

The influence function of semiparametric estimators

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There are many economic parameters that depend on nonparametric first steps. Examples include games, dynamic discrete choice, average exact consumer surplus, and treatment effects. Often estimators of these parameters are asymptotically equivalent to a sample average of an object referred to as the influence function. The influence function is useful in local policy analysis, in evaluating local sensitivity of estimators, and constructing debiased machine learning estimators. We show that the influence function is a Gateaux derivative with respect to a smooth deviation evaluated at a point mass. This result generalizes the classic [Von Mises \(1947\)](#) and [Hampel \(1974\)](#) calculation to estimators that depend on smooth nonparametric first steps. We give explicit influence functions for first steps that satisfy exogenous or endogenous orthogonality conditions. We use these results to generalize the omitted variable bias formula for regression to policy analysis for and sensitivity to structural changes. We apply this analysis and find no sensitivity to endogeneity of average equivalent variation estimates in a gasoline demand application.

KEYWORDS. Influence function, semiparametric estimation, NPIV.

JEL CLASSIFICATION. C13, C14, C20, C26, C36.

1. INTRODUCTION

There are many estimators of economic parameters that depend on nonparametric first steps. Examples include games, dynamic discrete choice, average consumer surplus, and treatment effects. Often these estimators are asymptotically equivalent to a sample average. The object being averaged is referred to as the influence function.

The influence function has several important uses. It can be used for quantifying local policy effects. For example, [Firpo, Fortin, and Lemieux \(2009\)](#) used influence functions to quantify local policy effects of changes in explanatory variables on quantiles or other characteristics of a distribution. We give local policy effects of structural changes.

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The influence function can also be used to measure sensitivity of estimators to misspecification. Its use for qualitative sensitivity measures is where the influence function gets its name in the robust estimation literature; see [Hampel \(1974\)](#). The expected GMM influence function under a misspecified distribution is the GMM sensitivity measure given in [Andrews, Gentzkow, and Shapiro \(2017\)](#). We quantify sensitivity for objects that depend on solutions to orthogonality conditions. We use this quantification to generalize the classic omitted variables bias formula for regression coefficients to many other objects. We apply these results to estimate sensitivity of equivalent variation bounds to endogeneity of gasoline demand.

Another important use of the influence function is construction of orthogonal moment functions where first step estimation has no first-order effect on moments. Orthogonal moment functions reduce bias in GMM from model selection and regularization of the first step and enable machine learning for high-dimensional first steps, as in [Chernozhukov et al. \(2018\)](#) and [Chernozhukov et al. \(2020\)](#). The influence function formulae given here are used in [Chernozhukov et al. \(2020\)](#) to derive orthogonal moment functions. The influence function can also be used to compare asymptotic efficiency of estimators and find efficient ones. Efficient estimation is important in many econometric settings where weak assumptions are made to make models empirically plausible. Knowing the form of the influence function also facilitates asymptotic theory by showing in advance the conclusion of an asymptotic expansion.

[Newey \(1994\)](#) showed that the influence function of an estimator could be obtained from the probability limit (plim) of the estimator. A functional equation was given that can be solved for the influence function without an asymptotic, large sample expansion. [Hahn \(1998\)](#) and [Hirano, Imbens, and Ridder \(2003\)](#) applied this approach to derive the influence function of important treatment effect estimators. A primary purpose of this paper is to give a simpler way of calculating the influence function and to illustrate its usefulness for applied researchers. We show that the influence function can be calculated from a derivative of the plim with respect to a scalar mixture of the true distribution with another distribution. This calculation extends the classic [Von Mises \(1947\)](#), [Hampel \(1974\)](#), and [Huber \(1981\)](#) Gateaux derivative calculation to objects that exist only for continuous distributions. We also illustrate how this Gateaux derivative can be used to facilitate empirical research on local policy analysis, quantify sensitivity of estimators, and construct orthogonal moment functions.

The functional equation in [Newey \(1994\)](#) has been solved to obtain influence functions in many important settings. [Newey \(1994\)](#) did so for estimators that depend on a first step least squares projection or a probability density function (pdf). [Bajari, Hong, Krainer, and Nekipelov \(2010\)](#) and [Bajari, Chernozhukov, Hong, and Nekipelov \(2009\)](#) did so for game models and [Hahn and Ridder \(2013, 2016\)](#) did so for nonparametric generated regressors. We use the Gateaux derivative calculation to derive influence functions for first steps that solve orthogonality conditions, both exogenous and endogenous. These calculations provide explicit influence function formulae for a variety of estimators in addition to those already in the literature. The calculations also illustrate the simplicity and usefulness of the formulae here in making the influence function more

widely available for empirical research involving local policy analysis, estimator sensitivity, or orthogonal moment functions.

We estimate sensitivity to endogeneity of bounds on average equivalent variation for gasoline demand. This application is motivated by the difficulty of simultaneously allowing for price endogeneity and general preferences in demand analysis. Hausman and Newey (2016) gave nonparametric estimators of bounds on average equivalent variation with general preferences that are independent of prices and income. For scalar heterogeneity and endogenous prices, Blundell, Horowitz, and Parey (2017) estimated the gasoline demand function via nonparametric quantile instrumental variables, which is computationally difficult and only allows scalar heterogeneity. The bound sensitivity we give is much simpler and allows general heterogeneity. We find that for gasoline demand the average equivalent variation bounds are not very sensitive to endogeneity and that the sensitivity is not statistically significant.

A distinctive feature of our approach is that the influence function is obtained directly from the moment conditions defining the estimator without solving an integral equation or going through a probabilistic calculations in the form of asymptotic arguments. In this sense, our result allows us to study semiparametric estimators analogously to the estimators obtained based on the parametric maximum likelihood or the generalized method of moment conditions. Using asymptotic arguments, Robinson (1988), Powell, Stock, and Stoker (1989), Goldstein and Messer (1992), Ichimura (1993), Klein and Spady (1993), Sherman (1993), and Chaudhuri, Doksum, and Samarov (1997) gave influence function formulae for important semiparametric estimators. Newey (1994) gave general explicit influence function formulae where a first step is an infinite dimensional regressions or pdf. Ai and Chen (2007, 2012), Ichimura and Lee (2010), Ackerberg et al. (2014), Chen and Liao (2015), and Chen and Pouzo (2015) gave interesting and useful characterizations of influence functions for estimators with first steps that solve conditional moment restrictions or that are maximizers of an objective function. The results of this paper are complementary to this previous work in providing explicit formulae for influence functions for estimators that solve orthogonality conditions. Such explicit formula are useful for policy and sensitivity analysis and for construction of orthogonal moment functions.

A primary objective of this paper is to provide a method to compute the influence functions for semiparametric estimators. The influence function of an estimator may be different than the efficient influence function for the parameter of a semiparametric model considered, for example, by Bickel et al. (1993). These do coincide in models where a parameter is exactly identified; see Chen and Santos (2015). One can think of the object derived here as the efficient influence function for the parameter that is defined as the plim of an estimator for a general, unrestricted distribution. This parameter is exactly identified in the model with the unrestricted distribution so the efficient influence function coincides with the influence function of the estimator. This is the approach taken by Newey (1994) to finding the influence function of an estimator. We simplify this approach in a way that makes it more applicable to empirical research.

Validity of the influence function calculation given here depends on distributional variation that is a smooth approximation to a distribution that puts all probability on

a point, that is, is a point mass. After the first version of this paper appeared on arXiv, [Luedtke, Carone, and van der Laan \(2015\)](#) and [Carone, Luedtke, and van der Laan \(2016\)](#) used such deviations in estimation. This construction is useful in that setting, but we emphasize that we have a different goal here; to calculate the influence function of any semiparametric estimator.

[Mukhin \(2019\)](#) used the influence function to derive local effects of changing one object of interest on another object of interest. Also, the local effects are integrated to obtain global effects. This work also shows the usefulness of the influence functional calculation given here.

Summarizing, the contributions of this paper are to (i) give a simpler way of calculating the influence function; (ii) derive explicit influence function formulae for functions satisfying exogenous and endogenous orthogonality conditions; (iii) give local policy effects and sensitivity to structural changes and illustrate their use in empirical research; and (iv) show absence of local sensitivity to endogeneity of equivalent variation in a gasoline demand application.

In Section 2, we give the Gateaux derivative formula for the influence function and describe several important uses of this formula. Section 3 gives the influence function for exogenous orthogonality conditions and uses that to derive local policy effects and sensitivity for structural change. It is shown that these formula generalize the classic omitted variables bias formula. Section 4 gives the influence function for endogenous orthogonality conditions. Section 5 discusses extensions and conclusions. Appendices in the Online Supplementary Material ([Ichimura and Newey \(2022\)](#)) give regularity conditions for validity of the influence function calculation, characterize the influence function for minimum distance estimators, and extend the explicit influence function formulae to misspecified orthogonality conditions.

2. THE INFLUENCE FUNCTION AND ITS USES

The estimators and objects in this paper are allowed to depend on a first-step nonparametric estimator. We refer to these estimators as semiparametric. We denote such an estimator by $\hat{\theta}$, which is a function of the data W_1, \dots, W_n where n is the number of observations. Throughout the paper, we will assume that the data observations W_i are i.i.d. with some cumulative distribution function (CDF) F_0 . We let θ_0 denote the probability limit of $\hat{\theta}$ when F_0 is the distribution of W_i .

In this paper, we focus on asymptotically linear estimators that satisfy

$$\sqrt{n}(\hat{\theta} - \theta_0) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{n}} \sum_{i=1}^n \psi(W_i) + o_p(1), \quad (2.1)$$

$$E[\psi(W)] = 0, \quad E[\psi(W)^T \psi(W)] < \infty.$$

The asymptotic variance of $\hat{\theta}$ is then $E[\psi(W)\psi(W)^T]$. The function $\psi(w)$ is referred to as the influence function, following terminology of [Hampel \(1974\)](#). It gives the influence of a single observation in the leading term of the expansion in equation (2.1). It also quantifies the effect of a small change in the distribution of W on the probability limit of

$\hat{\theta}$ as we further explain below. Very many root- n consistent semiparametric estimators are asymptotically linear under sufficient regularity conditions, including M-estimators, Z-estimators, estimators based on U-statistics, and many others; see [Bickel et al. \(1993\)](#) and [Van der Vaart \(1998\)](#).

