

Chapter 6. Principle of Data Reduction.

Principles of Data Reduction:

1. Sufficient Principle: use a statistic that contain more information about θ .
2. Likelihood Principle: A function of parameters determined by data \Rightarrow what value of θ makes the observed data most likely.
3. Equivalent principle: Are the data reduction method processing those important features.

Definition: Sufficient Statistics

- A. Statistics $T(x)$ is sufficient statistics for θ if conditional distribution of sample x given the value of $T(x)$ does not depends on θ .

Example: Sufficient Statistics.

$\{x_i\}$ denotes number of accident in NYC on a particular day

Assume independent with Poisson distribution.

$x_i \sim \text{Poisson}(\lambda)$.

$$\begin{aligned} f(x|n) &= f(x_1, \dots, x_n | n) \quad \text{Joint PDF} \\ &= \frac{e^{-n} n^{x_1}}{x_1!} \cdot \frac{e^{-n} n^{x_2}}{x_2!} \cdots \frac{e^{-n} n^{x_n}}{x_n!} \\ &= \frac{e^{-n} n^{\sum x_i}}{\prod_{i=1}^n x_i!} \end{aligned}$$

$T(x) = \sum_{i=1}^n x_i$ is the sufficient statistics.

Proof: $T(x) = \sum_{i=1}^n x_i$ is a sufficient statistics by definition of sufficient.

$$P(x_1=x_1, x_2=x_2, \dots, x_n=x_n | T(x)=t).$$

$$= \frac{P(x_1=x_1, \dots, x_n=x_n, T(x)=t)}{P(T(x)=t)} = \frac{P(x_1=x_1, \dots, x_n=x_n, \sum_{i=1}^n x_i=t)}{P(\sum_{i=1}^n x_i=t)}.$$

$$= \frac{P(x_1=x_1, \dots, x_n=x_n)}{P(\sum_{i=1}^n x_i=t)} \quad \text{Since } \{x_1=x_1, \dots, x_n=x_n\} \subseteq \{T(x)=t\}$$

$$= \frac{e^{-n} n^{\sum x_i}}{\sum_{i=1}^n x_i!} = n \text{ independent of } \lambda.$$

Theorem 6.2.2.

If $f(\underline{x}|\theta)$ is a joint PDF of \underline{x} and $g(t|\theta)$ is PDF or PMF of $T(\underline{x})$

Then, $T(\underline{x})$ is a sufficient statistic for θ , if for every x in the sample space, the ratio of $\frac{f(\underline{x}|\theta)}{g(T(\underline{x})|\theta)}$ is constant as a function of θ .

Proof:

$$P_\theta(X_1=x_1 \dots X_n=x_n) = P_\theta(X_1=x_1 \dots X_n=x_n, T(\underline{x})=t(\underline{x})) = P_\theta(T(\underline{x})=t(\underline{x})).$$

$$P_\theta(\underline{x}=\underline{x}) = P_\theta(X=\underline{x}, T(\underline{x})=t(\underline{x})) \cdot P_\theta(T(\underline{x})=t(\underline{x})).$$

$$\frac{P_\theta(\underline{x}=\underline{x})}{P_\theta(T(\underline{x})=t(\underline{x}))} = \underbrace{P_\theta(X=\underline{x}, T(\underline{x})=t(\underline{x}))}_{\text{independent of } \theta, \text{ if } T(\underline{x}) \text{ is a sufficient statistic}},$$

Theorem: Factorization Theorem (8B.6.2).

Let $f(\underline{x}|\theta)$ denote the joint PDF or PMF of \underline{x} . A statistics $T(\underline{x})$ is a sufficient statistic for θ , if there exists function $g(T|\theta)$ and $h(\underline{x})$, s.t. for all sample points \underline{x} and all parameter points θ ,

$$f(\underline{x}|\theta) = g(T(\underline{x})|\theta) h(\underline{x}).$$

Proof = discrete case. prove both necessary & sufficient.

