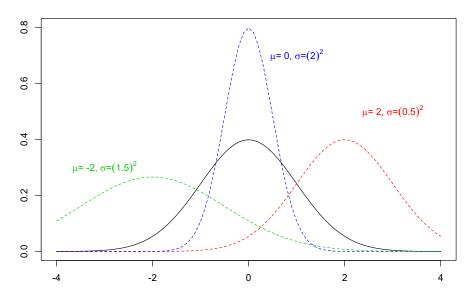
$$\Phi(x) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{2\pi}} \int_{-\infty}^{x} \exp\left(-\frac{t^2}{2}\right) dt$$

▶ Using this notation, the PDF of $N(\mu, \sigma^2)$ can be written as $\frac{1}{\sigma}\phi(\frac{x-\mu}{\sigma})$









Other Distributions Often Used in Social Science

- Negative binomial distribution
- Multinomial distribution
- t distribution
- F distribution
- χ^2 distribution
- Exponential distribution
- Weibull distribution
- Gamma distribution
- Beta distribution
- Dirichlet distribution
- ...

Wrapping Up...

- We learned a lot!
 - Basics
 - * Exponential & log functions
 - ★ Summation & product operators
 - * ...
 - Calculus
 - * Limit
 - * Derivative
 - ⋆ Integral
 - * (Unconstrained) Optimization
 - Matrix Algebra
 - Probability theory

Now They Look Familiar! (Right?)

Specifically, the expression for the sum of squared residuals for any given estimates of $\hat{\beta}_0$ and $\hat{\beta}_1$ is

$$\sum_{i=1}^{N} \hat{\epsilon}_i^2 = \sum_{i=1}^{N} (Y_i - \hat{\beta}_0 - \hat{\beta}_1 X_i)^2$$

Now They Look Familiar! (Right?)

where $y_i(e_i) = e_i + \varepsilon_i$. The first-order condition for (2.2.4) is

$$(w_{\rm H} - w_{\rm L}) \frac{\partial \text{Prob}\{y_i(e_i) > y_j(e_i^*)\}}{\partial e_i} = g'(e_i). \tag{2.2.5}$$

That is, worker i chooses e_i such that the marginal disutility of extra effort, $g'(e_i)$, equals the marginal gain from extra effort, which is the product of the wage gain from winning the tournament, $w_H - w_L$, and the marginal increase in the probability of winning. By Bayes' rule, 12

$$\begin{aligned} \operatorname{Prob}\{y_i(e_i) > y_j(e_j^*)\} &= \operatorname{Prob}\{\varepsilon_i > e_j^* + \varepsilon_j - e_i\} \\ &= \int_{\varepsilon_j} \operatorname{Prob}\{\varepsilon_i > e_j^* + \varepsilon_j - e_i \mid \varepsilon_j\} f(\varepsilon_j) d\varepsilon_j \\ &= \int_{\varepsilon_j} [1 - F(e_j^* - e_i + \varepsilon_j)] f(\varepsilon_j) d\varepsilon_j, \end{aligned}$$

Now They Look Familiar! (Right?)

orm. The least squares estimate of $a^T\beta$ is

$$\hat{\theta} = a^T \hat{\beta} = a^T (\mathbf{X}^T \mathbf{X})^{-1} \mathbf{X}^T \mathbf{y}. \tag{3.17}$$

Considering X to be fixed, this is a linear function $\mathbf{c}_0^T \mathbf{y}$ of the response vector \mathbf{y} . If we assume that the linear model is correct, $a^T \hat{\beta}$ is unbiased ince

$$E(a^{T}\hat{\beta}) = E(a^{T}(\mathbf{X}^{T}\mathbf{X})^{-1}\mathbf{X}^{T}\mathbf{y})$$

$$= a^{T}(\mathbf{X}^{T}\mathbf{X})^{-1}\mathbf{X}^{T}\mathbf{X}\beta$$

$$= a^{T}\beta.$$
(3.18)

Topics Not Covered in This Class...

- Constrained optimization
- Multiple integral
- Matrix decomposition
- More probability theory
- ...

Last Word

- Review materials as often as possible
- Enjoy studying statistics & formal modeling!