The influence function of an estimator can be obtained without deriving the stochastic expansion in equation (2.1) as in [Newey \(1994\)](#). Let F be any distribution that is unrestricted except for regularity conditions and $\theta(F)$ denote the probability limit of $\hat{\theta}$ when F is the CDF of W . Here, $\theta(F)$ can be thought of as the probability limit of $\hat{\theta}$ under general misspecification where F is only required to satisfy some regularity conditions (like some random variables being continuously distributed and/or existence of certain moments) but is otherwise unrestricted. Also, let $\{F_\beta\}$ be any parametric family of distributions passing through F_0 with $F_\beta = F_0$ when $\beta = 0$ and satisfying certain regularity conditions with score (derivative of log-likelihood) $S_\beta(w)$ at $\beta = 0$. Then by [Van der Vaart \(1991\)](#), it follows that the influence function satisfies

$$\frac{\partial \theta(F_\beta)}{\partial \beta} = E[\psi(W)S_\beta(W)], \quad (2.2)$$

when the estimator $\hat{\theta}$ is locally regular in the sense discussed in [Van der Vaart \(1991\)](#). This is a functional equation from which $\psi(w)$ may be obtained by varying $\{F_\beta\}$ and the associated score $S_\beta(w)$. In several important settings, the influence function has been obtained by solving this functional equation without the stochastic expansion in equation (2.1). [Newey \(1994\)](#) did this for first-step regression and density estimation. [Hahn \(1998\)](#) obtained the influence function for the regression estimator of the average treatment effect and [Hirano, Imbens, and Ridder \(2003\)](#) for inverse propensity score weighted estimators. [Hahn and Ridder \(2013, 2016\)](#) did so for first step generated regressors and control functions and [Bajari et al. \(2009, 2010\)](#) for estimating game models.

A main purpose of this paper is to give a simpler, more direct way of calculating the influence than solving equation (2.2). Let H denote a CDF such that $\theta(F_\tau)$ exists for $F_\tau = (1 - \tau)F_0 + \tau H$ where τ is a scalar with $0 \leq \tau < C$ for $0 < C < 1$. Equation (2.1) and regularity conditions discussed in Appendix A imply that

$$\frac{d\theta(F_\tau)}{d\tau} = \int \psi(w)H(dw), \quad E[\psi(W)] = 0, \quad E[\psi(W)^2] < \infty, \quad (2.3)$$

where throughout the paper $d/d\tau$ denotes a derivative from the right at $\tau = 0$. This equation suggests a direct way to calculate the influence function:

Step I: Calculate $d\theta(F_\tau)/d\tau$ for any H such that the derivative exists;

Step II: Evaluate the derivative formula at $H = \Delta_w$, where Δ_w is the CDF with $\Pr(W = w) = 1$, to obtain $\psi(w) = \int \psi(\tilde{w})\Delta_w(d\tilde{w})$ as a function of w .

Equation (2.3) does not justify Step II because the derivative need not exist when $H = \Delta_w$. In particular $\theta(F_\tau)$ may not be well-defined when $\theta(F)$ depends on a pdf or conditional expectation because of the discrete component Δ_w of $F_\tau = (1 - \tau)F_0 + \tau\Delta_w$. The nonexistence of a pdf of F_τ of $(1 - \tau)F_0 + \tau\Delta_w$ at any $\tau > 0$ can make $\theta(F_\tau)$ undefined. Nevertheless, Step II is justified as a limit as H approaches Δ_w , similar to [Lebesgue \(1904\)](#)

differentiation in analysis; for example, see [Wheeden and Zygmund \(1977\)](#). A precise justification for Step II is given in Appendix A.

The calculation in Steps I and II generalizes the classic [Hampel \(1974\)](#) formula, $\psi(w) = d\theta((1 - \tau)F_0 + \tau\Delta_w)/d\tau$, to cases where existence of $\theta(F)$ requires some components of W be continuously distributed. Such cases are very important for semiparametric estimators where $\theta(F)$ can depend on limits of nonparametric estimators of densities, conditional expectations, or other objects whose existence requires W have continuously distributed components. Steps I and II provide a simpler and more direct way of obtaining $\psi(w)$ than solving the integral equation (2.2).

The influence function does not exist when $\theta(F)$ does not satisfy the [Stein \(1956\)](#) necessary conditions for existence of a root-n consistency estimator. In that case Steps I and II will fail. To illustrate, suppose W is continuously distributed with pdf $f_0(w)$ and $\theta(F) = f(\bar{w})$ is the pdf of W at some fixed \bar{w} . In that case,

$$\frac{d\theta(F_\tau)}{d\tau} = h(\bar{w}) - f_0(\bar{w}). \quad (2.4)$$

Because $h(\bar{w})$ is the pdf of $H(w)$ at the point \bar{w} it cannot be represented as the expectation over H of a function with finite second moment. In general, Steps I and II will fail whenever equation (2.3) is not satisfied. As in equation (2.4), this failure will often be evident in the calculation of $d\theta(F_\tau)/d\tau$.

Equation (2.3) motivates the use of the influence function in empirical work. The Gateaux derivative $d\theta(F_\tau)/d\tau$ is the local effect of changing the distribution F on the object $\theta(F)$. If we broaden the interpretation of $\theta(F)$ to include economic objects of interest, such as a feature of the distribution of outcome variables, then $d\theta(F_\tau)/d\tau$ can be thought of as a local policy effect of changing the distribution of the data. Equation (2.3) then can be used to obtain the local policy effect from the influence function, as did [Firpo, Fortin, and Lemieux \(2009\)](#) for the policy effect of changing the distribution of regressors. When $\theta(F)$ is the probability limit of an estimator $\hat{\theta}$, we can think of $d\theta(F_\tau)/d\tau$ as the local sensitivity of that estimator to changes in F , which gives local effects of misspecification. The GMM sensitivity analysis of [Andrews, Gentzkow, and Shapiro \(2017\)](#) has precisely the form of equation (2.3), as will be discussed in Section 2.2. In addition, when $\theta(F)$ is the true expectation of an identifying moment function evaluated at the limit of a first step estimator, the influence function can be used to create orthogonal moments that have zero Gateaux derivative with respect to the first step. As discussed in [Chernozhukov et al. \(2018\)](#), this use of the influence function is helpful for debiased machine learning of objects of interest.

In the remainder of this section, we describe more fully these important uses of the influence function that are of direct interest to empirical researchers. Here, we show how this paper can be applied to obtain novel policy effects of structural change, local sensitivity measures and Hausman tests, and orthogonal moment functions.

2.1 Local policy analysis of structural changes

In many settings, $\theta(F)$ may be an economic quantity of interest. Changes in F can sometimes be thought of as changes in a policy. From equation (2.3), we see that $\int \psi(w)H(dw)$

is the derivative of $\theta(F)$ as F_τ changes away from F_0 in the direction $H - F_0$. If H is thought of as resulting from a change in policy, then $\int \psi(w)H(dw)$ will be the derivative of the economic quantity of interest with respect to that policy change, that is, a local policy effect.

Firpo, Fortin, and Lemieux (2009) derived such effects where $\theta(F)$ is specified as some feature of the marginal distribution of an outcome variable Y and the change in policy is a change in the distribution of explanatory variables X . Because $\theta(F)$ depends only on the marginal distribution of Y , the influence function of $\theta(F)$ will be $\psi(y)$ that depends only on y . For example, if $\theta(F)$ is the p th quantile of F , satisfying $F_Y(\theta(F)) = p$, then $\psi(y) = [1(y < \theta_0) - p]/f_{Y_0}(\theta_0)$, where $f_{Y_0}(y)$ is the true marginal pdf of Y . Because the distribution of X is different in H but nothing else is different than in F_0 , the conditional distribution of Y given X will be the same for H as it is for F_0 . Then by iterated expectations, the local policy effect is

$$\frac{d\theta(F_\tau)}{d\tau} = \int \psi(y)H(dw) = E_H[\psi(Y)] = E_H[E[\psi(Y)|X]].$$

Firpo, Fortin, and Lemieux (2009) analyzed such policy effects for quantiles of Y , other objects $\theta(F)$ of interest, and for a variety of alternative policy shifts in the distribution of X as represented by H .

One can also specify the policy effect of a structural change where the conditional distribution of Y given X changes and the marginal distribution of X remains unchanged. The local policy effect of a structural change is

$$\frac{d\theta(F_\tau)}{d\tau} = E_H[\psi(Y)] = E[E_H[\psi(Y)|X]].$$

Here, we see that the local effect of a structural change in the direction $H - F_0$ is captured by the conditional expectation $E_H[\psi(Y)|X]$ of the influence function $\psi(Y)$ for the distribution H .

Other local policy effects can be considered by specifying $\theta(F)$ to be something other than a feature of the distribution of a random variable Y . One example of such a $\theta(F)$ is a bound on average equivalent variation from Hausman and Newey (2016). The Gateaux derivative formula in equation (2.3) can be used to derive local policy effects of structural changes on this and many other objects. In Section 3, we do so for $\theta(F)$ that depends on conditional location.

Specification and estimation of global policy effects using quantile regressions was developed by Machada and Mata (2005), Albrecht, Bjorklund, and Vroman (2003), and Melly (2005). Estimators of global effects based distribution regression were developed by Chernozhukov, Fernandez-Val, and Melly (2013). Local policy effects are useful for evaluating small policies. Also, Mukhin (2019) showed that global policy effects can be obtained from integrating local effects, making local effects of interest even for evaluation of global effects.

2.2 Local sensitivity and local Hausman tests

Quantifying local sensitivity of an estimator to misspecification, or more generally to a change in distribution of the data, is another important use of the influence function. Equation (2.3) gives the Gateaux derivative of the probability limit $\theta(F)$ in the direction $H - F_0$. If the distribution H allows for misspecification, then $\int \psi(w)H(dw)$ measures sensitivity of $\theta(F)$ to local misspecification. More generally, if H is a different distribution than that of the data, then $\int \psi(w)H(dw)$ measures the sensitivity of $\theta(F)$ to a distribution shift. Qualitative and quantitative sensitivity measures can be constructed based on $\psi(w)$. A qualitative sensitivity characteristic is boundedness of $\psi(w)$, which guarantees that $d\theta(F_\tau)/d\tau$ is bounded over all possible H . This is the classic robustness characteristic of Hampel (1974) and Huber (1981) that is defined by boundedness of the influence function.

Quantitative measures of estimator sensitivity can also be based on $\psi(w)$. Conley, Hansen, and Rossi (2012) and Andrews, Gentzkow, and Shapiro (2017) gave measures of sensitivity of IV and GMM estimators, respectively, to moment misspecification. The sensitivity measure for GMM is exactly $\int \psi(w)H(dw)$ for the GMM influence function. To explain, suppose that there is a vector function $g(w, \theta)$ of a data observation w and parameter vector θ satisfying a moment condition $E[g(W, \theta_0)] = 0$. A GMM estimator is obtained as $\hat{\theta} = \arg \min_{\theta} \hat{g}(\theta)' \hat{\Psi} \hat{g}(\theta)$ where $\hat{g}(\theta) = \sum_{i=1}^n g(W_i, \theta)/n$ are sample moments and $\hat{\Psi}$ is a positive semidefinite weighting matrix. It is well known that the influence function for GMM under correct specification (i.e., $E[g(W, \theta_0)] = 0$) is

$$\psi(w) = -(G'\Psi G)^{-1} G'\Psi g(w, \theta_0), \quad G = \frac{\partial}{\partial \theta} E[g(W, \theta)]|_{\theta=\theta_0}, \quad \Psi = \text{plim}(\hat{\Psi}).$$

Therefore, for GMM the local sensitivity will be

$$\frac{d\theta(F_\tau)}{d\tau} = \int \psi(w)H(dw) = -(G'\Psi G)^{-1} G'\Psi \int g(w, \theta_0)H(dw).$$

This is the local sensitivity formula given in Andrews, Gentzkow, and Shapiro (2017). When the dimension of $g(w, \theta)$ is bigger than that of θ , this formula imposes correct specification of the moments, that is, $E[g(W, \theta_0)] = 0$. Imbens (1997) gave the influence function for GMM allowing for misspecification and Mukhin (2019) described its use for sensitivity analysis.