Suppose $T(\underline{x})$ is a sufficient statistic. Choose $g(t|\theta) = P_\theta(T(\underline{x})=t)$

and $h(\underline{x}) = P(\underline{X}=\underline{x}, T(\underline{x})=t(\underline{x}))$. Because $T(\underline{x})$ is sufficient, the conditional probability defining $h(\underline{x})$ does not depends on θ . Thus the choice of $h(\underline{x})$ & $g(t|\theta)$ is legitimate, and for this choice, we have

$$\begin{aligned} f(\underline{x}|\theta) &= P_\theta(\underline{X}=\underline{x}) \\ &= P_\theta(\underline{X}=\underline{x}, T(\underline{x})=t(\underline{x})) \\ &= P_\theta(T(\underline{x})=t(\underline{x})) \cdot P_\theta(\underline{X}=\underline{x} | T(\underline{x})=t(\underline{x})) \\ &= g(T(\underline{x})|\theta) h(\underline{x}) \end{aligned}$$

The above exhibited the factorization theorem. We also see from the last

two. lines. above. That.

$P_\theta(T(x)=T(\tilde{x})) = g(T(x)|\theta)$. so, $g(T(x)|\theta)$ is PDF or PMF of $T(x)$.

Now, we. assume. factorization. theorem exists. let, $g(t|\theta)$ be the PMF

of. $T(x)$. Show. that. $T(x)$ is sufficient, we. examine the ratio. $\frac{f(x|\theta)}{g(T(x)|\theta)}$

Define $A_{T(x)} = \{y : T(y) = T(x)\}$. Then,

$$\frac{f(x|\theta)}{g(T(x)|\theta)} = \frac{g(T(x)|\theta) h(x)}{g(T(x)|\theta)}.$$

Since factorization. theorem. exists.

$$= \frac{g(T(x)|\theta) h(x)}{\sum_{A_{T(x)}} f(y|\theta)}$$

$$(T(x) = \sum x_i, \begin{array}{ll} x_1=1 & x_1=2 \\ x_2=2 & x_2=1 \end{array})$$

$$P(T(x)) = f(x_1=1, x_2=2) + f(x_1=2, x_2=1).$$

$$= \frac{g(T(x)|\theta) h(x)}{\sum_{A_{T(x)}} g(T(x)|\theta) h(y)}$$

$$= \frac{g(T(x)|\theta) h(x)}{g(T(x)|\theta) \sum_{A_{T(x)}} h(y)}$$

Since. T . is constant on. $A_{T(x)}$

$$= \frac{h(x)}{\sum_{A_{T(x)}} h(y)} \sim \text{not. depends on } \theta.$$

Since. the ratio does not depends on θ . by theorem b.2.2.

$T(x)$ is. a sufficient. statistics. for θ .

Various. Version of this. proved. by. Fisher & Savage .

See. "Testing statistical. Hypothesis" by. F. Lehman

Also see. Billingsley. Dall. for. general frameworks.

Example: Poission. Re-visit.

$$f_\lambda(x_1, \dots, x_n) = \frac{e^{-n\lambda} \cdot \lambda^{\sum x_i}}{\sum_{i=1}^n x_i!} = h(x) e^{-n\lambda} \lambda^{\sum x_i} \quad \left. \begin{array}{l} \sum_{i=1}^n x_i \text{ is a sufficient. Statistics.} \\ \Rightarrow \text{One-to-one. function.} \\ \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n x_i = \bar{x} \text{ is also a sufficient statistics.} \end{array} \right\}$$

This. form. holds. for any. distribution in general.

Example. Uniform. distribution. German. Tank. Problem

Use. Serial. number on tank. To estimate. total. number. of tank. θ

Set. $\{x_i\} \sim$ uniform distribution

$$f(x|o) = \frac{1}{o} \text{ for } x = 1, 2, \dots, o,$$

Select. n . serial. number without replacement we will have. C_n^o possible samples. each with. DPF $\frac{1}{C_n^o}$.

$$\begin{aligned} f(\tilde{x}|o) &= \frac{1}{C_n^o} \cdot I(1 \leq x_1 \leq o, 1 \leq x_2 \leq o, \dots, 1 \leq x_n \leq o), \\ &= (C_n^o)^{-1} \cdot I(\max(x_i) \leq o), \\ &= (C_n^o)^{-1} \cdot I(x_n \leftarrow \text{n}^{\text{th}} \text{ order statistic}) \end{aligned}$$

Let. $h(\tilde{x}) = 1$. By. factorization theorem.

$X_{(n)}$ is a sufficient statistic for o .

However, $E[X_{(n)}] < o$. so. it's a biased. sufficient. statistic

So. it need. to be. rescaled. to get. the. unbiased. estimator.

