# **Chapter 7 Risk Aversion**

## 7.1 Diminishing Marginal Utility

定义 7.1 对于函数  $u(\cdot)$ , 如果  $\forall x, y$  和  $\alpha \in [0,1]$ ,

$$\alpha u(x) + (1 - \alpha)u(y) \le u(\alpha x + (1 - \alpha)y) \iff Eu(x) \le uE(x)$$

则我们称 $u(\cdot)$ 为凹的。

我们立即可以得到下面的定理:

**定理 7.1** 如果凸的连续偏好由(6.4)式中的期望效用函数表示,那么相应的效用函数 $u(\cdot)$ 

是凹的。

证明:

**定理 7.2** 如果凹函数  $u(\cdot)$ 还是二阶可微的,那么  $u'' \leq 0$  。

证明:

 $u(\cdot)$ 表示的是消费的直接效用,它的一阶导数 $u'(\cdot)$ 表示的是消费的边际效用。不满足性要求 $u'(\cdot)>0$ ,即边际效用始终为正。偏好的凸性意味着 $u''(\cdot)\leq0$ ,也就是说边际效用是消费的减函数。边际效用递减意味着当消费水平上升时,一单位额外消费得到的效用递减。

### 7.2 Definition of Risk Aversion

定义 7.2 Let  $\tilde{g}$  be an uncertainty payoff.  $\tilde{g}$  is a **fair gamble** if  $E[\tilde{g}] = 0$ .

定义 7.3 An agent is (strictly) risk averse if

$$E[u(w+\tilde{g})] \le (<)Eu(w)(=u(w)), \quad \forall E[\tilde{g}] = 0$$

风险厌恶的经济含义: 在期望值相同(即  $E(w+\tilde{g})=E(w)$ )的不确定性支付和确定性支付之间,一个风险厌恶的参与者总是选择后者。

定理 7.3 An agent is (strictly) risk averse  $\Leftrightarrow u$  is (strictly) concave.

Proof:

#### (1) RA $\Rightarrow u$ concave

 $\forall w_1, w_2(w_1 > w_2)$  and  $p \in (0,1)$ , construct the Bernoulli gamble  $\tilde{g} = \{g_1, g_2\}$  with probability  $\{p, 1-p\}$  s.t.

$$g_1 = -(1-p)(w_2 - w_1), g_2 = p(w_2 - w_1)$$

Clearly,  $E[\tilde{g}] = 0$ . Define  $w = pw_1 + (1-p)w_2 = p(w_1 - w_2) + w_2 = -g_2 + w_2$ . Then

$$w_1 = w + g_1, w_2 = w + g_2$$

RA implies that

$$E[u(w + \tilde{g})] = pu(w + g_1) + (1 - p)u(w + g_2) \le u(w)$$

Then

$$pu(w_1) + (1-p)u(w_2) \le u(pw_1 + (1-p)w_2), \forall w_1, w_2$$

Thus, *u* is concave.

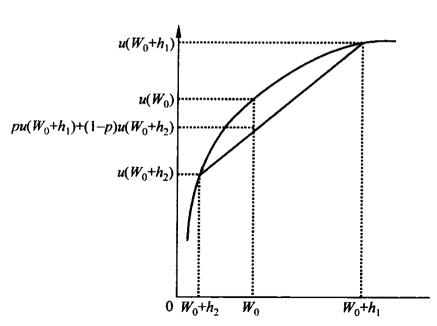
### (2) u concave $\Rightarrow$ RA

相反的证明用到了 *Jensen's inequality*: 对于随机变量  $\tilde{z}$  ,  $Ef(\tilde{z}) \leq f(E\tilde{z})$  , 当且仅当  $f(\bullet)$  是严格凹函数。根据定义 7.1,u concave implies that

$$E[u(w+\tilde{g})] \leq u\big[E(w+\tilde{g})\big] = u\big[E(w) + E(\tilde{g})\big] = u\big[E(w)\big] = u(w), \forall E[\tilde{g}] = 0$$

由定义 7.1, the agent is risk averse.