Equation (2.3) gives the local sensitivity of any estimator to a change of F in the direction $H - F_0$. In Section 3, we derive local sensitivity of a functional of conditional location and illustrate its use in estimating sensitivity of average equivalent variation bounds to endogeneity of gasoline prices.

Local sensitivity can be used to construct local Hausman specification tests for any object of interest with an influence function. A first-order expansion gives

$$\theta(H) - \theta(F_0) = \theta(F_1) - \theta(F_0) \approx \left(\frac{d\theta(F_\tau)}{d\tau} (\tau - 0) \right)_{\tau=1} = \int \psi(w)H(dw). \quad (2.5)$$

Thus we see that $\int \psi(w)H(dw)$ is a first-order approximation to the effect of changing the distribution F on the probability limit $\theta(F)$ of the estimator $\hat{\theta}$ corresponding

to Hausman's (1978) idea of checking sensitivity of an estimator of an object of interest to model assumptions. A estimator of $d\theta(F_\tau)/d\tau$ can be formed from an estimator of the influence function $\psi(w)$ and an alternative H by substituting the estimated influence function in equation (2.3) and integrating over H . Standard errors can be constructed using asymptotic theory or the bootstrap and an asymptotic t-statistic formed in the usual way. From equation (2.5), we see that such a t-statistic is a local Hausman test of the effect of misspecification in the direction H . This approach can give local Hausman specification tests for any estimator with an influence function in any direction H . In Section 3, we illustrate such tests by testing for a significant effect of endogeneity of price on average equivalent variation for gasoline demand. It is beyond the scope of this paper to develop the general asymptotic theory of such tests. We discuss these tests here to illustrate the usefulness of the influence function in empirical work.

The covariance between the influence functions of two different estimators was suggested by Gentzkow and Shapiro (2015) and Andrews, Gentzkow, and Shapiro (2017) as a measure of sensitivity of one estimator with respect to another. Mukhin (2019) gave a geometric interpretation of this covariance as a directional derivative of one functional with respect another. As Mukhin (2019) shows, the covariance between two influence functions is the Gateaux derivative of $\theta(F)$ with respect to a departure from F_0 in a direction G that corresponds to a change in the other functional. In this way, the influence functions for two different estimators are useful for constructing measures of sensitivity. For brevity, we omit further specifics but note that this is an active and important research topic that is potentially useful for empirical work, where influence functions are key ingredients.

2.3 Orthogonal moment functions

Another important use of influence functions is in the construction of orthogonal moment functions for GMM with a nonparametric first step. Orthogonal moment functions are those where the expected moment functions have zero derivative with respect to the first step. GMM with orthogonal moment functions does not suffer from the large model selection and regularization biases of some estimators based on nonorthogonal moment functions. Avoiding such biases can be particularly important for machine learning first steps, as discussed in Chernozhukov et al. (2018) and shown in Chernozhukov et al. (2020).

To describe orthogonal moment functions, consider a vector of functions $g(w, \gamma, \theta)$ where γ is a (possibly) nonparametric first step with true value γ_0 , θ is the parameter vector of interest, and the moment condition $E[g(W, \gamma_0, \theta)] = 0$ is satisfied. This moment condition can be thought of as an identifying moment for θ_0 , with γ_0 obtained from a first step. In general, the first-order effect of γ on $E[g(W, \gamma, \theta)]$ may be nonzero, leading to bias in a GMM estimator based on sample moments $\hat{g}(\theta) = \sum_{i=1}^n g(W_i, \hat{\gamma}, \theta)/n$, where $\hat{\gamma}$ is a first step estimator of γ_0 that is plugged in. As shown in Chernozhukov et al. (2020), orthogonal moment functions can be constructed by adding to the identifying moments the influence function $\phi(w, \gamma_0, \alpha_0, \theta)$ of $E[g(W, \gamma(F), \theta)]$, where α are additional unknown functions on which ϕ may depend and $\gamma(F)$ is the

probability limit of the first step estimator $\hat{\gamma}$ when F is the true distribution of W . This $\phi(w, \gamma, \alpha, \theta)$ can be calculated by Steps I and II applied to equation (2.3) for $E[g(W, \gamma(F), \theta)]$, that is,

$$\frac{dE[g(W, \gamma(F_\tau), \theta)]}{d\tau} = \int \phi(w, \gamma_0, \alpha_0, \theta)H(dw), \quad E[\phi(W, \gamma_0, \alpha_0, \theta)] = 0. \quad (2.6)$$

Orthogonal moment functions can then be constructed as

$$\psi(w, \gamma, \alpha, \theta) = g(w, \gamma, \theta) + \phi(w, \gamma, \alpha, \theta).$$

The influence function $\phi(w, \gamma_0, \alpha_0, \theta)$ of $E[g(W, \gamma(F), \theta)]$ is an ‘‘adjustment term,’’ or first- step influence function (FSIF) analyzed in [Newey \(1994\)](#), that accounts for the presence of the first step $\hat{\gamma}$ in the moment functions. Adding this FSIF to the original, identifying moment functions $g(w, \gamma, \theta)$ makes orthogonal moments. Calculating the FSIF from Steps I and II is simpler than obtaining ϕ from the functional equation in [Newey \(1994\)](#). This simplicity facilitates the construction of orthogonal moment functions. We illustrate by calculating the FSIF ϕ for solutions to exogenous orthogonality conditions in Section 3 and endogenous orthogonality conditions in Section 4. In [Chernozhukov et al. \(2020\)](#), the FSIF for quantile orthogonality conditions is used to obtain debiased machine learning estimators for functionals of solutions to quantile conditions.

Local policy analysis, sensitivity measures, and constructing orthogonal moment functions are three uses of the influence function that are of direct interest for empirical research. The results of this paper are useful in providing a simpler method of calculating the influence function that can then be used to construct local policy effects of structural changes, local sensitivity analysis, and local Hausman tests for any estimator with an influence function, and orthogonal moment functions that can be used in debiased machine learning. In the next section, we illustrate by deriving the influence function for conditional location effects, constructing sensitivity measures for estimators of such effects, and applying them to average equivalent variation bounds.

Another important use of the influence function is in asymptotic efficiency comparisons, where it is convenient to bypass the stochastic expansion in equation (2.1). Knowing the influence function is also useful for showing that the asymptotic expansion in equation (2.1) is satisfied, because the influence function implies the precise form of the remainder. For brevity, we omit further discussions of these uses of the influence function.

3. EXOGENOUS ORTHOGONALITY CONDITIONS

Many interesting economic and causal effects depend on a function that solves an orthogonality condition and depends only on exogenous instrumental variables. Such functions include high dimensional or additive specifications of orthogonality conditions for quantiles or expectiles. Effects of interest include bounds on average equivalent variation and average derivatives. In this section, we derive the influence function

for such effects using Step I and Step II. We quantify local policy effects and local sensitivity for these effects. In addition, we give an application to sensitivity of bounds on average equivalent variation to endogeneity in gasoline demand.

3.1 Functions satisfying exogenous orthogonality conditions

The unknown functions we consider depend on a vector of regressors X that may be infinite dimensional. We will denote a possible unknown function by γ with $\gamma(x)$ being its realization at $X = x$. We will impose the restriction that γ is in a set of functions Γ that is linear and closed in mean square, meaning that every γ in Γ has finite second moment and that if $\gamma_k \in \Gamma$ for each positive integer k and $E[\{\gamma_k(X) - \gamma(X)\}^2] \rightarrow 0$ then $\gamma \in \Gamma$. We give examples of Γ in the second paragraph to follow.

We specify $\gamma_0 = \gamma(F_0)$ to be the probability limit (plim) of a nonparametric estimator $\hat{\gamma}$ when the distribution is F_0 . We suppose that γ_0 satisfies an orthogonality condition where a residual $\rho(W, \gamma)$ with finite second moment is orthogonal in the population to all $b \in \Gamma$. That is, we specify that γ_0 satisfies

$$E[b(X)\rho(W, \gamma_0)] = 0 \quad \text{for all } b \in \Gamma. \quad (3.1)$$

This is like an instrumental variables orthogonality condition where the function γ depends only on the same variables X that the instrumental variables $b(X)$ depend on. This dependence of the functions γ and instrumental variables b on the same X is the “exogenous” referred to in the title of this section. In the next section, we consider orthogonality conditions where γ may depend on different variables than X , corresponding to instrumental variables settings where there is endogeneity.

If Γ is specified to be all functions of X with finite second moment, then equation (3.1) will be a conditional moment restriction $E[\rho(W, \gamma_0)|X] = 0$. We also allow Γ to be a smaller set. For example, a set of functions of interest for high-dimensional estimation are those that are linear combinations of a sequence of functions $(b_1(X), b_2(X), \dots)$ each having finite second moment. A corresponding Γ would be limits in mean square of linear combinations $\sum_{j=1}^{\infty} \beta_j b_j(X)$ where $\beta_j \neq 0$ for only a finite number of integers j . Another example is a set of functions that are additive in distinct components of X . For $X = (X_1, X_2)$, this Γ is the mean square closure of all functions $\gamma(X) = \gamma_1(X_1) + \gamma_2(X_2)$ that are additive in X_1 and X_2 with finite second moment. The high dimensional, additive, and unrestricted specifications of Γ are each of interest.

A leading example of the residual function is $\rho(W, \gamma) = Y - \gamma(X)$ for an outcome variable Y having finite second moment. In this example, the orthogonality condition of equation (3.1) specifies that γ_0 is the least squares projection of Y on the set of functions Γ , that is, $\gamma_0 = \arg \min_{\gamma \in \Gamma} E[\{Y - \gamma(X)\}^2]$. In this example, γ_0 is the conditional expectation if Γ is all functions of X with finite second moment, or is the least squares projection of Y on the closure of linear combinations of $(b_1(X), b_2(X), \dots)$, or is the least squares projection on the closure of additive functions. Newey (1994) gave the influence function for functionals of such γ_0 .

There are other important examples of the residual function.

QUANTILE. In this case, there is an outcome variable Y and the residual function is

$$\rho(W, \gamma) = p - 1(Y < \gamma(X)),$$

where $0 < p < 1$. This $\rho(W, \gamma)$ is the derivative with respect to u of the “check function” $q_p(u) = |u|\{p1(u > 0) + (1 - p)1(u < 0)\}$ evaluated at $u = Y - \gamma(X)$; see [Koenker and Bassett \(1978\)](#). By convexity of $q_p(Y - \gamma(X))$ in γ ,

$$\gamma_0 = \arg \min_{\gamma \in \Gamma} E[q_p(Y - \gamma(X))].$$

Here, $\gamma_0(X)$ will be the p th conditional quantile of Y when Γ is unrestricted. For other specifications of Γ , the γ_0 will be the minimizer of the expected check function over Γ .

