Intermediary asset pricing: Capital constraints and market power

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The presented views are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Bank of Canada.

Motivation

What moves asset prices?

- Intermediary asset pricing: equity capitalization of intermediaries (dealers)

  E.g., He and Krishnamurthy (2012, 2013); Brunnermeier and Sannikov (2014)

- In practice, dealers (Bank of America, Deutsche Bank,...)
  1. Face capital constraints
  2. Have market power

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  1. Face **capital constraints**
  2. Have market power

Basel III leverage ratio (SLR)

- Imposed to reduce systematic risk
- Requires banks to hold sufficient equity capital, even when holding safe assets
- "Major constraint on bank activity" (Jerome Powell)

Leverage Ratio Runs Counter to Policy Objectives (Wall Street Journal, 2016)

Washington Wants to Weaken Bank Rules. Not Every Regulator Agrees. (New York Times, 2018)

US banks push Fed for extension of Covid capital relief (Financial Times, 2021)

Geithner stresses need for SLR reform (Risk.net, 2022)

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  E.g., He and Krishnamurthy (2012, 2013); Brunnermeier and Sannikov (2014)

- In practice, dealers (Bank of America, TD, Deutsche Bank,...)
  1. Face capital constraints
  2. Have **market power**, e.g., Hortaçsu et al. (2018); Allen and Wittwer (2020); Brancaccio and Kang (2022); Huber (2022); Pinter and Üslü (2022); Wallen (2022)

This paper

Do capital constraints affect asset demand/prices when dealers have market power?

1) **Model**
   - Capital-constrained dealers have market power, i.e., price impact à la Kyle (1989)

2) **Test and calibrate the model with data on Treasury auctions**
   - Why? Dealers submit demand curves and balance sheet information
   - How? Policy change of Basel III leverage ratio

Findings: Model predictions

Relax capital constraints

→ Price increases

→ Market power, i.e., price impact, increases

Findings: Model predictions

Trade-off for primary market

→ Benefit: Lower funding costs for the issuer

→ Cost: Higher price distortion, which may reduce market efficiency

Findings: Model predictions

Trade-off for primary market

→ Benefit: Lower funding costs for the issuer

→ Cost: Higher price distortion, which may reduce market efficiency

Quantification

- Dealers face high (shadow) cost of capital (constraint)
- If the capital cost decreases by 1%

→ Market price and market power increase by $\approx 0.5\%$ each

Literature: Bird's eye view

Theories on intermediary asset pricing (macro)

- Following He and Krishnamurthy (2012, 2013); Brunnermeier and Sannikov (2014)

$\Rightarrow$ This paper allows for market power

Theories on market power in financial markets (micro)

- Following Kyle (1985, 1989); Wilson (1979)

$\Rightarrow$ This paper introduces capital constraints

more

Model

Model

Goods

- Asset of supply Q, pays per unit return $R \sim N(\mu, \sigma)$
- Cash (numeraire)

Players

- $N > 2$ dealers
- Initially, dealer i holds z_i of the asset, capital E_i, and *rest* on its balance sheet

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- $N > 2$ dealers
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Model: Simplest case

Aggregate uncertainty about Q, no private information/signals

Goods

- Asset of supply $Q \sim \mathcal{F}$, pays per unit return $R \sim N(\mu, \sigma)$ with $\mu \in \mathbb{R}^+, \sigma \in \mathbb{R}^+$
- Numeraire

Players

- $N > 2$ dealers
- Initially, dealer i holds $z_i = 0$ of the asset, capital $E_i \in \mathbb{R}^+$ and $rest \in \mathbb{R}^+$

Model

Standard uniform price auction, but with a capital constraint

Period 1:

- Each dealer submits demand schedule $q_i(\cdot) : \mathbb{R} \to \mathbb{R}$ s.t. capital constraint
- Market clears at p^* such that $\sum_i q_i(p^*) = Q$

Period 2: Asset pays out return and all transactions take place

Model

Dealers maximize expected CARA utility from wealth s.t. capital constraint:

$$\mathbb{E}\left[1 - \exp^{-\rho\omega_i(q_i,p)}\right] \text{ with } \omega_i(q_i, p) = q_i(R - p) \text{ , } \rho > 0$$

$$\text{subject to: } \kappa \leq \frac{\text{equity capital}}{\text{total exposure}}$$

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$$\text{subject to: } \kappa \leq \frac{E_i}{pq_i + rest} \Rightarrow \text{Lagrange multiplier: } \lambda_i$$

Model: Equilibrium

There exists a linear equilibrium in which dealer i chooses $q_i(p)$ at p is s.t.:

$$\text{marginal utility} \;=\; \text{marginal disutility}$$

No capital constraint & perfect competition:

$$\mu - \sigma\rho q_i(p) = p$$

Model: Equilibrium

There exists a linear equilibrium in which dealer i chooses $q_i(p)$ at p is s.t.:

$$\text{marginal utility} \;=\; \text{marginal disutility}$$

With capital constraint & perfect competition

$$\mu - \rho\sigma q_i(p) = (1 + \lambda_i \kappa)p$$

Model: Equilibrium

There exists a linear equilibrium in which dealer i chooses $q_i(p)$ at p is s.t.:

$$\text{marginal utility} \;=\; \text{marginal disutility}$$

With capital constraint & market power

$$\mu - \rho\sigma q_i(p) = (1 + \lambda_i \kappa)[p + \Lambda_i(\vec{\lambda}) q_i(p)]$$

