A Bayesian Nonatomic Game and Its Applicability to Finite-player Situations

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Research Outline

- We formulate a nonatomic game (NG) with Bayesian features
- This NG allows players to have *correlated* signals and has very *general* finite-player counterparts
- After establishing *equilibrium* existence, we show how any of this NG's equilibria could be used by its *randomly generated* finite counterparts to achieve *approximate equilibrium*
- Mixed NG equilibria could yield approximate *pure* equilibria for large finite games randomly generated in NG's neighborhood
- When anonymous—joint external player-action distribution influences a player only through marginal action distribution, NG itself can be shown to have pure equilibria

Literature Overview

- Normal-form NGs were studied by Schmeidler (1973), Mas-Colell (1984), Balder (1995, 2002), Khan, Rath, and Sun (1997), Loeb and Sun (2006), Podczeck (2009), and Khan et al. (2013), etc.
- Finite *n*-player Bayesian games were treated by Harsanyi (1967-8), Radner and Rosenthal (1982), Milgrom and Weber (1985), Balder (1988), He and Sun (2019), and so on
- Kalai (2006) showed *ex-post stability* of *large* Bayesian games; extensions and generalizations were made by Carmona (2008), Carrtwright and Wooders (2009), Gradwohl and Reingold (2010), Carmona and Podczeck (2012), and Deb and Kalai (2015), etc.
- Our NG-finite-game connections convey a different but still *robustness*-themed message: players would *not* be much bothered by their opponents' realized characteristics in a large game

Infinite Players and Incomplete Information

- Khan and Rustichini (1991), Balder (1991), and Balder and Rustichini (1994) all studied games involving *infinite* numbers of players possessing *incomplete* information
- Kim and Yannelis (1997) used *sub-sigma-fields* to model players' differentiated knowledge about true *state of world* and demonstrated existence of pure equilibria for case involving *concave* payoff functions over action spaces with *linear* structures
- Carmona and Podczeck (2020) let players have *independent* types and demonstrated any NG equilibrium would be *limiting point* of equilibria for a converging sequence of *finite* games
- We study a somewhat *complementary* situation where a substantial portion of information could be held by any one single player while her and others' received signals could be very much *correlated*

One Observation

- Let |I| be player $\#,\,|\Sigma|$ be signal #, and |A| be action #
- The greater an extent to which $|I| \times |\Sigma| \gg |A|$, the easier it would be for *deterministic* (i, σ) -dependent actions a to weave out desired externalities and hence for *pure* equilibria to emerge
- For normal-form NG where $|\Sigma| = 1$, most works, e.g., Schmeidler (1973) and Khan et al. (2013), effectively required $|I| \gg |A|$
- For finite Bayesian games where |I| = n, Milgrom and Weber (1982) and He and Sun (2019) demanded $|\Sigma| \gg |A|$
- However, relative predominance concerning cardinalities seems relaxable when only *approximate purification* is sought; see, e.g., Carmona (2008) and our *mixed*-to-*pure* result

Essential Elements

• Our Bayesian NG has a few spaces:

$$ω$$
) some Ω is for states of world
 i) $I ≡ [0,1]$ is set of players or player characteristics
 $σ$) a finite $Σ ≡ {\bar{σ}_1, \bar{σ}_2, ..., \bar{σ}_{|Σ|}}$ is space of signals
 a) a finite $A ≡ {\bar{a}_1, \bar{a}_2, ..., \bar{a}_{|A|}}$ is set of actions

• Let
$$\mathcal{D} \equiv \mathscr{P}(I \times A)$$
 be space of joint player-action distributions

- A player $i \in I$ would receive signal $\tilde{s}(\omega, i) \in \Sigma$ in a state $\omega \in \Omega$
- Under a worldly state ω ∈ Ω, a player i ∈ I would receive a
 [0,1]-valued payoff ũ(ω, i, a, δ) when she takes an action a ∈ A
 while facing an external environment δ ∈ D

