Erasmus University Rotterdam

A General Bayesian Approach to Quantile Regression with Applications in Marketing and Economics*

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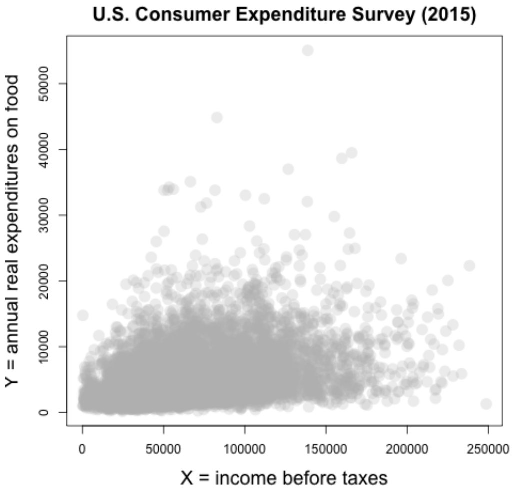
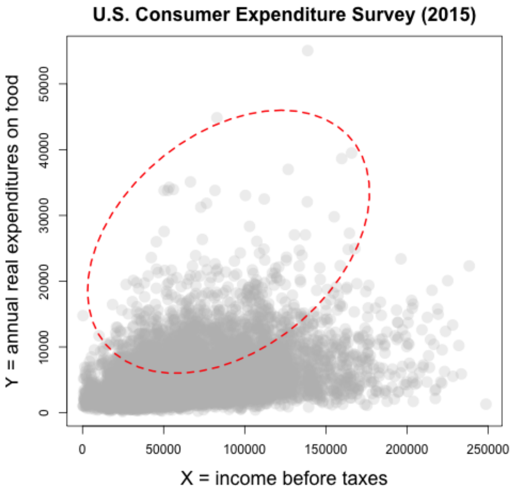
Example: Heterogeneity in Household Consumption Patterns



- $\{y_n, x_n\}_{n=1}^{N}$ and $N = 29,988$

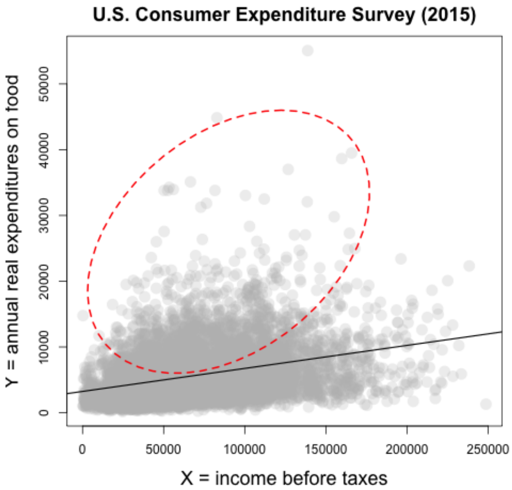
Example: Heterogeneity in Household Consumption Patterns



- $\{y_n, x_n\}_{n=1}^{N}$ and $N = 29,988$
- $y_n = \mu + x_n'\beta + u_n$

Assume, our interest is in the "top" (i.e., 10%) household segment.

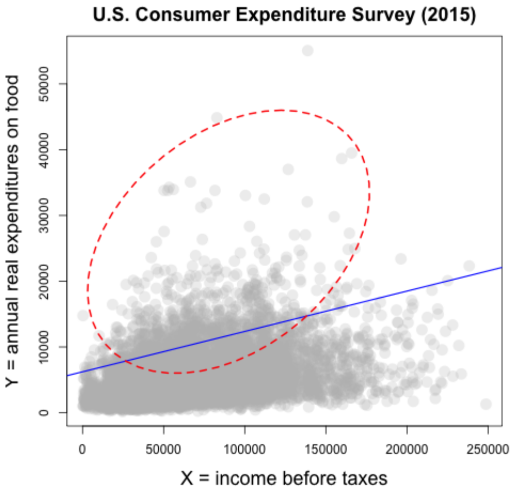
Example: Heterogeneity in Household Consumption Patterns



