

# Risk Modelling with Style

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# Outline of Talk<sup>1</sup>

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1. Taxonomy of Risk Models - Statistical, Time Series, Cross-Section
2. Pros and Cons of approaches and with particular attention to robustness to data and specification error.
  - Cross-sectional models robust except to measurement error in factor loadings
3. Errors-in-variable problem in cross-sectional risk models
4. A solution: instrument using estimates of lagged style betas
5. Show that there is significant bias, that instrument can reduce this bias, and particularly strong for some styles.
  - Discuss results in light of debate on stock characteristics versus risk loadings.

<sup>1</sup>The authors would like to thank Professor James Sefton of Imperial College, London for the significant contribution he provided to this material.

# Taxonomy of Risk Models

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- Returns are assumed to be generated by the LFM

$$r_t = Bf_t + \varepsilon_t$$
$$Cov(f_t) = \Omega \text{ and } Cov(\varepsilon_t) = D \quad \leftarrow \text{Diagonal}$$

- The Risk Matrix  $V = B\Omega B' + D$  can be estimated using a
  - Statistical Approach: estimated conditional on knowing the number of factors,  $k$
  - Time Series Approach: estimated conditional on knowing the factor returns,  $F$
  - Cross-Sectional Approach: estimated conditional on knowing the factor loadings,  $B$
- Hybrid Models first estimate the structural component, conditional on knowing some of the factor returns,  $F$ , or some of the factor loadings,  $B$ , and then estimate the other 'blind' factors using a statistical approach

# The Trade-Offs

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- The central trade-off in risk model design is between:  
Structural Error vs Estimation Error
- The more structure that is imposed on the model then:
  - the fewer parameters that will need to be estimated, so the smaller the estimation error.
  - But the more likely you have mis-specified the model so the greater the structural error.

# Pros and Cons

- Assume N (=500) stocks, T (=156) periods and K (=30) Factors

	Parameters to Estimate	Example	Pros	Cons
Statistical	$NK + \frac{K(K+1)}{2} + N$	15,965	Imposes no Structure ⇒ No estimation bias ⇒ Picks up transitory factors	High estimation error (especially if transitory) No risk or return attribution
Time-Series	$NK + N$	15,500	Clear Risk attribution (orthogonalise factors) Estimated coefficients unbiased	Hard to include dynamic factors (e.g short-term momentum) Harder to do return attribution
Cross-Sectional	$\frac{K(K+1)}{2} + N$	965	Good for return attribution Can incorporate 'new' stocks Factor exposures can be dynamic	Estimated coefficients biased ⇒Tends to need greater number of factors

# Understanding Factor Models (Episode 1)

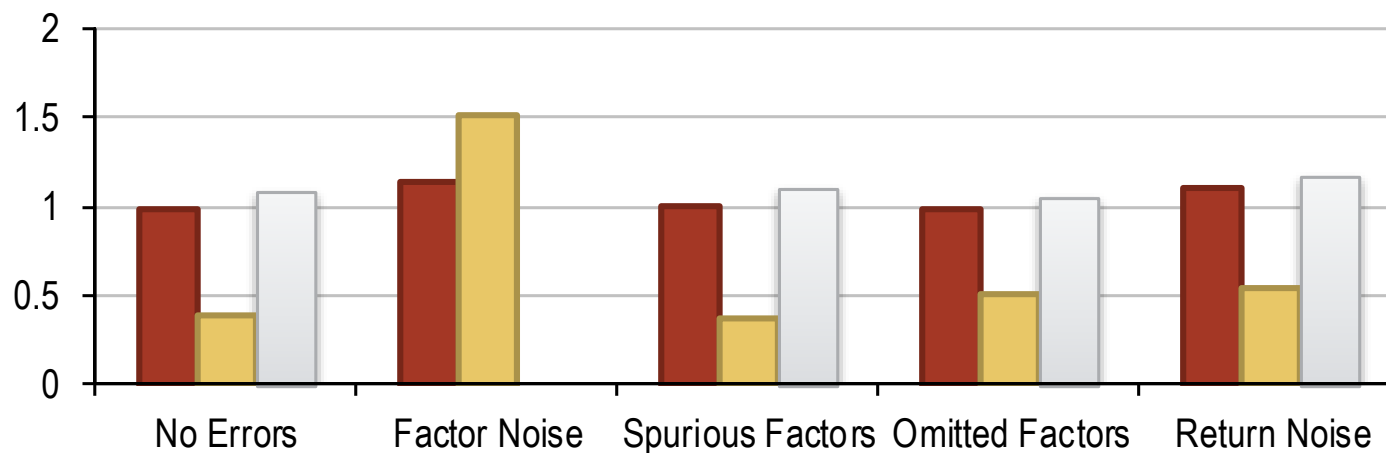
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- We assume the 'true' LFM model is the PAS risk model estimated on monthly returns to S&P 500 stocks over the last 5 years
  - The results *will* depend on the general structure of the 'true' model - we therefore used as our 'true' model one that was generated from historical data
- We estimate a risk matrix using the three modelling approaches on each of 1000 synthetic return histories generated from the 'true' model
  - assuming **no error** in the prior information (focusing on sampling errors only)
  - after adding 2 **spurious factors** to either **F** or **B** or incrementing  $K$  by 2
  - after **omitting 2 Factors** factor from either **F** and **B** or reducing  $K$  by 2.
  - after adding **factor noise** to the prior information: zero mean Gaussian noise with sd of half actual factor volatility is added to **F** - to the market and style betas in **B** we add zero mean Gaussian noise with volatility of 0.25; we round the sector and country betas in **B** to either 1 or 0
  - after adding **return noise** to **R** with a standard deviation of 0.1
- We measure the cost of the estimation errors as the average
  - increase in tracking error of the best 50 stock index tracker
  - increase in variance of the minimum variance portfoliocalculated from the estimated risk matrix relative to that calculated from the 'true' one

