Analyzing Player Popularity Trends in Limbus Company via Sequences, Summations, and Linear Regression-Based Recurrence Models with Time Lags

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Abstract—Active player count has long been a key indicator of a game's popularity. Prior studies have shown a strong correlation between sustained player activity and overall game success. One approach to analyzing this relationship is through mathematical modeling using sequences, summation, and recurrence relations based on active player data. This paper analyzes the popularity trends of the online game Limbus Company by examining its active player data over time through the lens of these discrete mathematical tools.

Keywords—Sequence, Summation, Recurrence Relations, Linear Regression, Time Lag, Jupyter Notebook, Python, Limbus Company

I. INTRODUCTION

Nine out of ten individuals in the world own smartphones, which means that most individuals have access to services and experiences from the internet. Knowing this, the gaming industry has taken advantage from the increasing amount of mobile phone users and usage by adjusting to the development of mobile games, including gacha.

Gacha games are a type of game genre that uses a randomizer or gacha mechanic, similar to gachapon, a capsule toy vending machine. This mechanic is the main focus of the game as it is needed for the players progression and the developers monetization system. Some players will spend not only in-game money, but also real money in order to get virtual in-game items or characters. And, around 77% of consumers consider the convenience of the game before making transactions in-game. Given these reasons, it drives most gaming industries into making a gacha game on mobile platforms, which is accessible and can fit in easily between people's daily lives compared to other types of games that require more time and focus, and PC or console games which have limited device options.

There are other reasons for the rise of the gacha genre, such as the new era of gaming where games are not an isolated experience anymore. Players from each game share their experience in social platforms like Discord, Reddit, or X (aka. Twitter), it can be about their pulls (gacha results), character and team builds, or event discussion. On the gaming industry side, they needed to appeal to players with unique experience or high quality visuals for every gacha they introduced, this will cause the players and fans to stay loyal to the game.





(Source: Limbus Company's Steam page)

Limbus Company is a turn-based strategy gacha game developed and published by Project Moon, a small independent studio from South Korea. Released in February 2023, the game has received very positive reviews for its unique art style, complex combat system, and deep narrative, standing out within the gacha genre despite the studio's relatively small size. However, while it enjoys a dedicated community, Limbus Company doesn't have the same massive player base as more mainstream gacha titles like Genshin Impact or Wuthering Waves.

This contrast gives an opportunity for analysis by examining its active player trends through mathematical modeling using sequences, summation, and recurrence relations. This paper aims to understand how popularity evolves in smaller-scale gacha games.

II. BASE THEORY

A. Sequence

A sequence is an ordered list of elements defined as a function from a set of natural numbers to a given set. In discrete mathematics, sequences are commonly used to represent values that vary with its index. For example:

$$a_n = 2n \Rightarrow \{a_1, a_2, a_3, ...\} = \{2, 4, 6, ...\}$$

Additionally, strings can also be viewed as a sequence of characters, for example:

$$gacha \Rightarrow a_1 a_2 a_3 a_4 a_5$$

Therefore, sequences are useful for representing an ordered list of elements, which is required in various analyses.

B. Summation

Summation is the operation of adding every element from a sequence in a certain range. It is denoted using sigma (Σ) notation:

$$\sum_{k=m} a_k = a_m + a_{m+1} + a_{m+2} + \dots + a_n$$

Summation is important for analyses which require calculating cumulative numerical data from a certain range.

C. Recurrence Relation

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A recurrence relation defines each element in a sequence based on one or more of its previous elements. An example of recurrence relation is as follows:

$$a_{n} = c_{1}a_{n-1} + c_{2}a_{n-2} + c_{3}a_{n-3} + \dots + c_{k}a_{n-k}$$

here $c_{1}, c_{2}, c_{3}, \dots, c_{k}$ are real numbers and $c_{k} \neq 0$.

Recurrence relations are useful in modeling functions from a sequential data (or sequence).

D. Linear Regression and Time Lag

The recurrence relations obtained through the analysis are represented as linear regression models with time-lagged variables. Linear regression is a mathematical model used to examine the relationships between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables. Here's a simple example of linear regression:

$$y = \alpha \cdot x + \beta$$

 α is slope, representing how much x affects y. While β is intercept, showing y's starting point when x = 0.