Game Formulation

- For some γ̃ ∈ 𝒫(Ω) as a prior distribution of worldly states and some atomless λ̃ ∈ 𝒫(I) as a player distribution, we can identify our NG as (Ω, I, Σ, A, š, ũ, γ̃, λ̃)
- For emphasis on *player distribution*, let us name this NG $\Gamma(\tilde{\lambda})$
- Let $\mathcal{I}(\sigma|\omega) \equiv [\tilde{s}(\omega, \cdot)]^{-1}(\{\sigma\})$ (think *horizontal*) be set of players who would receive signal σ under state ω — $(\mathcal{I}(\sigma|\omega))_{\sigma\in\Sigma}$ would form a *partition* of player space I for every state ω
- Let $\mathcal{W}(\sigma|i) \equiv [\tilde{s}(\cdot,i)]^{-1}(\{\sigma\})$ (think *vertical*) be set of states that would let player *i* receive signal σ — $(\mathcal{W}(\sigma|i))_{\sigma\in\Sigma}$ would form a *partition* of state space Ω for every player *i*

Bayesian Nonatomic and Finite Games

A Depiction with $|\Sigma| = 3$



Mixed Strategy Profile for NG

- Let $\Theta_{|A|}$ be probability *simplex* embedded in $\Re^{|A|}$ It is topologically equivalent to $\mathscr{P}(A)$ and its set of extreme points $\Theta^0_{|A|}$ contains vectors $\bar{\theta}^0_{|A|,j}$ that correspond to actions \bar{a}_j
- By a mixed strategy profile for $\Gamma(\tilde{\lambda})$, we mean

$$\mu \equiv (\mu(i,\sigma))_{i \in I, \sigma \in \Sigma} \equiv (\mu(a|i,\sigma))_{i \in I, \sigma \in \Sigma, a \in A},$$

which is an element of $\mathcal{M} \equiv \mathscr{M}(I \times \Sigma, \Theta_{|A|})$, so that each $\mu(a|i, \sigma)$ is chance for an (i, σ) -player's action to be a

• Under a state $\omega \in \Omega$, any player $i \in I$ would receive a signal $\tilde{s}(\omega, i) \in \Sigma$, prompting her to adopt an *action plan* $\mu(i, \tilde{s}(\omega, i)) \equiv (\mu(a|i, \tilde{s}(\omega, i)))_{a \in A} \in \Theta_{|A|}$ under μ

A State-determined Distribution

• In aggregation, joint player-action distribution would be some $\Delta(\omega, \mu) \in \mathcal{D}$ such that for any $I' \in \mathscr{B}(I)$ and $a \in A$,

$$\begin{aligned} \left[\Delta(\omega, \mu) \right] (I' \times \{a\}) &\equiv \int_{I'} \mu(a|i, \tilde{s}(\omega, i)) \cdot \tilde{\lambda}(di) \\ &= \sum_{\sigma \in \Sigma} \int_{I' \cap \mathcal{I}(\sigma|\omega)} \mu(a|i, \sigma) \cdot \tilde{\lambda}(di) \end{aligned}$$

• Note $\Delta(\omega,\mu)$ could be understood as $\tilde{\lambda} \odot K(\omega,\mu)$ with each *I*-to- $\Theta_{|A|}$ mapping $K(\omega,\mu)$ satisfying

$$[K(\omega,\mu)](\sigma|i) \equiv \mu(a|i,\sigma) \quad \text{ for } i \in \mathcal{I}(\sigma|\omega)$$

• Though heuristically plausible, we do not claim $\Delta(\omega, \mu)$ to be almost sure *empirical* player-action distribution resulting from players in $I \equiv [0, 1]$ "independently" carrying out μ under ω

Relevant Definitions

• When taking action $a \in A$ under state $\omega \in \Omega$ while everyone adopts strategy profile $\mu \in \mathcal{M}$, player $i \in I$ would receive

$$V(\omega,i,a,\mu)\equiv \tilde{u}\left(\omega,i,a,\Delta(\omega,\mu)\right)$$

- However, player knows not state $\omega \in \Omega$ but signal $\tilde{s}(\omega, i) \in \Sigma$ sent to her alone—she is an (i, σ) -player when $\tilde{s}(\omega, i) = \sigma$
- Thus, define unnormalized average payoff to an (i, σ) -player as

$$U(i,\sigma,a,\mu) \equiv \int_{\mathcal{W}(\sigma|i)} V(\omega,i,a,\mu) \cdot \tilde{\gamma}(d\omega)$$

For purpose of identifying actions $a \in A$ that maximize average payoff, whether or not to *normalize* would *not* matter

