#### FINM3123 Introduction to Econometrics

Chapter 4
Multiple Regression Analysis: Inference

#### Statistical inference in the regression model

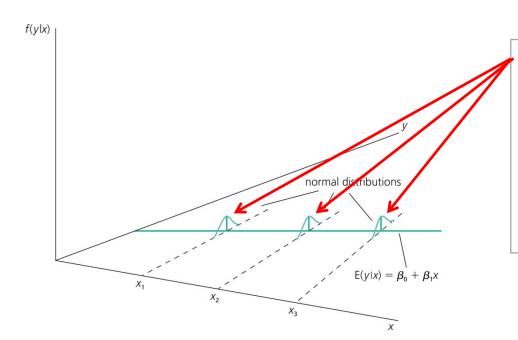
- Hypothesis tests about population parameters
- Construction of confidence intervals

#### Sampling distributions of the OLS estimators

- The OLS estimators are random variables
- We already know their expected values and their variances
- However, for hypothesis tests we need to know their <u>distribution</u>
- In order to derive their distribution we need additional assumptions
- Assumption about distribution of errors: normal distribution

#### Assumption MLR.6 (Normality of error terms)

$$u_i \sim N(0, \sigma^2)$$
 independently of  $x_{i1}, x_{i2}, \dots, x_{ik}$ 



It is assumed that the unobserved factors are normally distributed around the population regression function.

The form and the variance of the distribution does not depend on any of the explanatory variables.

It follows that:

$$y|\mathbf{x} \sim N(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \ldots + \beta_k x_k, \sigma^2)$$

#### Discussion of the normality assumption

- The error term is the sum of "many" different unobserved factors
- Sums of independent factors are normally distributed (CLT)
- The normality of the error term is an empirical question
- At least the error distribution should be "close" to normal
- In many cases, normality is questionable or impossible by definition

- Discussion of the normality assumption (cont.)
  - Examples where normality cannot hold:
    - Wages (nonnegative; also: minimum wage)
    - Number of arrests (takes on a small number of integer values)
    - Unemployment (indicator variable, takes on only 1 or 0)
  - In some cases, normality can be achieved through transformations of the dependent variable (e.g. use log(wage) instead of wage)
  - Under normality, OLS is the best (even nonlinear) unbiased estimator
  - <u>Important:</u> For the purposes of statistical inference, the assumption of normality can be replaced by a large sample size

#### Terminology

$$MLR.1 - MLR.5$$

"Gauss-Markov assumptions"

$$MLR.1 - MLR.6$$

"Classical linear model (CLM) assumptions"

#### Theorem 4.1 (Normal sampling distributions)

Under assumptions MLR.1 – MLR.6:

$$\widehat{\beta}_j \sim N(\beta_j, Var(\widehat{\beta}_j))$$

The estimators are normally distributed around the true parameters with the variance that was derived earlier

$$rac{\widehat{eta}_j - eta_j}{sd(\widehat{eta}_j)} \sim N(0,1)$$

The standardized estimators follow a standard normal distribution

- Testing hypotheses about a single population parameter
- Theorem 4.2 (t-distribution for standardized estimators)

Under assumptions MLR.1 – MLR.6:

$$\frac{\widehat{eta}_j - eta_j}{se(\widehat{eta}_j)} \sim t_{n-k-1}$$
 If the standardization is done using the estimated standard deviation (= standard error), the normal distribution is replaced by a t-distribution

Note: The t-distribution is close to the standard normal distribution if n-k-1 is large.

Null hypothesis (for more general hypotheses, see below)

$$H_0: \ \beta_j = 0$$
 The population parameter is equal to zero, i.e. after controlling for the other independent variables, there is no effect of  $\mathbf{x_j}$  on  $\mathbf{y}$ 

#### t-statistic (or t-ratio)

$$t_{\widehat{\beta}_j} = \frac{\widehat{\beta}_j}{se(\widehat{\beta}_j)}$$

The t-statistic will be used to test the above null hypothesis. The farther the estimated coefficient is away from zero, the less likely it is that the null hypothesis holds true. But what does "far" away from zero mean?

