Precautionary Reserves and the Interbank Market[1]

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Abstract

Large excess reserve balances are held by banks in the U.S. despite the ability of large banks to closely target end-of-day balances close to zero. We show that the friction faced by small banks to participate in the fed funds market leads to all banks holding precautionary reserves. The precautionary motive for reserves can explain that small banks hold relatively large amounts of excess reserves overnight, while at the same time lending large amounts to large banks. Small banks are large net lenders despite their reluctance to lend as large of a percentage of available balances during the day as large banks. We also explain an increase in the volatility of the fed funds rate late in the day, and offer a new rationale for the large size of fed funds lending relative to aggregate bank reserve balances.

1 Introduction

In the first two quarters of 2007 banks in the U.S. held on average \$1.6 billion in excess reserve balances that were not required by regulation and which earned an interest rate of zero. On average banks held approximately \$15 billion over the period in required and

[1] The views expressed in this paper are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York or the Federal Reserve System.

excess reserve balances and required clearing balances. At the same time, large banks appear capable on average of targeting their end-of-day balance to quite narrow ranges by actively trading fed funds in the final thirty minutes of the operating day, as shown in Ashcraft and Duffie (2007). It is therefore a puzzle as to why banks should hold excess reserves.

We resolve this puzzle by carefully examining the effects of a friction in the fed funds market. This friction, that small banks have higher costs of participation in the fed funds market, has been previously described in the literature. We provide the first examination of the effects of this friction on the workings of the fed funds market itself, and on the reserve-holding behavior of banks, small and large. We find that the friction motivates both small and large banks to hold precautionary balances.

We hypothesize that large banks have a precautionary demand for reserves related to the possibility that aggregate reserves become concentrated at the end of the day in the accounts of banks that are reluctant to lend. We start out with the view that financial constraints limit the ability of some banks to borrow, which in turn should motivate an unwillingness to lend. Ashcraft and Bleakley (2005) document that privately-held banks appear to face financial constraints when borrowing in the federal funds market. This paper develops a model in order to better understand the importance of this phenomenon and analyzes Fedwire data in order to document its empirical relevance.

The model shows that the concept of precautionary balances can explain that small banks hold relatively large amounts of excess reserves overnight, while lending large amounts to large banks overnight. In addition, small banks lend a lower percentage of available balances during the day than do large banks. The model also shows an increase in the volatility of the fed funds rate late in the day, and predicts empirically that fed funds lending increases with the fed funds rate. Furthermore, the model offers a new explanation for the phenomena of fed funds loans that are multiples of aggregate bank reserves.

The literature on the fed funds market suggests a few different explanations for the pattern of small banks lending to large banks. Ho and Saunders (1985) develop a model in which small banks prefer taking deposits to borrowing on the fed funds market because of risk aversion. An alternative explanation for the reliance on deposits by small banks are the results of Rose and Kolari (1985) whose empirical results suggest that small regional banks have lower deposit-taking costs as a result of local monopoly power. Allen and Saunders (1986) give an explanation based on asymmetric information leading to adverse selection. Small banks' size and location outside of money centers makes information on their credit quality more difficult to discover. They further examine the roles of multi-period contracts and relationships to partially resolve those adverse selection problems in the fed funds market. Allen, Peristiani, and Saunders (1989) document that larger banks are net purchasers of fed funds, consistent with the hypothesis of small banks having greater adverse selection problems in the market, while the same pattern of net purchases does not exist in the repo market, a collateralized market that overcomes some of the adverse selection problems of the fed funds market.

The more recent literature includes partial equilibrium models of why reserves are held because of the payments shocks to which banks are subject–shocks that arrive after trading in fed funds has ended. Ennis and Weinberg (2007) explore one such a model. Other models include ones that focus on interest rate corridor regimes for the implementation of monetary policy such as Whitesell (2006a,b), Pérez-Quirós and Rodríguez-Mendizábal (2006) and Berentsen and Monnet (2007).

We take the inability of small banks to borrow in the fed funds market as an assumption. This inability to borrow causes a friction in the fed funds market. We examine how this friction plays out through the banks' behavior in the fed funds market and in their choices of precautionary balance levels. This contrasts with Allen and Saunders (1986) who consider multi-period implicit contract remedies for the adverse selection problem. We present empirical evidence to support our focus on the effects in the fed funds market and on banks' levels of precautionary reserves.