Mean regression

$$\overline{m}(x_n) = \mu + x_n' \beta$$

Example: Heterogeneity in Household Consumption Patterns

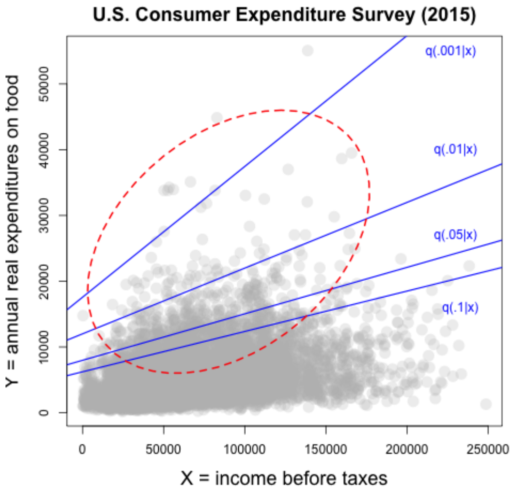


Quantile regression

$$q(.1|x_n) = \mu_{(.1)} + x_n'\beta_{(.1)}$$

Provides insights into the effects of covariates that are missed with mean regression!

Example: Heterogeneity in Household Consumption Patterns



Quantile regression

$$\left\{ q(\alpha_l | x_n) = \mu_{(\alpha_l)} + x_n' \beta_{(\alpha_l)} \right\}_{l=1}^{L}$$

Provides a comprehensive picture of the conditional response distribution!

Regression quantiles
R Koenker, G Bassett Jr - Econometrica: journal of the Econometric Society, 1978

"... applications are found throughout the sciences: chemistry, ecology, ***economics****, finance, genomics, medicine, and meteorology." (Handbook of Quantile Regression, 2017).*

Marketing applications are not part of this selection!

Regression quantiles

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Contributions in Economics

Study of heterogeneity in treatment participation
(e.g., Abadie, Angrist & Imbens, 2002; Athey & Imbens 2006; Firpo, 2007; Chernozhukov & Hansen, 2013)

Value-at-risk (tail value) measurement
(Chernozukov & Umantsev, 2001; Engle & Manganelli, 2004)

Exploration of multiple-output and functional responses
(Hallin, Paindaveine & Siman, 2010; Wei 2008; Carlier, Chernozhukov & Galichon, 2016, Hallin & Siman, 2016; **this talk!**)

Potential Contributions in Marketing

Study of heterogeneity in treatment participation

- Ad exposure effects (e.g., conversions or other rare events)

Value-at-risk (tail value) measurement

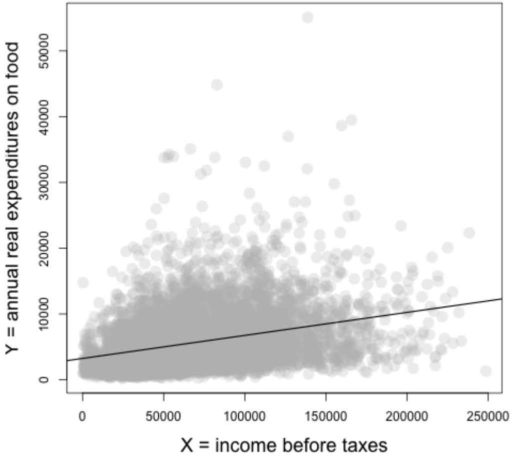
- Customer risk quantification

Exploration of multiple-output and functional responses

- Product category shift and substituation effects (e.g., share of wallet)

Regression Quantiles in a Nutshell

(Conditional) mean regression

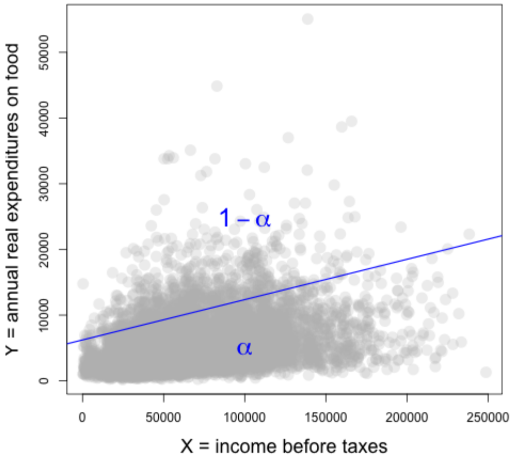


$$\underset{\mu,\beta}{\text{argmin}} \sum_{n=1}^{N} |y_n - \overline{m}(x_n)|^2$$

$\Rightarrow$ solved with numerical linear algebra (i.e., OLS).