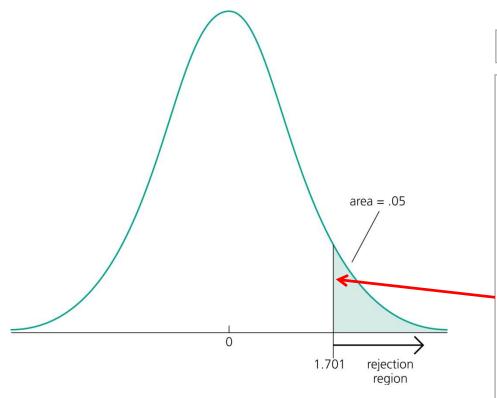
This depends on the variability of the estimated coefficient, i.e. its standard deviation. The t-statistic measures how many estimated standard deviations the estimated coefficient is away from zero.

Distribution of the t-statistic <u>if the null hypothesis is true</u>

$$t_{\widehat{\beta}_j} = \widehat{\beta}_j / se(\widehat{\beta}_j) = (\widehat{\beta}_j - \beta_j) / se(\widehat{\beta}_j) \sim t_{n-k-1}$$

Goal: Define a rejection rule so that, if it is true, H<sub>0</sub> is rejected only with a small probability (= significance level, e.g. 5%)

Testing against one-sided alternatives (greater than zero)



Test  $H_0$  :  $\beta_j = 0$  against  $H_1$  :  $\beta_j > 0$ 

Reject the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative hypothesis if the estimated coefficient is <u>"too large"</u> (i.e. larger than a critical value).

Construct the critical value so that, if the null hypothesis is true, it is rejected in, for example, 5% of the cases.

In the given example, this is the point of the tdistribution with 28 degrees of freedom that is exceeded in 5% of the cases.

! Reject if t-statistic greater than 1.701

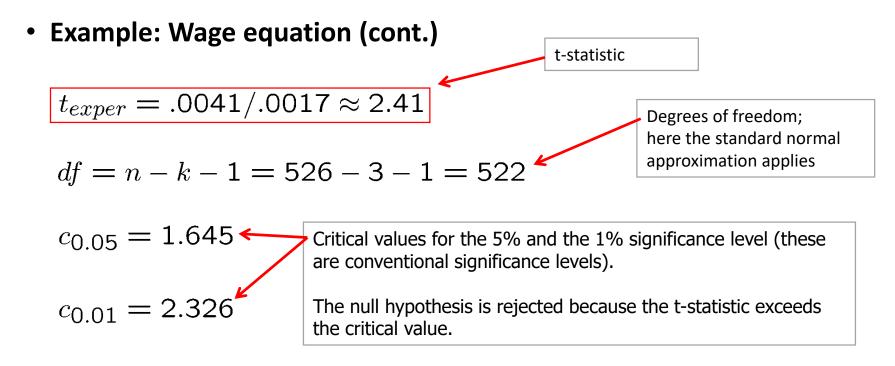
#### • Example: Wage equation

 Test whether, after controlling for education and tenure, higher work experience leads to higher hourly wages

$$\widehat{\log}(wage) = .284 + .092 \ educ + .0041 \ exper + .022 \ tenure$$
(.104) (.007) (.0017) (.003)

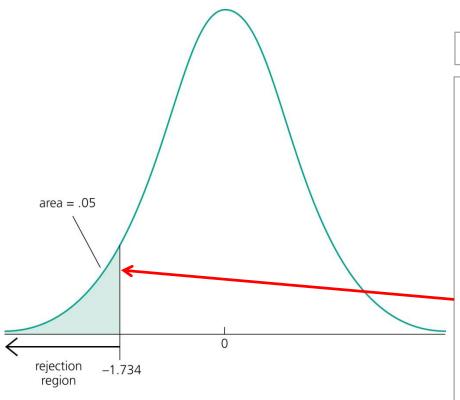
Test 
$$H_0$$
:  $\beta_{exper} = 0$  against  $H_1$ :  $\beta_{exper} > 0$ .

One would either expect a positive effect of experience on hourly wage or no effect at all.



"The effect of experience on hourly wage is statistically greater than zero at the 5% (and even at the 1%) significance level."