定理 7.3 证明了当偏好可以由期望效用表示时,凸性(凹函数)意味着风险厌恶。



### 7.3 Measure of Risk Aversion

### **A Arrow-Pratt Measure – Absolute Risk Aversion**

定义 7.4 For a fair gamble  $\tilde{g}$ , the **risk premium** required to take the gamble,  $\pi$ , is defined by (由 **Jensen's inequality**,  $E[u(w+\tilde{g})] \le u[E(w+\tilde{g})]$ )

$$E[u(w+\tilde{g})] = u[E(w+\tilde{g}) - \pi] = u(w-\pi) = u(CE)$$
 (7.1)

这就是说,风险溢价是参与者为了消除风险而愿意放弃的财富值。

式(7.1)定义中的 $w-\pi$ ,被称为风险赌博的 certainty equivalence (CE)。确定性等值 CE 是一个完全确定的收入量,在此收入水平上所对应的效用水平等于不确定条件下期望的效用水平,因此

$$CE = E(w + \tilde{g}) - \pi = w - \pi$$
$$\pi = E(w + \tilde{g}) - CE = w - CE$$

In general,  $\pi = \pi(w, \tilde{g})$ .

strict risk aversion  $\Leftrightarrow \pi > 0$ , risk neutrality  $\Leftrightarrow \pi = 0$ , risk preference  $\Leftrightarrow \pi < 0$  定义 7.5 当随机变量  $\tilde{g}$  的取值范围很小时,称  $\tilde{g}$  为风险小的赌博。

一个随机变量的取值范围定义为它的最大值和最小值之差。对于小风险,通过泰勒展开(7.1)式两边,我们有 等式左边:

$$E[u(w+\tilde{g})] = E\left[u(w) + u'(w)\tilde{g} + \frac{1}{2}u''(w)(\tilde{g}^{2}) + O(\tilde{g}^{3})\right]$$

$$= Eu(w) + u'(w)E[\tilde{g}] + \frac{1}{2}u''(w)E[\tilde{g}^{2}] + OE[\tilde{g}^{3}]$$

$$\approx u(w) + \frac{1}{2}u''(w)E[\tilde{g}^{2}]$$

等式右边:  $u(w-\pi) = u(w) - u'(w)\pi + O(\pi^2) \approx u(w) - u'(w)\pi$ 

Thus, we have

$$\pi = \frac{1}{2} \left[ -\frac{u''(w)}{u'(w)} \right] E[\tilde{g}^2] = \frac{1}{2} \left[ -\frac{u''(w)}{u'(w)} \right] var[\tilde{g}]$$
 (7.2)

$$E[\tilde{g}^2] = \operatorname{var}[\tilde{g}] + (E[\tilde{g}])^2 = \operatorname{var}[\tilde{g}]$$

式(7.2)给出的风险溢价有一个很直观的解释:对于小风险而言,方差是风险大小的度量。风险溢价与风险的大小成正比,而比例系数反映了参与者的风险厌恶程度。

除去客观因素  $var[\tilde{g}]$ ,仅留下反映个体主观因素的部分,Arrow-Pratt measure of risk aversion 定义为:

$$A(w) = -\frac{u''(w)}{u'(w)} \ge 0$$

因为 A(w)是与每单位绝对风险的风险溢价相联系的,因此也被称为绝对风险厌恶。绝对风险厌恶不仅依赖于效用函数,它也依赖于财富水平 w。通常把绝对风险厌恶的倒数称作 risk tolerance coefficient:

$$T(w) = \frac{1}{A(w)} = -\frac{u'(w)}{u''(w)} \tag{7.3}$$

### **B** Relative Risk Aversion

Arrow-Pratt 风险厌恶度量是对于给定绝对大小的风险而定义的。它并不考虑风险对于参与者的总财富的相对大小。我们也可以考虑如下以总财富作为基数的赌博和风险溢价:

$$E[u(w+w\tilde{g})] = u(w-w\pi_R)$$
  
$$E[u(w(1+\tilde{g}))] = u(w(1-\pi_R))$$

这里,赌博的盈亏为 $w\tilde{g}$ ,是与总财富成比例的。相应的风险溢价也如此。对于小规模的赌博,我们有

$$\pi_R = \frac{1}{2} \left[ -\frac{wu''(w)}{u'(w)} \right] \text{var}[\tilde{g}]$$
 (7.4)

这样就可以得到参与者的相对风险厌恶,记作R(w),定义为

$$R(w) \equiv -\frac{wu''(w)}{u'(w)} \tag{7.5}$$

因此,如果参与者面临的风险是与他的财富 w g 成比例的,相应的风险溢价作为其财富的一部分,是与他的相对风险厌恶以及风险相对于财富的大小成比例的。

例:  $u=\ln(w)$ , w=\$20000, G(10, -10: 50%, 50%): 50% will win 10, 50% will lose 10。 计算风险溢价。

