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CONDITIONAL VARIANCE AND THE RISK PREMIUM IN THE FOREIGN EXCHANGE MARKET

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We investigate the existence of a risk premium in the foreign exchange market, based on the conditional variance of market forecast errors. The forecast errors are assumed to follow the ARCH process introduced by Engle (1982). Estimation and diagnostic testing of the model are discussed, and results are presented for the currencies of the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Japan and Switzerland.

1. Introduction

The existence of a risk premium in the foreign exchange market provides an alternative hypothesis to the proposition that the forward rate is an unbiased predictor of the future spot rate, without sacrificing the notion of market efficiency. Motivated by this link to questions of efficiency in the forward market and by a growing body of empirical evidence against the unbiasedness hypothesis, there has been considerable interest in empirically tractable theories of a risk premium. Without such a theory, there is no way to empirically distinguish between an inefficient market and a time-varying risk premium. In this paper we attempt to shed some light on this issue by presenting an empirical model of the risk premium as a function of the conditional variance of market forecast errors.

Several models have been proposed that generate a risk premium in the foreign exchange market.¹ In the two-period, optimizing models of Stockman... *We would like to thank Pekka Ahlala, Robert Flood, Arnold Harberger, Robert Hodrick, Dennis Krueh and two anonymous referees for helpful comments, and Tom Holmes for the programming involved in estimation of the model. We would also like to thank the University Research Grants Committee of Northwestern University for their financial support of the project. The views expressed herein are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Federal Reserve Bank of Kansas City or the Federal Reserve System. The introduction will not be an exhaustive summary of the literature on risk premium. Rather, we will refer to some 'typical' papers. For a more complete survey, see Levich (1983).

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WHIRC Report VI - Mean-Variance Analysis

Dick Joyce 5 January 2010, revised 28 October 2010

1. Fowler-Mortara Mean-Variance Analysis

Modern electronic detectors are read out in a digital analog-digital process, in which the electrons are collected on a capacitor (usually a potential well produced by reverse bias of a diode junction), read out as an analog voltage, then converted again to a digital output by an analog-to-digital converter. The relation between the physical signal in electrons and the 'arbitrary digital unit' (ADU) which comprise the observed data can be determined by an analysis of the noise as a function of the signal level. This analysis, generally referred to as a Photon Transfer Curve (PTC) or mean-variance analysis, involves generating a dataset of images taken at signal levels ranging from near zero (dark) to the saturation level of the detector, and calculating both the mean level and standard deviation of the mean of an ensemble of images at each signal level.

Under the assumption that the only sources of noise are the zero-signal (read) noise and the Poisson noise of the photon (or dark current) signal, Mortara and Fowler (1981, SPIE, 290, 28) defined the variance of the image (in electrons) as

V_e = N_e + S_e [1]

Where N_e and S_e are the read noise and signal, in electrons.

If g is the conversion gain in e/ADU, then

g^2 V_adu = g^2 N_e + g S_e [2]

S_adu = g (V_adu - N_e) [3]

log (V_adu - N_e) = log (S_adu) - log (g) [4]

By measuring the standard deviation and mean signal in ADU and determining the read noise from the zero-signal noise, one can plot the read-noise subtracted variance against the mean signal to obtain a linear curve of slope=1/g, whose X intercept is the gain.

If one writes equation [3] as

V_adu = N_e + g^2 S_adu [5]

Then one should get a linear plot whose Y intercept is N_e and slope is 1/g.

STANDARD COSTING AND VARIANCE ANALYSIS

20.0 Objective :

After going through this unit you should be able to

- Understand the concept of standard costing
Know the types of standards and process in setting standards
Discuss the meaning and purpose of various analysis
Analyse various types of variances viz., material variance, labour variance, and overhead variance.

Structure :

- 20.1 Introduction
20.2 Concept of Standard Costing
20.3 Types of Standard Costs
20.4 Variance analysis
20.5 Material Variance
20.6 Labour Variance
20.7 Overhead Variance
20.8 Sales Variances
20.9 Advantages and Limitations
20.10 Self Assessment Questions
20.11 Exercises
20.12 Suggested Readings

20.1 INTRODUCTION :

Financial Accounting is only historical costing and is only a post-mortem examination of cost and hence, is not very much useful to management for cost control and cost reduction purposes. Besides this, historical costing is not useful to managerial decision making and policy formulating purposes. Hence, to the accounting world, a new concept (or) tool by name "Standard Costing" appeared as a very big way out.

20.2 CONCEPT OF STANDARD COSTING : [DEFINITION]

Normally it is understood as a long step by step process of fixing standards, using standards, and their comparisons with the actuals, finding out of variances in between standards and actuals, analysing these variances, finding out of causative factors for these variances, classifying these causes into controllable and un-controllable, controlling and taking remedial actions, revising these standards if necessary etc. Thus, it is a cost controlling and cost reducing device.

Multivariate Variance Component Analysis: An Application in Test Development

Nicholas T. Longford Educational Testing Service

Key words: latent trait, multivariate data, psychometric test, variance components

This paper presents a multilevel variance component analysis of data from the pilot year of pretesting of an educational test. The multilevel nature of the data is induced by the clustering of students within colleges and by having multivariate observations (scores) on students. The presence of a multidimensional trait underlying the scores is formulated as a hypothesis about the full rank of a variance matrix.

The need for objective measurement of the quality of general education in United States colleges has been appreciated for some time. Colleges are facing increasing demand for provision of such information to state governments, accrediting boards, and organizations assisting in placement of high school students. Also, many college administrators are interested in comparisons of their freshman and upperclass cohorts, or in longitudinal comparisons of freshmen and upperclassmen. Awareness of the competition for the same freshman candidates has raised the importance of comparisons among colleges. Educational testing organizations in the United States have responded to this demand by instituting efforts to develop tests of general education outcomes.

In a typical educational admissions test, such as the SAT, ACT, or GRE, students are administered sets of items, the responses to which are scored and the scores reported back to students. Test developers usually attempt to set the number of items in the test close to a minimum that would make the test scores for the examinees sufficiently reliable. The testing time (i.e., the time period during which the examinees are exposed to the test items) should be set to a minimum in which the majority of students would have sufficient time to study and to respond to all the test items, so as to encroach to the smallest extent on the time available for (academic) instruction or on the free time of the examinees.

The author has benefited from discussions with Charlie Lewis. Comments of an associate editor and of two referees have helped to improve the presentation. Secretarial services of Liz Brophy, ETS, are acknowledged.

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