Regression Quantiles in a Nutshell

(Conditional) quantile regression



$$\underset{\mu_{(\alpha)},\beta_{(\alpha)}}{\text{argmin}} \sum_{n=1}^{N} \rho_\alpha |y_n - q(\alpha|x_n)|$$

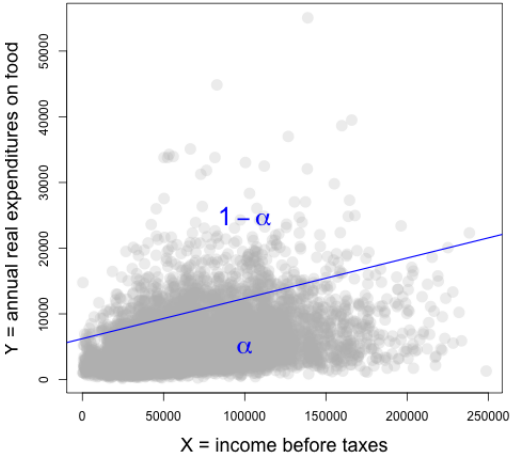
for $0 < \alpha < 1$, and asymmetric weight ("check") function:

$$\rho_\alpha(u_n) = \begin{cases} \alpha u_n, & u_n > 0 \\ -(1-\alpha)u_n, & u_n \leq 0 \end{cases}$$

$\Rightarrow$ solved with linear programming (see, Koenker & Bassett, 1978).

Regression Quantiles in a Nutshell

(Conditional) quantile regression



$$\rho_\alpha(u_n) = u_n(\alpha I_{(u_n>0)} - (1-\alpha) I_{(u_n \leq 0)})$$

equivalent to:

$$u_n \overset{iid}{\sim} \mathcal{AL}(0, \sigma, \alpha)$$

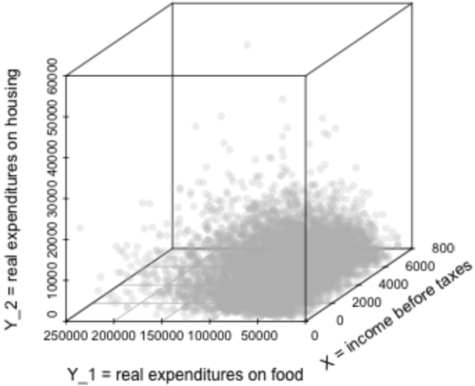
with asymmetry parameter $0 < \alpha < 1$

Example

$\Rightarrow$ ML (and Bayesian) inference is straightforward (see, Koenker & Machado, 1999; Yu & Moyeed, 2001).

Regression Quantiles in a Nutshell

Multiple-outputs: $\boldsymbol{y}_n = (y_{n1}, \ldots, y_{nK})', \boldsymbol{x}_n = (x_{n1}, \ldots, x_{nG})'$



$$\boldsymbol{q}(\alpha|\boldsymbol{x}_n) = \boldsymbol{\mu}_{(\alpha)} + \boldsymbol{B}_{(\alpha)}\boldsymbol{x}_n$$

where $\boldsymbol{\mu}_{(\alpha)}$ is $K \times 1$ and $\boldsymbol{B}_{(\alpha)}$ is $K \times G$

The conditional (Koenker-Bassett) quantile concept is not easy to extend!