NG Equilibrium

• For any player $i \in I$, signal $\sigma \in \Sigma$, and strategy profile $\mu \in \mathcal{M}$, let

$$\mathbb{B}^0(i,\sigma,\mu) \equiv \left\{ \bar{\theta}^0_{|A|,j}: \ \bar{a}_j \in \mathrm{argmax}_{a \in A} U(i,\sigma,a,\mu) \right\}$$

• A member θ of its *convex hall* $\mathbb{B}(i, \sigma, \mu)$ would be characterized by

$$\sum_{a \in A} \theta(a) \cdot U(i, \sigma, a, \mu) \ge \sum_{a \in A} \theta'(a) \cdot U(i, \sigma, a, \mu),$$

for any $\theta'\in \Theta_{|A|}$ i.e., $(i,\sigma)\text{-player's set of }optimal \text{ action}$ distributions in response to common μ

• A mixed strategy profile $\mu^* \in \mathcal{M}$ would be an *equilibrium* when

$$\mu^*(i,\sigma) \in \mathbb{B}\left(i,\sigma,\mu^*\right), \qquad \forall i \in I, \ \sigma \in \Sigma$$

Equilibrium Existence

• Define a correspondence $\mathbb{F}:\mathcal{M}\rightrightarrows\mathcal{M}$ so that for each $\mu\in\mathcal{M},$

$$\mathbb{F}(\mu) \equiv \left\{ \mu' \in \mathcal{M} : \ \mu'(i,\sigma) \in \mathbb{B}(i,\sigma,\mu), \quad \forall i \in I \ \sigma \in \Sigma \right\}$$

It is set of all strategy profiles μ' whose every component $\mu'(i,\sigma)$ is (i,σ) -player's best response to given strategy profile μ

- A strategy profile μ^{*} ∈ M would be an *equilibrium* if and only if it is a *fixed point* of 𝔽(·) satisfying μ^{*} ∈ 𝔼(μ^{*})
- With various *compactness*, *convexity*, *continuity*, *nonemptiness*, and *upper hemi-continuity*, we can use Fan-Glicksberg fixed point theorem to show *existence* of NG equilibria
- In other words, $\mathcal{M}^*(\tilde{\lambda}) \neq \emptyset$

A Finite Game

- Consider $\Gamma_n(i_{[n]})$ with player profile $i_{[n]} \equiv (i_m)_{m=1,2,\dots,n} \in I^n$
- It would inherit from $\Gamma(\tilde{\lambda})$ same state space Ω , signal space Σ , action space A, payoff function $\tilde{u}(\omega, i, a, \delta)$, state-player-to-signal mapping $\tilde{s}(\omega, i)$, and prior state distribution $\tilde{\gamma}$
- When players' actions form a profile $a_{[n]} \equiv (a_m)_{m=1,2,\dots,n} \in A^n$, empirical player-action distribution faced by player i_m would be $\varepsilon(i_{[n],-m},a_{[n],-m})$ and hence leading to her payoff

$$\tilde{u}\left(\omega, i_m, a_m, \varepsilon(i_{[n], -m}, a_{[n], -m})\right)$$

• At a particular n and a given player profile $i_{[n]}$ which is settled in background, our finite game could be very general

Mixed Strategy for Finite Game

- For *m*-th player with an i_m characteristic, her *mixed strategy* could be some $\mu_m \equiv (\mu_m(\sigma))_{\sigma \in \Sigma} \equiv (\mu_m(a|\sigma))_{\sigma \in \Sigma, a \in A} \in \mathcal{M}_0 \equiv (\Theta_{|A|})^{\Sigma}$, such that each $\mu_m(a|\sigma)$ would represent *chance* for action *a* to be taken when she receives a σ signal
- Let us use $\mu_{[n]} \equiv (\mu_m)_{m=1,2,...,n} \in \mathcal{M}_0^n$ for strategy profile adopted by all players and $\mu_{[n],-m} \equiv (\mu_l)_{l \neq m} \in \mathcal{M}_0^{n-1}$ for profile of strategies adopted by all players except *m*-th one
- Average payoff $V_n(\omega, i_m, a_m, i_{[n], -m}, \mu_{[n], -m})$ to *m*-th player when she takes action a_m under state ω while her opponents form $i_{[n], -m}$ and adopt *strategy profile* $\mu_{[n], -m}$ would be

$$\sum_{a_{[n],-m}\in A^{n-1}} \left[\prod_{l\neq m} \mu_l\left(a_l | \tilde{s}(\omega, i_l)\right) \cdot \tilde{u}\left(\omega, i_m, a_m, \varepsilon(i_{[n],-m}, a_{[n],-m})\right) \right]$$

