MAZIAR M. KAZEMI

AFFILIATION

Ph.D. Candidate in Financial Economics
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PERSONAL INFORMATION

Birthday: March 17, 1991
Citizenship: U.S.A

EMPLOYMENT

03/2021 - MIT, Sloan School of Management. Research Assistant for Prof. Hui Chen and Prof. Jiang Wang

09/2018–12/2020: MIT, Sloan School of Management. Research Assistant for Prof. Lawrence Schmidt

02/2016-09/2016: MIT, Sloan School of Management. Research Assistant for Prof. Hui Chen and Prof. Adrien Verdelhan.

07/2014-07/2015: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. Senior Research Assistant in Division of International Finance, Global Modeling Studies section.

07/2013-06/2014: Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System. Research Assistant in Division of International Finance, Trade and Financial Studies section.

EDUCATION

08/2015- Ph.D., Financial Economics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Sloan School of Management

05/2013: Bachelor of Arts at Vassar College. Mathematics and Economics

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Asset Pricing, Macro-Finance, Investment, Applied Time-Series Econometrics

RESEARCH – WORKING PAPERS

Intangible Investment, Skilled Labor, and the Value Discount (with Bledi Taska). 2021. ***Job Market Paper***

Abstract: Composition matters. The composition of a firm's assets in place, and the composition of a firm's growth opportunities both affect risk and expected returns. In this paper, we study the effects of varying these compositions and show one must go beyond simple valuation ratios, namely, the book-to-market ratio, to understand firm risk. We develop a production-based asset pricing model which includes intangible and tangible assets and investment rates. The model shows that installed intangible capital and investment provide different information. The first tells us about current displacement risk, and the second tells us about future displacement risk. We take the model implications to the data and show that, indeed, high intangible investment firms are risky. The intangible investment effect is larger than the physical investment effect. Failing to account for the differential risk of intangible investment compared to phy`sical investment can explain why recent attempts to ``save" the value premium have not been wholly successful. We propose a new value factor that does not suffer a downturn in 2000 or since 2010. We rationalize the positive price of risk of intangible investment in a general equilibrium model with skilled labor and forward-looking labor demand. We validate the model's assumptions in the data using high-quality skilled labor demand data from Burning Glass Technologies. Intangible investment and skilled labor demand are intimately related, skilled labor demand is sensitive to firm exposure to displacement risk, and skilled wages reflect the marginal value of intangible capital.

Identification of Factor Risk Premia (with Peter G. Hansen). 2021.

Abstract: This paper a develops novel statistical test of whether individual factor risk premia are identified from return data in multi-factor models. We give a necessary and sufficient condition for population identification of individual risk premia, which we call the kernel-orthogonality condition. This condition is weaker than the standard rank condition commonly assumed for linear factor models. Under misspecification, our condition ensures point identification of the risk premium with minimal pricing error. We show how to test this restriction directly in reduced-rank models. Finally, we apply our test methodology to assess identification of risk premia associated with consumption growth and intermediary leverage.

Do Skilled Managers Improve Welfare? (with Ali Kakhbod). 2020.

Abstract: We propose a parsimonious equilibrium model of active managers and investors. We allow feedback effects from optimal fee-setting by managers on the expected mean returns of the manager benchmark. We show that using a standard model of the SDF from the negative performance puzzle literature, that alpha will be positive when managers add value over the benchmark asset. However, we also show that the sign of alpha is not sufficient for determining investor value, but that alpha needs to exceed some positive threshold to determine whether the existence of managers is value improving for investors. In empirical exercises, we show that this cutoff is non-trivial, and that a number of U.S. domestic equity mutual funds fall on either side of the line.

Semi-Parametric Estimation of Factor Risk-Premia.2018.