Multivariate Quantiles

Attempt 1: Conditioning

$$\boldsymbol{q}(\alpha) = [q_{y_{n1}}(\alpha|\boldsymbol{y}_{n(-1)}), \ldots, q_{y_{nK}}(\alpha|\boldsymbol{y}_{n(-K)})]'$$

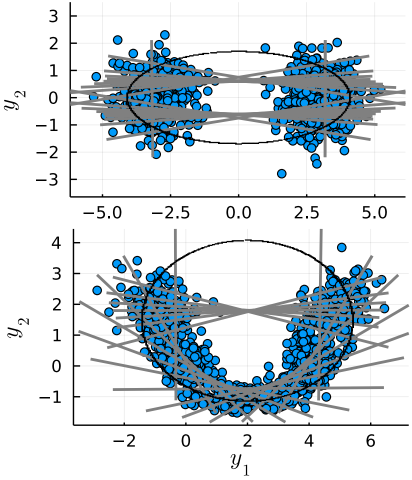
- Input-space augmentation, assumes all "regressors" are fixed!

Multivariate Quantiles

Attempt 2: Directional

- Convex intersection of α-quantile halfspaces for different (Koenker-Bassett) regression hyperplanes
(Hallin, Paindaveine & Siman, 2010).

Areas within the gray lines (contours) give the 80%-**directional quantile** (20 directions).



Multivariate Quantiles

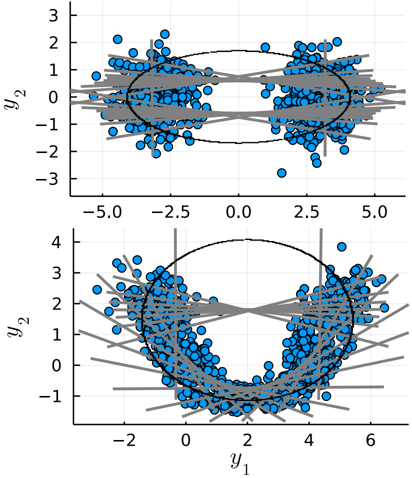
Attempt 2: Directional

- Convex intersection of α-quantile halfspaces for different (Koenker-Bassett) regression hyperplanes (Hallin, Paindaveine & Siman, 2010).

Attempt 3: Direct

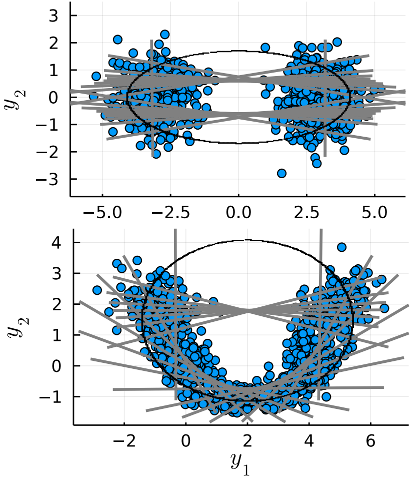
- Find an ellipsoid around a (determined) center with α-probability mass (Hallin & Siman, 2016).

Areas within the black lines (countours) give the 80%-**elliptical quantile**.



Multivariate Quantiles

- The (directional) quantile contours are not guaranteed to cover α.
- The quantile regions can cover large parts with little to no probability mass.
- The definitions cannot easily be extended (i.e., to more than two outputs/ inputs).



Multivariate Quantiles

(Super)level-set

$$\mathcal{L}(f;t) = \left\{\boldsymbol{y}_n \in \mathbb{R}^K : f(\boldsymbol{y}_n) \geq t\right\}$$

for threshold $t > 0$, gives the highest density region for $f(\cdot)$ (see, e.g., Hartigan, 1987).

Multivariate Quantiles

(Super)level-set

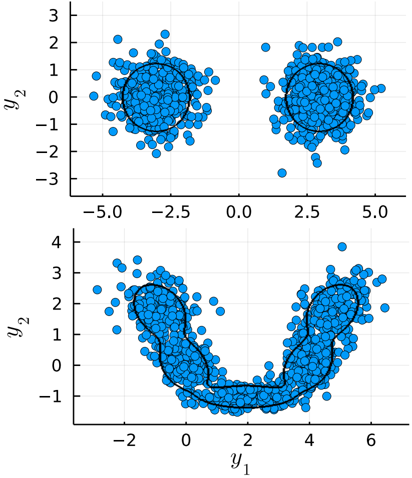
$$\mathcal{L}(f;t) = \left\{ \boldsymbol{y}_n \in \mathbb{R}^K : f(\boldsymbol{y}_n) \geq t \right\}$$

for threshold $t > 0$, gives the highest density region for $f(\cdot)$ (see, e.g., Hartigan, 1987).