Equilibrium-related Concepts

• As *m*-th player does *not* see actual state ω but signal $\sigma_m \equiv \tilde{s}(\omega, i_m)$ sent her way, she should naturally care about average payoff $U_n(i_m, \sigma_m, a_m, i_{[n], -m}, \mu_{[n], -m})$ defined as

$$\int_{\mathcal{W}(\sigma_m|i_m)} V_n\left(\omega, i_m, a_m, i_{[n], -m}, \mu_{[n], -m}\right) \cdot \tilde{\gamma}(d\omega),$$

which is so far unnormalized

• For any $\epsilon \geq 0$, consider $\mu_{[n]} \in \mathcal{M}_0^n$ an ϵ -equilibrium for $\Gamma_n(i_{[n]})$ when for any m = 1, 2, ..., n, $\sigma_m \in \Sigma$, and $a' \in A$,

$$\sum_{a_m \in A} \mu_m(a_m | \sigma_m) \cdot U_n(i_m, \sigma_m, a_m, i_{[n], -m}, \mu_{[n], -m})$$

$$\geq U_n(i_m, \sigma_m, a', i_{[n], -m}, \mu_{[n], -m}) - \tilde{\gamma}(\mathcal{W}(\sigma_m | i_m)) \cdot \epsilon$$

Equilibrium Interpretations

• Namely, *m*-th player's unnormalized average payoff

$$\sum_{a_m \in A} \mu_m(a_m | \sigma_m) \cdot U_n(i_m, \sigma_m, a_m, i_{[n], -m}, \mu_{[n], -m})$$

of using $\mu_m(\cdot|\sigma_m)$ is better than $U_n(i_m, \sigma_m, a', i_{[n], -m}, \mu_{[n], -m})$ of taking any action a' except for some $\tilde{\gamma}(\mathcal{W}(\sigma_m|i_m)) \cdot \epsilon$ margin

- Sub-unitary weight $\tilde{\gamma}(\mathcal{W}(\sigma_m|i_m))$ in front of ϵ , which makes condition *more stringent* than when it were not there, matches *unnormalized* payoff definition
- Let $\mathcal{M}_n^*(i_{[n]},\epsilon)$ be $\Gamma_n(i_{[n]})$'s set of $\epsilon\text{-equilibria}$
- An ϵ -equilibrium here would be same as that in traditional sense

Randomly Generated Finite Games

• A version of *law of large numbers* says for any $\epsilon > 0$,

$$\lim_{n \to +\infty} \tilde{\lambda}^n \left(\left\{ i_{[n]} \equiv (i_m)_{m=1,2,\dots,n} \in I^n : \rho_I(\tilde{\lambda}, \varepsilon(i_{[n]})) < \epsilon \right\} \right) = 1,$$

meaning that *empirical distribution* of randomly generated finite game's *player profile i* would converge to NG's *signature distribution* $\tilde{\lambda}$ in a *probabilistic* sense

- Note $[\varepsilon(i_{[n]})](\{i'\}) \equiv \sum_{m=1}^{n} \mathbf{1}(i_m = i')/n$ for any $i' \in I$ and ρ_I is *Prokhorov metric* for player distribution space $\mathscr{P}(I)$
- Though not directly used, this probabilistic closeness serves as a rationale for *mixed*-to-*mixed* and *mixed*-to-*pure* approximations

A Mixed-to-mixed Guarantee

- An NG strategy profile $\mu \in \mathcal{M}$ would *induce* a profile $\tilde{\nu}_{[n]}(\mu, i_{[n]})$ for *n*-player game $\Gamma_n(i_{[n]})$, so that any *m*-th player with an i_m characteristic would *behave as if* she were a player i_m in $\Gamma(\tilde{\lambda})$
- When n-player profile i_[n] is randomly sampled from distribution λ
 while μ* is an equilibrium for NG Γ(λ), there would be a big
 chance for resulting ν
 [n](μ*, i_[n]) to be good for Γ_n(i_[n])
- Precisely, suppose state space Ω is finite and utility function \tilde{u} is sufficiently continuous