# Tracking Errors - the cost of not using the true model

	Time Series	Cross Section	Statistical
No Errors	0.99	0.38	1.08
Factor Noise	1.14	<b>1.52</b>	
Spurious Factors	1.01	0.37	1.10
Omitted Factors	0.98	0.50	1.06
Return Noise	1.11	0.54	1.17

Source: UBS estimates



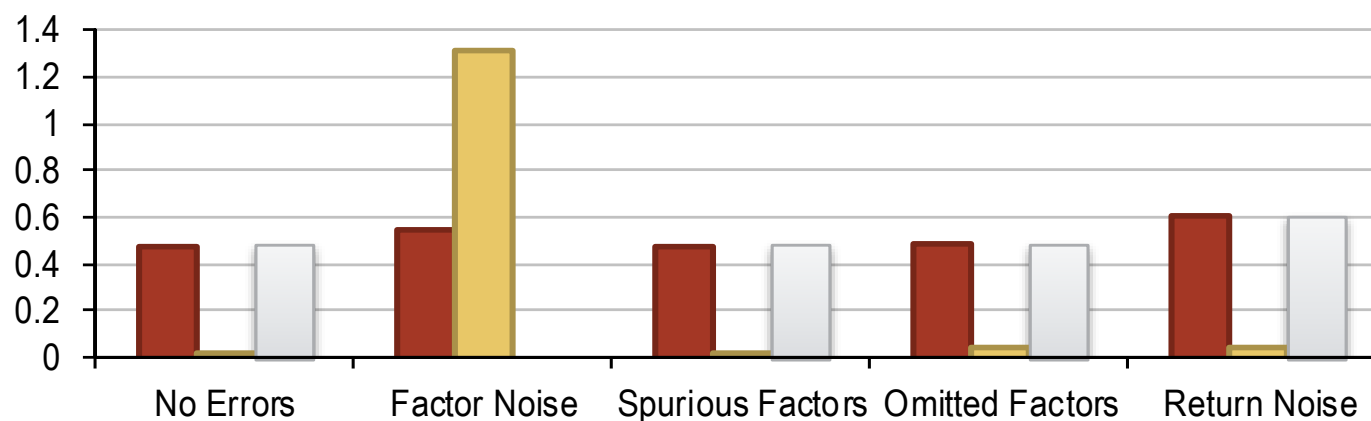
Source: UBS estimates

■ Time Series ■ Cross Section ■ Statistical

# Minimum Variance- cost of not using the true risk model

	Time Series	Cross Section	Statistical
No Errors	0.48	0.02	0.49
Factor Noise	0.55	<b>1.31</b>	
Spurious Factors	0.48	0.02	0.49
Omitted Factors	0.49	0.04	0.49
Return Noise	0.61	0.04	0.61