• Testing against one-sided alternatives (less than zero)



Test  $H_0: \beta_j = 0$  against  $H_1: \beta_j < 0$ 

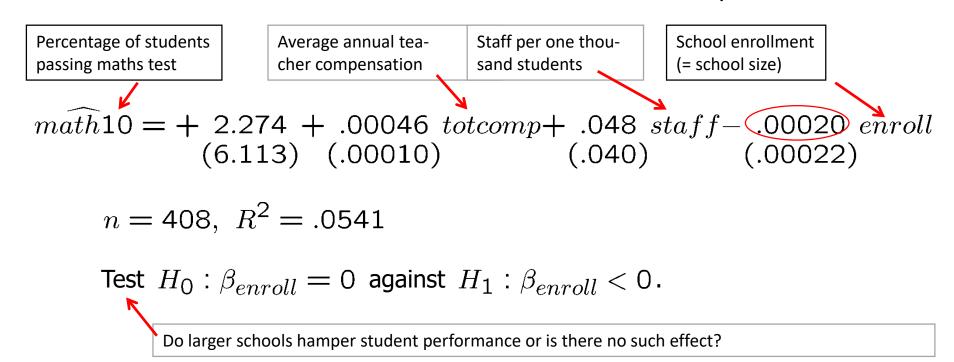
Reject the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative hypothesis if the estimated coefficient is <u>"too small"</u> (i.e. smaller than a critical value).

Construct the critical value so that, if the null hypothesis is true, it is rejected in, for example, 5% of the cases.

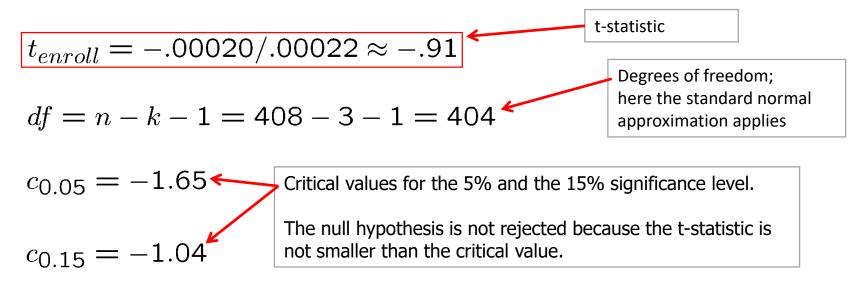
In the given example, this is the point of the t-distribution with 18 degrees of freedom so that 5% of the cases are below the point.

! Reject if t-statistic less than -1.734

- Example: Student performance and school size
  - Test whether smaller school size leads to better student performance



Example: Student performance and school size (cont.)



One cannot reject the hypothesis that there is no effect of school size on student performance (not even for a lax significance level of 15%).

- Example: Student performance and school size (cont.)
  - Alternative specification of functional form:

$$\widehat{math}10 = -207.66 + 21.16 \log(totcomp)$$
 $(48.70) + (4.06)$ 
 $+ 3.98 \log(staff) - 1.29 \log(enroll)$ 
 $(4.19) + (0.69)$ 
 $n = 408, R^2 = .0654$ 
 $R$ -squared slightly higher

Test  $H_0: \beta_{\log(enroll)} = 0$  against  $H_1: \beta_{\log(enroll)} < 0$ .

Example: Student performance and school size (cont.)

$$t_{\log(enroll)} = -1.29/.69 pprox -1.87$$
 (t-statistic color of the 5% significance level ! reject null hypothesis

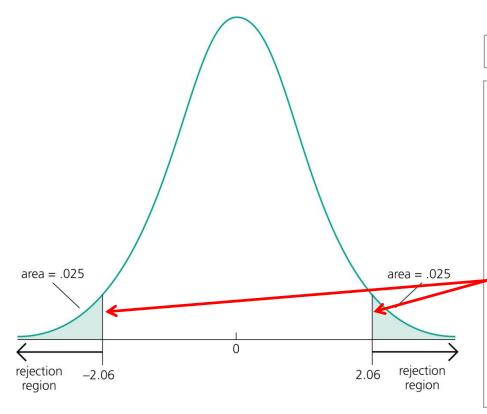
The hypothesis that there is no effect of school size on student performance can be rejected in favor of the hypothesis that the effect is negative.

