

A simplified unified propagator model for signed/unsigned order flow, concave price impact and rough volatility

Abstract

We simplify the setup in [MORS26] by exogenously modelling the signed order flow as an fBM-type process with $H > \frac{1}{2}$, which avoids the need for Hawkes processes, Mittag-Leffler functions and lengthy scaling limit arguments.

0.1 Positive order flow

Similar to Theorem 3.1 in [MORS26]¹, we consider a hyper-rough Heston process $(F_t^+)_t \geq 0$ for cumulative positive order flow which satisfies

$$F_t^+ = g(t) + \int_0^t f(t-s)B_{F_s^+}ds$$

where B is a standard Brownian motion with $B_0 = 0$ and $f(t) = e^{-\theta t}t^{H-\frac{1}{2}}$ is the usual Gamma kernel with $H \in (-\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2})$, $\theta > 0$ so $f \in L^1$ and we assume $g \in C^1$. F_t^+ is a.s. $(2\alpha - \varepsilon) \wedge 1$ -Hölder continuous where $\alpha = H + \frac{1}{2}$ (see e.g. Theorem 3.1 in [JM20] for details)² and F^+ is an increasing process which is non-differentiable if $H \leq 0$. Then if $h * f \equiv 1$, we see that

$$\begin{aligned} \int_0^t h(t-s)(F_s^+ - g(s))ds &= \int_0^t h(t-s) \int_0^s f(s-u)B_{F_u^+}du ds = \int_0^t \int_u^t h(t-s)f(s-u)dsB_{F_u^+}du \\ &= \int_0^t \int_0^{t-u} h(t-s-u)f(s)dsB_{F_u^+}du \\ &= \int_0^t (h * f)(t-u)B_{F_u^+}du = \int_0^t B_{F_u^+}du \end{aligned}$$

where Fubini is justified since $F_t^+ < \infty$ a.s. for finite t and B is a.s. continuous, and thus

$$\frac{d}{dt} \int_0^t h(t-s)(F_s^+ - g(s))ds = B_{F_t^+} \quad (1)$$

Lebesgue a.e. Taking Laplace transforms, the condition $h * f \equiv 1$ becomes $\hat{f}(\lambda)\hat{h}(\lambda) = \frac{1}{\lambda}$, from which we find that

$$h(t) = \frac{\theta^\alpha}{\Gamma(\alpha)} \left(1 - \frac{\Gamma(-\alpha, t\theta)}{\Gamma(-\alpha)}\right)$$

where $\Gamma(a, z) = \int_z^\infty s^{a-1}e^{-s}ds$ is the incomplete Gamma function, and in particular $h(t) = O(t^{-H-\frac{1}{2}})$ as $t \rightarrow 0$.

0.2 Signed order flow

Again following [MORS26], we now assume the *signed* order flow for an asset is

$$V_t = F_t^+ - F_t^-$$

where $F_t^- = g(t) + \int_0^t f(t-s)W_{F_s^-}ds$ and W is another Brownian motion independent of B (so F^- is an i.i.d. copy of F^+). Then we see that

$$\frac{d}{dt} \int_0^t h(t-s)V_s ds = B_{F_t^+} - W_{F_t^-}$$

since the g terms cancel, and for $0 \leq t \leq u$ we have

$$\mathbb{E}(F_u^+ | \mathcal{F}_{F_t^+}^B) = g(u) + \mathbb{E}\left(\int_0^u f(u-s)B_{F_s^+}ds | \mathcal{F}_{F_t^+}^B\right) = g(u) + \int_0^t f(u-s)B_{F_s^+}ds + B_{F_t^+} \int_t^u f(u-s)ds$$

(and similarly for $\mathbb{E}(F_u^- | \mathcal{F}_{F_t^-}^W)$), where we have used that $(B_{F_t^+})_{t \geq 0}$ is a \mathcal{G}_t^+ -martingale (see e.g. Section 7 in [AJ21]), where $\mathcal{G}_t^+ = \mathcal{F}_{F_t^+}^B$.