Source: UBS estimates



Source: UBS estimates

■ Time Series ■ Cross Section ■ Statistical



# Bias in Cross-Sectional Risk Models

## Errors in Variables

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- In a cross-section regression (CSR), we regress the factor loadings,  $B$ , on excess returns,  $r_t$  to estimate factor returns,  $f_t$

$$r = Bf + \varepsilon_t$$

- However we do not observe risk loadings,  $B$ , – in particular when we think about style – we observe style characteristics,  $\hat{B}$ ,
  - For example we use Book/Price ratio as proxy for loading on value factor – see discussion Kent and Titman (1997), Davis, Fama, French (2000), Chordia, Goyal, Shanken (2015).

$$\hat{B} = B + V_t$$

- Substituting in implies

$$r = \hat{B}f - (\varepsilon_t - V_tf)$$

and so the equation residual  $(\varepsilon_t - V_tf)$  is correlated with regressors  $\hat{B}$

# Bias in Cross-Sectional Risk Models

## Errors in Variables

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- The OLS estimate is

$$\hat{f} = (\hat{B}^T \hat{B})^{-1} \hat{B}^T r = f + (\hat{B}^T \hat{B})^{-1} \hat{B}^T (\varepsilon_t - V_t f)$$

- Is therefore biased

$$E \hat{f} = (\hat{B}^T \hat{B})^{-1} \hat{B}^T r = f - \underbrace{(\hat{B}^T \hat{B})^{-1} E(V_t^T V_t)}_{\neq \mathbf{0}} f$$

- and this bias can be significant and will attenuate estimates

# History of Problem

## A few milestones

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- Long history ever since first Fama-MacBeth (1973) regressions. In this seminal paper, Fama-MacBeth suggest using portfolios rather than single securities to minimise the EIV problem. Blume (1975) offers a similar suggestion.
- Shanken (1992) derives adjusted standard errors for the two-pass estimator
- Kim (1995) suggested that standard errors in the first pass regression could be used to adjust for the bias in the CSR.
- Ang, Liu and Schwartz (2017) demonstrate that these error bounds are tighter using individual securities rather than portfolios.
- Standard approach to errors-in-variables problems is to use instruments.
- Jegadeesh, Noh, Roll *et al.* (2016) suggest using betas estimated from obs. at  $t-1, t-4, t-7 \dots$  as instruments for CSR on returns at  $t, t-3, t-6 \dots$  using betas estimated from obs  $t-2, t-5, t-7 \dots$
- Here we use lagged betas to instrument our CSR of characteristics on returns.

# Instrumental Variables

## A solution to EIV problems

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- Instrumental variables has a long history too! The idea is to find instruments, that are correlated with the regressors but not with the errors.
- We propose to use the lagged historical betas as instruments to the security style characteristics. Denote these lagged beta instruments as  $Z$ .

- Our CSR is

$$r = \hat{B}f - (\varepsilon_t - V_t f)$$

- Multiply on left by  $(Z^T \hat{B})^{-1} Z^T$

$$\hat{f} = (Z^T \hat{B})^{-1} Z^T r = f + (Z^T \hat{B})^{-1} Z^T (\varepsilon_t - V_t f)$$

- But now instruments uncorrelated with  $\varepsilon_t$  and so take expectations

$$E(\hat{f}) = (Z^T \hat{B})^{-1} Z^T r = f + (Z^T \hat{B})^{-1} Z^T (\varepsilon_t - V_t f)$$

**Expected value = 0**

# Instrumental Variables

## Are the instruments valid?

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- There are some things we need to think about
- 1. Weak Instruments:** the instruments need to be sufficiently correlated with the regressors. This is an F-test of the null that all coefficients are zero in a regression of the instruments on the regressors.
- 2. Is there evidence of bias ( Hausman-Wu test):** Estimate factor returns  $f$  using OLS and then using instrument variables and test if the two estimates are significantly different.
- 3. Are the instruments uncorrelated with the residual returns (Sargan overidentification test):** Test the covariance between instruments and estimated residuals is significantly different from zero; test requires more instruments than regressors
  - If no. of regressors equals no. of instruments, covariance will be identically zero (optimality condition).