In contrast to the recent literature on monetary policy implementation, we provide a general equilibrium model of the fed funds market with a richer model of time-of-day payment shocks. In addition our model focuses on the heterogeneity of banks and their behavior in the fed funds market. The payment shocks in our model are a result of payments flowing between banks within the closed system of banks in the model at different times of the day. By modeling multiple trading rounds in the fed funds market, we can address the dichotomy between low and high volatility periods of trading within the day, as well as the evolution of banks' balances during the day. This richer model has specific empirical implications for which we provide evidence.

We examine a particular friction in the fed funds market, namely that small banks face higher costs in participating in the market, and examine that friction's effects on both the fed funds market itself and on banks' decisions regarding precautionary excess reserve balances. By examining this motive for precautionary balances in a general equilibrium environment, our model produces greater insights into the behavior of the fed funds market. We are able to substantiate many of the model's implications in the empirical performance of the market in the U.S. The implications and insights of our model are useful given the importance of the fed funds market for monetary policy implementation and as an anchor to many other market interest rates.

2 Empirical Motivation

This section outlines some motivating facts for the model. First, we highlight the importance of the federal funds market at the end of the business day. Figure 1 documents how the cross-sectional distribution of balances changes during the last 90 minutes of the business day. We focus on the top 100 accounts during all business days of 2005. At the start of this window (17:00), note that a significant fraction of banks have negative balances. These typically large institutions make use of intraday credit throughout the day. This credit is provided by the Federal Reserve for a small fee (measured as 36 basis points at an annual rate, adjusted for the duration of the credit as a percentage of the day) to promote the timely sending of payments. As the end of the business day (18:30) nears, reserves are reallocated from institutions with positive balances to banks with negative balances, largely through federal funds loans.

Figure 2 documents that the last hour of the day is a more volatile time for banks. The graph plots the federal funds interest rate volatility measured by the time series standard deviation of the dollar-weighted average federal funds rate over the previous thirty minutes. The sample refers to loans between the top 100 banks during 2005. It is clear from the figure that volatility starts to increase around 17:30 and has a significant spike at 18:20 when banks seems fairly certain of their end-of-day balances. Banks in need of reserves during this time are subject to a severe hold-up problem, as the penalty on an overnight overdraft is the effective federal funds rate plus 400 basis points.

Figure 3 illustrates the average propensity that a bank lends or borrows at least once during the day is related to its size. Here the sample refers to the approximately 700 banks that ever lend or borrow during the first two months of 2007. We measure size using percentiles of the cross-sectional distribution of average daily Fedwire send for the bank over this time period. While the smallest banks lend about one out of every five days, they rarely borrow (about 5 percent of business days). On the other hand, the largest decile of banks lends on about 8.5 out of every 10 days, and borrows on about 7.5 out of every 10. The key takeaway is that smaller institutions are less likely to borrow and lend across all states of nature.

Figure 4 focuses on the average propensity of the smallest banks to lend across different states of nature measured by the actual balance during different windows of the day. For each bank, we measure the percentiles of the distribution of balance at a given minute of the day across all days of the sample period. The point of using bank-specific distributions is to take into account the fact that different banks have different stanards for what is normal at a given time of day. The figure documents that the smallest banks are most willing to lend in the 3pm to 5pm window, and that these institutes rarely lend during the last 90 minutes of the day. Moreover, the figure illustrates the natural phenomenon that banks are more likely to lend when faced when reserves are higher than normal. However, note that the willingness of these banks to lend is quite small, as only about 4 percent will lend during the 3pm to 5pm window when faced with the most favorable liquidity shock. These facts suggest that the smallest institutions withdraw from the federal funds market at the end of the day.

Figure 5 tells a much different story for the largest banks. While large banks are active lenders during the 3pm to 5pm window, they are also active lenders during the last 90 minutes of the day when faced with a favorable reserve position. The graph documents that in contrast to the smallest banks, more than 50 percent of the largest banks with the most favorable reserve position will lend during the last 90 minutes of the day. Moreover, note that 20 percent of the largest banks facing the most adverse reserve position are willing to lend during this late period. Together, these facts suggest that large banks are active lenders throughout the business day.

Figure 6 documents the average propensity of the smallest banks to borrow across percentiles of the balance distribution for different time windows. The smallest banks typically borrow during the 3pm to 5pm window when the reserve position is in one of the two most adverse deciles. However, small banks also borrow during the last 90 minutes of the day, but only when faced with the tail of the reserve balance distribution. Note that the mean probability of borrowing is quite low for small banks, suggesting that reserve management is largely accomplished by holding large precautionary reserves and not through borrowing.