(Super)level-set quantile

$$\boldsymbol{q}(\alpha) = \mathcal{L}(f; t^\star_\alpha),$$
$$t^\star_\alpha = \sup\left\{ Pr(\boldsymbol{y}_n \in \mathcal{L}(f;t)) \geq \alpha \right\}$$

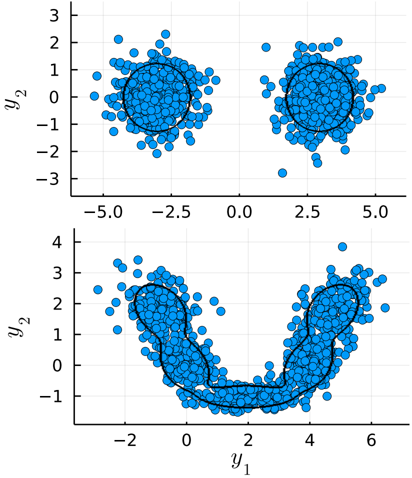
Areas within the lines (quantile contours) correspond to 80% probability mass.



Multivariate Quantiles

- Supports a clear probabilistic interpretation (in terms of α).
- (Flexible) quantile regions cover areas with high probability mass.
- Extensions to more than two inputs/ outputs are straightforward. **(see this paper!)**

Areas within the lines (quantile contours) correspond to 80% probability mass.



Let's go (fully) Bayesian

(Overfitted) Finite Gaussian Mixture Model:

$$f\left(\boldsymbol{y}_n|\boldsymbol{x}_n\right) = \sum_{m=1}^{M} \kappa_m \phi\Big(\boldsymbol{g}_m(\boldsymbol{x}_n), \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_m\Big),$$

$$\text{where } \boldsymbol{g}_m(\boldsymbol{x}_n) = \boldsymbol{\mu}_m + \boldsymbol{B}_m \boldsymbol{x}_n,$$

$$\boldsymbol{\kappa}|\{\bar{\rho}_m\} \sim \mathcal{D}\Big(\bar{\rho}_1, \cdots, \bar{\rho}_M\Big),$$

$$\bar{\rho}_m \sim \mathcal{G}\Big(\underline{a}_1, 1/(\underline{a}_2 M)\Big).$$

with M comparatively large (Nobile & Fearnside, 2007; Rousseau & Mengersen, 2011) and a Shrinkage Prior on $\phi(\boldsymbol{g}_m(\boldsymbol{x}_n), \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_m)$ (Malsiner-Walli, Frühwirth-Schnatter & Grün, 2016).

Implementation

$$\boldsymbol{\mu}_m^{\mathcal{K}|\mathcal{C}}(\boldsymbol{y}_\mathcal{C}, \boldsymbol{x}) = \boldsymbol{g}_{m,\mathcal{K}}(\boldsymbol{x}) + \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{m,\mathcal{K},\mathcal{C}} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{m,\mathcal{C},\mathcal{C}}^{-1} \Big(\boldsymbol{y}_\mathcal{C} - \boldsymbol{g}_{m,\mathcal{C}}(\boldsymbol{x}) \Big),$$

$$\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_m^{\mathcal{K}|\mathcal{C}} = \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{m,\mathcal{K},\mathcal{K}} - \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{m,\mathcal{K},\mathcal{C}} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{m,\mathcal{C},\mathcal{C}}^{-1} \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{m,\mathcal{C},\mathcal{K}} \ ,$$

$$\omega_m^{\mathcal{C}}(\boldsymbol{y}_\mathcal{C}, \boldsymbol{x}) = \frac{\kappa_m \phi\Big(\boldsymbol{g}_{m,\mathcal{C}}(\boldsymbol{x}), \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{m,\mathcal{C},\mathcal{C}}\Big)}{\sum_{l=1}^{M} \kappa_l \phi\Big(\boldsymbol{g}_{l,\mathcal{C}}(\boldsymbol{x}), \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{l,\mathcal{C},\mathcal{C}}\Big)} \ ,$$

... serve as inputs to the Level-set algorithm to compute $\tilde{\boldsymbol{q}}(\alpha)$.