EXPECTILE. In this case, the residual function is

$$\rho(W, \gamma) = [p + (1 - 2p)1(Y < \gamma(X))](Y - \gamma(X)).$$

This $\rho(W, \gamma)$ is the derivative with respect to u of the asymmetric squared residual function $\bar{q}_p(u) = (u^2/2)\{p1(u > 0) + (1 - p)1(u < 0)\}$ evaluated at $u = Y - \gamma(X)$, as in [Newey and Powell \(1987\)](#). By convexity of $\bar{q}_p(Y - \gamma(X))$ in γ ,

$$\gamma_0 = \arg \min_{\gamma \in \Gamma} E[\bar{q}_p(Y - \gamma(X))].$$

Here, $\gamma_0(X)$ will be the p th conditional expectile of Y given X when Γ is unrestricted. For other specifications of Γ , the γ_0 will be the minimizer of the asymmetric squared residual function over Γ .

BINARY CHOICE. In this case, there is a binary outcome variable $Y \in \{0, 1\}$, a known CDF $\Lambda(a)$ with derivative (pdf) $\Lambda_a(a)$, and the residual is

$$\rho(W, \gamma) = \frac{\Lambda_a(\gamma(X))}{\Lambda(\gamma(X))[1 - \Lambda(\gamma(X))]} \{Y - \Lambda(\gamma(X))\}.$$

This $\rho(W, \gamma)$ is $\partial Q(W, a)/\partial a$ at $a = \gamma(X)$ for the negative of the binary pseudo-likelihood

$$Q(W, a) = -Y \ln \Lambda(a) - (1 - Y) \ln[1 - \Lambda(a)].$$

When $\ln(\Lambda_a(a))$ is concave, this $Q(W, a)$ will be convex in a ; see [Pratt \(1981\)](#). For example, the logit CDF $\Lambda(a) = e^a/[1 + e^a]$ has this property with $\Lambda_a(a)/\{\Lambda(a)[1 - \Lambda(a)]\} = 1$. The γ_0 will satisfy

$$\gamma_0 = \arg \min_{\gamma \in \Gamma} E[Q(W, \gamma(X))].$$

Here, $\gamma_0(X)$ will be $\Lambda^{-1}(\Pr(Y = 1|X))$ when Γ is unrestricted. For other specifications of Γ , the γ_0 will minimize the expected value of the negative log-likelihood $E[-Y \ln(\Lambda(\gamma(X))) - (1 - Y) \ln\{1 - \Lambda(\gamma(X))\}]$ over Γ .

These cases of the residual function have the common feature that $\rho(W, \gamma) = dQ(W, a)/da|_{a=\gamma(X)}$ where $Q(W, a)$ is a convex function. In all such cases, equation (3.1) will be the necessary and sufficient first-order condition for

$$\gamma_0 = \arg \min_{\gamma \in \Gamma} E[Q(W, \gamma)],$$

when the argmin exists and some regularity conditions are satisfied. We focus on the orthogonality condition because it is potentially more general.

3.2 The influence function

We derive the influence function of objects of the form

$$\theta(F) = E_F[m(W, \gamma(F))], \quad E_F[b(X)\rho(W, \gamma(F))] = 0 \quad \text{for all } b \in \Gamma. \quad (3.2)$$

Here, the object of interest is the expectation of the function $m(W, \gamma)$ at γ_0 . One example of this $\theta(F)$ is a bound on average equivalent variation discussed in Section 3.4 to follow. Other examples will be discussed later in this section.

The influence function of $\theta(F)$ will be the sum of two terms. To explain, let $F_\tau = (1 - \tau)F_0 + \tau H = F_0 + \tau(H - F_0)$, $0 < \tau < 1$, denote a convex combination of the true CDF F_0 with another CDF H as discussed in Section 2 and let $\gamma_\tau = \gamma(F_\tau)$ and $E_\tau[\cdot] = E_{F_\tau}[\cdot]$. By the chain rule of calculus,

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} \theta(F_\tau) &= \frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E_\tau[m(W, \gamma_0)] + \frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[m(W, \gamma_\tau)] \\ &= \int m(w, \gamma_0)\{H - F_0\}(dw) + \frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[m(W, \gamma_\tau)] \\ &= \int [m(w, \gamma_0) - \theta_0]H(dw) + \frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[m(W, \gamma_\tau)]. \end{aligned}$$

We see in this equation that influence function of $\theta(F)$ will be the sum of $m(w, \gamma) - \theta$ and a term $\phi(w, \gamma, \alpha)$ satisfying

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[m(W, \gamma_\tau)] = \int \phi(w, \gamma_0, \alpha_0)H(dw), \quad (3.3)$$

with

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} \theta(F_\tau) = \int \psi(w, \gamma_0, \alpha_0, \theta_0)H(dw), \quad \psi(w, \gamma, \alpha, \theta) = m(W, \gamma) - \theta + \phi(w, \gamma, \alpha)$$

The first term $m(w, \gamma) - \theta$ accounts for the unknown distribution F that averages over W in $m(W, \gamma_0) - \theta_0$. The second term $\phi(w, \gamma, \alpha)$ accounts for estimation of the unknown γ_0 satisfying the orthogonality condition of equation (3.1). This $\phi(w, \gamma, \alpha)$ is the FSIF from Newey (1994) that accounts for a nonparametric estimator of γ_0 satisfying equation (3.1). We focus here on the derivation of $\phi(w, \gamma, \alpha)$.

To derive $\phi(w, \gamma, \alpha)$, we assume that $\gamma_\tau = \gamma(F_\tau)$ satisfies the orthogonality condition in equation (3.2) for each τ so that for all $b \in \Gamma$,

$$E_\tau[b(X)\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)] \equiv 0, \quad (3.4)$$

identically in τ . We are implicitly assuming here that Γ does not depend on τ , which will hold for the F_τ of Appendix A. Differentiating this identity with respect to τ and applying the chain rule of calculus, so that the derivative is the sum of derivatives with respect to τ in $E_\tau[b(X)\rho(W, \gamma_0)]$ and $E[b(X)\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)]$, gives

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &= \frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E_\tau[b(X)\rho(W, \gamma_0)] + \frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[b(X)\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)] \\ &= \int b(x)\rho(w, \gamma_0)H(dw) + \frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[b(X)\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)], \quad \text{for all } b \in \Gamma. \end{aligned} \quad (3.5)$$

Solving gives

$$-\frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[b(X)\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)] = \int b(x)\rho(w, \gamma_0)H(dw), \quad \text{for all } b \in \Gamma.$$

The object being integrated on the right provides a candidate for FSIF $\phi(w, \gamma, \alpha)$. This equation will give us equation (3.3) if there is $\alpha_0 \in \Gamma$ with

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[m(W, \gamma_\tau)] = -\frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[\alpha_0(X)\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)]. \quad (3.6)$$

Such an $\alpha_0(X)$ will exist under the following two conditions.

ASSUMPTION 1. *There exists $v_m(X)$ such that $\partial E[m(W, \gamma_\tau)]/\partial \tau = \partial E[v_m(X)\gamma_\tau(X)]/\partial \tau$ and $E[v_m(X)^2] < \infty$.*

Generally, it will follow from the chain rule, iterated expectations, and $E[m(W, \gamma + a)|X]$ differentiable in a scalar a that

$$v_m(X) = \frac{\partial}{\partial a} E[m(W, \gamma_0 + a)|X] \Big|_{a=0}.$$

Assumption 1 is like equation (4.4) of Newey (1994) in requiring that $\partial E[m(W, \gamma_\tau)]/\partial \tau$ can be represented as the derivative of an expected product of a function $v_m(X)$ with $\gamma_\tau(X)$ where $v_m(X)$ has finite second moment. One example is $m(W, \gamma) = v_m(X)\gamma(X)$ where $m(W, \gamma)$ is simply the product of some function $v_m(X)$ with $\gamma(X)$ and the $v_m(X)$ of Assumption 1 is the same as $v_m(X)$ here. Assumption 1 is also satisfied for other important effects as further discussed below. In general, this condition with $E[v_m(X)^2] < \infty$ can be shown to be a necessary condition for $\theta(F)$ to have a finite semiparametric variance bound.

ASSUMPTION 2. *There is $v_\rho(X) < 0$ that is bounded and bounded away from zero such that $\partial E[b(X)\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)]/\partial \tau = \partial E[b(X)v_\rho(X)\gamma_\tau(X)]/\partial \tau$ for every $b \in \Gamma$.*

Generally, it will follow from the chain rule, iterated expectations, and $E[\rho(W, \gamma_0 + a)|X]$ differentiable in a scalar a that

$$v_\rho(X) = \frac{\partial}{\partial a} E[\rho(W, \gamma_0 + a)|X] \Big|_{a=0}$$

In this way, Assumption 2 allows for $\rho(W, \gamma)$ to not be continuous as long as $E[\rho(W, a)|X]$ is differentiable in a . Here, $v_\rho(X) < 0$ is a sign normalization while $v_\rho(X)$ being bounded and bounded away from zero is important for the results. For example, $v_\rho(X) = -1$ for $\rho(W, \gamma) = Y - \gamma(X)$.

Under Assumptions 1 and 2, equation (3.6) becomes

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[v_m(X)\gamma_\tau(X)] = -\frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[\alpha_0(X)v_\rho(X)\gamma_\tau(X)].$$

This equality will be satisfied if $E[v_m(X)\gamma_\tau(X)] = E[\alpha_0(X)v_\rho(X)\gamma_\tau(X)]$ for all τ . Since $\gamma_\tau \in \Gamma$, this condition will be satisfied if for all $\gamma \in \Gamma$,

$$E[v_m(X)\gamma(X)] = -E[\alpha_0(X)v_\rho(X)\gamma(X)].$$

Adding $E[\alpha_0(X)v_\rho(X)\gamma(X)]$ to both sides gives

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &= E[v_m(X)\gamma(X)] + E[\alpha_0(X)v_\rho(X)\gamma(X)] \\ &= E\left[\{-v_\rho(X)\} \left\{ \frac{-v_m(X)}{v_\rho(X)} - \alpha_0(X) \right\} \gamma(X) \right] \quad \text{for all } \gamma \in \Gamma, \end{aligned}$$

where the second equality follows by multiplying and dividing by $-v_\rho(X)$ in $E[v_m(X)\gamma(X)]$. This is the orthogonality condition that is necessary and sufficient for $\alpha_0(X)$ to be the weighted least squares projection of $-v_m(X)/v_\rho(X)$ on Γ for weight $-v_\rho(X)$.