Note: Sufficient. Statistics. with. Extreme-value Statistics.

Typically, in examples where support. of. distribution. depends on some unknown parameters (e.g. uniform $(0, o)$) The. sufficient. statistics. will involve some. extreme order statistics.

Example: Sufficient. Statistics. for. Normal. distribution.

$\{x_i\} \sim N(\mu, \sigma^2)$. Both. μ . & σ^2 . are. unknown.

$$\begin{aligned} f(x|\mu, \sigma^2) &= (2\pi\sigma^2)^{-\frac{n}{2}} (\sigma^{-\frac{n}{2}}) \exp \left\{ -\frac{1}{2\sigma^2} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \mu)^2 \right\} \\ &= (2\pi\sigma^2)^{-\frac{n}{2}} \exp \left\{ -\frac{1}{2\sigma^2} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x} + \bar{x} - \mu)^2 \right\} \\ &= (2\pi\sigma^2)^{-\frac{n}{2}} \exp \left\{ -\frac{1}{2\sigma^2} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2 + n(\bar{x} - \mu)^2 + \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})(\bar{x} - \mu) \right\} \\ &= (2\pi\sigma^2)^{-\frac{n}{2}} \exp \left\{ -\frac{1}{2\sigma^2} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2 + n(\bar{x} - \mu)^2 \right\}, \quad s^2 = \frac{1}{n-1} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_i - \bar{x})^2 \\ &= (2\pi\sigma^2)^{-\frac{n}{2}} \exp \left\{ -\frac{1}{2\sigma^2} (n-1)s^2 + n(\bar{x} - \mu)^2 \right\}. \end{aligned}$$

By. factorization. Theorem. $T(x) = (\bar{x}, s^2)$ are. sufficient. statistics for (μ, σ^2) .

Example: Sufficient Statistics for Multi-variate Normal distribution.

$$\tilde{\mathbf{x}}_i = \begin{pmatrix} x_{i1} \\ \vdots \\ x_{ip} \end{pmatrix} \sim N(\underline{\mu}, \underline{\Psi}).$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 f(x_1, x_2, \dots, x_n | \underline{\mu}, \underline{\Psi}) &= (2\pi)^{-\frac{n}{2}} |\underline{\Psi}|^{-\frac{n}{2}} \exp \left\{ -\frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^n (\tilde{\mathbf{x}}_i - \underline{\mu})' \underline{\Psi}^{-1} (\tilde{\mathbf{x}}_i - \underline{\mu}) \right\} \\
 &= (2\pi)^{-\frac{n}{2}} |\underline{\Psi}|^{-\frac{n}{2}} \exp \left\{ -\frac{1}{2} \text{tr} \left(\sum_{i=1}^n (\tilde{\mathbf{x}}_i - \underline{\mu})' \underline{\Psi}^{-1} (\tilde{\mathbf{x}}_i - \underline{\mu}) \right) \right\} \\
 &= (2\pi)^{-\frac{n}{2}} |\underline{\Psi}|^{-\frac{n}{2}} \exp \left\{ -\frac{1}{2} \text{tr} \left(\underline{\Psi} \sum_{i=1}^n (\tilde{\mathbf{x}}_i - \underline{\mu})' (\tilde{\mathbf{x}}_i - \underline{\mu}) \right) \right\} \\
 &= (2\pi)^{-\frac{n}{2}} |\underline{\Psi}|^{-\frac{n}{2}} \exp \left\{ -\frac{1}{2} \text{tr} \left(n \underline{\Psi} \sum_{i=1}^n (\tilde{\mathbf{x}}_i - \underline{\mu})' (\tilde{\mathbf{x}}_i - \underline{\mu}) \right) \right\} \\
 &= (2\pi)^{-\frac{n}{2}} |\underline{\Psi}|^{-\frac{n}{2}} \exp \left\{ -\frac{1}{2} \text{tr} \left(n \underline{\Psi} \sum_{i=1}^n (\tilde{\mathbf{x}}_i - \bar{\mathbf{x}} + \bar{\mathbf{x}} - \underline{\mu})' (\tilde{\mathbf{x}}_i - \bar{\mathbf{x}} + \bar{\mathbf{x}} - \underline{\mu}) \right) \right\} \\
 &= (2\pi)^{-\frac{n}{2}} |\underline{\Psi}|^{-\frac{n}{2}} \exp \left\{ -\frac{1}{2} \text{tr} \left(n \underline{\Psi} \sum_{i=1}^n (\tilde{\mathbf{x}}_i - \bar{\mathbf{x}})' (\tilde{\mathbf{x}}_i - \bar{\mathbf{x}}) + n (\bar{\mathbf{x}} - \underline{\mu})' (\bar{\mathbf{x}} - \underline{\mu}) + \cancel{n \sum_{i=1}^n (\tilde{\mathbf{x}}_i - \bar{\mathbf{x}})' (\bar{\mathbf{x}} - \underline{\mu})} \right) \right\} = 0 \\
 &= (2\pi)^{-\frac{n}{2}} |\underline{\Psi}|^{-\frac{n}{2}} \exp \left\{ -\frac{1}{2} \text{tr} \left(n \underline{\Psi} (\bar{\mathbf{x}}' + n(\bar{\mathbf{x}} - \underline{\mu})(\bar{\mathbf{x}} - \underline{\mu})) \right) \right\}.
 \end{aligned}$$