Then, for any $\epsilon > 0$ and $\mu^* \in \mathcal{M}^*(\tilde{\lambda})$,

 $\lim_{n \longrightarrow +\infty} \tilde{\lambda}^n \left(\left\{ i_{[n]} \in I^n : \tilde{\nu}_{[n]}(\mu^*, i_{[n]}) \in \mathcal{M}_n^*(i_{[n]}, \epsilon) \right\} \right) = 1$

A Key Convergence of External Environment

- A key is that a player in randomly generated $\Gamma_n(i_{[n]})$ would face an external environment that increasingly resembles one in NG $\Gamma(\tilde{\lambda})$
- Recall Δ(ω, μ) is joint player-action distribution corresponding to state ω ∈ Ω and strategy profile μ ∈ M
- For any $\epsilon > 0$, we can show $\tilde{\lambda}^n(\mathcal{I}_n(\omega, \mu, \epsilon)) > 1 \epsilon$ for large enough n where $\mathcal{I}_n(\omega, \mu, \epsilon)$ is

$$\begin{split} \{i_{[n]} \in I^n: \sum_{a_{[n],-m} \in A^{n-1}} \prod_{l \neq m} \mu(a_l | i_l, \tilde{s}(\omega, i_l)) \times \\ \times \mathbf{1}(a_{[n],-m} \in \mathcal{A}_{n-1}(\omega, \mu, \epsilon, i_{[n],-m})) > 1 - \epsilon, \ \text{ for any } m\}, \end{split}$$

while each $\mathcal{A}_{n-1}(\omega,\mu,\epsilon,i_{[n],-m})$ is

$$\left\{a_{[n],-m} \in A^{n-1}: \ \rho_{I \times A}\left(\Delta(\omega,\mu), \varepsilon(i_{[n],-m},a_{[n],-m})\right) < \epsilon\right\}$$

A Source Enabler

Convergence of *external environment* in turn stems from a result of *law of large numbers* sort—for any ε > 0,

$$\begin{split} \lim_{n \longrightarrow +\infty} (\Delta(\omega, \mu))^n (\{(i_{[n]}, a_{[n]}) \in (I \times A)^n : \\ \max_{m=1}^n \ \rho_{I \times A} \left(\Delta(\omega, \mu), \varepsilon(i_{[n], -m}, a_{[n], -m}) \right) < \epsilon \}) = 1 \end{split}$$

• By a pure strategy profile for NG $\Gamma(\tilde{\lambda}),$ we mean some

$$\pi \equiv (\pi(i,\sigma))_{i \in I, \sigma \in \Sigma} \equiv (\pi(a|i,\sigma))_{a \in A, i \in I, \sigma \in \Sigma},$$

which is an element of $\mathcal{P} \equiv \mathscr{M}\left(I \times \Sigma, \Theta^0_{|A|}\right)$, so that a with $\pi(a|i, \sigma)=1$ is action to be taken by an (i, σ) -player

• As $\tilde{\nu}_{[n]}(\pi, i_{[n]})$ is a pure *n*-player strategy profile for any $\pi \in \mathcal{P}$, our *mixed*-to-*mixed* result would bear *pure*-to-*pure* message as well

A Mixed-to-pure Guarantee

- Even a generally *mixed* equilibrium μ^* for NG $\Gamma(\tilde{\lambda})$ would, very likely in some μ^* -based *probabilistic* sense, help achieve a *pure* ϵ -equilibrium for an *n*-player game $\Gamma_n(i_{[n]})$ whose player profile $i_{[n]} \equiv (i_m)_{m=1,2,...,n}$ is randomly generated from $\tilde{\lambda}$
- A precise description requires a few definitions
- Let $\mathcal{P}_n^*(i_{[n]},\epsilon)$ be n-player game $\Gamma_n(i_{[n]})\text{'s set of }\textit{pure }\epsilon\text{-equilibria}$
- Given an *n*-player action-plan profile

$$\alpha_{[n]} \equiv (\alpha_m)_{m=1,2,\dots,n} \equiv (\alpha_m(\sigma))_{m=1,2,\dots,m,\sigma \in \Sigma} \in (A^{\Sigma})^n,$$

we can define a *pure* n-player strategy profile $\tilde{\pi}_{[n]}(\alpha_{[n]})$ so that

$$(\tilde{\pi}_m(\alpha))(a|\sigma) = 1 \qquad \text{if and only if} \qquad a = \alpha_m(\sigma)$$

