

Taisiya Sikorskaya

PhD Candidate in Finance

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Research Interests	Asset Pricing, Financial Intermediaries, Asset Management
Education	<p>London Business School (LBS), United Kingdom PhD in Finance, 2017 - present</p> <p>London Business School (LBS), United Kingdom MRes in Finance, 2017 - 2019</p> <p>University of St. Gallen, Switzerland MA in Quantitative Economics and Finance, 2017</p> <p>Chelyabinsk State University, Russia Diplom (MSc equivalent) in Mathematical Methods in Economics and Operations Research, 2013</p>
Published Papers	<p>Retail Trading in Options and the Rise of the Big Three Wholesalers (with S. Bryzgalova and A. Pavlova). Forthcoming in <i>The Journal of Finance</i>, solicited. We document rapid increases in (i) retail trading in options and (ii) payment for order flow (PFOF), received by the U.S. retail brokerages from the so-called wholesalers in exchange for routing orders to them. Nearly 90% of PFOF comes from three wholesalers. Exploiting new flags in transaction-level data, we isolate wholesaler trades and build a novel measure of retail options trading. Our measure comoves with equity-based retail activity proxies and drops significantly during U.S. brokerage platform outages and trading restrictions. Retail investors prefer cheaper, weekly options, with the average bid-ask spread of a whopping 12.6%, and lose money on average.</p> <p>Benchmarking Intensity (with A. Pavlova). <i>The Review of Financial Studies</i>, 36(3), 2023, pp. 859–903. <i>Editor's Choice</i>. Benchmarking incentivizes fund managers to invest a fraction of their funds' assets in their benchmark indices, and such demand is inelastic. We construct a measure of inelastic demand a stock attracts, benchmarking intensity (BMI), computed as its cumulative weight in all benchmarks, weighted by assets following each benchmark. Exploiting the Russell 1000/2000 cutoff, we show that changes in stocks' BMIs instrument for changes in ownership of benchmarked investors. The resulting demand elasticities are low. We document that both active and passive fund managers buy additions to their benchmarks and sell deletions. Finally, an increase in BMI lowers future stock returns.</p>
Working Papers	<p>When Less is More: Effects of Benchmarking on Securities Lending Securities lending is a lucrative business for investment managers. Yet, what managers hold, and hence can lend, is dictated by their benchmark indexes. This paper explores how benchmarking affects equilibrium in the securities lending market. In a model with benchmarked fund managers who supply their risky holdings for lending, benchmarking affects both asset price and lending supply. Simple intuition suggests that a larger supply should alleviate short-selling constraints. However, my model shows that benchmarking may increase lending fees by attracting higher shorting demand. I test predictions of my model using two quasi-natural experiments, the Russell index reconstitution and the Bank of Japan purchases, in which there are exogenous shocks to how much capital is benchmarked against stocks. I find that, contrary to the intuition, it becomes costlier to short stocks whose benchmarking intensities increase. I use novel regulatory filings to suggest that lending limits are driving a wedge between the demand and supply effects of benchmarking.</p> <p>Two APs Are Better Than One: ETF Mispricing and Primary Market Participation (with E. Gorbatiyov) Exchange-traded funds (ETFs) depend on arbitrageurs to correct deviations between a fund's price and its fair value. ETFs have designated brokers, or authorized participants (APs), who have a unique right to create and redeem ETF shares, and who can thus trade on ETF mispricing without risk. Using novel regulatory filings, we provide the first description of the US ETF-AP network. It has a dense core and a sparse periphery, and the observed creation/redemption volumes are highly concentrated. The level of mispricing in a US equity ETF is negatively related to the fund's primary market diversity, especially during times of high market volatility. Funds that share more APs exhibit stronger mispricing comovement. We theoretically show that diverse primary markets help mitigate the effect of shocks to AP-specific arbitrage costs. We highlight the importance of AP balance sheet usage costs in ETF markets by exploiting the Federal Reserve's purchases of bond ETFs in 2020.</p>

Profiting from Investor Mistakes: Evidence from Suboptimal Option Exercise

(with S. Bryzgalova and A. Pavlova)

The recent retail trading boom in the U.S. options market, driven by an inflow of inexperienced investors, coincides with an increase in call option contracts left suboptimally unexercised. Arbitrageurs exploit these investor mistakes via so-called dividend play trades, which produce (virtually) riskless profits. Using transaction-level data and a new reporting requirement, we identify dividend play trades and document rising profits from this strategy. Puzzlingly, however, arbitrageurs leave 50% of potential profits on the table. Few arbitrageurs exploit each contract, with a median of only one. Finally, our paper details how market participants circumvent a regulation devised to curtail dividend play.

