Web of Science Search Process

The collection of publication data was time consuming. We started by collecting information on publications and CVs for individuals in our sample. Based on this information, we created a list of search queries for everyone in the CeMENT data. Each search query includes names, publication year intervals and affiliations. For names, we use both full names and name initials, because publications indexed in WOS prior to 2008 included only last names and initials for first and middle name. We limit the publication year intervals to be from 5 years prior to PhD year to 2018. The affiliations are the job institutions or affiliations of each person. Such information could be found on the job information collected in in the CVs. Institution names must be changed according to the Web of Science organization enhanced index.

For example, supposed that we have a person in the data named Katherine R. McDonald, who graduated in the 2008 from University of Kansas, and she worked in the University of Chicago from 2009 to 2013 and switched to Federal Reserve Bank of Boston after 2013. Then the search query for her would be:

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1 This is not a real person.
(AU = “McDonald, Katherine” or AU = McDonald, KR or AU = “McDonald, K”) and (PY = (2003-2018)) and (OG = “University of Kansas” or OG = “University of Chicago” or OG = “Federal Reserve Bank – Boston”)

The search with the name “McDonald, KR” would result in all the records with the full name “McDonald, Katherine R.” For people without a middle name (or middle name is not found), the search using last name and first name initials would result in records with same last name but not same first name. For example, paper published by McDonald, Kathy or McDonald, Kevin are likely to be found. Economics papers published before 2006 and health economics papers published in health journals are more likely to be published using name initials. We automated this search process by creating Python code to scrape search results from WOS.

After searching and downloading the result files from WOS for each person, we put the data together and hand-validated publications using information from the CVs. We use author’s full names, field, institutions and journals to find the false records.

There are several potential limitations to our data. First, the data collection is based on online searches. We were not able to find all the information for everyone in the data, making it less consistent. Second, because of the query limitations in WOS, we cannot simply use the WOS search results only. The search queries vary by each person. Some searches returned zero records and required updating. The screening process may have introduced coding errors. Most of the CV searches were done in 2017, however publications were found in WOS through the third quarter of 2018.