PROPOSITION 1. *If Assumptions 1 and 2 are satisfied, then*

$$\begin{aligned} \phi(w, \gamma, \alpha) &= \alpha(x)\rho(w, \gamma), \\ \alpha_0(x) &= \arg \min_{\alpha \in \Gamma} E[\{-v_\rho(X)\} \{-v_m(X)/v_\rho(X) - \alpha(X)\}^2]. \end{aligned}$$

Proposition 1 generalizes Proposition 4 of Newey (1994) where $\phi(w, \gamma, \alpha)$ was given for least squares projections where $\rho(W, \gamma) = Y - \gamma(X)$. Here, we give the FSIF $\phi(w, \gamma, \alpha)$ for any plim $\gamma(F)$ of a first step $\hat{\gamma}$ satisfying the the exogenous orthogonality condition of equation (3.2) where Assumptions 1 and 2 are also satisfied. We have obtained Proposition 1 by differentiation the orthogonality condition (3.4) with respect to τ and choosing the instrumental variable $b(X)$ in that condition so that equation (3.6) is satisfied. This derivation of Proposition 1 illustrates how the FSIF can be obtained directly from the moment conditions defining the first step estimator without solving an integral equation or using asymptotic arguments.

First steps that solve orthogonality conditions for quantiles, expectiles, and binary choice provide useful examples.

EXAMPLE 1 (Quantile functional). For $\rho(W, \gamma) = p - 1(Y < \gamma(X))$

$$-v_\rho(X) = \frac{\partial \Pr(Y < \gamma_0(X) + a|X)}{\partial a} = f_{Y|X}(\gamma_0(X)|X)$$

where $f_{Y|X}(y|X)$ is the pdf of Y conditional on X . The FSIF is

$$\phi(w, \gamma, \alpha) = \alpha(X)[p - 1(y < \gamma(x))],$$

where α_0 is given in Proposition 1. The formula for α_0 depends on the functional $m(W, \gamma)$ through the derivative term $v_m(W)$ and is given by

$$\alpha_0(x) = \arg \min_{\alpha \in \Gamma} E[f_{Y|X}(\gamma_0(X)|X) \{v_m(X)/f_{Y|X}(\gamma_0(X)|X) - \alpha(X)\}^2].$$

For instance, consider a weighted average derivative functional where $m(W, \gamma) = w(x)\partial\gamma(x)/\partial x_1$. Integration by parts gives

$$E[m(W, \gamma)] = \int w(x) \frac{\partial \gamma(x)}{\partial x} f_0(x) dx = - \int \frac{\partial \{w(x)f_0(x)\}}{\partial x_1} \gamma(x) dx = E[v_m(X)\gamma(X)],$$

$$v_m(X) = - \frac{1}{f_0(X)} \frac{\partial \{w(X)f_0(X)\}}{\partial x_1}.$$

When Γ is unrestricted Proposition 1 gives $\alpha_0(X) = v_m(X)/f_{Y|X}(\gamma_0(X)|X)$ and the FSIF coincides with that of Chaudhuri, Doksum, and Samarov (1997). Akerberg et al. (2014) also gave an expression for the FSIF for quantile functionals other than the weighted average derivative with $v_m(X)$ replaced by a functional derivative of $E[m(W, \gamma)]$. When Γ is restricted, then $\alpha_0(X)$ is the weighted projection of $v_m(X)/f_{Y|X}(\gamma_0(X)|X)$ on Γ with weight $f_{Y|X}(\gamma_0(X)|X)$. Proposition 1 generalizes the previous results to allow restrictions on γ .

EXAMPLE 2 (Expectile functional). For a conditional expectile $\rho(W, \gamma) = [p1(Y > \gamma(X)) + (1 - p)1(Y < \gamma(X))][Y - \gamma(X)]$, so that

$$-v_\rho(X) = p \Pr(Y > \gamma_0(X)|X) + (1 - p) \Pr(Y < \gamma_0(X)|X),$$

which is bounded and bounded away from zero. The FSIF is

$$\phi(w, \gamma, \alpha) = -\alpha(X)[p1(Y > \gamma(X)) + (1 - p)1(Y < \gamma(X))][Y - \gamma(X)],$$

where $\alpha_0(X)$ is given in Proposition 1. The formula for α_0 depends on the functional $m(W, \gamma)$ through the derivative term $v_m(W)$. When Γ is unrestricted and $m(W, \gamma) = w(x)\partial\gamma(x)/\partial x_1$, then $v_m(X)$ will be as in Example 1 and $\alpha_0(X) = -v_m(X)/v_\rho(X)$. We are not aware of previous results on the FSIF for functions that minimize the expectile objective function.

Examples 1 and 2 illustrate how the term $v_m(X)$ is determined by the functional of interest while $v_\rho(X)$ is determined by the residual $\rho(W, \gamma)$. Proposition 1 shows

how these aspects are combined to determine the $\alpha_0(X) \in \mathcal{B}$ that multiplies the residual $\rho(W, \gamma)$ to form the FSIF. From equation (3.6), we see that this $\alpha_0(X)$ is precisely the function that makes the effect of γ_τ on $E[m(W, \gamma_\tau)]$ equal to the effect of γ_τ on $-E[\alpha_0(X)\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)]$. Proposition 1 shows that this $\alpha_0(X)$ is a projection of $-v_m(X)/v_\rho(X)$ on Γ weighted by $-v_\rho(X)$

The explicit formula in Proposition 1 is useful for quantifying local policy effects and local sensitivity of semiparametric estimators, as we will illustrate in the remainder of this section. Proposition 1 also illustrates how the influence function can be obtained with calculus, under natural differentiability conditions like Assumptions 1 and 2. The key steps in deriving Proposition 1 are to use the first-order condition for $\gamma(F)$ to derive candidates for the influence function and to show that equation (3.3) is satisfied for one of those candidates.

3.3 Generalizing the omitted variable bias formula

The influence function for exogenous orthogonality conditions can be used to quantify local sensitivity to distributional changes of any object with an influence function. We consider structural changes where the distribution of X remains the same but the distribution of the outcome variable Y given X is different. A leading example, as we will see, is the omitted variable problem. We focus on the case where $m(w, \gamma)$ depends only on x , which covers many examples of interest and leads to simple, intuitive formulas. We consider H where the marginal distribution of X is the same as for F_0 but $\rho(W, \gamma_0)$ may not be orthogonal to Γ . Because $E_H[m(W, \gamma_0)] = E[m(X, \gamma_0)] = \theta_0$, the local sensitivity to such H is given by the following result.

PROPOSITION 2. *If Assumptions 1 and 2 are satisfied, $m(W, \gamma_0)$ depends only on X , and H has the same marginal distribution of X as F_0 then*

$$\frac{d\theta(F_\tau)}{d\tau} = E_H[\alpha_0(X)\rho(W, \gamma_0)]. \tag{3.7}$$

Here, we see that the local sensitivity is the expected product of $\alpha_0(X)$ with the conditional mean of the residual $\rho(W, \gamma_0)$ under the alternative distribution H . This local sensitivity formula generalizes the classic omitted variable bias formula to the local bias of any object that depends on the solution to an exogenous orthogonality condition, as we now demonstrate.

EXAMPLE 3 (Omitted variable bias formula). Here, we show that the classic omitted variable bias formula is a special case of Proposition 2. Consider the conditional mean $\gamma_0(X) = E[Y|X]$ where X has finite support and let D be the indicator function of one of the possible discrete outcomes of X . Then there is Z , θ_0 , and γ_0 such that

$$E[Y|D, Z] = \gamma_0(X) = D\theta_0 + Z'\gamma_0.$$

Take the object of interest to be θ_0 . Let $\tilde{D} = D - E[D|Z]$ be the residual from the population least squares regression of D on Z . Then the coefficient θ_0 is a functional of $\gamma_0(X)$

given by

$$\theta_0 = E[\alpha_0(X)\gamma_0(X)], \quad \alpha_0(X) = \frac{\tilde{D}}{E[\tilde{D}^2]}.$$

Let $\varepsilon := Y - \gamma_0(X) = \rho(W, \gamma_0)$. The sensitivity is then

$$\frac{d\theta(F_\tau)}{d\tau} = E[\alpha_0(X)E_H[Y - \gamma_0(X)|X]] = \frac{E[\tilde{D}E_H[\varepsilon|X]]}{E[\tilde{D}^2]}.$$

If there is an omitted variable \tilde{Z} under H so that the distribution ε is the same as $Y - \gamma_0(X) - \tilde{Z}$, then

$$\frac{d\theta(F_\tau)}{d\tau} = E[\alpha_0(X)E_H[\varepsilon|X]] = \frac{E[\tilde{D}E_H[\tilde{Z}|X]]}{E[\tilde{D}^2]}.$$

This formula is the classic omitted variables bias formula.

Example 3 shows that Proposition 2 generalizes the omitted variables bias formula for one coefficient of a linear regression to any object that depends on a solution to an exogenous orthogonality condition. We will illustrate another use of the generalization by estimating the local sensitivity of a bound on average equivalent variation to endogeneity of the price in a gasoline demand application.

An estimator of the local sensitivity can be obtained from an estimator $\hat{\alpha}(x)$ of the term $\alpha_0(x)$ in the influence function and from a specification \hat{H} of the joint distribution of X and $\rho(W, \gamma_0)$ under misspecification as

$$\frac{d\widehat{\theta(F_\tau)}}{d\tau} = \int [\hat{\alpha}(x)\rho(w, \hat{\gamma})]\hat{H}(dw).$$

Construction of a local Hausman test based on this object would require an estimator of the asymptotic variance of the sensitivity $d\widehat{\theta(F_\tau)}/d\tau$. It is beyond the scope of this paper to derive the asymptotic variance of the sensitivity and construct a consistent estimator of that asymptotic variance, although a bootstrap variance estimator could be used and should prove valid. We will illustrate in the gasoline demand example how this could be done.

An important part of $d\widehat{\theta(F_\tau)}/d\tau$ is an estimator $\hat{\alpha}(x)$ of $\alpha_0(x)$ that appears in the FSIF of Proposition 1. Such an $\hat{\alpha}(x)$ can be constructed as in Chernozhukov et al. (2020). Consider a dictionary of functions $b(x) = (b_1(x), \dots, b_p(x))'$ with $b_j \in \Gamma$ for each j . As discussed following Assumption 1, differentiability of $E[m(W, \gamma_0 + a)|X]$ in the constant a will lead to

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[m(W, \gamma_0 + \tau b_j)] &= E\left[\frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[m(W, \gamma_0 + \tau b_j)|X]\right] \\ &= E[v_m(W)b_j(X)] \\ &= E\left[-v_\rho(X)\left\{\frac{v_m(X)}{-v_\rho(X)}\right\}b_j(X)\right] \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 &= E[\{-v_\rho(X)\}\alpha_0(X)b_j(X)] \\
 &= -E\left[\frac{\partial}{\partial\tau}E[\rho(W, \gamma_0 + \tau b_j)|X]\alpha_0(X)\right] \\
 &= -E[\rho_\gamma(W, \gamma_0)\alpha_0(X)b_j(X)] \quad (j = 1, \dots, p), \tag{3.8}
 \end{aligned}$$

where the third equality is obtained by multiplying and dividing by $-v_\rho(X)$, the fourth by $\alpha_0(X)$ being as given in Proposition 1, the fifth by the discussion following Assumption 2, and the last equality by differentiability of $\rho(W, \gamma + a)$ in a constant a with $\rho_\gamma(W, \gamma_0)$ being the derivative. These are moment conditions that can be used to estimate $\alpha_0(X)$ as a linear combination of the dictionary functions. The idea is to replace expectations with sample averages, γ_0 with an estimator $\hat{\gamma}$, $\alpha_0(X)$ with a linear combination $\pi'b(X)$, and then solve for an estimator of π . Let

$$\begin{aligned}
 \hat{M} &= (\hat{M}_1, \dots, \hat{M}_p)', & \hat{M}_j &= \frac{\partial}{\partial\tau} \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n m(W_i, \hat{\gamma} + \tau b_j), \\
 \hat{G} &= \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n \rho_\gamma(W_i, \hat{\gamma}) b(X_i) b(X_i)'.
 \end{aligned}$$

Then a version of equation (3.8) that replaces expectations with sample moments, γ_0 by $\hat{\gamma}$, and has $\pi'b(X)$ in place of $\alpha_0(X)$ is $\hat{M} = -\hat{G}\pi$. Solving for π gives

$$\hat{\alpha}(x) = \hat{\pi}'b(x), \quad \hat{\pi} = -\hat{G}^{-1}\hat{M}. \tag{3.9}$$

For quantile orthogonality conditions where $\rho(W, \gamma)$ is not continuous, one can use kernel weighting to construct \hat{G} as in Example 2 of Chernozhukov et al. (2020).