0.3 Price dynamics and the propagator model

Making the usual assumption that the asset price $P_t = \kappa \lim_{u \rightarrow \infty} \mathbb{E}(F_u | \mathcal{G}_t)$ where $F_t = F_t^+ - F_t^-$ and $\mathcal{G}_t = \sigma(\mathcal{G}_t^+, \mathcal{G}_t^-)$ with $\mathcal{G}_t^- = \mathcal{F}_{F_t^-}^W$ (for some $\kappa > 0$)³, we find that $f(u-s) \rightarrow 0$ as $u \rightarrow \infty$ since $\theta > 0$, but $\lim_{u \rightarrow \infty} \int_t^u f(u-s)ds = c_{H,\theta}$

¹see also section 5.4 in [FGS21]

²we can simulate F^+ using the Monte Carlo scheme in [AA25] using Normal Inverse Gaussian variates

³note we are assuming $P_0 = 0$ without loss of generality since we can easily add a P_0 term

where $c_{H,\theta} = \theta^{-\frac{1}{2}-H}\Gamma(\frac{1}{2}+H)$, so

$$P_t = \kappa \lim_{u \rightarrow \infty} \mathbb{E}(F_u^+ - F_u^- | \sigma(\mathcal{F}_{F_t^+}^B, \mathcal{F}_{F_t^-}^W)) = \kappa c_{H,\theta} (B_{F_t^+} - W_{F_t^-})$$

i.e. P is the difference of two i.i.d. hyper-rough Heston models (each with correlation $\rho = 1$ since each process only has one driving Brownian motion), and

$$P_t = \kappa c_{H,\theta} \frac{d}{dt} \int_0^t h(t-s) V_s ds$$

which is a weak formulation of the usual Propagator model, and the *unsigned* order flow is $U_t = F_t^+ + F_t^-$.

0.4 The market impact function

In particular, the *market impact function* of an exogenous metaorder executed at constant trading speed 1 up to time t_0 is given by

$$MI(t) = \frac{d}{dt} \int_0^t h(t-s) s ds = \frac{\theta^{-\alpha_-} (t\theta\Gamma(-\alpha) - t\theta\Gamma(-\alpha, t\theta) - \Gamma(\alpha_-, 0) + \Gamma(\alpha_-, t\theta))}{\Gamma(-\alpha)\Gamma(\alpha)}$$

for $0 \leq t < t_0$ (where $\alpha_- = \frac{1}{2} - H$) for $0 \leq t \leq t_0$ which is $O(t^{\frac{1}{2}-H})$ as $t \rightarrow 0$ and globally concave in t for $H \in (-\frac{1}{2}, \frac{1}{2})$, consistent with empirical evidence (note the usual square-root impact law corresponds to $H = 0$ here), and we can show that the asymptotic (i.e. permanent) impact as $t \rightarrow \infty$ (given no trading after t_0) is

$$MI(\infty) = \frac{t_0 \theta^\alpha}{\Gamma(\frac{1}{2} + H)}$$

(this is the asymptotic grey line in the plot below). For $H = \frac{1}{2}$, $h(t) = \theta$ which corresponds to pure permanent price impact; conversely $\lim_{\theta \rightarrow 0} h(t) = \text{const.} \times t^{-\frac{1}{2}-H}$. Recall from above that F_t^+ has Hölder regularity $(2\alpha - \varepsilon) \wedge 1$, and empirical evidence in [MORS26] suggests that $2\alpha \in (\frac{1}{2}, 1)$ which corresponds to $H \in (-\frac{1}{4}, 0)$.

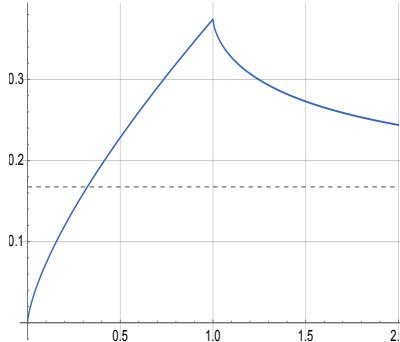


Figure 1: Concave price impact of an exogenous metaorder executed at constant trading speed 1 over $[0, 1]$ with $H = -0.2$, $\theta = 0.1$ and $\kappa = 1$. The blue line asymptotes to the constant level $MI(\infty)$ (grey line) as $t \rightarrow \infty$ which represents the asymptotic permanent price impact.

References

- [AJ21] Abi Jaber, E., “Weak existence and uniqueness for affine stochastic Volterra equations with L^1 -kernels”, Bernoulli 27(3), 2021, 1583–1615
- [AA25] Abi Jaber, E. and E.Attal, “Simulating integrated Volterra square-root processes and Volterra Heston models via Inverse Gaussian”, Preprint, 2025
- [FGS21] Forde, M., S. Gerhold and B. Smith, “Small-time, large-time and $H \rightarrow 0$ asymptotics for the rough Heston model”, Mathematical Finance, 31(1), 203–241, 2021.
- [JM20] P.Jusselin and M.Rosenbaum, “No-arbitrage implies power-law market impact and rough volatility”, 2018, to appear in Mathematical Finance, Mathematical Finance, Volume 30, Issue 4 pp. 1309-1336
- [MORS26] Muhle-Karbe, J., Y.Chahdi, M.Rosenbaum, and G.Szymanski, “A unified theory of order flow, market impact, and volatility”, preprint.