HPD vs. Level-set Quantiles

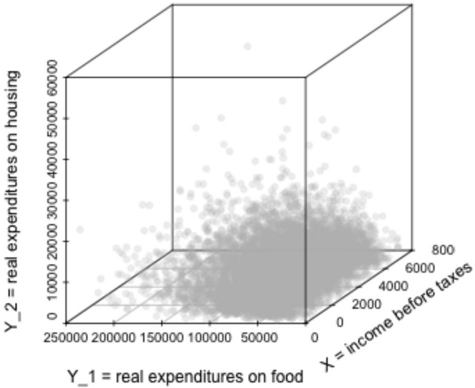
Highest posterior density-set

- Operationalizes uncertainty of a model parameter (for a univariate posterior distribution).

(Super)level-set

- Quantifies uncertainty in a (set of) response variable(s), conditional on other response variables. **(practically, invariance is not required).**

Heterogeneity in Household Consumption Patterns (cont.)



Hyperparameters

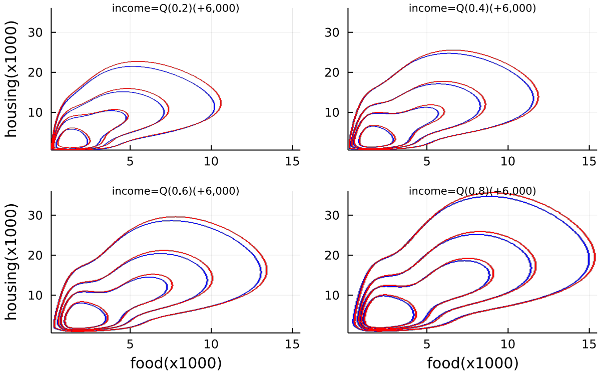
- $M = 5$
- $\underline{a}_1 = 10$, $\underline{a}_2 = 40$ (Dirichlet prior)
- $\underline{b}_1 = .5$, $\underline{b}_2 = .5$ (Gamma prior)

MCMC samples

- Effective: 200,000 / 40 (Burn-in: 400,000)

Heterogeneity in Household Consumption Patterns (cont.)

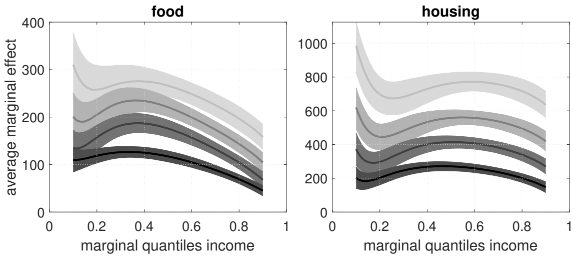
Bivariate quantiles for food and housing conditional on four different income levels. Blue lines corr. to $\alpha \in \{.2, .4, .6, .8\}$. Red lines corr. to an income increase of $6,000. QTE



- $.2$ expenditure quantile does not react considerably.
- $.8$ expenditure ($.2$ income) quantile substantially increases spending.
- No clear substitution patterns between food and housing.

Heterogeneity in Household Consumption Patterns (cont.)

Quantile-varying marginal effects conditional on income.
Shaded areas give the 90% C.I. for four income α-levels.



- Low-income quantile households dedicate most of the additional income to food and shelter.
- Highest-income quantile households hardly increase spendings at all.

Conclusion

(Super)level-sets provide a coherent framework for multivariate and univariate conditional as well as marginal quantiles:

- (1) no quantile crossing, (2) flexible quantile contours with exact probability coverage, (3) easy to extend quantile concept.
- The overfitted GMM enables a data driven bandwith parameter selection.

No particular residual distribution assumption (see also Taddy & Kottas, 2011; Reich, Bondell & Wang, 2011).

- Note: the $\mathcal{AL}$-likelihood is not the true data generating process!

Working paper available via
https://ideas.repec.org/p/tin/wpaper/20220094.html

Many thanks for your attention!