In this paper's context, time lag refers to the delay between past or prior values and present or current values, where the prior ones influences the current.

This paper explores four forms of linear regression recurrence models:

1. Single-Lag

$$a_n \approx \alpha \cdot a_{n-k} + \beta$$

(This model shows how variable a_n is affected by a

single prior variable a_{n-k} where k is the time lag)

2. 2-Lag

$$a_n \approx \alpha \cdot a_{n-k_1} + \beta \cdot a_{n-k_2} + \gamma$$

(This model shows how variable a_n is affected by two prior variables a_{n-k_1} and a_{n-k_2} where k_1 and k_2 are the time lags)

3. 3-Lag

$$a_n \approx \alpha \cdot a_{n-k_1} + \beta \cdot a_{n-k_2} + \gamma \cdot a_{n-k_3} + \delta$$

(This model shows how variable a_n is affected by two prior variables a_{n-k_1} , a_{n-k_2} , and a_{n-k_3} where k_1 ,

 k_2 , and k_1 are the time lags)

4. Summation-Lag

$$a_n \approx \alpha \cdot (\sum_{i=1}^n a_{n-i}) + \beta$$

(This model shows how variable a_n is affected by the

sum of k prior variables where k is the time lag) The models shown above are impossible to reach 100% accuracy, so R-squared (R^2) is used to measure how close the real data points are to the regression line model. The formula to find R^2 is as follows:

$$R^{2} = \frac{SSR}{SST} = \frac{\sum (\hat{y}_{i} - \bar{y})^{2}}{\sum (y_{i} - \bar{y})^{2}}$$



(Source: R-squared in Linear Regression Models: Concepts, Examples[6])

 \hat{y} represents the prediction or a point on the regression line, y, represents the actual values or the points, and \hat{y} represents

the mean of all the values. The closer the R^2 value is to 1, the greater the model's accuracy is.

E. Jupyter Notebook

Jupyter Notebook is a document that allows users to write and run code, display output, and add markdown text and visualization all in one place. It is an essential tool for data scientists to explore and analyze data in order to get insights efficiently.

While Jupyter Notebook supports multiple programming languages, Python is the most commonly used language in data science.

F. Python

Python is a versatile high-level programming language known for its simplicity and readability. Its continuous development in libraries and frameworks have broadened its applicability across numerous fields, including data science and analysis. In this paper, four open-source Python libraries and modules are used to process data and modeling:

1) Pandas

Pandas is a Python library used for manipulating and analyzing data structures or functions to perform operations efficiently in the form of DataFrame (structured table).

- *2) re module* re is a Python module used for regular expression matching operations for strings.
- *itertools module itertool* is a Python module used for providing iterator functions for data
- 4) LinearRegression from sklearn.linear_model LinearRegression is a class from Python module sklearn.linear_model used for modeling a linear regression based on the relationship between one or more independent variables and a dependent variable.

III. Method

The method used in this analysis involves modeling recurrence relations based on one or more preceding elements in the sequence. This includes testing single-lag, multi-lag, and summation-lag regression models, each following a recurrence relation structure to find underlying patterns in the data through the use of Python. The goal is to identify the most accurate mathematical representation of the active player trend over time.

IV. ACTIVE PLAYER DATASET ANALYSIS

The dataset used in this analysis,

Limbus_Company_Active_Player.csv, was taken from SteamDB on June 18, 2025. The analysis will be conducted using Jupyter Notebook with Python programming language, which provides the tools necessary for data pre-processing, model construction, and statistical evaluation. The following steps outline the procedure used to obtain the recurrence-based model from the active player dataset, mainly on the "DateTime" and "Average Players" columns. In this paper, a_{n-k} represents the average active player count from k days

prior. Finding out the correlation between $a_n \&$ each a_{n-k}

and $a_n \&$ each $\sum_{i=1}^{\kappa} a_{n-i}$ are not a required step. It is done to

give quick estimations on which time lags are more dependent. The time lag range is limited to 30 days to ensure manageable computation while still capturing a diverse set of results.