For regression where $\rho(W, \gamma) = Y - \gamma(X)$, this $\hat{\alpha}(x)$ is the same as in equation (6.2) from Newey (1994). For other choices of $\rho(W, \gamma)$, this $\hat{\alpha}(x)$ could be derived from series expansions given in Ai and Chen (2007), Ackerberg, Chen, and Hahn (2012), and Ackerberg et al. (2014) for conditional moment restrictions and Chen and Liao (2015) more generally. Such interesting estimators of the FSIF would be particularly useful when its form is not known. Here, we rely on the explicit moment condition for $\alpha_0(X)$ in equation (3.8) that is a special case of the Chernozhukov et al. (2020).

3.4 Sensitivity of average equivalent variation for gasoline demand

One object that depends on a conditional expectation is the Hausman and Newey (2016) bound on average equivalent variation (AEV) for heterogenous demand. This bound allows for completely general heterogeneity where the demand function for each person can be unique to that person. The bound does depend on preferences being independent of observed price and income, a strong exogeneity restriction. Here, we test the effect of dropping that exogeneity restriction on AEV using the local sensitivity results we have obtained.

An important motivation for this test is the difficulty of allowing for endogeneity with general heterogeneity. Endogeneity can be allowed for using control functions, as

in Hausman and Newey (2016), but existence of control functions imposes strong restrictions as in Blundell and Matzkin (2014). Blundell, Horowitz, and Parey (2017) allowed for endogeneity where there is an instrument for price but restrict heterogeneity to be scalar where bounds on AEV are not known. Here, we take a different approach to allowing for endogeneity, where we test for sensitivity to bounds on AEV to endogeneity.

To describe and carry out this test, we first describe the AEV bound and apply Proposition 1 to derive its influence function.

EXAMPLE 4 (Average equivalent variation bound). Here, Y is the share of income spent on a commodity and $X = (P_1, Z)$, where P_1 is the price of the commodity and Z includes income Z_1 , prices of other goods, and other observable variables affecting utility. Let $\check{p}_1 < \bar{p}_1$ be lower and upper prices over which the price of the commodity can change, κ a bound on the income effect, and $\omega(z)$ some weight function. The object of interest is

$$\theta_0 = E \left[\omega(Z) \int_{\check{p}_1}^{\bar{p}_1} \left(\frac{Z_1}{u} \right) \gamma_0(u, Z) \exp(-\kappa[u - \check{p}_1]) du \right], \quad (3.10)$$

where u is a variable of integration. If individual heterogeneity in consumer preferences is independent of X and κ is a lower (upper) bound on the derivative of consumption with respect to income across all individuals, then θ_0 is an upper (lower) bound on the weighted average over consumers and over the distribution of Z of equivalent variation for a change in the price of the first good from \check{p}_1 to \bar{p}_1 .

This object is a special case of that considered in Proposition 1 where $v(u) = u^2/2$, $\gamma_0(X) = E[Y|X]$, and $m(w, \gamma)$ depends only on x and is given by

$$m(x, \gamma) = \omega(z) \int_{\check{p}_1}^{\bar{p}_1} (z_1/u) \gamma(u, z) \exp(-\kappa[u - \check{p}_1]) du.$$

From the form of $E[m(X, \gamma)]$ and multiplying and dividing by the conditional pdf $f(p_1|z)$, we find

$$\alpha_0(x) = f(p_1|z)^{-1} \omega(z) 1(\check{p}_1 < p_1 < \bar{p}_1) (z_1/p_1) \exp(-\kappa[p_1 - \check{p}_1]).$$

where $f(p_1|z)$ is the conditional pdf of P_1 given Z .

We apply Example 4 to test sensitivity of a bound on AEV to endogeneity of price using gasoline demand data in Hausman and Newey (2016, 2017) and Blundell, Horowitz, and Parey (2017). We use the estimator $\hat{\alpha}(x)$ given in equation (3.9) for several choices of basis functions. For an estimate of $\varepsilon = Y - \gamma(X)$ that allows for endogeneity, we use a linear instrumental variable estimator where the share equation has a constant, $\ln(\text{price})$, and $\ln(\text{income})$ with the Blundell, Horowitz, and Parey (2017) price instrument that is the distance from the Gulf of Mexico. We take $\hat{\varepsilon}_i$, ($i = 1, \dots, n$) to be the residuals from the linear instrumental variables estimation and the sensitivity estimator to be

$$\frac{d\widehat{\theta(F_\tau)}}{d\tau} = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n \hat{\alpha}(X_i) \hat{\varepsilon}_i.$$

This sensitivity estimate will depart from zero when $\hat{\alpha}(X_i)$, which depends on the price variable, is correlated with the instrumental variables residuals $\hat{\varepsilon}_i$. In this application, we use the delta method and standard calculations to obtain a standard error for the sensitivity estimator.

We use gasoline demand data from the 2001 U.S. National Household Transportation Survey (NHTS). This survey is conducted every 5–8 years by the Federal Highway Administration. The survey is designed to be a nationally representative cross-section, which captures 24-hour travel behavior of randomly-selected households. Data collected includes detailed trip data and household characteristics such as income, age, and number of drivers. We restrict our estimation sample to households with either one or two gasoline-powered cars, vans, SUVs, and pickup trucks. We exclude Alaska and Hawaii. We use daily gasoline consumption, monthly state gasoline prices, and annual household income. The data we use consists of 8,908 observations. Note that the mean price of gasoline was \$1.33 per gallon with the mean number of drivers in a household equal to 2.04.

We specify the weight function in the measure of AEV to be $\omega(Z) = 1$ and consider a price change from the mean of price in the data to a price that is 10% higher. We set $\kappa = 0$ so that the sensitivity will be for a lower bound on AEV when gasoline is a normal good (the income effect is positive) for all consumers. For the basis function $b(x)$ used to estimate $\hat{\alpha}(x)$, we consider bivariate linear, quadratic, and cubic function in $\ln(\text{price})$ and $\ln(\text{income})$. Because their presence had little effect on AEV estimates in Hausman and Newey (2016, 2017), we do not use covariates here. We do use simulation to estimate the integral that appears in $m(x, \gamma)$ in the bound. For u_i uniformly distributed on $[\check{p}_1, \bar{p}_1]$, the $\hat{\alpha}(x)$ is given by

$$\hat{\alpha}(x) = \hat{\pi}'b(x), \quad \hat{\pi} = \left[\sum_{i=1}^n b(X_i)b(X_i)' \right]^{-1} (\bar{p}_1 - \check{p}_1) \sum_{i=1}^n \left(\frac{Z_{1i}}{u_i} \right) b(u_i, Z_i),$$

where $x = (p_1, z_1)'$ and z_1 is income.

Table 1 reports the sensitivity estimates and their standard errors for linear, quadratic, and cubic specifications of $b(x)$.

We find statistically significant evidence of sensitivity to endogeneity for the linear specification of demand but not for the quadratic or cubic. We also find that the sensitivity estimates are quite small for all three specifications. This absence of sensitivity of

TABLE 1. AEV sensitivity to endogeneity.

	Sensitivity	AEV Bound
Linear	1.44 (0.554)	25.08 (1.37)
Quadratic	0.487 (0.640)	33.93 (1.05)
Cubic	-1.20 (0.946)	32.27 (0.805)

the AEV bound to endogeneity suggests there is little need in this application to allow for price endogeneity in the estimation of a lower bound on AEV.

4. ENDOGENOUS ORTHOGONALITY CONDITIONS

There are many interesting economic and causal effects that depend on functions satisfying endogenous orthogonality conditions where the function of interest depends on variables that are not instruments. Such solutions to orthogonality conditions come from first-order conditions to economic choice problems or define causal functions of interest. Objects of interest that depend on such functions include policy and sensitivity effects like those of Sections 2 and 3.

In this section, we derive the influence function for effects that depend on the probability limit of a nonparametric instrumental variables (NPIV) estimator like those in Newey and Powell (2003), Newey (1991), and Ai and Chen (2003). We consider an estimator $\hat{\gamma}$ with a probability limit $\gamma_0 = \gamma(F_0)$ that is the unique solution to orthogonality conditions

$$E[b(X)\rho(W, \gamma)] = 0, \quad b \in \mathcal{B}, \gamma \in \Gamma. \quad (4.1)$$

Here, \mathcal{B} is a linear set of possible instrumental variables $b(X)$ and γ is restricted to a linear set Γ similar to Section 3.1. We depart from Section 3.1 in allowing the unknown function γ to depend on variables Z that are different than the instruments X . This set up generalizes the conditional moment restrictions environment of Newey and Powell (1989, 2003), Newey (1991), and Ai and Chen (2003) to orthogonality conditions with linear restrictions on γ .

Restrictions on the structural functions and on the instrumental variables are of interest to empirical researchers for at least two reasons. First, imposing correct restrictions on the structural function can improve efficiency of the estimator and mitigate the well-known ill-posed inverse problem for NPIV that can lead to imprecise estimators. For example, imposing partially linear or additive structure on γ can make estimators more precise. Second imposing restrictions on the instrumental variables can help reduce the well-known Nagar (1959) instrumental variable bias. Such biases are known to be important in empirical applications such as Angrist and Krueger (1991). By allowing such restrictions, we provide the researcher with more flexibility to choose a model that can lead to good inference properties for policy or sensitivity analysis with endogeneity. We leave to future work the application of the results of this section to policy and sensitivity analysis. We focus here on showing how Steps I and II can be used to derive influence functions in complicated and important settings which is a primary purpose of this paper.