Academic Presentations

2024: AFA

2023: AFA*, Dauphine Finance PhD Workshop, G Group Spring Seminar*, Junior Academic Research Seminar in Finance, London Business School, NFA, TADC, Women in Microstructure Meeting, SEC*, USC Marshall PhD Conference in Finance, Vanguard seminar*

2022: AFA (2x), Bank of America*, Cambridge Centre for Alternative Finance, CDI Annual Conference on Derivatives*, Chicago Fed, Florida International University*, Indiana University*, London Business School, Miami Behavioral Finance Conference*, Microstructure Exchange, NBER Asset Pricing Spring Meeting*, NBER Behavioral Finance*, NFA*, Queen Mary University of London*, Stockholm Business School*, Tel Aviv Finance Conference*, TMX Group, University of Indiana*, University of Central Florida*, University of Hong Kong*, Virtual Derivatives Workshop, YSFC*

2021: Adam Smith Workshop*, ASSA Meetings, EFA, European Winter Finance Conference, FMA*, INSEAD Finance Symposium*, London Business School, MFA, NBER Behavioral Finance*, NFA, SFS Cavalcade North America, University of Bath, Vienna Graduate School of Finance*, WSIR

2020: London Business School

** Presentations by co-authors.*

Awards and Honours

AQR Asset Management Institute Fellowship Award, 2022

Professor Sir James Ball PhD Award, London Business School, 2021

Fellowship for Doctoral Students, London Business School, 2017-2023

The STARR International Foundation Grant, Switzerland, 2013-2014

The President of Russia Award for Outstanding Students (awarded twice), 2012

The City Administration Award (Chelyabinsk, Russia), 2010

Additional Research Experience

London School of Economics

Research Assistant to Prof. Dimitri Vayanos, 2020-2021

London Business School

Research Assistant to Prof. Svetlana Bryzgalova, 2020

Work Experience

Bank of England, London, UK

PhD Intern, 2021-2022

ThirdYear Capital GmbH, Munich, Germany

Global Macro Analysis Intern, 2017

Deutsche Asset Management, Deutsche Bank Switzerland and UK

Assistant Portfolio Manager, Credit and ETF Portfolio Management, 2014-2016

Teaching Experience

LBS - INEOS Executive Education Program

Finance, Assistant to Prof. Anna Pavlova, 2022

Mean evaluation 4.6/5.0

LBS Empirical Asset Pricing, PhD

Assistant to Prof. Svetlana Bryzgalova, 2019-2021

LBS - MBA

Finance II, Assistant to Prof. Howard Kung, 2020-2021

Finance I, Assistant to Prof. Anna Pavlova, 2018-2020

LBS - Masters

Personal Finance, Assistant to Prof. Francisco Gomes, 2019-2021

FinTech and the Financial Services Industry Transformation, Assistant to Prof. Narayan Naik, 2018

LBS - Sberbank Executive Education Program

Project Appraisal and Corporate Valuation, Assistant to Prof. Anna Pavlova, 2018-2020

Financial Statements Analysis, Assistant to Prof. Alastair Lawrence, 2018-2020

Macroeconomics, Assistant to Prof. Andrew Scott and Prof. Elias Papaioannou, 2018-2020

Professional Service	Organization of Finance PhD seminars and reading groups at LBS, 2019-2021 Organization of Finance Junior Faculty and PhD Students reading group at LBS, 2019-2021 Organization of the Trans-Atlantic Doctoral Conference 2019, London	
Other	Languages: Russian (native), English (proficient), German (intermediate) Programming: R, SAS, Python, Stata, MATLAB, Julia, VBA, SQL Certifications: Completed Level III of CFA examination in 2016	
References	Anna Pavlova (advisor) Professor of Finance London Business School +44 (0)20 7000 8218 apavlova@london.edu	Svetlana Bryzgalova Assistant Professor of Finance London Business School +44 (0)20 7000 8292 sbryzgalova@london.edu