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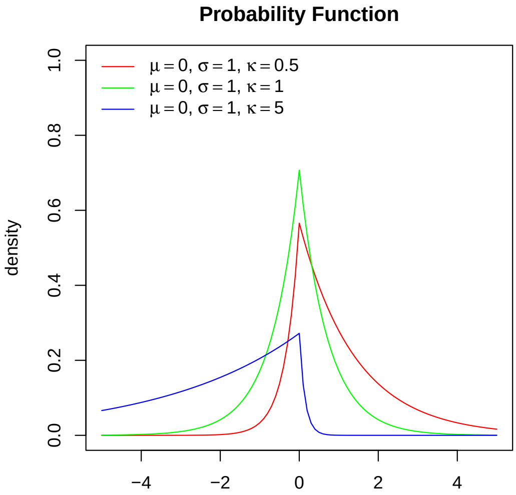
Asymmetric Laplace Distribution



Back

Prior Distributions

$$\boldsymbol{\mu}_m | \bar{\boldsymbol{v}}_0, \overline{\boldsymbol{V}}_0 \sim \mathcal{N}\left(\bar{\boldsymbol{v}}_0, \overline{\boldsymbol{V}}_0\right),$$

$$\bar{\boldsymbol{v}}_0 \sim \mathcal{N}\left(\underline{\boldsymbol{v}}, \underline{\boldsymbol{V}}\right),$$

$$\underline{\boldsymbol{v}} = median(\boldsymbol{y}_n), \underline{\boldsymbol{V}}^{-1} = \mathbf{0}$$

$$\overline{\boldsymbol{V}}_0 = \text{diag}(R_1^2 \lambda_1, \ldots, R_K^2 \lambda_K),$$

$$\lambda_k \sim \mathcal{G}\left(\underline{b}_1, 1/\underline{b}_2\right).$$

with response variable-specific value ranges $\{R_k\}$ and local shrinkage factors $\{\lambda_k\}$ $(\underline{b}_1, \underline{b}_2 > 0)$. (see, Brown & Griffin, 2010)

$$\text{vec}(\boldsymbol{B}_m) \sim \mathcal{N}\left(\boldsymbol{c}_0, \boldsymbol{C}_0\right)$$

$$\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_m \sim \mathcal{IW}\left(\boldsymbol{S}_0, s_0\right)$$

where $\boldsymbol{S}_0 = \boldsymbol{I}$ and $s_0 > 2 + K$.

Sampling Algorithm

- Simulate mixture parameters conditional on $\boldsymbol{z}_n$ $(n = 1, \ldots, N,\ m = 1, \ldots, M)$:
  - Sample $\{\kappa_m\}$ from $\mathcal{D}(\bar{\rho}_1, \ldots, \bar{\rho}_M)$ where $\bar{\rho}_m = \rho_m + N_m$, $N_m = \#\{n : z_n = m\}$.
  - Sample $\{\boldsymbol{\mu}_m\}$ from $\mathcal{N}(\bar{\boldsymbol{v}}_m, \overline{\boldsymbol{V}}_m)$.
  - Sample $\{\boldsymbol{B}_m\}$ from $\mathcal{N}(\boldsymbol{c}_m, \boldsymbol{C}_m)$.
  - Sample $\{\boldsymbol{\Sigma}_m\}$ from $\mathcal{IW}(\boldsymbol{S}_m, s_m)$.
- Sample z_n to classify observations conditional on mixture parameters $(n = 1, \ldots, N)$:
  - $\pi_m \equiv \Pr[z_n = m | \boldsymbol{y}_m, \boldsymbol{\kappa}, \boldsymbol{\mu}, \boldsymbol{B}, \boldsymbol{\Sigma}] \propto \kappa_m \phi\big(\boldsymbol{y}_n; g_m(\boldsymbol{x}_n), \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_m\big)$.
  - Sample $\{z_n\}$ from $\mathcal{M}(\pi_1, \ldots, \pi_M)$.
- Sample hyperparameters:
  - Sample $\{\bar{\rho}_m\}$ simulatneously via a random walk MH-step with proposal density $\log(\rho_m) \sim \mathcal{N}(\log(\rho_m), s^2_{\rho_m})$ from $p(\bar{\rho}_m | \boldsymbol{\kappa}) \propto p(\boldsymbol{\kappa} | \bar{\rho}_m) p(\bar{\rho}_m)$
  - Sample $\{\lambda_k\}$ from $\mathcal{GIG}(\underline{b}_1 - M/2, 2\underline{b}_2, \delta_k)$ where $\delta_k = \sum_{m=1}^{M} (\mu_{m,k} - \bar{v}_{0,k})^2 / R_k^2$.
  - Sample $\bar{\boldsymbol{v}}_0$ from $\mathcal{N}\big(\sum_{m=1}^{M} \boldsymbol{\mu}_k / M, \overline{\boldsymbol{V}}_0 / M\big)$ with $\overline{\boldsymbol{V}}_0 = \text{diag}(R_1^2 \lambda_1, \ldots, R_K^2 \lambda_K)$.