4.1 The estimator

We will derive influence functions for $\hat{\gamma}$ that is a first step NPIV estimator based on the orthogonality conditions in equation (4.1). Let $b^K(x) = (b_1(x), \dots, b_K(x))'$ be the first K elements of a sequence of instrumental variables. We assume that $b^K(X)$ spans \mathcal{B} as K

grows meaning that any element of \mathcal{B} can be approximated arbitrarily well by a linear combination of $b^K(X)$ for K large enough. The NPIV estimator we consider is

$$\hat{\gamma} = \arg \min_{\gamma \in \Gamma_n} \hat{Q}(\gamma),$$

$$\hat{Q}(\gamma) = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^n \rho(W_i, \gamma) b^K(X_i)^T \left(\sum_{i=1}^n b^K(X_i) b^K(X_i)^T \right)^{-} \sum_{i=1}^n b^K(X_i) \rho(W_i, \gamma), \tag{4.2}$$

where Γ_n is a subset of Γ and A^- denotes a generalized inverse of a matrix A . For example, Γ_n could be the set of linear combinations of L functions $p_1(z), \dots, p_L(z)$ where $p_\ell(\cdot) \in \Gamma$ for each ℓ . We assume that a minimum exists with probability approaching one, as could be guaranteed in some settings using [Chen and Pouzo \(2015\)](#). This $\hat{\gamma}$ has the form of NPIV given in [Newey and Powell \(1989, 2003\)](#), [Newey \(1991\)](#), [Ai and Chen \(2003\)](#), and [Darolles, Fan, Florens, and Renault \(2011\)](#). We differ from this prior work in allowing the instrumental variables to be restricted to the set \mathcal{B} .

The influence function for the object of interest will depend on the plim γ_τ of $\hat{\gamma}$ when the distribution of W is $F_\tau = (1 - \tau)F_0 + \tau H$. Since $\hat{\gamma}$ minimizes the sample objective function $\hat{Q}(\gamma)$, the usual extremum estimator theory (e.g., [Amemiya \(1985\)](#)), will imply that γ_τ is the minimum of the plim $Q_\tau(\gamma)$ of $\hat{Q}(\gamma)$ when the distribution of W is F_τ . To describe $Q_\tau(\gamma)$, assume that \mathcal{B} does not depend on τ , which can be shown to hold under regularity conditions on H . Let $\pi_\tau(a(W)|X)$ denote the linear projection of $a(W)$ on \mathcal{B} when W has CDF F_τ , satisfying

$$\pi_\tau(a(W)|X) \in \mathcal{B}, E_\tau[\{a(W) - \pi_\tau(a(W)|X)\}b(X)] = 0 \quad \text{for all } b(X) \in \mathcal{B} \tag{4.3}$$

Then it follows exactly as in [Newey \(1991\)](#) that for $K \rightarrow \infty$ and $K/n \rightarrow 0$,

$$\text{plim}(\hat{Q}(\gamma)) = Q_\tau(\gamma) := E_\tau[\{\pi_\tau(\rho(W, \gamma)|X)\}^2]. \tag{4.4}$$

Intuitively, from standard regression results we see that $\hat{Q}(\gamma)$ is the sample average of squares of predicted values from the least squares regression of $\rho(W_i, \gamma)$ on $b^K(X_i)$, ($i = 1, \dots, n$). Then by the law of large numbers, consistency of a sample regression for a population regression, and the growth of K it will follow that plim of $\hat{Q}(\gamma)$ will be the expected value of the square of the predicted value from the population regression of $\rho(W, \gamma)$ on \mathcal{B} , giving equation (4.4). It then follows by extremum estimator theory and from Γ_n assumed to approximate Γ that

$$\text{plim}(\hat{\gamma}) = \gamma_\tau := \arg \min_{\gamma \in \Gamma} Q_\tau(\gamma).$$

We will assume that γ_τ is unique, which could be shown to hold under more primitive conditions in [Chen and Pouzo \(2015\)](#).

As in Section 3.2 the focus of this section is deriving the FSIF $\phi(w, \gamma, \alpha)$ that satisfies $\partial E[m(W, \gamma_\tau)]/\partial \tau = \int \phi(w, \gamma_0, \alpha_0)H(dw)$. The first-order condition for γ_τ has a key role in deriving the FSIF. To describe the first-order condition, let $\Delta \in \Gamma$ denote a possible

deviation of γ away from γ_τ . Assume that there is $v_{\rho\tau}(W)$ such that

$$\frac{\partial \pi_\tau(\rho(W, \gamma_\tau + \zeta \Delta)|X)}{\partial \zeta} = \pi_\tau(v_{\rho\tau}(W)\Delta(Z)|X).$$

The calculus of variations, first-order condition for the minimization of $Q(\gamma_\tau + \zeta \Delta)/2$ at $\zeta = 0$ is

$$\begin{aligned} 0 &= \frac{d}{d\zeta} E_\tau[\{\pi_\tau(\rho(W, \gamma_\tau + \zeta \Delta)|X)\}^2]/2|_{\zeta=0} \\ &= E_\tau\left[\pi_\tau(\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)|X) \frac{\partial \pi_\tau(\rho(W, \gamma_\tau + \zeta \Delta)|X)}{\partial \zeta}\right] \\ &= E_\tau[\pi_\tau(\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)|X) \pi_\tau(v_{\rho\tau}(W)\Delta(Z)|X)] \quad \text{for all } \Delta \in \Gamma, \end{aligned} \quad (4.5)$$

identically in τ . This first-order condition has a form analogous to two-stage least squares, being orthogonality of the residual $\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)$ with instruments obtained by projecting the derivative of the residual on the set of instrumental variables. We use this first-order condition and the orthogonality condition in equation (4.4) to characterize the FSIF.

4.2 The first step influence function

Similar to Section 3, the influence function of $\theta(F) = E_F[m(W, \gamma(F))]$ will be the sum of $m(W, \gamma_0) - \theta_0$ and the FSIF. We focus on derivation of the FSIF here. To characterize the FSIF, we proceed analogously to Section 3.2 by differentiating the first-order condition with respect to τ and applying the chain rule. For notational simplicity, let $\pi(A(W)|X)$ denote the projection of $A(W)$ on \mathcal{B} for $\tau = 0$. We carry out these calculations for the case where $\pi(\rho(W, \gamma_0)|X) = 0$, where either the orthogonality conditions are correctly specified or γ_0 is exactly identified so that the plim of $\hat{\gamma}$ solves the orthogonality conditions (see [Chen and Santos \(2015\)](#) for exact identification). In Appendix C, we derive the FSIF under misspecification where $\pi(\rho(W, \gamma_0)|X) \neq 0$.

Differentiating the identity of equation (4.5) with respect to τ , using the third equality and $\pi(\rho(W, \gamma_0)|X) = 0$, gives

$$0 = \frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[\pi_\tau(\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)|X) \pi(v_{\rho\tau}(W)\Delta(Z)|X)] \quad \text{for all } \Delta \in \Gamma, \quad (4.6)$$

where $v_{\rho\tau}(W) = v_{\rho 0}(W)$. Define the set \mathcal{A} to be the mean square closure of the set of $\pi(v_{\rho\tau}(W)\Delta(Z)|X)$ for $\Delta \in \Gamma$, that is,

$$\begin{aligned} \mathcal{A} &= \{\alpha(X) : \text{for all } \varepsilon > 0 \text{ there is } \Delta(Z) \in \Gamma \text{ with} \\ &\quad E[\{\alpha(X) - \pi(v_{\rho\tau}(W)\Delta(Z)|X)\}^2] < \varepsilon\}, \end{aligned} \quad (4.7)$$

Then the first-order condition in equation (4.5) becomes

$$0 = \frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[\pi_\tau(\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)|X) \alpha(X)] \quad \text{for all } \alpha \in \mathcal{A}.$$

Next, we use the orthogonality condition (4.3) for the projection. Because \mathcal{A} is a subset of \mathcal{B} it follows that

$$E_\tau[\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)\alpha(X)] = E_\tau[\pi_\tau(\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)|X)\alpha(X)] \quad \text{for all } \alpha \in \mathcal{A}$$

identically in τ . Differentiating both sides with respect to τ and applying the chain rule gives

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E_\tau[\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)\alpha(X)] = \frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E_\tau[\pi(\rho(W, \gamma_0)|X)\alpha(X)] + \frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[\pi_\tau(\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)|X)\alpha(X)] = 0,$$

by $\pi(\rho(W, \gamma_0)|X) = 0$ and equation (4.6). Applying the chain rule to the left-hand side and solving then gives

$$-\frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)\alpha(X)] = \int \alpha(x)\rho(w, \gamma_0)H(dw) \quad \text{for all } \alpha \in \mathcal{A}. \quad (4.8)$$

Similar to Section 3.1, the object being integrated on the right provides a candidate for FSIF $\phi(w, \gamma, \alpha)$. To find $\alpha_0(X)$ such that equation (3.6) is satisfied, we impose the following conditions.

ASSUMPTION 3. *There exists $v_m(Z)$ such that*

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[m(W, \gamma_\tau)] = \frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[v_m(Z)\gamma_\tau(Z)], \quad E[v_m(X)^2] < \infty.$$

This condition is analogous to Assumption 1 in specifying an expected product form for $dE[m(W, \gamma_\tau)]/d\tau$, and similarly will be required for existence of the FSIF.

ASSUMPTION 4. *There exists $v_\rho(W)$ such that for all $b \in \mathcal{B}$,*

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)b(X)] = \frac{\partial}{\partial \tau} E[v_\rho(W)\gamma_\tau(Z)b(X)].$$

This condition is similar to Assumption 2 in specifying a derivative condition involving the residual $\rho(W, \gamma)$ as a function of γ .

Unlike Section 3, the differentiability conditions in Assumptions 3 and 4 are not sufficient to show that the FSIF has the form $\alpha(x)\rho(w, \gamma)$ for some $\alpha_0(x)$. The presence of endogeneity, where γ depends on variables different than the instrumental variables X , creates the need for a link between $v_m(Z)$, functions of X , and $v_\rho(W)$. The following condition establishes the needed link. Let $\Pi(d(W)|Z) = \arg \min_{\gamma \in \Gamma} E[\{d(W) - \gamma(Z)\}^2]$ denote the least squares projection of a function $d(W)$ on Γ .

ASSUMPTION 5. *There is $b_m(X) \in \mathcal{B}$ such that*

$$\Pi(v_m(Z)|Z) = -\Pi(v_\rho(W)b_m(X)|Z).$$

This condition requires that the projection of $v_m(Z)$ on Γ must be equal to the projection of $-v_\rho(W)b_m(X)$ on Γ for some instrumental variable $b_m(X)$. This condition is

restrictive in a way that is related to the [Severini and Tripathi \(2012\)](#) necessary conditions for root- n consistent estimation as discussed in [Example 6](#) to follow.