A Joint Player–action-plan Distribution

• For any NG strategy profile $\mu \in \mathcal{M}$, define an $(I \times A^{\Sigma})$ -distribution $\Psi(\mu) \in \mathscr{P}(I \times A^{\Sigma})$ so that for any player subset $I' \in \mathscr{B}(I)$ and signal-based action plan $\alpha \equiv (\alpha(\sigma))_{\sigma \in \Sigma} \in A^{\Sigma}$,

$$[\Psi(\mu)]\left(I' \times \{\alpha\}\right) \equiv \int_{I'} \left[\prod_{\sigma \in \Sigma} \mu(\alpha(\sigma)|i,\sigma)\right] \cdot \tilde{\lambda}(di)$$

- Sampling from Ψ(μ) would amount to obtaining a player i ∈ I following NG-defining distribution λ̃ and then for every possible signal σ ∈ Σ, obtaining an action α(σ) ∈ A following (i, σ, μ)-determined distribution μ(·|i, σ)
- For some NG equilibrium μ^* , our *mixed*-to-*pure* result would be based on random sampling from $\Psi(\mu^*)$ first of *players* and then of their corresponding *signal-based action plans*

The Precise Mixed-to-pure Statement

- Beyond demands on Ω and \tilde{u} , we also require $\mathcal{I}(\sigma|\omega)$'s for every state ω to be *F*-sigma sets or equivalently, at most *countable* unions of open, half-open-half-closed, and closed *intervals*
- A precise statement reads that for any $\epsilon > 0$,

$$\lim_{n \longrightarrow +\infty} \left(\Psi(\mu^*) \right)^n \left(\left\{ (i_{[n]}, \alpha_{[n]}) : \ \tilde{\pi}_{[n]}(\alpha_{[n]}) \in \mathcal{P}_n^*(i_{[n]}, \epsilon) \right\} \right) = 1,$$

for any NG equilibrium $\mu^* \in \mathcal{M}^*(\tilde{\lambda})$

• A key enabling property involving external environment is for $\epsilon > 0$,

$$\begin{split} \lim_{n \longrightarrow +\infty} (\Psi(\mu))^n (\{(i_{[n]}, \alpha_{[n]}) \in (I \times A^{\Sigma})^n : \\ \max_{m=1}^n \rho_{I \times A^{\Sigma}} (\Psi(\mu), \varepsilon(i_{[n], -m}, \alpha_{[n], -m})) < \epsilon\}) = 1 \end{split}$$

More about Pure Equilibria

- Earlier *mixed*-to-*mixed* and current *mixed*-to-*pure* convergence would convey same *pure*-to-*pure* message when NG equilibrium μ^* is some *pure* π^* to start with
- When state space Ω is *finite* and game is *anonymous*, NG $\Gamma(\tilde{\lambda})$ would indeed have *pure* equilibria π^*
- Our NG is considered anonymous when other players influence a given player through marginal action distribution only, i.e., for some ũ^a : Ω × I × A × 𝒫(A), payoff satisfies

$$\tilde{u}(\omega, i, a, \delta) \equiv \tilde{u}^{\mathsf{a}}(\omega, i, a, \delta|_A)$$

• Proof involves *purification* relying on $\tilde{\lambda}$'s *atomlessness*

Concluding Remarks

- We have formulated a Bayesian NG that
 - (i) allows players to have *correlated* signals
 - (ii) has *n*-player counterparts that are quite general
- We have relied on *finiteness* of signal space Σ , action space A, and many times that of state space Ω —relaxations should be welcome
- Our *mixed*-to-*pure* result, though having somehow relaxed $|I| \times |\Sigma| \gg |A|$ for pure-equilibrium existence at price of being *approximate*, is in *fixed*-NG-to-*random*-finite-game direction
- It might be beneficial to learn from *statistics* on how to deal with a *given finite* Bayesian game—1st to derive *convergence rates*?