1 Introduction:

The dynamic response of any system can be modeled as a set of ordinary differential equations (ode) (Equation 1a) in the state variables ($\mathbf{x}$). The changes in the state variables are expressed as a function of the state variables, the system parameters (θ) and the inputs to the system (u).

$$\dot{\mathbf{x}} = g(\mathbf{x}, \theta, u) \tag{1a}$$

$$\mathbf{y} = h(\mathbf{x}, \mu, u) \tag{1b}$$

When not all states are observable, Equation (1a) is usually augmented with a system that defines the relationship between the observable output variables ($\mathbf{y}$) and the state variables ($\mathbf{x}$) as in Equation (1b). The parameters used to establish this relationship (Equation 1b), μ, may or may not include system parameters θ defined in Equation (1a).

Typically, a nonlinear programming formulation with the objective of minimizing the least square error between the measured (y^*_{kl}) and modeled (y_{kl}) outputs over the time course ($l = 1, ..., d$) for which experimental data is collected (Equation 2) (Raue et al., and other parameter estimation/identifiability papers), is used to estimate parameters θ and μ in Equation 1.

$$\chi^2(\theta, \mu) = \sum_{k=1}^{m} \sum_{l=1}^{d} \left(\frac{y^*_{kl} - y_{kl}}{\sigma^*_{kl}} \right)^2 \tag{2}$$

The difference between the data and the model estimate for each output, and at each time point, is weighted by the variance in the experimental data σ^*_{kl} for that corresponding variable and time point. The minimization problem is solved subject to constraints on the state and output variables expressed in Equation 1, as well as bounds on the estimated parameter values. The ability to determine a unique solution to the parameter estimation problem is however governed by the identifiability of the parameters in the model (McLean AND McAuley 2012).

The identifiability of parameters in nonlinear models can be classified into two categories: structural (or a priori) and practical (or posterior) identifiability. Any system (Equation 1) is said to be structurally identifiable if, for an input-output mapping defined by $\mathbf{y} = \Phi(\mu, u)$ for at least one input function u, any two

values of parameters μ_1 and μ_2 satisfy the relationship in Equation (3) below.

$$\Phi(\mu_1, u) = \Phi(\mu_2, u) \iff \mu_1 = \mu_2 \tag{3}$$

Accordingly, any system that has an infinite number of solutions to the parameter estimation problem for all input functions is said to structurally non-identifiable. Thus, the structural identifiability of parameters in a dynamic model helps establish the presence or absence of a relationship between the unobservable system states and the observable system outputs. Accordingly, the effect of model structure and parameterization on the ability to infer true parameter values from experimental data is determined by the structural identifiability of the parameter.

Experimental data from many physical systems is usually noisy, and when parameters are estimated on the basis of noisy data, the ability to estimate unique parameter values to satisfy Equation (3) is referred to as practical identifiability. The effect of the available experimental data on the ability to estimate unique parameter values is determined by the practical identifiability of the parameter. Accordingly, practical identifiability of a parameter is contingent upon the nature, quality and quantity of data available to estimate the parameter as opposed to the structure and parameterization of the model.

Thus, on the one hand, establishing the structural identifiability of parameters enables one to propose models that are not only appropriate representations of physical processes, but also are parameterized in such a way that the value of these parameters can be estimated. On the other hand, establishing practical identifiability of parameters in any model helps design experiments that are minimal, informative and useful for parameter estimation.

The dynamics of metabolic networks can also be represented by Equation (1) wherein the metabolite concentrations, $\mathbf{x}$, are state variables. The changes in the metabolite concentrations ($\mathbf{x}$) are expressed as a function of reaction rates dependent on enzyme kinetics, which are in turn expressed as nonlinear functions of the states ($\mathbf{x}$), kinetic parameters (θ) and other input variables (u).

Algorithms have been extensively developed for establishing structural identifiability of dynamic models of biological systems (IEEE Trans paper from 2007). Most of these algorithms use methods based on differential algebra (Glad and Ljung, 1994). More recent methods take a profile-likelihood-based approach (2012 Paper) to establish both structural and practical identifiability. However, these methods not only scale poorly

with increases in size of the modeled system, but also require dynamic time course data of the observable variables of the system. While computational burden due to poor scalability can be partly addressed with the current increases in computational power, the ability to obtain dynamic data for establishing identifiability of parameters in kinetic models of metabolism still remains a challenge.