A. Library, Module, and Class Import and Environment Setup

1) Library, Module, and Class Import	
import pandas as pd	
import re	
import itertools	



(Source: Author's archive)

2) Environment Setup



Fig. 4.A.2 Loading dataset, ensuring required columns exists in a correct format and order, and limiting time lag range (Source: Author's archive)

B. Lag Correlation Analysis
 1) Calculation of Lag Correlation
 correlations = {} {} dictionary to keep lag:correlation

Compute correlation for each lag
for lag in range(1, max_lag + 1):
 lagged = players.shift(lag) # shifts index by lag
 corr = players.cor(lagged) # get the correlation value between current a_n with a_n-la
 correlations[f*a_n-{lag}'] = corr # put values into dictionary

Fig. 4.B.1 Calculating correlation values for each lag and storing the results (Source: Author's archive)

2) Display Sorted Lag Correlation

f sort the dictionary of lag correlations in descending order based on the absolute value of the correlati correlations_sorted = dict(sorted(correlations.items(), key=lambda item: abs(item[1]), reverse=True)) f show results for lag, corr in correlations_sorted.items();

Fig. 4.B.2a Sorting and displaying stored lag correlation results in descending order based on absolute correlation values

(Source: Author's archive)

a	_n-1:	correlation	=	0.9657
a	_n-7:	correlation	=	0.9518
a	_n-2:	correlation	=	0.9493
a	_n-6:	correlation	=	0.9388
		A (° C(1 (41°	1 4	4 11

Fig. 4.B.2b A portion of the top 4 highest sorted lag correlation results (Source: Author's archive)

a_n-26:	correlation	=	0.8262
a_n-29:	correlation	=	0.8226
a_n-25:	correlation	=	0.8195
a_n-30:	correlation	=	0.8125

Fig. 4.B.2c A portion of the bottom 4 lowest sorted lag correlation results (Source: Author's archive) Based on the sorted lag correlation results, the strongest correlation is observed at lag a_{n-1} , followed by a_{n-7} and a_{n-2} . Conversely, the weakest correlations are at lags a_{n-29} , a_{n-25} , and a_{n-30} , with a_{n-30} being the lowest overall correlation.

C. Single-Lag Regression Modeling 1) Construct Single-Lag DataFrame



Fig. 4.C.1 Constructing a DataFrame for each lag consisting of the current value a_n and its lagged value a_{n-k}

(Source: Author's archive)

2) Creating Single-Lag Regression Models and Storing Its Statistical Values



3) Display Sorted Single-Lag Regression Models

Sort the results by R-squared score in descending order results.sort(key=lambda x: x[3], reverse=True)

Print sorted results (top 5)
for k, alpha, beta, r2 in results[:5]:
 print(f"Lag {k:2d}: a_n ≈ {alpha:.4f} * a_(n-{k}) + {beta:.2f} | R² = {r2:.4f}")

Fig. 4.C.3a Sorting and displaying the top 5 stored single-lag regression model results in descending order based on R^2 score (Source: Author's archive)

Lag	1:	a_n	0.9651	a_(n-1)	+	581.92	R² :	= 0	.9326
Lag	7:	a_n	0.9510	a_(n-7)	+	832.15	R² :	= 0	9059
Lag	2:	a_n	0.9487	a_(n-2)	+	852.65	R² :	= 0	.9011
Lag	6:	a_n	0.9380	a_(n-6)	+	1065.79	R²	= (0.8814
Lag	5:	a_n	0.9318	a_(n-5)	+	1137.65	R²	= (0.8694



Based on the sorted single-lag regression models, the strongest single lag regression model is:

$$a_n \approx 0.9651 \cdot a_{n-1} + 581.92$$

with an R^2 score of 0.9326, indicating a strong level of accuracy.

D. Multi-Lag Regression Modeling

Multi-lag regression modeling is limited to 2-lag and 3-lag to ensure manageable computation while still capturing a diverse set of results.