By factorization theorem, $(\bar{\mathbf{x}}, \bar{s}^2)$ are sufficient statistics for $(\underline{\mu}, \underline{\Psi})$.

Definition: Minimal Sufficient Statistics.

A sufficient statistics, $T(\mathbf{x})$ is called minimal sufficient statistics

if, for any other sufficient statistics, $T'(\mathbf{x})$, $T(\mathbf{x})$ is a function of $T'(\mathbf{x})$.

Theorem: Minimal Sufficient Statistics. 6.2.13.

Let, $f(\mathbf{x}|\theta)$ be the DMF or PDF of a sample \mathbf{x} . Suppose there exists a function $T(\mathbf{x})$ s.t. for every two sample points \mathbf{x} & \mathbf{y} , the ratio of $\frac{f(\mathbf{x}|\theta)}{f(\mathbf{y}|\theta)}$ is constant as function of θ , iff $T(\mathbf{x}) = T(\mathbf{y})$. Then, $T(\mathbf{x})$ is a minimal sufficient statistics for θ .

Example: Minimal Sufficient Statistics for Normal distribution.

$$\{x_i\} \sim N(\mu, \sigma^2).$$

Let, $\{x_1\} \sim N(\bar{x}_1, s_1^2)$ & $\{x_2\} \sim N(\bar{x}_2, s_2^2)$ are two sample points.

Apply theorem 6.2.13.

$$\frac{f(\mathbf{x}_1 | \mu, \sigma^2)}{f(\mathbf{x}_2 | \mu, \sigma^2)} = \frac{\left(\frac{1}{2\sigma}\right)^{\frac{n}{2}} \exp\left\{-\frac{1}{2\sigma^2} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_{i2} - \mu)^2\right\}}{\left(\frac{1}{2\sigma}\right)^{\frac{n}{2}} \exp\left\{-\frac{1}{2\sigma^2} \sum_{i=1}^n (x_{i1} - \mu)^2\right\}} = \exp\left\{-\frac{1}{2\sigma^2} \left[\frac{s_1^2}{\sigma^2}(n-1) - \frac{s_2^2}{\sigma^2}(n-1) + \frac{n(\bar{x}_2 - \bar{x}_1)^2}{\sigma^2} \right] \right\}$$

is constant as function of (μ, σ^2) if $\bar{x}_1 = \bar{x}_2$, $s_1^2 = s_2^2$

proving that (\bar{x}, s^2) is minimal sufficient statistics for (μ, σ^2)

Note: Dimension of Minimal Sufficient Statistics.

Dimension of Minimal Sufficient Statistics \geq Dimension of Θ .

Example: Dimension of minimal sufficient statistics \geq Dimension of Θ

$\{x_i\} \sim \text{Uniform}(\theta, \theta+1)$ where θ is one dimensional

But, $(X_{(1)}, X_{(n)})$ is minimal sufficient statistic (\geq dimensional)

Note: Uniqueness of Minimal Sufficient Statistics.

If T_1 & T_2 are both minimal sufficient statistics. Then, by definition, each of them is a measurable function of the other.

So, it's unique in the sense that they must be 1-to-1 function of each other.