Abstract: We show that factor risk premia can be consistently estimated using a semi-parametric estimate of the stochastic discount factor without requiring a correctly specified linear factor model. We use a minimum discrepancy objective function to construct a stochastic discount factor from asset returns. In simulations, the method proposed outperforms classic estimation strategies when the model is misspecified and performs equally well even when the model is correctly specified. Empirical estimates of popular traded factors are close to their mean excess returns. For non-traded factors, we find that intermediary leverage and consumption growth carry risk-premia, while employment growth does not.

Returns to Active Management: The Case of Hedge Funds (with Ergys Islamaj). 2016.

Abstract: Do more active hedge fund managing strategies generate higher returns than the less active ones? We develop a novel approach to measuring activeness for hedge funds by estimating the dynamics of risk exposure of a large sample of live and dead equity long-short funds. We find that higher activeness is positively correlated with raw excess returns, but not with risk-adjusted returns. Furthermore, the relationship between risk-adjusted returns and activeness is likely non-linear and some specifications suggest evidence of a negative association. The results suggest that a strategy that exposes hedge funds to more frequent changes in market risk exposures comes at the expense of higher risks that are not necessarily justified by better performance.

RESEARCH – WORKS IN PROGRESS

Heterogeneous pass through of stock returns to worker earnings: Evidence from the universe of listed firms in the US (with Leonid Kogan, Dimitris Papanikolaou, and Lawrence Schmidt)

Abstract: To what extent are workers' labor earnings exposed to firm- and industry-specific stock returns, and for whom are these exposures the largest? These questions have important implications for optimal portfolio choice, characterizing the nature of insurance provided through the firm, and understanding sources of cross-sectional variation in income risk across different groups of workers. To address this question, we link long panels of employer-employee matched administrative earnings records from the United States with financial characteristics and stock return data for the universe of publicly traded companies. These rich data allow us to study in detail the extent to which workers' future earnings trajectories are linked with returns of their employers as well as firms in related industries and to estimate heterogeneous effects depending on predetermined worker (e.g., education, income, age, future worker mobility) and firm characteristics (e.g., size, leverage, profitability, idiosyncratic volatility, etc.) and to uncover important nonlinearities in these relationships

[Results have not been disclosed but will be available soon].

Using Machine Learning to Measure Hedge Fund Activeness (with Xiahoui Yang)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

02/2018-05/2018: Teaching Assistant. 15.450/15.S13 Analytics of Finance. (Prof. Hui Chen) at MIT, Sloan School of Management

02/2017-05/2017: Teaching Assistant. 15.450/15.S13 Analytics of Finance. (Prof. Hui Chen) at MIT, Sloan School of Management

CONFERENCE/SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS (*INDICATES PRESENTATION BY CO-AUTHOR)

2021	MIT Finance Seminar; World Finance Conference; SoFie Annual Conference*
2020	MIT Finance Lunch
2019	MIT Finance Lunch; UMass Amherst Brownbag
2018	MIT Finance Lunch; SoFiE Financial Econometrics Summer School at the University of Chicago, Yale SOM Finance Doctoral Conference at Yale SOM
2015	Georgetown Center for Economic Research Biennial Conference*; MIT Finance Lunch.
2014	Federal Reserve Board RA Research Roundtable.

AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS

03/2021:	Golub (1978) Fellowship from MIT Sloan
03/2018:	Golub (1978) Fellowship from MIT Sloan
03/2017:	Golub (1978) Fellowship from MIT Sloan
03/2016:	Golub (1978) Fellowship from MIT Sloan
08/2015:	MIT Sloan PhD Fellowship from MIT Sloan
05/2015:	Emilie Louise Wells Fellowship from Vassar College
05/2013:	Honors in Economics from Vassar College.
05/2013:	Overall Honors from Vassar College

RECENT PUBLISHED WORKS OF FICTION

"Waiting for the Sign" *34th Parallel*. 2021

SOFTWARE KNOWLEDGE

MATLAB, Dynare, R, Mathematica, Stata, SAS

LANGUAGES

Fluent in English, Farsi.
Conversational in French.

References

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Victor J. Menezes (1972) Career Development Professor of Finance
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