1) Limiting Time Lag Range

lags = list(range(1, max_lag + 1)) # range of lag values from 1 to 30
results = [] # holds tuples of (combination, slope, intercept, r2)

Fig. 4.D.1 Limiting time lag range to 30 days (Source: Author's archive)

2) Construct 2-Lag DataFrame

all 2-lag combinations
in [2]:
combination in itertools.combinations(lags, r):
<pre>lagged_df = pd.DataFrame({'a_n': players}) # create dataframe and a_n as dependent variable</pre>
for k in combination:
<pre>lagged_df[f'a_n-{k}'] = players.shift(k) # a_n-k1 and a_n-k2 as independent variable</pre>
lagged df = lagged df.droppa() # removes NaN values

Fig. 4.D.2 Constructing a DataFrame for each lag combination consisting of the current value a_n and its lagged values a_{n-k_1} .

and
$$a_{n-k_2}$$

(Source: Author's archive)

3) Construct 3-Lag DataFrame

fest all 3-lag combinations r in [3]: for combination in itertools.combinations(lags, r): lagged_df = pd.DataFrame(['a_n': players)) # create dataFrame and a_n as dependent variable for k in combination: lagged_df ['a_n-(k)'] = players.shift(k) # a_n-k1, a_n-k2, and a_n-k3 as independent variable lagged_df ['a_n-(k)']

Fig. 4.D.3 Constructing a DataFrame for each lag combination consisting of the current value a_n and its lagged values a_{n-k} ,

$$a_{n-k_2}$$
, and a_{n-k_3}
(Source: Author's archive)

4) Creating 2-Lag & 3-Lag Regression Models and Storing Its Statistical Values



Fig. 4.D.4 Creating regression model in the form of $a_n \approx \alpha \cdot a_{n-k_1} + \beta \cdot a_{n-k_2} + \gamma$ for 2-lag and

 $a_n \approx \alpha \cdot a_{n-k_1} + \beta \cdot a_{n-k_2} + \gamma \cdot a_{n-k_3} + \delta$ for 3-lag, and

storing the model's slope (α), intercept (β), and accuracy (R^2 score) for each lag combination (Source: Author's archive)

5) Display Sorted 2-Lag and 3-Lag Regression Models



Fig. 4.D.5a Sorting and displaying the top 5 stored 2-lag and 3-lag regression model results in descending order based on

 R^2 score (Source: Author's archive)

Fig. 4.D.5b Top 5 sorted 2-lag regression model results (Source: Author's archive)



Fig. 4.D.5c Top 5 sorted 3-lag regression model results (Source: Author's archive)

Based on the sorted multi-lag (2-lag and 3-lag) regression models, the strongest 2-lag regression model is:

 $a_n \approx 0.6105 \cdot a_{n-1} + 0.3792 \cdot a_{n-7} + 183.06$

with an R^2 score of 0.9512.

While the strongest 3-lag regression model is:

 $a_n \approx 0.8746 \cdot a_{n-1} + 0.6886 \cdot a_{n-14} - 0.5764 \cdot a_{n-15} + 225.3$ with an R^2 score of 0.9652.

Both models indicate a strong level of accuracy.

E. Summation-Lag Correlation Analysis*1)* Calculation of Lag Summation



Fig. 4.E.1 Calculating each lag summations and storing the results in a DataFrame (Source: Author's archive)

4	2) Calculation of Summation-Lag Correlation
	<pre># get the correlation value between current a_n with sum_lag</pre>
	<pre>corr = sum_players['a_n'].corr(sum_players['sum_lag'])</pre>
	# put values into dictionary
	correlation_sums[f'sum_lag_{lag}'] = corr
_	

Fig. 4.E.2 Calculating correlation values for each summation and storing the results (Source: Author's archive)

3) Display Sorted Summation-Lag Correlation
Sort the dictionary of summation-lag correlations in descending order based on the absolute value of the correlatio sorted_corr = dict(sorted(correlation_sums.items(), key=lambda x: abs(x[1]), reverse=True))
Show results for label, corr in sorted_corr.items():

Fig. 4.E.3a Sorting and displaying stored summation-lag correlation results in descending order based on absolute correlation values (Source: Author's archive)