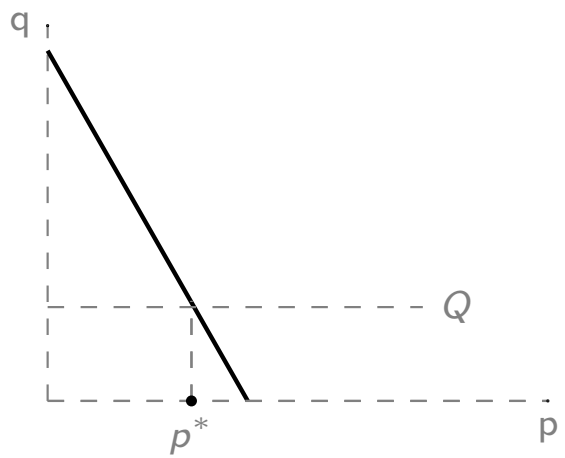
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Model: Proposition

When the capital constraint is relaxed, e.g., $\kappa \downarrow$

(1) demand $q_i(\cdot)$ becomes flatter, and market price p^* increases

Figure: $q_i(p)$

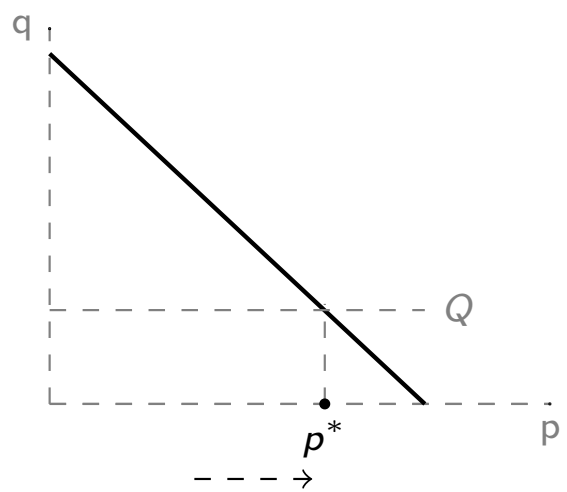


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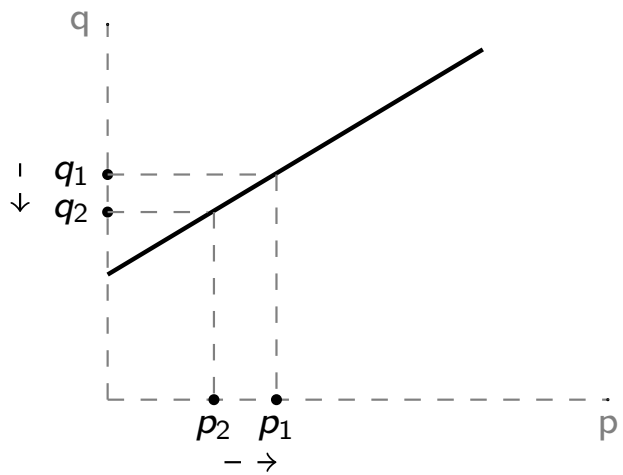
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(2) price impact $\Lambda_i(\vec{\lambda})$ increases for all dealers i.

Figure: Residual Supply$_i(p)$



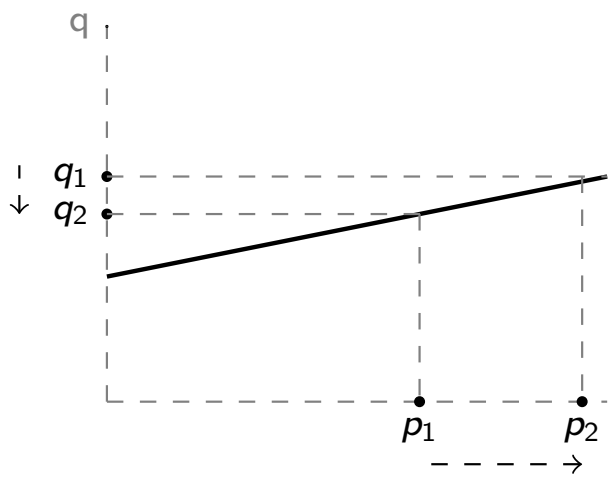
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Model: IPV environment

In uniform price auction with iid private values (IPV) and unknown capital

- I.e., when
  - Dealers have iid private information about their inventory, or the assets's return
  - Equity positions realize iid at the end of the game ("quarter")
- There exists a symmetric equilibrium with analogous properties

more

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- There exists a symmetric equilibrium with analogous properties more

Discriminatory price auctions with iid IPV and unknown capital

- Same is true, under additional assumptions more

Empirical application

Environment: Canada's Primary Market for Government Bonds

Attractive market features

- Dealers submit entire demand curves
- Dealer demand can be linked to balance sheet infos