Level-Set Algorithm

Input : chosen coverage probability α
conditional distribution function $F_{\boldsymbol{Y}_\mathcal{K}|\boldsymbol{Y}_\mathcal{C}=\boldsymbol{y}_\mathcal{C}}(\boldsymbol{y})$
grid boundary probability ϵ
dimension-specific grid point number n_{grid}

Output: actual coverage probability p
numerical quantile $\tilde{Q} = \tilde{Q}_{\boldsymbol{Y}_\mathcal{K}|\boldsymbol{Y}_\mathcal{C}=\boldsymbol{y}_\mathcal{C}}(\alpha)$ of size $n_{\text{grid}}^{|\mathcal{K}|}$

for $k \in \mathcal{K}$ **do**
  grid_k = equally spaced n_{grid} vector with values from $F^{-1}_{Y_k|\boldsymbol{Y}_\mathcal{C}=\boldsymbol{y}_\mathcal{C}}(\epsilon)$ to $F^{-1}_{Y_k|\boldsymbol{Y}_\mathcal{C}=\boldsymbol{y}_\mathcal{C}}(1-\epsilon)$;
  $\tilde{Q}_{\boldsymbol{Y}_\mathcal{K}|\boldsymbol{Y}_\mathcal{C}=\boldsymbol{y}_\mathcal{C}}(\alpha)$ = $|\mathcal{K}|$-dimensional array of zeros
P = empty $|\mathcal{K}|$-dimensional array to hold probabilities per hypercube
for $(i_1 \in 2 : n_{grid}), (i_2 \in 2 : n_{grid}), \ldots, (i_{|\mathcal{K}|} \in 2 : n_{grid})$ **do**
  $P_{i_1,i_2,\ldots,i_{|\mathcal{K}|}} = \Pr[Y_k \in [\text{grid}_{k,i_k-1}, \text{grid}_{k,i_k}]\ \forall k \in \mathcal{K} | \boldsymbol{Y}_\mathcal{C} = \boldsymbol{y}_\mathcal{C}]$
$p = 0$
while $p < \alpha$ **do**
  $\mathcal{I}$ = set of indices for which P equals $\max\{P\}$
  $p = p + \sum_{i \in \mathcal{I}} P_i$
  for $i \in \mathcal{I}$ **do**
    $\tilde{Q}_i = \alpha$
    $P_i = 0$

Quantile-Specific Measures

The local marginal effect in the α-level quantile of Y_k given $\boldsymbol{Y}_{\mathcal{C}} = \boldsymbol{y}_{\mathcal{C}}$ for a change from $\boldsymbol{x}$ to $\boldsymbol{x} + \Delta_g$ is:

$$\beta^g_{k|\mathcal{C}}(\alpha|\boldsymbol{y}_{\mathcal{C}}, \boldsymbol{x}) = Q_{Y_k|\boldsymbol{Y}_{\mathcal{C}}=\boldsymbol{y}_{\mathcal{C}}}\Big(\alpha|\boldsymbol{x} + \boldsymbol{\Delta}_g\Big) - Q_{Y_k|\boldsymbol{Y}_{\mathcal{C}}=\boldsymbol{y}_{\mathcal{C}}}\Big(\alpha|\boldsymbol{x}\Big),$$

where $\boldsymbol{\Delta}_g$ is a vector with a small value δ_g at position g and zeros elsewhere (see Doksum, 1974). Back