<pre>sum_lag_2:</pre>	correlation	=	0.9849
<pre>sum_lag_3:</pre>	correlation	=	0.9785
<pre>sum_lag_4:</pre>	correlation	=	0.9740
<pre>sum_lag_7:</pre>	correlation	=	0.9733

Fig. 4.E.3b A portion of the top 4 highest sorted summation-lag correlation results (Source: Author's archive)

<pre>sum_lag_27:</pre>	correlation	=	0.9356
<pre>sum_lag_28:</pre>	correlation	=	0.9347
<pre>sum_lag_29:</pre>	correlation	=	0.9330
sum lag 30:	correlation	=	0.9310

Fig. 4.E.3c A portion of the bottom 4 lowest sorted summation-lag correlation results (Source: Author's archive)

Based on the sorted sur	mmation-lag correlation results, the $\frac{2}{2}$
strongest correlation is ob	oserved at $\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_{n-i}$, followed by
3 4	
$\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_{n-i}$ and $\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_{n-i}$ Conv	versely, the weakest correlations are
28 29	30 30
at $\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_{n-i}$, $\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_{n-i}$, and $\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_{n-i}$	$\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_{n-i}$, with $\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_{n-i}$ being the
lowest overall correlation	l.

F. Summation-Lag Regression Modeling
1) Construct Summation-Lag DataFrame



Fig. 4.F.1 Constructing a DataFrame for each summation-lag consisting of the current value a_n and its summation-lagged

value
$$\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_{n-i}$$

(Source: Author's archive)

This whole section (except creating a tuple) follows the exact same method as IV.E.1.

2) Creating Summation-Lag Regression Models and Storing Its Statistical Values



 $a_n \approx \alpha \cdot (\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_{n-i}) + \beta$ and storing the model's slope (α),

intercept (β), and accuracy (R^2 score) for each summation-lag (Source: Author's archive)

3) Display Sorted Summation-Lag Regression Models



Fig. 4.F.3a Sorting and displaying the top 5 stored summation-lag regression model results in descending order based on R^2 score (Source: Author's archive)

k	2:	a_n	0.3327	SUM(a_(n-1)	to	a_(n-2))	38.06 R ² = 0.9701
k	3:	a_n	0.2488	SUM(a_(n-1)	to	a_(n-3))	$80.74 \mid R^2 = 0.9574$
k	4:	a_n	0.1988	SUM(a_(n-1)	to	a_(n-4))	$104.90 \mid R^2 = 0.9487$
k	7:	a_n	0.1247	SUM(a_(n-1)	to	a_(n-7))	$52.02 \mid R^2 = 0.9473$
k	5:	a_n	0.1658	SUM(a_(n-1)	to	a_(n-5))	97.45 R ² = 0.9457

Fig. 4.F.3b Top 5 sorted summation-lag regression model results (Source: Author's archive) Based on the sorted summation-lag regression models, the strongest summation-lag regression model is:

$$a_n \approx 0.3327(\sum_{i=1}^{2} a_{n-i}) + 38.06$$

with an R^2 score of 0.9701, indicating a strong level of accuracy.

V. CONCLUSION

Linear regression-based recurrence models cand be used to find a fitting mathematical model representation of Limbus Company's average active player trend. From the analyses done, three types of regression models were formed. Among them, the best and most accurate model is:

$$a_n \approx 0.3327(\sum_{i=1}^{n} a_{n-i}) + 38.06$$

with an R^2 score of 0.9701. From this model, it can be concluded that the trend of Limbus Company's active player count is rising, as the model adds positive values from the previous 2 days. However, it has a slow growth rate, indicated by the low coefficient of 0.3327.

Further optimization will be necessary for future model tuning, as the Limbus_Company_Active_Player.csv dataset will continue to grow over time while the game remains in active service.

VI. ATTACHMENT

Source code used to analyze the data: https://github.com/RND815/Analysis-Limbus-Company-Activ e-Player-Trend

VII. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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PERNYATAAN

Dengan ini saya menyatakan bahwa makalah yang saya tulis ini adalah tulisan saya sendiri, bukan saduran, atau terjemahan dari makalah orang lain, dan bukan plagiasi.





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