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Bank Concentration and Structure of Manufacturing Sectors: Differences Between High and Low Income Countries

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This paper investigates the relationship between bank concentration and the real economy by analyzing the number and average size of firms in manufacturing industries in two samples of countries with differing levels of economic development. We use a panel of 42 countries and 27 manufacturing industries for the period 1993-2001, and we apply the Rajan-Zingales (1998) methodology. The main finding is that in developed countries higher levels of bank concentration are associated with lower number of firms, of bigger size, while in developing countries this relationship does not seem to be significant.

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In Table 7 we show the statistics of the endogeneity test that tests the null hypothesis that the suspected endogenous regressor (bank concentration) can actually be treated as exogenous.²² We report OLS estimation results when the test does not reject the null hypothesis. The estimation results confirm that in high income countries higher bank concentration is associated with lower number of firms and bigger average firm size. While, we do not find a statistically significant relationship between bank concentration and number of firm and average firm size in low income countries.²³

Combining the results, we find support for the idea that, even after controlling for country, industries, and year fixed effects as well as for the industries relative importance in the country, a more concentrated banking market is associated with a lower number of establishments and a bigger average establishment size in industries that are more dependent on external finance. We find this relationship for the group of high income countries, while we do not find a significant (or stable) relationship in the group of low income countries.

This suggests that bank concentration has not in itself a determinant effect on the non-financial market structure, but it seems to have different effects for different levels of economic development. The level of economic development, which is likely to be associated with the economy's institutional, regulatory and overall macroeconomic framework, might have an important role while defining the relationship between bank concentration and the structure of manufacturing sectors.

High income countries have more developed financial and legal systems that may provide better information sharing and creditors rights protection, and more stable economic and political environment.

Trying to interpret these results in light of the contending hypotheses about the real effects of bank concentration, in high income countries the beneficial effects of bank market power, seen in part of the literature as a means to reduce asymmetric information problems, may not offset the costs of a non-competitive credit market, which is likely to be associated with higher interest rates and lower supply of credit.

In low income countries there appears to be a non-significant relationship between bank concentration and the structure of manufacturing sectors. This may be explained by the fact that some institutional, regulatory, technological factors, also beyond the financial system, are more important determinants of the market structure of manufacturing sectors.

²² The test statistic is distributed as chi-squared with degrees of freedom equal to the number of tested regressors. It is a version of the Durbin-Wu-Hausman robust to various violations of conditional homoskedasticity.

²³ One may raise doubts about identification since we are using annual data and we do not use lagged independent variables. However, we have tried to include in our model lagged variables. The result show similar results. However, we believe that further research is needed on this point.

6 Robustness Checks

6.1 Outliers

One might argue that the estimation results are driven by the presence of outlying values. To ensure the robustness of the previous results, for all the model specifications and for both dependent variables, the sample is restricted to the interval within the 5th and the 95th percentile of the country-year distribution (calculated for each sub-sample) of the bank concentration variable.

As showed in Table 8, the results obtained dropping the tails of the country-year distributions of bank concentration in both income groups confirm our previous findings.²⁴

A further approach to control for outliers is to estimate robust regressions. We estimate the two baseline models with iteratively reweighted least squared (IRLS). The estimation results in Table 8 show that the main findings are not changed.

6.2 Augmented Model

In order to check the stability of the bank concentration estimated parameters, we run additional regressions (Table 9), augmenting the models with an measure of the depth of credit markets (i.e. banking private credit to GDP ratio) variables that might also affect the industrial structure.

This variable can capture the effect of the quantity of credit available in the economy and, more generally, it may capture the effects of the legal and regulatory determinants of development of private credit.²⁵

We find that in high-income countries private credit to GDP ratio is positively associated with a higher number of establishments, while it has not a statistically significant effect on the average establishments size.

A possible interpretation of this finding does not differ much from the one used for the effect of bank concentration.

In high-income countries, entrants may take advantage from more credit availability and enter the market. At the same time, incumbents also take advantage of the higher credit availability: however, the more competitive market conditions may lead some of them (likely inefficient ones) to leave the market. An improvement in the aggregate quantity of available credit is likely to be associated with improvements in the institutional and regulatory framework (e.g. better information sharing, creditor rights protection, regulation of banks activities, or removal of legal barriers and impediments

²⁴ Recall that because of data problems with the industrial variables from UNIDO, we have used a filter that dropped all the observations that have an annual growth rate greater than 300%. Further robustness checks with a more restrictive filter (annual growth greater than 100%) confirm the results obtained with the less restrictive filter. The estimation results are available upon request.

²⁵ See for example Djankov et al. (2007).

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