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EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy, Economics [Expected June, 2009]

University of Washington

Dissertation: A Bayesian Analysis of Model Uncertainty and Development

Committee: Professor Theo Eicher (chair), Professor Yu-chin Chen, Professor Sibel Sirakaya

Master of Arts, Economics, 2007

University of Washington

Bachelor of Science, Business Administration, 1996

University of Colorado at Boulder

RESEARCH INTERESTS

- *International Economics*
- *Macroeconomics*

PUBLICATIONS

“In Search of an Environmental Kuznets Curve in Sulphur Dioxide Concentrations: a Bayesian Model Averaging Approach,” *Environment and Development Economics*, 2008, Vol. 13(6), pp. 795-822 (joint with Theo Eicher) [http://journals.cambridge.org/repo_A28bVque]

WORKING PAPERS

“Initial Conditions and Heterogeneity in Cross-Country Growth: An Iterative Bayesian Model Averaging (IBMA) Analysis” [*job market paper*]

“Different Growth for Different Folks? Reexamining East Asian Growth Determinants through Iterative Bayesian Model Averaging (IBMA)”

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Washington

- *Instructor:* Principles of Macroeconomics, 2008; Principles of Microeconomics, 2007-2008; International Macroeconomics, 2009

- *Teaching assistant*: Principles of Microeconomics, 2004, 2009 (lead teaching assistant for Professor Keith Leffler, Fall 2004)
- Average teaching effectiveness score (from student evaluations): 4.5 out of 5.0

HONORS

- ***Best Macroeconomics Paper***, University of Washington graduate student awards, 2007, “In Search of an Environmental Kuznets Curve in Sulphur Dioxide Concentrations: a Bayesian Model Averaging Approach” (joint with Theo Eicher)
- University of Colorado Alumni Scholar

OTHER

- University of Washington graduate student mentor
- Languages: Romanian, Spanish – conversational; Mandarin, French – some knowledge
- Work experience and travel in over 30 countries

REFERENCES

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ABSTRACTS

“In Search of an Environmental Kuznets Curve in Sulphur Dioxide Concentrations: a Bayesian Model Averaging Approach”

Abstract: The exact specification and motivation for an environmental Kuznets curve (EKC) is the subject of a vast literature in environmental economics. A remarkably diverse set of econometric approaches and candidate regressors have been proposed, which highlights the degree of model uncertainty surrounding the relationship between environmental quality and pollution. We introduce Bayesian model averaging (BMA) to the EKC analysis to examine a) whether a sulphur dioxide EKC exists, and if so, b) which income/pollution specification is supported by the data. BMA addresses model uncertainty as part of the empirical strategy by incorporating the uncertainty about the validity of competing theories into the posterior distribution. We find only weak support for an EKC, which disappears altogether when we address issues relating to the extreme oversampling of two industrialized countries in the sample. In contrast, our results highlight the relative importance of political economy and

site-specific variables (specifically executive constraints and precipitation variation) in explaining pollution outcomes. Trade is shown to play an important indirect role, as it moderates the influence of the composition effect on pollution.

“Different Growth for Different Folks? Reexamining East Asian Growth Determinants through Iterative Bayesian Model Averaging (IBMA)”

Abstract: This paper applies Iterative Bayesian Model Averaging (IBMA) to a broad cross-country dataset to see if East Asia grew differently than the rest of the world. Unlike prior studies which merely include an East Asia dummy variable, this study allows for parameter heterogeneity in several oft-cited factors that have been tied to East Asian growth. The IBMA analysis finds evidence that primary schooling and labor market rigidity played a much larger role in East Asian growth than for growth in other regions. Specifically, greater labor market flexibility and higher levels of primary schooling appear to be strongly linked to greater East Asian growth.

“Initial Conditions and Heterogeneity in Cross-Country Growth: An Iterative Bayesian Model Averaging (IBMA) Analysis”

Abstract: This paper tests for parameter heterogeneity in cross-country growth determinants due to threshold effects in initial income and human capital, and allows for model uncertainty in growth determinants through use of Iterative Bayesian Model Averaging (IBMA, a procedure which runs BMA recursively on subsets of data and thus allows for a large number of candidate regressors to be processed efficiently). Allowing for model uncertainty in cross-country growth studies is crucial since while scores of theory-supported growth determinants have been proposed, the “true” underlying growth regression is not known. Further, while several authors have found evidence of multiple regimes due to initial conditions, and some have allowed for model uncertainty, they have only tested for parameter heterogeneity in the original Solow variables or in a limited set of explanatory variables (thus not allowing for heterogeneous growth in many potential covariates, and not making the results fully comparable to any variable-rich cross-country growth dataset).

This study builds on past work by allowing for model uncertainty and parameter heterogeneity in a full suite of candidate regressors from a well-known cross-country growth dataset. Initial income and human capital (public education share) are found to be important threshold variables for growth heterogeneity, which lends supports to Durlauf and Johnson’s (1995) and Masanjala and Papageorgiou’s (2004) findings but contradicts Crespo Cuaresma and Doppelhofer (2007) who also employ Bayesian techniques.

* Updated March 24, 2009