Definition: Ancillary Statistics.

$S(\mathbf{x})$ is ancillary statistics if its distribution doesn't depend on θ

Example: Ancillary Statistics.

Suppose, θ is a location parameter with CDF $F(x-\theta)$ F doesn't

depend on θ . (e.g. $\{x_i\} \sim N(\mu, 1)$ $F \sim \Phi$ ~ Standard Normal)

$\Rightarrow x_i = z_i + \theta$ where z_i is a standard normal).

When we look at the cdf of Range, $R = X_{(n)} - X_{(1)}$.

$P(X_{(n)} - X_{(1)} \leq r) = P(R \leq r)$ independent of θ

$P(z_{(n)} + \theta - z_{(1)} - \theta \leq r) = P(\underline{z_{(n)}} - \underline{z_{(1)}} \leq r)$.

We have R as an ancillary statistics for location family.

Similar results for scale parameter.

$x_i = \sum z_i$. If we look at the ratio. Huy. Statistics. that.

depends on $\frac{x_1}{x_n}, \frac{x_2}{x_n}, \dots, \frac{x_m}{x_n}$, is auxiliary statistics.

Note: Auxiliary statistics.

Auxiliary statistics. in some cases gives information for inference on θ .

Definition: Complete Statistics. C & B. b.2.21,

let $f(x)$ be a family of PDF or PMF for a statistic $T(x)$. The family of probability distribution is called complete if $E_\theta(g(T)) = 0$, for all θ . implies $P_\theta(g(T)=0) = 1$ for all θ . Equivalently, $T(x)$ is called complete statistics.

Example: Complete statistics.

$\{x_i\} \sim N(98.6, \sigma^2)$ represent human body temperature

Let $g(x) = x - 98.6$. $E[g(x)] = E[x - 98.6] = 0$.

$T(\bar{x}) = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n x_i = \bar{x}$, if we don't assume that n is known.

We have $T(\bar{x}) = \bar{x}$ as a complete statistics for $\mu \in \mathbb{R}$.

Note: Origin of the name of complete statistics.

A set of vector is complete if they span the whole space.

i.e. $V \subset \text{Vector space}$. Then \exists coefficients a_1, \dots, a_p .

S.t. $v = a_1v_1 + \dots + a_pv_p$.

If $w \in \text{Vector space } \& \quad w \perp v_j, \quad j=1, 2, \dots, p \Rightarrow w=0$.

Now consider a discrete example of complete statistic T .

$$E_\theta[g(T)] = 0 \Rightarrow \sum_{j=1}^p g(T_j) P_\theta(T_j) = 0 \Rightarrow g(w) = 0,$$

$$\Rightarrow (g(t_1), \dots, g(t_p)) \begin{pmatrix} P_\theta(t_1) \\ \vdots \\ P_\theta(t_p) \end{pmatrix} = 0 \Rightarrow \text{orthogonal}.$$

Thus $P_{\theta}(t_j) = \begin{pmatrix} P_{\theta}(t_1) \\ \vdots \\ P_{\theta}(t_p) \end{pmatrix}$ is complete in vector-space context.

Similarly, when T is continuous,

$$E[g(t)] = \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} g(t) f(t) dt = 0.$$

= inner-product in function space is complete.

Example. Complete statistic for Poisson distribution

$$\{x_i\} \sim \text{Poisson } (\lambda). \quad f(x|\lambda) = \frac{e^{-\lambda} \cdot \lambda^x}{x!}.$$

$$T(x) = \sum_{i=1}^n x_i \text{ is a sufficient statistic. } E[T(x)] = n\lambda.$$

Suppose there exists a measurable function g s.t. $E[g(T(x))] = 0$, for all λ .

$$T(x) = S \sim \text{Poisson } (n\lambda).$$

$$\begin{aligned} E[g(s)] &= \sum_{s=0}^{\infty} g(s) P(S=s) \\ &= \sum_{s=0}^{\infty} g(s) \cdot e^{-n\lambda} \cdot \frac{(n\lambda)^s}{s!} \\ &= e^{-n\lambda} \cdot \sum_{s=0}^{\infty} \frac{g(s) n^s}{s!} \cdot \lambda^s = 0, \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{if } \sum_{s=0}^{\infty} \frac{g(s) n^s}{s!} \cdot \lambda^s = 0, \Rightarrow \frac{g(s) n^s}{s!} = 0 \Rightarrow g(s) = 0.$$

$$\text{Since, } s = 0, 1, 2, \dots \Rightarrow g(s) = 0.$$

Thus S is a complete statistic.