#### Arrow-Pratt Measure

$$\pi = \frac{1}{2} \left[ -\frac{u''(w)}{u'(w)} \right] \text{var}[\tilde{g}]$$

$$var[\tilde{g}] = 0.5 \times (20010 - 20000)^2 + 0.5 \times (19990 - 20000)^2 = 100$$

$$u'(w) = 1/w, u''(w) = -1/w^2$$

$$u''(w)/u'(w) = -1/w = -1/20000$$

$$\pi = -(1/2) \times 100 \times (-1/20000) = 0.0025$$

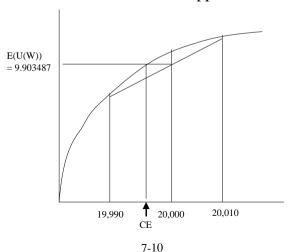
## Markowitz Approach

$$E(u(\tilde{w})) = \sum_{i} p_i u(w_i) = 0.5 \times u(20010) + 0.5 \times u(19990)$$
$$= 0.5 \times \ln 20010 + 0.5 \ln 19990 = 9.903487 = u(CE)$$

$$ln(CE) = 9.903487 \Rightarrow CE = 19999.9975$$

则风险溢价  $\pi = 0.0025$ 

### Markowitz Approach



## 7.4 Examples

- 1. Risk-neutral
- 2. Negative exponential (CARA, Constant absolute risk aversion)
- 3. Quadratic
- 4. Power (**CRRA**, Constant relative risk aversion)
- 5. Log
- 6. HARA (Hyperbolic absolute risk aversion)

给定某个偏好,若其绝对风险厌恶随财富增加(减少)而增加(减少),即 A'(w) > (<)0,则我们称之为**绝对风险厌恶递增(递减)**(increasing absolute risk aversion, **IARA**; decreasing absolute risk aversion, **DARA**)。如果其相对风险厌恶随财富增加(减少)而增加(减少),即 R'(w) > (<)0,则我们称之为相对风险厌恶递增(递减)(increasing relative risk aversion, **DRRA**)。

## 7.5 Comparing Risk Aversion

Let  $u_1, u_2$  be increasing and smooth,  $A_1(w), A_2(w)$  是它们相应的(绝对)风险厌恶系数。

## 定理 7.4 (Pratt) The following statements are equivalent:

- $1. A_1(w) \ge A_2(w), \forall w$
- $2.u_1(u_2^{-1}(z))$  concave
- 3.  $\exists f(\cdot) \text{ with } f'(\cdot) > 0 \text{ and } f''(\cdot) \le 0 \text{ s.t. } u_1(w) = f[u_2(w)]$
- 1的效用函数比2的效用函数更凹,即1的效用函数是2的效用函数的一个凹变换。
- 4.  $\pi_1 \ge \pi_2$  for all *w* and gambles

上述例子中,参与者1是全局的,要比参与者2有更大的风险厌恶。

## 7.6 一阶风险厌恶

## Taylor's Theorem

$$f(\tilde{x}) = f(E[\tilde{x}] + \tilde{x} - E[\tilde{x}]) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n!} f^{(n)}(E[\tilde{x}]) (\tilde{x} - E[\tilde{x}])^n$$
$$= f(E[\tilde{x}]) + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n!} f^{(n)}(E[\tilde{x}]) (\tilde{x} - E[\tilde{x}])^n$$

Expected utility

$$E[f(\tilde{x})] = f(E[\tilde{x}]) + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n!} f^{(n)}(E[\tilde{x}]) E[(\tilde{x} - E[\tilde{x}])^n] = f(E[\tilde{x}]) + \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n!} f^{(n)}(E[\tilde{x}]) m^n(\tilde{x})$$

where

$$m^n(\tilde{x}) \equiv E[(\tilde{x} - E[\tilde{x}])^n]$$

In particular

$$m^{1}(\tilde{x}) = E[(\tilde{x} - E[\tilde{x}])^{1}] \equiv 0$$

$$m^{2}(\tilde{x}) = E[(\tilde{x} - E[\tilde{x}])^{2}] \equiv Var[\tilde{x}]$$

$$m^{3}(\tilde{x}) = E[(\tilde{x} - E[\tilde{x}])^{3}] \equiv Skew[\tilde{x}]$$

$$m^{4}(\tilde{x}) = E[(\tilde{x} - E[\tilde{x}])^{4}] \equiv Kurt[\tilde{x}]$$

Indeed, we can rewrite equation as

$$E[f(\tilde{x})] = f(E[\tilde{x}]) + \frac{1}{2} f''(E[\tilde{x}]) \operatorname{Var}[\tilde{x}] + \frac{1}{6} f''''(E[\tilde{x}]) \operatorname{Skew}[\tilde{x}]$$
$$+ \frac{1}{24} f'''(E[\tilde{x}]) \operatorname{Kurt}[\tilde{x}] + \sum_{n=5}^{\infty} \frac{1}{n!} f^{(n)}(E[\tilde{x}]) m^{n}(\tilde{x})$$