In this paper, we propose a methodology to establish practical identifiability for parameters in kinetic models of metabolism. We present a computer algebra-based method that can facilitate experimental design for estimating parameters separately for each individual reaction within a metabolic network based on available steady state experimental data. This enables us to address the twin issues of scalability and data availability. We illustrate the utility of this method by applying it for a small network of gluconeogenesis in *E. coli* and demonstrating our ability to propose experiments that will facilitate parameter estimation for a kinetic model of this network. We also demonstrate the scalability of the proposed methodology to facilitate experimental design by applying it to a relatively larger metabolic network of the human red blood cell hepatocyte.

Outline:

- Importance of parameter values for estimating in vivo response using kinetic models of metabolism and consequently for metabolic network design using kinetic models of metabolism
- The need for parameter identifiability to determine unique and true parameter values from observed data
- Types and purpose of identifiability for parameters
- Methods for structural identifiability and existing methods for practical identifiability
- Lack of methods for practical identifiability and consequently experimental design (not covered?)
- work done in this paper for practical identifiability
- scalability of computer algebra-based methods for structural identifiability (using CRNT to reduce networks to make structural identifiability scalable) (move to discussion - may be in discussion)

2 Methods:

2.1 A method for practical identifiability of kinetic models of metabolism:

In this section, we show how practical identifiability of kinetic parameters in a dynamic model of metabolism can be established using the nonlinear algebraic kinetic rate law formulations that describe the relationship between the concentrations, fluxes and the kinetic parameters of the metabolic network model. A summary of the methodology in the form of a flow diagram is shown in Figure 1. In a kinetic model, the value of every flux v_i is expressed using one of the many available enzyme kinetic formulations. Without loss of generality, all of these kinetic formulations can be expressed as nonlinear algebraic equations (Equation 4). The fluxes are expressed as a function of the metabolite concentrations $\mathbf{x}$ and the kinetic parameters θ (Figure 1a).

$$v_i = f(\mathbf{x}, \theta, u) \tag{4}$$

Let $\theta \in \mathbb{R}^p$ for each flux v_i in the network. For each experiment $j = 1, 2, ..., n$, we assume that all metabolite concentrations $\mathbf{x}$ and reaction fluxes $\mathbf{v}$ are measurable. The pertinent information for each experiment is available as a vector of concentrations and fluxes, $\mathbf{x}_j$ and $\mathbf{v}_j$, respectively (Figure 1b).

In order to establish the identifiability of kinetic parameters for each flux v_i, we describe a computer algebra-based method. The primary use of the computer algebra system is to obtain closed form expressions for each parameter in θ for each flux v_i (Figure 1c). This is done by solving a system of nonlinear algebraic equations in $\mathbb{R}^p$, shown in Equation (5).

$$v_{i,k} = f_k(\mathbf{x}_k, \theta, u_k) \qquad\qquad \forall k = \{1, 2, ..., p\} \subset \{1, 2, ..., n\} \tag{5}$$

Each equation in (5), indicated by the index k, corresponds to the kinetic rate law expression $f(\mathbf{x}, \theta, u)$ for v_i, described earlier in Equation (4), written for concentrations and fluxes obtained from experiment k. Solving the system in Equation (5) results in $\mathbb{R}^p$ nonlinear expressions for parameters in θ, where $N(\mathbf{v}_i, \mathbf{x}, \mathbf{u})$ is the numerator of g, and $D(\mathbf{v}_i, \mathbf{x}, \mathbf{u})$ is the denominator of g (Figure 1c).

$$\theta_k = g_k(\mathbf{v}_i, \mathbf{x}, \mathbf{u}) = \frac{N_k(\mathbf{v}_i, \mathbf{x}, \mathbf{u})}{D_k(\mathbf{v}_i, \mathbf{x}, \mathbf{u})} \tag{6}$$

The identifiability of parameter θ_k for flux v_i can be established by determining the value of $D_k(\mathbf{v}_i, \mathbf{x}, \mathbf{u})$

(Figure 1c): any parameter θ_k is said to practically identifiable (practically non-identifiable) if $D_k(\mathbf{v}_i, \mathbf{x}, \mathbf{u}) \neq 0$ ($D_k(\mathbf{v}_i, \mathbf{x}, \mathbf{u}) = 0$).