How large is the effect?

+ 10% enrollment -0.129 percentage points students pass test

$$-1.29 = \frac{\partial math10}{\partial \log(enroll)} = \frac{\partial math10}{\frac{\partial enroll}{enroll}} = \frac{\frac{-1.29}{100}}{\frac{1}{100}} = \frac{-0.0129}{+1\%}$$
(small effect)

#### Testing against two-sided alternatives



Test  $H_0: \beta_i = 0$  against  $H_1: \beta_i \neq 0$ 

Reject the null hypothesis in favour of the alternative hypothesis if <u>the absolute value</u> of the estimated coefficient is too large.

Construct the critical value so that, if the null hypothesis is true, it is rejected in, for example, 5% of the cases.

In the given example, these are the points of the t-distribution so that 5% of the cases lie in the two tails.

! Reject if absolute value of t-statistic is less than -2.06 or greater than 2.06

#### Example: Determinants of college GPA

Lectures missed per week

$$coll\widehat{GPA} = 1.39 + .412 \ hsGPA + .015 \ ACT - .083 \ skipped$$
(.33) (.094) (.011) (.026)

$$n = 141, R^2 = .234$$

For critical values, use standard normal distribution

$$t_{hsGPA} = 4.38 > c_{0.01} = 2.58$$

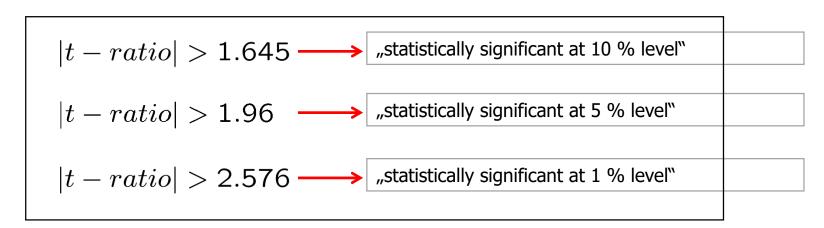
$$t_{ACT} = 1.36 < c_{0.10} = 1.645$$

$$|t_{skipped}| = |-3.19| > c_{0.01} = 2.58$$

The effects of hsGPA and skipped are significantly different from zero at the 1% significance level. The effect of ACT is not significantly different from zero, not even at the 10% significance level.

#### • "Statistically significant" variables in a regression

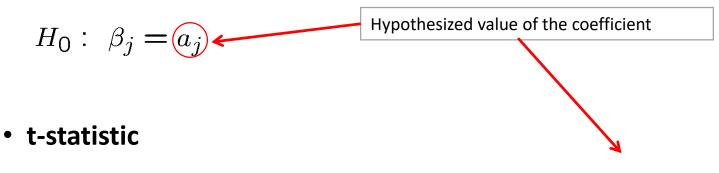
- If a regression coefficient is different from zero in a two-sided test, the corresponding variable is said to be <u>"statistically significant"</u>
- If the number of degrees of freedom is large enough so that the nor-mal approximation applies, the following rules of thumb apply:



#### Guidelines for discussing economic and statistical significance

- If a variable is statistically significant, discuss the magnitude of the coefficient to get an idea of its economic or practical importance
- The fact that a coefficient is statistically significant does not necessarily mean it is economically or practically significant!
- If a variable is statistically and economically important but has the "wrong" sign, the regression model might be misspecified
- If a variable is statistically insignificant at the usual levels (10%, 5%, 1%), one may think of dropping it from the regression
- If the sample size is small, effects might be imprecisely estimated so that the case for dropping insignificant variables is less strong

- Testing more general hypotheses about a regression coefficient
- Null hypothesis



$$t = \frac{(estimate - hypothesized\ value)}{standard\ error} = \frac{(\widehat{\beta}_j - \widehat{a_j})}{se(\widehat{\beta}_j)}$$

 The test works exactly as before, except that the hypothesized value is substracted from the estimate when forming the statistic