Assumptions 3–5 imply that the FSIF will have the form $\alpha(X)\rho(W, \gamma)$ where $\alpha_0(X)$ is the least squares projection of $b_m(X)$ on \mathcal{A} . To see this, note that by $\gamma_\tau \in \Gamma$ and Assumption 5,

$$\begin{aligned} E[v_m(Z)\gamma_\tau(Z)] &= E[\Pi(v_m(Z)|Z)\gamma_\tau(Z)] \\ &= -E[\Pi(v_\rho(W)b_m(X)|Z)\gamma_\tau(Z)] \\ &= -E[v_\rho(W)b_m(X)\gamma_\tau(Z)] \\ &= -E[b_m(X)\pi(v_\rho(W)\gamma_\tau(Z)|X)] \\ &= -E[\alpha_0(X)\pi(v_\rho(W)\gamma_\tau(Z)|X)] \\ &= -E[\alpha_0(X)v_\rho(W)\gamma_\tau(Z)], \end{aligned}$$

for all τ where the fifth equality follows by $\pi(v_\rho(W)\gamma_\tau(Z)|X) \in \mathcal{A}$. Then by Assumptions 3 and 4 and differentiating, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{d}{d\tau}E[m(W, \gamma_\tau)] &= \frac{d}{d\tau}E[v_m(Z)\gamma_\tau(Z)] \\ &= -\frac{d}{d\tau}E[\alpha_0(X)v_\rho(W)\gamma_\tau(Z)] \\ &= -\frac{d}{d\tau}E[\alpha_0(X)\rho(W, \gamma_\tau)] \\ &= \int \alpha_0(x)\rho(w, \gamma_0)H(dw). \end{aligned}$$

where the last equality follows from equation (4.8). This equation shows the following result.

PROPOSITION 3. *If Assumptions 3–5 are satisfied and $\pi(\rho_0(W, \gamma_0)|X) = 0$, then the FSIF is*

$$\phi(w, \gamma, \alpha) = \alpha(x)\rho(w, \gamma),$$

where $\alpha_0(X)$ is the least squares projection of $b_m(X)$ on \mathcal{A} satisfying

$$\alpha_0(X) = \arg \min_{\alpha \in \mathcal{A}} E[\{b_m(X) - \alpha(X)\}^2].$$

The derivation of Proposition 3 is more complicated than Proposition 1 because of endogeneity and the link condition in Assumption 5. The function $\alpha_0(X)$ quantifies how the instrumental variables affect the FSIF. It is constrained to be an element of \mathcal{A} because NPIV projects functions of Z on the set of instrumental variables \mathcal{B} , just as parametric two-stage least square does. When multiple sets of orthogonality conditions are available, for example, as could be the case if $E[\rho(W, \gamma_0)|X] = 0$, $\alpha_0(X)$ can vary with \mathcal{B} . This

effect of the choice of \mathcal{B} on the influence function is analogous to parametric instrumental variables estimation, where the influence function can vary with the choice of linear combination of instrumental variables.

EXAMPLE 5 (Additive structural functions and instruments). We consider NPIV where $\gamma(Z) = \gamma_1(Z_1) + \gamma_2(Z_2)$ is restricted to be additive in distinct components Z_1 and Z_2 of $Z = (Z_1, Z_2)$. Such a restriction can reduce the severity of the ill-posed inverse problem. The instrumental variables $b(X) = b_1(X_1) + b_2(X_2)$ are also restricted to be additive in distinct components of X_1 and X_2 of X . Such a restriction can identify the additive components $\gamma_1(Z_1)$ and $\gamma_2(Z_2)$ while limiting the number of instrumental variables to reduce the Nagar (1959) bias of instrumental variables estimators. Here, Γ and \mathcal{B} are mean square closures of sets of additive functions. It will be convenient here to just refer to additive functions rather the mean square closures of sets of functions, though not every function in the closure need be additive.

One thing of note about the FSIF here is that $\alpha_0(X)$ is in \mathcal{B} and so it is an additive function of X_1 and X_2 . The form of $\alpha_0(X)$ will be determined by the form of $v_m(Z)$ and $v_\rho(W)$ and the link condition of Assumption 5. Here, $\Pi(A(W)|Z)$ is the projection on (the mean square closure of) additive functions. Also the elements of \mathcal{B} are (in the closure of) additive functions. Suppose that the residual is linear with

$$\rho(W, \gamma) = Y - \gamma_1(Z_1) - \gamma_2(Z_2).$$

Then $v_\rho(W) = -1$ so that Assumption 5 is existence of $b_m \in \mathcal{B}$ with

$$\Pi(v_m(Z)|Z) = \Pi(b_m(X)|Z).$$

This requires that the projection of $v_m(Z)$ on additive functions of Z_1 and Z_2 must be equal to the projection of an additive function of X_1 and X_2 on additive functions of Z_1 and Z_2 . For example, if Z_1 is a scalar and $m(w, \gamma) = \omega(z_1)\partial\gamma_1(z_1)/\partial z_1$ then as in Example 1,

$$v_m(Z) = -\frac{1}{f_0(Z)} \frac{\partial\{w(Z_1)f_0(Z)\}}{\partial z_1} = -\frac{\partial w(Z_1)}{\partial z_1} - w(Z_1) \frac{\partial f_0(Z)/\partial z_1}{f_0(Z)}.$$

Here, it would suffice for Assumption 5 that there $b^I(X_1)$ and $b^{II}(X) = b_1^{II}(X_1) + b_2^{II}(X_2)$ such that

$$-\frac{\partial w(Z_1)}{\partial z_1} = E[b^{II}(X_1)|Z_1], \quad \Pi\left(w(Z_1) \frac{\partial f_0(Z)/\partial z_1}{f_0(Z)} \middle| Z\right) = \Pi(b^{II}(X)|Z) \tag{4.9}$$

For quantile orthogonality conditions where $\rho(W, \gamma) = p - 1(Y < \gamma(Z))$, it follows similar to Section 3 that

$$v_\rho(W) = f(\gamma_0(Z)|Z, X),$$

where $f(Y|Z, X)$ is the pdf of Y conditional on Z and X . Assumption 5 is then existence of $b_m \in \mathcal{B}$ with

$$\Pi(v_m(Z)|Z) = \Pi(f(\gamma_0(Z)|Z, X)b_m(X)|Z).$$

This requires that the projection of $v_m(Z)$ on additive functions of Z_1 and Z_2 must be equal to the projection of a weighted additive function of X_1 and X_2 on additive functions of Z_1 and Z_2 . This condition also restricts $v_m(Z)$ to be such that its projection on Γ is equal to projection of a function of Z and X on Γ as further discussed in Example 6 to follow.

To help relate Proposition 3 to prior work, we consider a simple example of an object of interest for conditional moment restrictions.

EXAMPLE 6 (Linear function of a linear structural equation). A relatively simple example has $m(W, \gamma) = v_m(Z)\gamma(Z)$ for a $v_m(Z)$ with $E[v_m(Z)^2] < \infty$, $\rho(w, \gamma) = y - \gamma(z)$, and Γ and \mathcal{B} are unrestricted, so that the orthogonality condition of equation (4.1) is

$$Y = \gamma_0(Z) + \varepsilon, \quad E[\varepsilon|X] = 0.$$

This is a linear NPIV equation. Assumptions 3 and 4 are satisfied with $v_m(Z)$ as given in this example and $v_\rho(W) = -1$. Then Assumption 5 is existence of $b_m(X)$ such that

$$v_m(Z) = E[b_m(X)|Z]. \quad (4.10)$$

Also \mathcal{A} is the mean square closure of $E[\Delta(Z)|X]$ over all $\Delta(Z)$ with finite second moment and $\alpha_0(X)$ is the projection of $b_m(X)$ on \mathcal{A} . The FSIF is then

$$\phi(W, \gamma_0, \alpha_0) = \alpha_0(X)\{Y - \gamma_0(Z)\}. \quad (4.11)$$

It is interesting to note that existence of a solution $b_m(X)$ to equation (4.10) is the necessary condition of Severini and Tripathi (2012) for existence of a root- n consistent estimator of $\theta_0 = E[v_m(Z)\gamma_0(Z)]$. This condition is restrictive in imposing that coefficients in a singular value expansion of $b_m(X)$ must decline at certain rates. This example shows the precise relationship of that necessary condition to the $\alpha_0(X)$ in the FSIF. The $\alpha_0(X)$ is the projection of $b_m(X)$ on \mathcal{A} .

The formula for the FSIF given here is related to a prior influence function formula given in Ai and Chen (2007, p. 40) for conditional moment restrictions. In the notation here, the Ai and Chen (2007) formula is

$$\phi(W, \gamma_0, \alpha_0) = E[v^*(Z)|X]\{Y - \gamma_0(Z)\}, \quad (4.12)$$

where $v^*(Z)$ is a Riesz representer in an extended Hilbert space described in Ai and Chen (2003, 2007). Equations (4.11) and (4.12) coincide for $\alpha_0(X) = E[v^*(Z)|X]$. Equation (4.11) is more explicit in giving the precise relationship between $\alpha_0(X)$ and the $b_m(X)$ of the Severini and Tripathi (2012) necessary condition. Also Proposition 3 allows orthogonality conditions that are more general than conditional moment restrictions. Interesting and useful Hilbert space characterizations of the FSIF in Proposition 3 could be obtained as in Chen and Liao (2015) and/or Chen and Pouzo (2015) by extending their results for conditional moment restrictions to orthogonality conditions. The more explicit formula in Proposition 3 may prove useful for policy and sensitivity analysis and the construction of orthogonal moment functions.

The NPIV objective function in equation (4.2) can be modified to allow a weighted second moment matrix in the middle as in Ai and Chen (2003) where $\sum_{i=1}^n b^K(X_i)b^K(X_i)^T$ is replaced by $\sum_{i=1}^n \omega(X_i)b^K(X_i)b^K(X_i)^T$ for $\omega(X_i) > 0$. Such a modification with $\omega(X_i) = \text{Var}(\rho(W_i, \gamma)|X_i)$ would lead to improved asymptotic efficiency of $\hat{\theta}$ if γ were a finite dimensional parameter vector and $m(W, \gamma)$ did not depend on W . Proposition 3 can be modified in a straightforward way to allow for the presence of such a $\omega(X_i)$ by replacing $\rho(W, \gamma)$ with $\omega(X)^{-1}\rho(W, \gamma)$ and $E_\tau[\cdot]$ with the weighted expectation $E_\tau[\omega(X)(\cdot)]$, including in the projection π . Further details are beyond the scope of this paper.

5. EXTENSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

It is straightforward to extend the results we have given to objects that depend on multiple nonparametric estimators. As discussed in Newey (1994), such objects will have a separate FSIF for each nonparametric estimator and the overall FSIF will be the sum of the separate FSIF's. Also, each separate FSIF can be computed from varying one nonparametric estimator while holding the others fixed at their limit. It is also straightforward to extend the results to objects of interest that maximize objective functions other than that for GMM. This extension is described in Appendix C.

This paper gives explicit influence function formulae for first steps that satisfy exogenous or endogenous orthogonality conditions. It is shown how such formulae are useful for characterizing local policy effects of structural changes, quantifying sensitivity of semiparametric estimators, and constructing orthogonal moment functions. Those results are used to generalize the omitted variable bias formula for regression to obtain the local effect of misspecification on policies and estimators that depend on solutions to exogenous orthogonality conditions. This analysis is applied to a gasoline demand data set where we find no evidence that average equivalent variation bounds are sensitive to endogeneity.

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