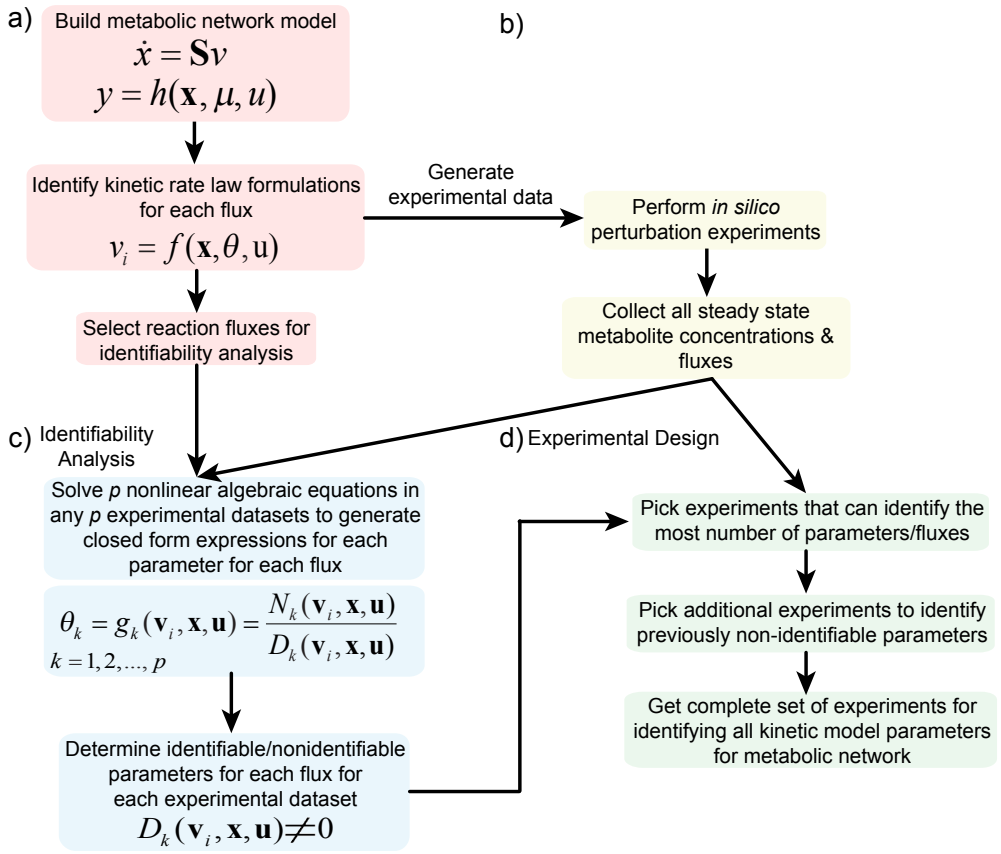

Figure 1: A flow diagram showing the methodology developed to establish practical identifiability of parameters in kinetic models of metabolism. a) The steps for the construction of a kinetic model of a metabolic network are shown. The choice of rate law formulations to describe metabolic fluxes influences the identification methodology. The identifiability of parameters for each flux can be establish independently. b) in silico data generation to test the identifiability of a given parameter is an important step that is also required for experimental design using the proposed methodology. c) The steps for identifiability analysis for a parameters of a single flux are shown. d) If any of the proposed in silico experiments results in non-identifiability of any parameter, then the number and nature of experiments to be performed to establish identifiability of the corresponding parameter can be determined by following the steps shown.