#### Example: Campus crime and enrollment

 An interesting hypothesis is whether crime increases by one percent if enrollment is increased by one percent

$$\widehat{\log}(crime) = -6.63 + 1.27 \log(enroll)$$

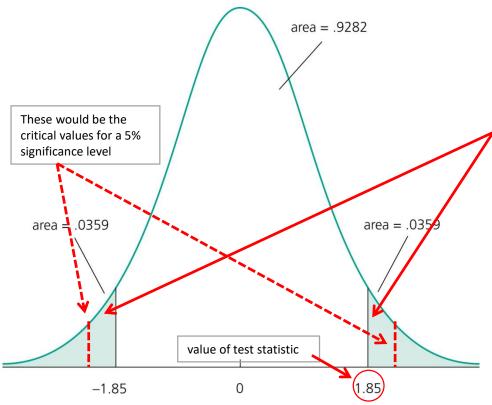
$$(1.03) \quad (0.11)$$
Estimate is different from one but is this difference statistically significant?
$$H_0: \beta_{\log(enroll)} = 1, \ H_1: \beta_{\log(enroll)} \neq 1$$

$$t = (1.27 - 1)/.11 \approx 2.45 > 1.96 = c_{0.05}$$

#### Computing p-values for t-tests

- If the significance level is made smaller and smaller, there will be a point where the null hypothesis cannot be rejected anymore
- The reason is that, by lowering the significance level, one wants to avoid more and more to make the error of rejecting a correct H<sub>0</sub>
- The smallest significance level at which the null hypothesis is still rejected, is called the <u>p-value</u> of the hypothesis test
- A small p-value is evidence against the null hypothesis because one would reject the null hypothesis even at small significance levels
- A large p-value is evidence in favor of the null hypothesis
- P-values are more informative than tests at fixed significance levels

How the p-value is computed (here: two-sided test)



The p-value is the significance level at which one is indifferent between rejecting and not rejecting the null hypothesis.

In the two-sided case, the p-value is thus the probability that the t-distributed variable takes on a larger absolute value than the realized value of the test statistic, e.g.:

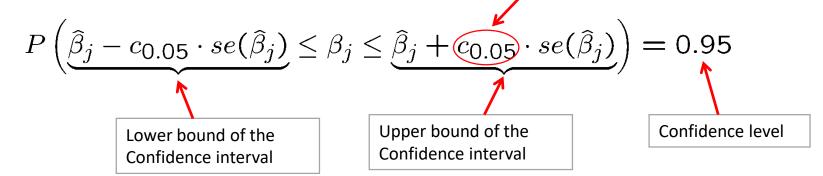
$$P(|t - ratio| > 1.85) = 2(.0359) = .0718$$

From this, it is clear that <u>a null hypothesis is</u> rejected if and only if the corresponding p-value is smaller than the significance level.

For example, for a significance level of 5% the t-statistic would not lie in the rejection region.

Confidence intervals

- Critical value of two-sided test
- Simple manipulation of the result in Theorem 4.2 implies that



- Interpretation of the confidence interval
  - The bounds of the interval are random
  - In repeated samples, the interval that is constructed in the above way will cover the population regression coefficient in 95% of the cases

Confidence intervals for typical confidence levels

$$P\left(\widehat{\beta}_{j} - c_{0.01} \cdot se(\widehat{\beta}_{j}) \leq \beta_{j} \leq \widehat{\beta}_{j} + c_{0.01} \cdot se(\widehat{\beta}_{j})\right) = 0.99$$

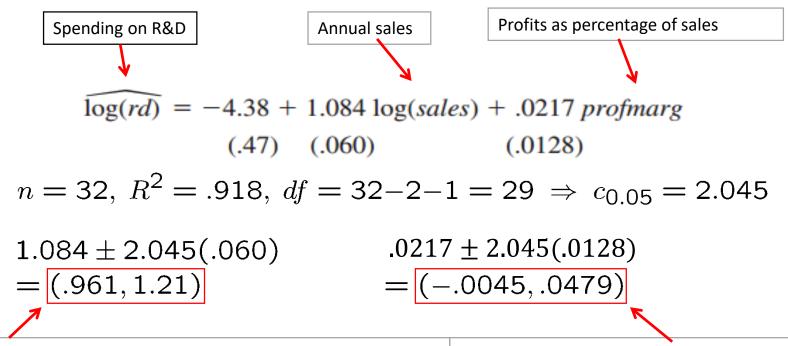
$$P\left(\widehat{\beta}_{j} - c_{0.05} \cdot se(\widehat{\beta}_{j}) \leq \beta_{j} \leq \widehat{\beta}_{j} + c_{0.05} \cdot se(\widehat{\beta}_{j})\right) = 0.95$$