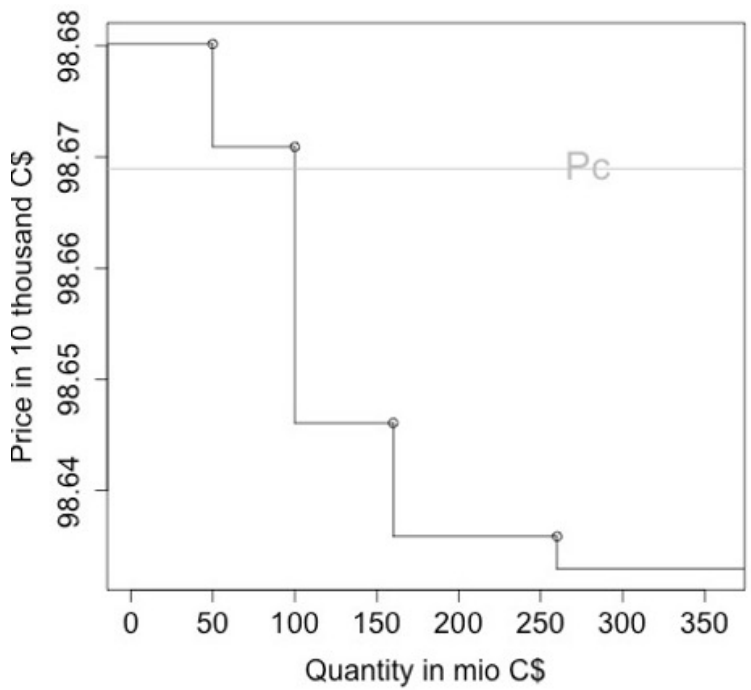
Challenges

- Auction format is discriminatory price
- Demand is a step-function as in Kastl (2011)
- There are dealers & customers who bid via dealers as in Hortaçsu and Kastl (2012)

Data

Bidding data of all regular Treasury auctions (01/01/2015–02/01/2021)

- Who bids (ID), winning and losing bids



Data

Bidding data of all regular Treasury auctions (01/01/2015–02/01/2021)

- Who bids (ID), winning and losing bids

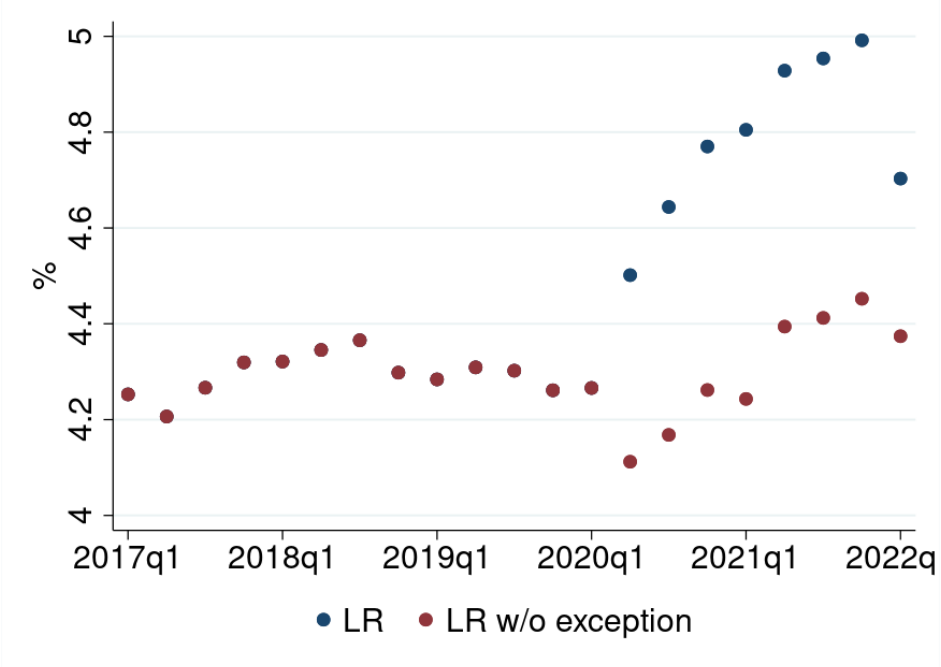
Balance sheet information of 8 dealers at bank level

- Quarterly Basel III Leverage Ratio (LR) $= \frac{\text{Tier 1 capital}}{\text{Total leverage exposure}} \geq 3\%$
- Quarterly institution-specific capital threshold (set by the regulator)

Testing model predictions: Demand effect

- 04/2020–12/2021: Treasuries exempted from LR constraint
- Some banks i faced stricter capital $threshold_{ik}$ than others

Figure: Time series of LR for an average bank



Testing model predictions: Demand effect

- 04/2020–12/2021: Treasuries exempted from LR constraint
- Some banks i faced stricter capital $threshold_i$ than others

→ **Test if their demand became flatter relative to others**:

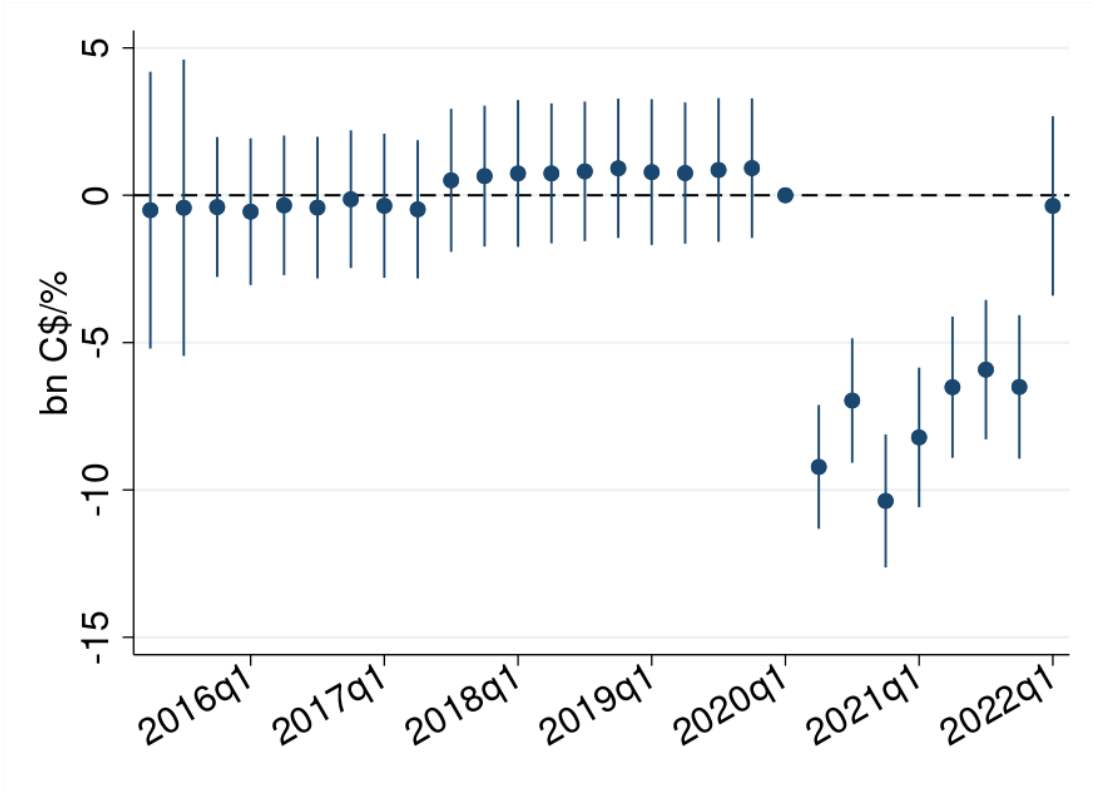
$$slope_{iqs} = \alpha + \sum_{k=-K}^{K} \gamma_k D_k threshold_i + \zeta_{qs} + \epsilon_{iqs}$$

– $slope_{iqs}$ is the avg. slope in i's demand for security s in quarter q

– D_k is an indicator for quarter k, ζ_{qs} is a quarter-security fixed effect

measure

Figure: Change in the slope of demand



Take away: Demands of banks s.t. stricter capital thresholds were flatter

Testing model predictions: Price effect

Quantifying effect on market price is difficult

- Must use variation across time instead of banks
- Endogeneity concern: Unobservable factors that lead banks to $\downarrow$ LR and $\uparrow$ price

$\Rightarrow$ Leverage empirical auction model following Hortaçsu and Kastl (2012)

Model calibration

Parameters

- Capital cost $\lambda_t \kappa$
- Risk aversion ρ_t

Identifying assumptions per auction t

- Everyone bids as in equilibrium
- Dealer i draws private info $\zeta_{ti} \overset{iid}{\sim} \mathcal{H}_t$ about her true $value_{ti}(q)$ for amount q
- $value_{ti}(q) = \zeta_{ti} - \beta_t q$ with $\beta_t = \frac{\rho_t \sigma_t}{1+\lambda_t \kappa}$

Model calibration

Estimation procedure

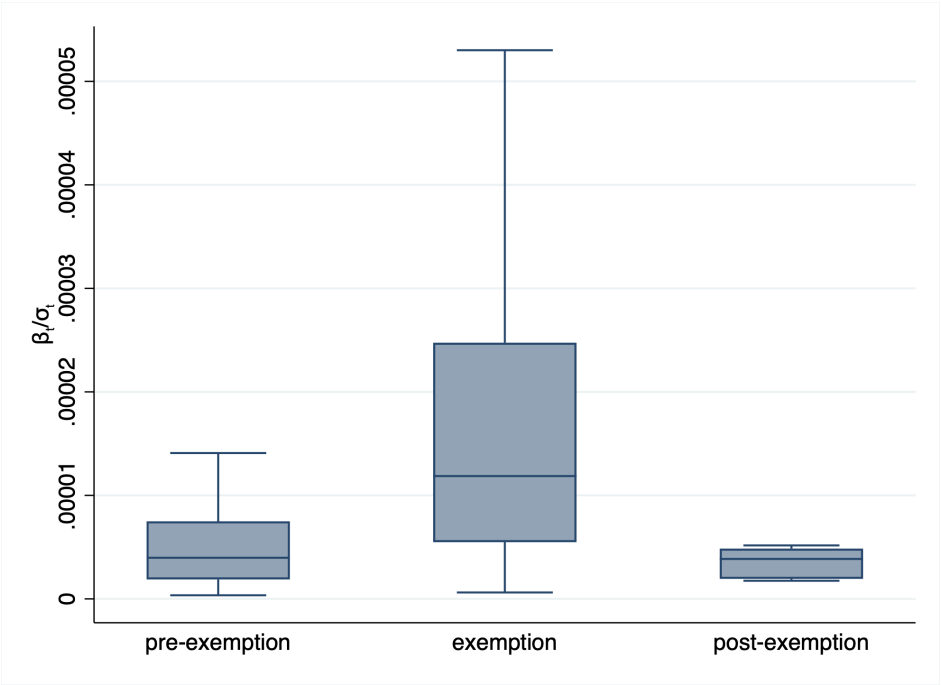
1) Back out $\hat{v}alue_{tik}$ at each submitted step k as in Allen et al. (2022)
2) Fixed-effect regression using bids of dealers who submit more than 1 step:

$$\hat{v}alue_{tik} = \zeta_{ti} - \beta_t q_{tik} + \epsilon_{ti}$$

Model calibration: Warm up

Figure: Distribution of $\frac{\hat{\beta}_t}{\sigma_t}$ with σ_t = implied volatility

observed



$\frac{\hat{\beta}_t}{\sigma_t} = \rho_t$ during exemption; $\frac{\hat{\beta}_t}{\sigma_t} = \frac{\rho_t}{1 + \lambda_t \kappa}$ otherwise

Point estimates: Policy change 1

- Assume $\rho_t = \rho$ and $\lambda_t \kappa = \lambda\kappa$ during a quarter
- Compare $\frac{\hat{\beta}_t}{\sigma_t}$ in auctions in 2020q1 and 2020q2 around exemption

	2020q1-2020q2	
ρ	+0.000001***	(0.000)
$\lambda\kappa$	+0.965***	(0.168)
N	23,074	

Tables shows the estimate of $\hat{v}alue_{tik} = \zeta_{ti} + \rho \times exempt_t \sigma_t q_{tik} + \frac{\rho}{1+\lambda\kappa} \times (1 - exempt_t)\sigma_t q_{tik} + \epsilon_{tik}$ with values expressed as yields to maturity in bps, quantities are in C$, standard errors are in parentheses

- Risk aversion per unit of the asset, ρ, is small ≈ 0
- The shadow cost of capital, $\lambda\kappa$, is large

sanity check

Point estimates: Policy change 2

- Assume $\rho_t = \rho$ and $\lambda_t \kappa = \lambda\kappa$ during a quarter
- Compare $\frac{\hat{\beta}_t}{\sigma_t}$ in auctions in 2021q4 and 2022q1 around reintroduction

	2020q1-2020q2		2021q4-2022q1	
ρ	+0.000001***	(0.000)	+0.000003***	(0.000)
$\lambda\kappa$	+0.965***	(0.168)	+0.302**	(0.115)
N	23,074		12,894	

Tables shows the estimate of $\hat{v}alue_{tik} = \zeta_{ti} + \rho \times exempt_t \sigma_t q_{tik} + \frac{\rho}{1+\lambda\kappa} \times (1 - exempt_t)\sigma_t q_{tik} + \epsilon_{tik}$ with values expressed as yields to maturity in bps, quantities are in C$, standard errors are in parentheses

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sanity check

Model calibration: Trade off

When demand functions are linear

- Decreasing the capital cost $\lambda\kappa$ by 1%,
  - Increases the market price
  - Increases market power

    I.e., difference btw. price that would arise if dealers were price takers and actual price
- Both by $\eta = \left(\frac{1}{1+\lambda\kappa} - 1\right)$ %

Model calibration: Trade off

In the data, demand functions are not linear, but approximately linear here

→ We can approximate the trade off:

	2020q1-2020q2	2021q4-2022q1
η	0.49%	0.23%

Implication

- Exempting Treasuries from the Basel III leverage ratio $\approx$ capital cost $\downarrow$ by 100%

→ Reduced bond yields, but increases market power by $\approx$ 49% each

Conclusion

This paper

- Shows that dealer capitalization affects asset prices and market power—trade-off!
- Quantifies the effects with data on Treasury auctions

→ Helps inform ongoing policy debate about Basel III

→ Contributes to intermediary asset pricing literature thanks to micro-level data

E.g., Adrian et al. (2014); He et al. (2017); Gospodinov and Robotti (2021)

Thank you!

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Appendix

Empirical literature

Empirical intermediary asset pricing (macro)

- He et al. (2017); Du et al. (2018); Gospodinov and Robotti (2021); He et al. (2022)...

$\Rightarrow$ This paper uses micro-level to observe the link btw. demand and capitalization

Empirical studies on market power in Treasury auctions (micro)

- Hortaçsu (2002); Cassola et al. (2012); Hortaçsu and Kastl (2012); Hortaçsu et al. (2018)...