2.2 Experimental design for parameter estimation in kinetic models of metabolism:

The identifiability of each parameter based on each experiment indexed as $j = \{1, ..., n\}$ is established based on the methodology described previously in Section 2.1 and demonstrated in Section 3.1. Subsequently, for any flux v_i, if for any p combinations of indices j, the experimental concentrations ($\mathbf{x}_j$) and fluxes ($\mathbf{v}_j$) do not satisfy the condition for identifiability for any parameter in $\theta \in \mathbb{R}^p$, i.e., $D_k(\mathbf{v}_i, \mathbf{x}, \mathbf{u}) = 0$ for any k, then at least one of the p experiments needs to be changed to make a parameter θ_k identifiable. Consequently, the corresponding experiment cannot be used for parameter estimation and needs to be discarded from the set of all necessary experiments. Furthermore, another experiment from $j = \{1, ..., n\}$ needs to be selected such that parameter θ_k is identifiable. This process has to be repeated until all parameters in $\theta \in \mathbb{R}^p$ are identifiable for flux v_i. In doing so, we can arrive at a set of p experiments that will always result in practically identifiable parameters for flux v_i. This analysis can be performed for each flux in a metabolic network independent of all the other fluxes. Hence, our method is theoretically scalable even to genome-scale models. We show the application of this design methodology for flux v_2 in the gluconeogenic model in Section.

Note that if none of the n pre-selected experiments satisfy the identifiability condition, then we can design an $(n+1)^{th}$ experiment that can replace one of the experiments that causes practical non-identifiability using our methodology.

In the following sections we provide a previously published kinetic model of a small gluconeogenic network, followed by a demonstration of our methodology to establish practical identifiability and experimental design for one of the fluxes in this network.

2.3 Kinetic model of gluconeogenesis in E. coli:

The proposed model for acetate consumption through gluconeogenesis and its corresponding kinetic model is used as a case study to illustrate the utility of identifiability analysis for the design of experiments for estimating parameters in kinetic models of metabolism. The kinetic model is described below.

$$\frac{d}{dt}pep = v_1 - v_2 - v_4 \tag{7}$$

$$\frac{d}{dt}fdp = v_2 - v_3 \tag{8}$$

$$\frac{d}{dt}E = v_{e,max}\left(\frac{1}{1+\left(\frac{fdp}{K_e^{fdp}}\right)^{n_e}}\right) - dE \tag{9}$$

The kinetic expressions for fluxes v_1 through v_4 are given below. The consumption of acetate through v_1 and conversion of *pep* through v_2 are expressed in Equations (10) and (11) respectively using Michaelis-Menten kinetics. The acetate flux through v_1 is also governed by the quantity of available enzyme E.

$$v_1 = k_1^{cat}E\frac{acetate}{acetate + K_1^{acetate}} \tag{10}$$

$$v_2 = V_2^{max}\frac{pep}{pep + K_2^{pep}} \tag{11}$$

$$v_3 = V_3^{max}\frac{f\tilde{dp}\left(1+f\tilde{dp}\right)^3}{\left(1+f\tilde{dp}\right)^4 + L_3\left(1+\frac{pep}{K_3^{pep}}\right)^{-4}} \tag{12}$$

The allosterically regulated flux v_3 for the consumption of *fdp* is expressed in Equation (12) using the Monod-Wyman-Changeux (MWC) model for allosterically regulated enzymes, where $f\tilde{dp}$ refers to the ratio of *fdp* with respect to its allosteric binding constant K_3^{fdp}. The added flux v_4 for the export of *pep* is expressed as a linear equation dependent on *pep* in Equation (13).

$$v_4 = k_4^{cat}.pep \tag{13}$$

2.4 Data for establishing parameter identifiability in kinetic model of gluconeogenesis:

Steady state metabolomics and fluxomics data can be gathered under different physiological conditions by either perturbing the expression levels for different enzymes within a metabolic network, or by changing the substrate concentrations under which the cells grow. The aforementioned model of gluconeogenesis has three different fluxes (v_1, v_2 and v_3) whose enzyme expression parameters (V_1^{max}, V_2^{max} and V_3^{max}) can be perturbed to simulate the repression and over expression of the corresponding enzymes. Furthermore, the acetate concentration on which the cell is grown can also be perturbed to measure cellular response to changes in the substrate concentration. We use the in silico metabolomics and fluxomics data generated from these perturbation experiments to demonstrate parameter identification with our methodology.

3 Results:

First, in Section 3.1 we demonstrate how our methodology can be applied for one of the fluxes in the gluconeogenic model. In Section 3.2 that follows, we discuss the ability to apply our methods to different nonlinear kinetic rate law formulations within the context of the gluconeogenic model. Then, in Section we discuss the different experimental design strategies that were found through our identifiability analysis to enable kinetic parameter estimation for the each flux in the model using steady state data. Finally, in Section we expand the application of our method to a relatively large (39 reactions) kinetic model of the red blood cell metabolism.