$$P\left(\widehat{\beta}_{j} - c_{0.10} \cdot se(\widehat{\beta}_{j}) \leq \beta_{j} \leq \widehat{\beta}_{j} + c_{0.10} \cdot se(\widehat{\beta}_{j})\right) = 0.90$$
Use rules of thumb  $c_{0.01} = 2.576, c_{0.05} = 1.96, c_{0.10} = 1.645$ 

Relationship between confidence intervals and hypotheses tests

$$a_j \notin interval \implies \text{reject } H_0 : \beta_j = a_j \text{ in favor of } H_1 : \beta_j \neq a_j$$

#### Example: Model of firms' R&D expenditures



The effect of sales on R&D is relatively precisely estimated as the interval is narrow. Moreover, the effect is significantly different from zero because zero is outside the interval.

This effect is imprecisely estimated as the interval is very wide. It is not even statistically significant because zero lies in the interval.

- Testing hypotheses about a linear combination of parameters
- Example: Return to education at 2 year vs. at 4 year colleges

Years of education at 2 year colleges Years of education at 4 year colleges 
$$\log(wage) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 jc + \beta_2 univ + \beta_3 exper + u$$

Test 
$$H_0: \beta_1 - \beta_2 = 0$$
 against  $H_1: \beta_1 - \beta_2 < 0$ .

A possible test statistic would be:

$$t = \frac{\widehat{\beta}_1 - \widehat{\beta}_2}{se(\widehat{\beta}_1 - \widehat{\beta}_2)}$$

The difference between the estimates is normalized by the estimated standard deviation of the difference. The null hypothesis would have to be rejected if the statistic is "too negative" to believe that the true difference between the parameters is equal to zero.

Impossible to compute with standard regression output because

$$se(\hat{\beta}_1 - \hat{\beta}_2) = \sqrt{\widehat{Var}(\hat{\beta}_1 - \hat{\beta}_2)} = \sqrt{\widehat{Var}(\hat{\beta}_1) + \widehat{Var}(\hat{\beta}_2) - 2\widehat{Cov}(\hat{\beta}_1, \hat{\beta}_2)}$$

Usually not available in regression output

#### Alternative method

Define 
$$\theta_1 = \beta_1 - \beta_2$$
 and test  $H_0: \theta_1 = 0$  against  $H_1: \theta_1 < 0$ .

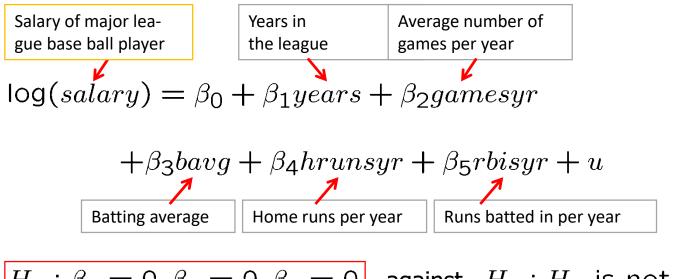
$$\log(wage) = \beta_0 + (\theta_1 + \beta_2)jc + \beta_2 univ + \beta_3 exper + u$$

$$= \beta_0 + \theta_1 jc + \beta_2 (jc + univ) + \beta_3 exper + u$$
Insert into original regression
a new regressor (= total years of college)

#### Total years of college **Estimation results** $\log(wage) = 1.472 = .0102 jc + .0769 totcol + .0049 exper$ (.021) (.0069) (.0023)(.0002) $n = 6,763, R^2 = .222$ Hypothesis is rejected at 10% level but not at 5% level t = -.0102/.0069 = -1.48p - value = P(t - ratio < -1.48) = .070 $-.0102 \pm 1.96(.0069) = (-.0237, .0003)$

This method works <u>always</u> for single linear hypotheses

- Testing multiple linear restrictions: The F-test
- Testing exclusion restrictions



 $H_0: \beta_3=0, \beta_4=0, \beta_5=0$  against  $H_1: H_0$  is not true

Test whether performance measures have no effect/can be exluded from regression.