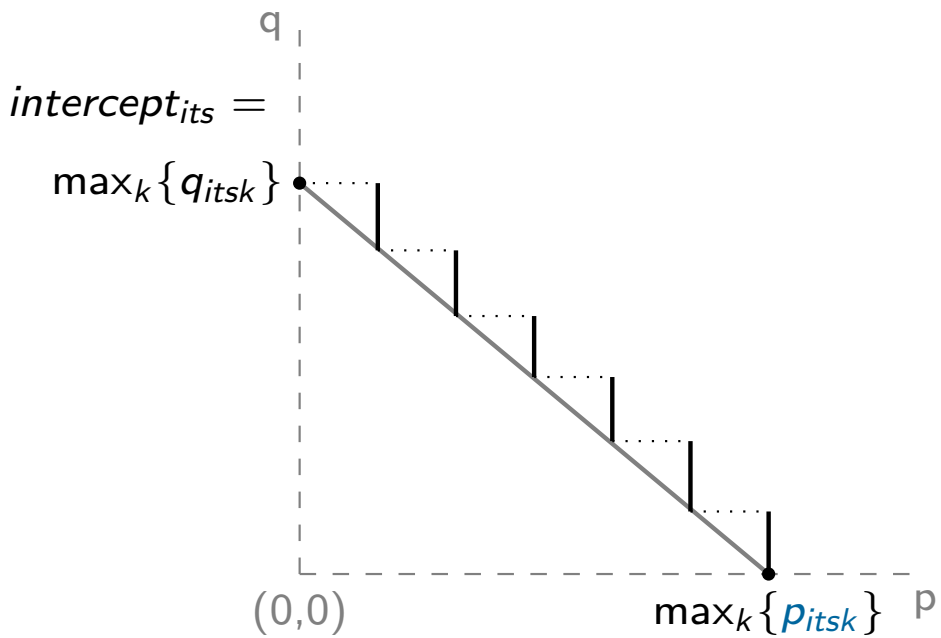
$\Rightarrow$ This paper introduces capital constraints

back

Data: Slope measure

Conventions: Draw demand curves with quantity on y-axis

Day t, security s, dealer i: $\boldsymbol{slope_{its}} = -\frac{\max_k\{q_{itsk}\}}{\max_k\{p_{itsk}\}}$ in quantity-price space

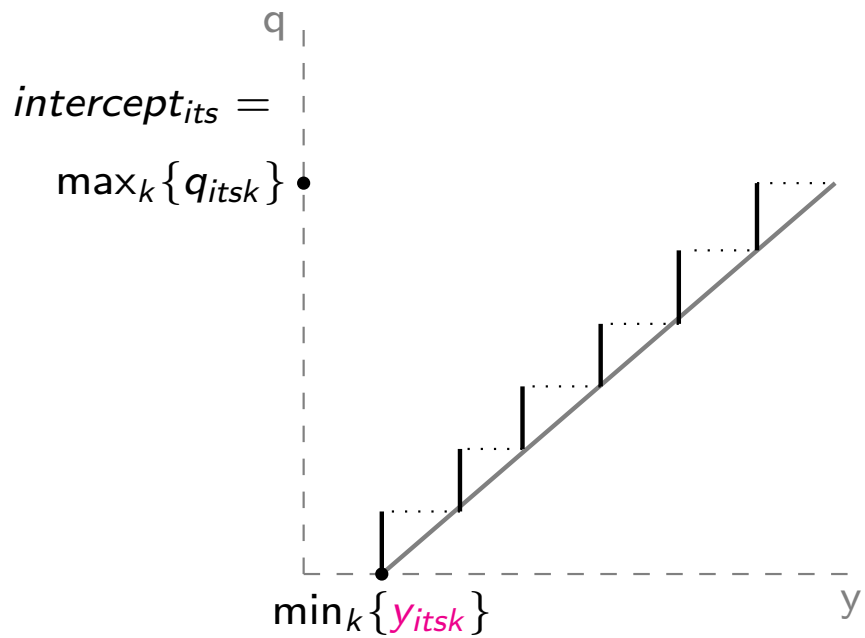


back

Data: Slope measure

Conventions: Draw demand curves with quantity on y-axis

Day t, security s, dealer i: $\boldsymbol{slope_{its}} = + \frac{\max_k \{q_{itsk}\}}{\min_k \{y_{itsk}\}}$ in quantity-yield space



back

Model: Equilibrium

There exists an equilibrium in which dealer i submits the demand curve

$$q_i(p) = \left((1+\lambda_i\kappa)\Lambda_i + \sigma\rho\right)^{-1}\left(\mu - (1+\lambda_i\kappa)p\right),$$

where

$$\Lambda_i = \beta_i\alpha_i\sigma \text{ with } \beta_i = \frac{2}{\alpha_i b - 2 + \sqrt{(\alpha_i b)^2+4}} \text{ and } \alpha_i = \frac{\rho}{1+\lambda_i\kappa s},$$

with $b \in \mathbb{R}^+$ as unique positive solution to $1/2 = \sum_i (\alpha_i b + 2 + \sqrt{(a_i b)^2+4})^{-1}$.

back

IPV uniform price auction

Period 1:

- Each dealer observes z_i (iid) and submits demand schedule $q_i(\cdot) : \mathbb{R} \to \mathbb{R}$ s.t. expected capital constraint
- Market clears at p^* such that $\sum_i q_i(p^*) = Q$

Period 2:

- Asset pays out return and all transactions take place
- Remaining balance sheet positions finalize: Equity E_i (iid) and rest $\in \mathbb{R}^+$

IPV uniform price auction

There exists an equilibrium in which dealer i submits the demand curve

$$q_i(p) = \left(\frac{N-2}{N-1}\right)\frac{1}{\sigma\rho}\left(\mu - \sigma\rho z_i - (1+\lambda\kappa)p\right), \text{ where}$$

- $\lambda = \mathbb{E}[\lambda_i | z_i]$ is the expected shadow cost of capital, and
- price impact is $\Lambda(\lambda) = \frac{\sigma\rho(N-2)}{1+\lambda\kappa}$.

back

IPV discriminatory price auction

Let dealer i have value $v_i(q) = \frac{\sigma\rho}{1+\lambda\kappa}[\mu - (z_i + q)]$ for amount q, where