We will see using complete, $\frac{1}{n}S$, is the unbiased statistic for λ .

With smallest variance

Theorem. Bessuis theorem. 28 B. b. 2.24

If $T(x)$ is a complete & minimal sufficient statistic, then $T(x)$ is independent of every ancillary statistic.

Proof = discrete case.

Let $S(x)$ be ancillary statistic. Then $P(S(x)=s)$ does not depends on θ

Since $S(x)$ is ancillary. Also, The conditional probability,

$$P(S(x)=s | T(x)=t) = P(X \in \{x : S(x)=s\} | T(x)=t).$$

does not depend on θ . Because $T(x)$ is a sufficient statistic.

Thus to show that $S(x) \& T(x)$ are independent, it's sufficient to show that, $P(S(x)=s | T(x)=t) = P(S(x)=s)$, for all possible values $t \in \mathbb{T}$. Now,

$$P(S(x)=s) = \sum_{t \in \mathbb{T}} P(S(x)=s | T(x)=t) \cdot P(T(x)=t).$$

Furthermore, since $\sum_{t \in \mathbb{T}} P(T(x)=t) = 1$. We can write.

$$P(S(x)=s) = \sum_{t \in \mathbb{T}} P(S(x)=s) P(T(x)=t).$$

Therefore, if we define the statistic $g(t) = P(S(x)=s | T(x)=t) - P(S(x)=s)$ the above two equations show that.

$$E(g(t)) = \sum_{t \in \mathbb{T}} g(t) P(T(x)=t) = 0 \text{ for all } s$$

Since $T(x)$ is a complete statistic, this implies that $g(t) = 0$ for all possible values $t \in \mathbb{T}$. Hence verified.

Lemma: Distribution of sufficient statistics in exponential family.

$\{x_i\}$ belongs to exponential family.

$$f(x|\theta) = h(x) c(\theta) \exp \left\{ \sum_{j=1}^k w(\theta_j) t_j(x_i) \right\}$$

Then $T(x) = \left\{ \sum_{i=1}^n t_1(x_i), \dots, \sum_{i=1}^n t_k(x_i) \right\}$ has a distribution also belongs to exponential family.

Theorem: find Complete statistic in the exponential family.

Let x_1, \dots, x_n be iid observations from an exponential family with PDF or PMF of the form $f(x|\theta) = h(x) c(\theta) \exp \left\{ \sum_{j=1}^k w(\theta_j) t_j(x) \right\}$

where $\theta = (\theta_1, \theta_2, \dots, \theta_k)$. Then the statistic

$T(x) = \left(\sum_{i=1}^n t_1(x_i), \dots, \sum_{i=1}^n t_k(x_i) \right)$ is complete as long as the parameter

space Ω contains an open set in \mathbb{R}^k .

Example: Poisson distribution.

We saw. $S = \sum_{i=1}^n X_i$ is complete & sufficient statistic.

$$f(x) = \frac{e^{-\lambda} \lambda^x}{x!} = \left(\frac{1}{x!}\right) \cdot \exp\{\lambda \log x - \lambda\}.$$

$T(x) = \sum_{i=1}^n X_i$ is complete & sufficient statistic by theorem 6.2.25.

Theorem (Minimal Sufficient & Complete Statistics). (§ 13 6.2.28)

If a minimal sufficient statistic exists. Then any complete statistic is also a minimal sufficient statistic.

Definition: Likelihood Principle.

Let. $f(x|\theta)$ denotes the joint PDF or PMF of sample, $x = (x_1, \dots, x_n)$.

Then, given that $X=x$ is observed. The function of θ , defined by

$L(\theta|x) = f(x|\theta)$ is called. likelihood function.

If X is a discrete random vector, then $L(\theta|x) = P_\theta(X=x)$, if we

compare the likelihood function at two parameter points and find that

$$P_{\theta_1}(X=x) = L(\theta_1|x) > L(\theta_2|x) = P_{\theta_2}(X=x)$$

Then, the sample we actually observed is more likely to occur if $\theta = \theta_1$.