#### Estimation of the unrestricted model

$$\widehat{\log}(salary) = 11.19 + .0689 \ years + .0126 \ gamesyr$$
 $(0.29) \ (.0121) \ (.0026)$ 
 $+ .00098 \ bavg + .0144 \ hrunsyr + .0108 \ rbisyr$ 
 $(.00110) \ (.0072)$ 

None of these variabels is statistically significant when tested individually

$$n = 353$$
,  $SSR = 183.186$ ,  $R^2 = .6278$ 

<u>Idea:</u> How would the model fit be if these variables were dropped from the regression?

#### Estimation of the restricted model

$$\widehat{\log}(salary) = 11.22 + .0713 \ years + .0202 \ gamesyr$$
(0.11) (.0125) (.0013)

$$n = 353$$
,  $SSR = 198.311$ ,  $R^2 = .5971$ 

The sum of squared residuals necessarily increases, but is the increase statistically significant?

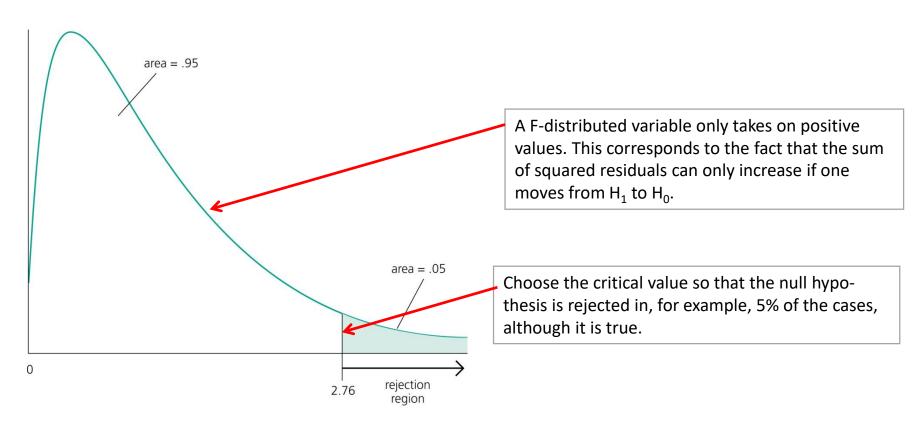
#### Test statistic

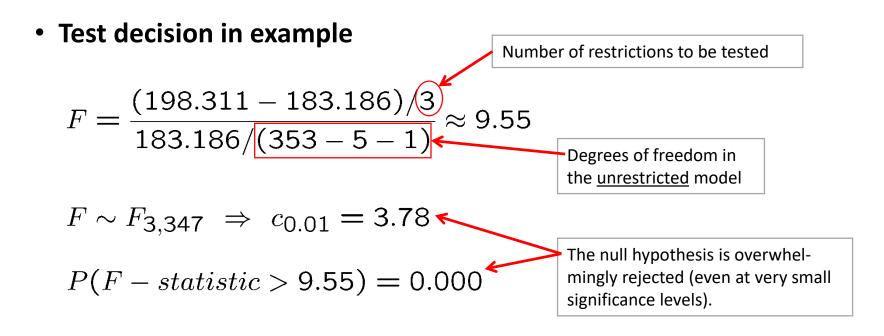
Number of restrictions

$$F = \frac{(SSR_r - SSR_{ur})/q}{SSR_{ur}/(n-k-1)} \sim F_{q,n-k-1}$$

The relative increase of the sum of squared residuals when going from  $H_1$  to  $H_0$  follows a F-distribution (if the null hypothesis  $H_0$  is correct)