3.1 Identifiability of parameters in a kinetic model of gluconeogenesis:

Here, we demonstrate the use of our computer algebra-based methodology to establish practical identifiability of parameters for flux v_2 in the small model of gluconeogenesis described in Section 2.3. Flux v_2 has two parameters, V_2^{max} and K_2^{pep} that need to be estimated from experimental data. Here, we assume that at least two different sets of experimental data for the concentrations and fluxes are available. We label the concentrations as pep^1 and pep^2, and the fluxes as ${v_2}^1$ and ${v_2}^2$ respectively, from each experiment. Accordingly, the nonlinear algebraic equations shown in Equation (5) can be formulated for flux v_2 as follows:

$${v_2}^1 = V_2^{max} \frac{pep^1}{pep^1 + K_2^{pep}} \tag{14a}$$

$${v_2}^2 = V_2^{max} \frac{pep^2}{pep^2 + K_2^{pep}} \tag{14b}$$

Solving this simultaneous system of equations, we get two nonlinear algebraic equations in the parameters V_2^{max} and K_2^{pep} based on the form shown earlier in Equation (6).

$$V_2^{max} = \frac{v_2^1 v_2^2 (pep^1 - pep^2)}{v_2^2 pep^1 - v_2^1 pep^2} \tag{15a}$$

$$K_2^{pep} = \frac{pep^1 (v_2^1 pep^2 - v_2^2 pep^2)}{v_2^2 pep^1 - v_2^1 pep^2} \tag{15b}$$

In Equation (15), the denominator of the right hand side expression is used to test the identifiability of parameters V_2^{max} (Equation 15a) and K_2^{pep} (Equation 15b).

3.2 Getting closed-form expressions for each flux in Kotte model:

The complexity of the equations in our specific scenario is determined by the complexity of enzyme-metabolite interaction models used describe fluxes in metabolic networks. Although computer algebra systems (CAS) are capable of handling complex symbolic calculations, sometimes, the complexity of getting closed form expressions for all kinetic parameters of certain rate law formulations is too much for the CAS to overcome. We encountered this scenario in the case of the gluconeogenic model for flux v_3 where the kinetics of the allosterically activated reaction are described by the MWC model for allosteric regulation. In order to overcome this computational difficulty, we used a convenience kinetic rate law formulation to describe the allosteric interaction in v_3. We give this formulation in Section.

We believe this problem of computational tractability to occur in other complex kinetic rate law formulations as well. Examples?

3.3 Experiments that can establish identifiability for each flux in Kotte model:

As indicated previously in Section, we performed different experiments by perturbing the parameters for fluxes v_1, v_2 and v_3 in the model. We also perturbed the input substrate concentration to collect data on the concentrations and fluxes within the network. We describe the results of using this data to establish the identifiability of various parameters in the kinetic model of the small metabolic network.

3.4 Combinations of experiments that will enable identification of all model parameters:

3.5 Expanding methodology to RBC model:

If any data generated from a perturbation experiment i results in nonidentifiability, we eliminate experiment i from the list of experiments that need to be performed for parameter estimation.

Outline:

- parameter estimation is a well developed field typically using minimization of least square error to estimate model parameters from available experimental data

Table 1: Table showing the perturbed values of all fluxes used for parameter estimation.

Designation	Perturbed Fluxes	Perturbed Values
P1	v_1	2
P2	v_2	0.2
P3	v_3	0.5

- if parameters are structurally identifiable, it does not guarantee practical identifiability from noisy experimental data
- identifiability dependent on whether given datasets (outputs) for estimation can sufficiently distinguish between different parameter values

Sections:

- datasets required for parameter estimation in kinetic models of metabolism (methods?)
- identifiability in kotte model - scalability, number of experiments required, requirements for time course data(? in the intro)
- identifiability in large rbc model

References

McLean, K. A. P. AND K. B. McAuley (2012) Mathematical modelling of chemical processes-obtaining the best model predictions and parameter estimates using identifiability and estimability procedures, *Can. J. Chem. Eng.* 90.2, 351–366.