- $\lambda = \mathbb{E}[\lambda_i | z_i]$ is the expected shadow cost of capital
- inventory z_i is drawn from iid across i from a distribution with support $[\underline{z}, \overline{z}]$

If winning quantities are drawn from a distribution with CDF $F_i(q) = 1 - (\frac{\nu_i + \xi q}{\nu_i})^{-\frac{1}{\xi}}$ with $\xi \in (-\infty, -1], \nu_i = -\xi(\frac{N(1-\xi)-1}{N(1-\xi)})(\overline{z} - z_i) - \xi(\frac{Q}{N})$, there exists an equilibrium in which dealer i submits the demand curve

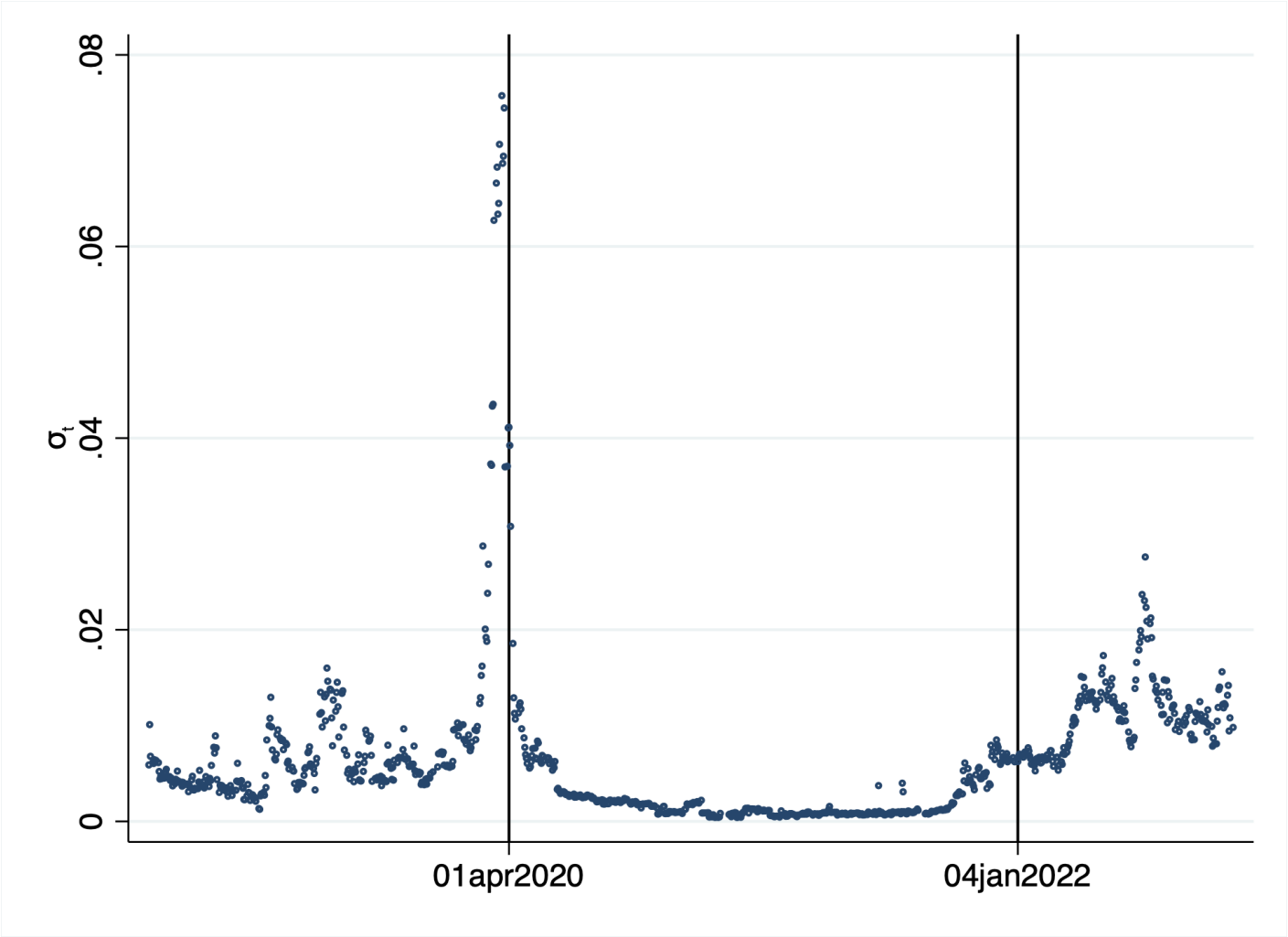
$$q_i(p) = \left(\frac{N(1-\xi)-1}{N-1}\right)\frac{1}{\sigma\rho}(\mu_i - (1+\lambda\kappa)p)$$

with $\mu_i = \mu + \frac{\rho\sigma}{1-\xi}(\overline{z} - z_i) + \frac{\rho\sigma A}{N(1-\xi)-1}$ as long as $\mathbb{E}[\mu_i] \geq \frac{\rho\sigma A(N-1)}{N(N(1-\xi)-1)}$.

back

Implied Volatility Index

- Measures the expected volatility of Treasury prices
- Based on option prices on interest rate futures (Young and Feunou (2013))
- Similar to MOVE for US Treasuries, VIX for stocks



back

Sanity check

Use observed bids instead of estimated values:

	2020q1-2020q2		2021q4-2022q1	
ρ	+0.0000007***	(0.000)	+0.000002***	(0.000)
$\lambda\kappa$	+0.850***	(0.161)	+0.171*	(0.0814)
N	23,074		12,894	

Tables shows the estimate of $bid_{tik} = \zeta_{ti} + \rho \times exempt_t \sigma_t q_{tik} + \frac{\rho}{1+\lambda\kappa} \times (1 - exempt_t)\sigma_t q_{tik} + \epsilon_{tik}$ with bids expressed as yields to maturity in bps, quantities are in C$, standard errors are in parentheses

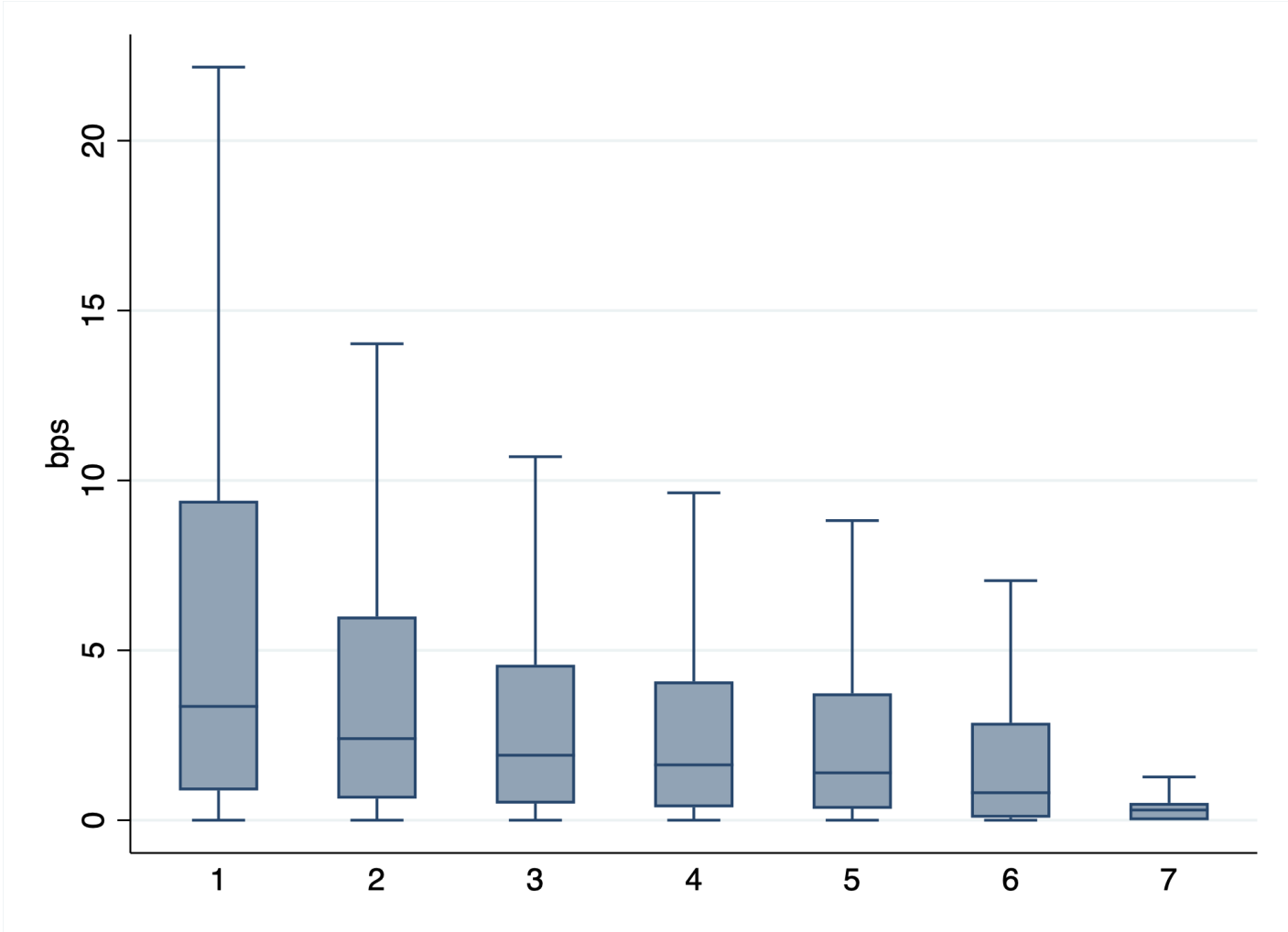
Findings

- Both parameters are downward biased due to shading
- But magnitudes are roughly similar

more

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Figure: Distribution of bid shading, $bid_{tik} - \hat{v}alue_{tik}$, per step k



back

Supporting descriptive evidence

Follow Hortaçsu (2002) and check R_t^2 of

$$b_{ti\tau k} = \zeta_{ti\tau} + \beta_t q_{ti\tau k} + \epsilon_{ti\tau k}$$

	mean	median	sd
β_t	0.20	0.17	0.11
R_t^2	0.82	0.83	0.16
Adj. R_t^2	0.77	0.77	0.21
Within R_t^2	0.53	0.54	0.15

Subsample: bidding-functions with at least 2 steps.
Bids are in yields (bps) and quantities in % of supply.

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