#### Rejection rule (Figure 4.7)

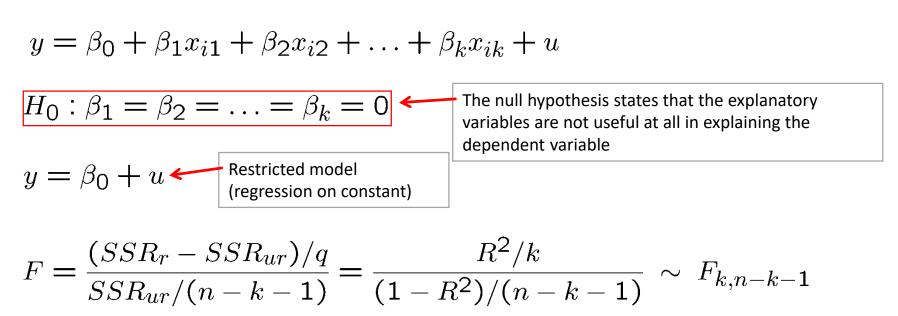




#### Discussion

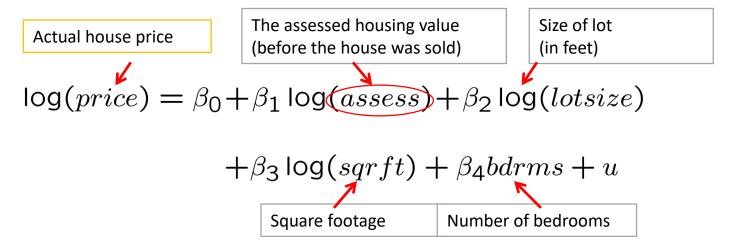
- The three variables are "jointly significant"
- They were not significant when tested individually
- The likely reason is multicollinearity between them

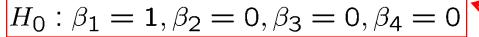
Test of overall significance of a regression



 The test of overall significance is reported in most regression packages; the null hypothesis is usually overwhelmingly rejected

- Testing general linear restrictions with the F-test
- Example: Test whether house price assessments are rational





If house price assessments are rational, a 1% change in the assessment should be associated with a 1% change in price.

In addition, other known factors should not influence the price once the assessed value has been controlled for.

#### Unrestricted regression

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \ldots + \beta_3 x_3 + \beta_4 x_4 + u$$

Restricted regression

The restricted model is actually a regression of  $[y-x_1]$  on a constant

$$y = \beta_0 + x_1 + u \Rightarrow [y - x_1] = \beta_0 + u$$

#### Test statistic

$$F = \frac{(SSR_r - SSR_{ur})/q}{SSR_{ur}/(n-k-1)} = \frac{(1.880 - 1.822)/4}{1.822/(88-4-1)} \approx .661$$

$$F \sim F_{4,83} \implies c_{0.05} = 2.50 \implies H_0$$
 cannot be rejected

Regression output for the unrestricted regression

$$\widehat{\log}(price) = .264 + 1.043 \log(assess) + .0074 \log(lotsize)$$

$$(.570) \quad (.151) \quad (.0386)$$

$$- .1384 \log(sqrft) + .0338 \ bdrms$$

$$(.1032) \quad (.0221)$$
When tested individually, there is also no evidence against the rationality of house price assessments

- The F-test works for general multiple linear hypotheses
- For all tests and confidence intervals, validity of assumptions MLR.1 MLR.6 has been assumed. Tests may be invalid otherwise.

#### Summary

- Assumption MLR.6 (Normality of error terms)
- Gauss-Markov assumptions (MLR.1-5) and Classical linear model (CLM) assumptions (MLR.1-6)
- Two theorems
  - Normal sampling distributions
  - t-distribution for standardized estimators
- For all tests and confidence intervals, MLR.1-6 should be satisfied.

### Summary

- Three types of hypothesis tests
  - Tests about a single population parameter
    - t test
    - Three approaches: critical value, p-value, confidence interval for two-sided tests
  - Tests about a linear combination of parameters
    - t test
    - Alternative method: variable transformation
  - Tests about multiple linear restrictions
    - F test (SSR form, R-squared form)
    - SSR form should be used if y is different between unrestricted and restricted models.