# Understanding Factor Models (Episode 2)

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- Cross-sectional Risk Model estimated for MSCI Europe Large and Mid Cap Universe
  - Roughly 450 -500 stocks
  - Factors returns estimated for week over last 3 years (156 obs)
- Loadings,  $B$  used to estimate factor returns
  1. Market factor - estimated market beta on 3 year returns before end of previous month
  2. 11 GICs Sector Factors - loading of 1 indicates sector membership, 0 otherwise.
  3. 8 country regions – loading of 1 indicates region membership, 0 otherwise.  
(GB/IR,BG/NL/LX, FR, GE/AUT, SP/PT, IT/GR, SWE/DK/NOR/FIN, SW )
  4. 9 Style Factors - Use cross-sectional scores normalised by sector to have zero mean and unit std dev. Styles: Market Cap, 12m Volatility, 1m momentum, 6m momentum, Earnings Yield, Free Cash Flow Yield, 3m Earnings Momentum, ROE, Net Debt to EV

(To avoid co-linearity, impose that sum of sector factor returns and sum region factors returns equal 0)
- Instrumental Variables
  1. Use market betas, sector and region indicators (so these are not instrumented).
  2. Instrument styles using beta estimated by regressing stock returns on respective UBS long short style index returns using 6 month returns up to beginning of previous month

# Strength of Instruments

- Instruments checked for strength.
  - Regress loadings (normalised scores) on instruments (lagged betas). Test null that all coefficients are zero.
- Count in how many periods the instruments are strong enough (  $p < 0.01$  )

	Mkt. Cap.	12m Vol.	6m Mom.	1m Mom.	Earn. Yield	FCF Yield	3m Earn. Mom	ROE	Net Debt / EV
Jun-17	156	156	117	16	147	47	104	122	28
Jun-16	156	156	117	12	138	9	135	104	57
Jun-15	156	156	99	19	143	14	131	101	114
Jun-14	156	156	89	17	147	65	135	108	150
Jun-13	156	156	86	17	156	78	95	81	148
Jun-12	156	156	89	17	138	41	51	73	113

Source: UBS estimates

# Evidence of significant bias

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- Use Hausman-Wu test of whether OLS estimates are significantly different from instrumented estimates

	$p < 0.01$	$0.01 < p < 0.05$	$0.05 < p < 0.1$	$0.1 < p < 0.2$	$p \geq 0.2$
Jun-17	78	38	17	19	4
Jun-16	60	27	27	16	26
Jun-15	73	35	17	23	8
Jun-14	84	38	21	10	3
Jun-13	72	40	20	21	3
Jun-12	59	38	16	11	32

Source: UBS estimates



# Are instruments uncorrelated

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- If style score is weakly correlated with instruments, include that score as additional instrument and test whether other instruments are uncorrelated with errors (Sargan overidentification test)

	p<0.01	0.01<p<0.05	0.05<p<0.1	0.1<p<0.2	p>=0.2
Jun-17	16	16	13	16	95
Jun-16	11	18	9	15	103
Jun-15	11	17	11	19	98
Jun-14	10	11	10	11	114
Jun-13	9	11	13	27	96
Jun-12	8	12	16	23	97

Source: UBS estimates

# An estimate of the size of the bias

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- Estimate factor correlation matrix  $\hat{\Omega} = \frac{1}{T=156} \sum_t f_t f_t^T$  using instrument and OLS approaches.
- Look at ratio of the estimated factor standard deviations.

	Mkt. Cap.	12m Vol.	6m Mom.	1m Mom.	Earn. Yield	FCF Yield	3m Earn. Mom	ROE	Net Debt / EV
Jun-17	<b>1.9</b>	1.4	1.1	1.0	<b>2.1</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>2.1</b>	<b>2.5</b>	1.4
Jun-16	<b>1.8</b>	1.6	1.2	1.0	<b>1.9</b>	1.3	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>1.8</b>
Jun-15	<b>1.7</b>	1.5	1.2	1.1	<b>1.9</b>	1.6	<b>2.3</b>	<b>3.6</b>	<b>2.4</b>
Jun-14	<b>1.8</b>	1.3	1.0	1.2	1.6	<b>1.7</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>2.7</b>
Jun-13	<b>1.9</b>	1.2	1.0	1.1	<b>1.9</b>	1.6	<b>2.3</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>1.9</b>
Jun-12	<b>1.7</b>	1.3	0.9	1.1	<b>1.8</b>	1.5	<b>1.8</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>1.9</b>

Source: UBS estimates

# Conclusions

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- The errors-in-variable problem in cross-section model estimation can account for the weak contribution of style to risk to overall portfolio risk.
- A possible solution is to instrument the style scores in the regressions using lagged style betas.
  - Evidence that these are strong instruments
  - Evidence that they are also uncorrelated with residual returns
- Tests on risk models for Europe suggest that the problem is particularly acute for size (market cap) and quality styles.
- This links closely to the debate between stock characteristics and stock risk betas.

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<b>Sell</b>	FSR is > 6% below the MRA.	16%	13%
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