The mean frequency of borrowing for the largest banks across percentiles of the balance distribution is illustrated in Figure 7. Large banks borrow throughout the day, but do borrow the most when hit with an adverse reserve balance at the end of the day. Note that the means are much higher for the large banks. For example, 85 percent of banks hit with the worst reserve position during he last 90 minutes borrow. This suggests that federal funds trading is a key component of the reserve management strategy of large banks throughout the day.

3 Model

Banks hold reserves for precautionary reasons to avoid being overdrawn at the end of the day. There are L large banks called type 'l' and S small banks called type 's'. There are four periods $t \in \{1\text{pm}, 3\text{pm}, 6\text{pm}, 9\text{pm}\}$, abbreviated as $t = \{1, 3, 6, 9\}$. Banks receive payments shocks at $t \in \{3, 6\}$ that they must pay during the period. A bank can make any amount of payments intraday regardless of its reserve balance, which abstracts from any fees or caps for intraday credit from the Fed. But if a bank is overdrawn at the end of the day, it must borrow from the discount window at a penalty rate.

Positive values of the flow variables, payment shocks p_t^i and fed funds loans f_t^i, represent outflows from banks, while negative values represent inflows. Discount window loans w_6^i are always positive and represent inflows. The state variable m_t^i represents the reserve balances held by bank i entering period t.

Timeline $t = 1$: Bank $i \in \{l, s\}$ holds $b_1^i \in \mathbb{R}$ bonds and $m_1^i \in \mathbb{R}$ Federal Reserve account balances at the start of the period. The Fed conducts open market operations (equivalent to a repo market) by buying and selling any amount of bonds to banks at a price of one and gross return that the Fed sets of $1 + R_1^b > 1$ at $t = 9$. The bank chooses $\Delta b_1^i \in \mathbb{R}$ bonds to buy.

$t = 3$: Bank i holds $b_3^i = b_1^i + \Delta b_1^i$ and $m_3^i = m_1^i - \Delta b_1^i$.[2] Bank l has a payment shock of p_3^l to small banks and p_3^k to other large banks. Bank s has a payment shock of p_3^s to large banks. For simplicity, bank s has no payment shock to other small banks. (Bank l's shocks to other large banks at $t = 1$ and $t = 3$ below are not required for any results). Banks may then trade on the fed funds market, in which prices are taken as given. Bank s lends $f_3^s(R_3^s) \geq 0$ to large banks for a return due at $t = 9$ of R_3^s. Bank l borrows $-f_3^l(R_3^s) \geq 0$ from small banks and lends $f_3^k(R_3^k) \in \mathbb{R}$ to other large banks.

$t = 6$: Bank l has a payment shock of p_6^l to small banks and p_6^k to other large banks. Bank s has a payment shock of p_6^s to large banks. Bank l lends $f_6^k(R_6^k) \in \mathbb{R}$ in the fed funds market to other large banks. Bank $i \in \{l, s\}$ must borrow $w_6^i \geq 0$ from the Fed discount window for a return due at $t = 9$ of $R_6^w \geq R_1^b$, such that it's balance at the end of the period is non-negative.

$t = 9$: Period $t = 9$pm can be considered as equivalent to occurring the next day before or at the beginning of the $t = 1$pm period. Bank l has payment shocks of $-(p_3^l + p_6^l)$ to small banks and $-(p_3^k + p_6^k)$ to other large banks. Bank s has a payment shock of $p_9^s = -(p_3^s + p_6^s)$ to large banks. Bank l has a payment of $-(1 + R_3^s)f_3^l - (1 + R_3^k)f_3^k - (1 + R_6^k)f_6^k$, and bank s has a payment of $-(1 + R_3^s)f_3^s$, to repay fed funds. Bank i makes a payment of $(1 + R_6^w)w_6^i$ to the Fed to repay its discount window loan, and the Fed redeems bonds to bank i for $(1 + R_1^b)b_3^i$ in reserve balances (equivalent to trading longer-dated bonds for balances).

Notation and distributions To summarize the notation, lowercase variables generally denote individual bank values. An 'l' or 's' superscript generally denotes a state variable for that bank type, a flow variable transaction from that bank type to the other bank type, or an interest rate R_t^i involving transactions of bank type. A 'k' superscript generally denotes a flow variable or interest rate for transactions among large banks. Subscripts denote the period $t \in \{1, 3, 6, 9\}$.

[2] We could equivalently assume bank s does not trade during $t = 1$, and rather that m_3^s is its steady-state level in a repeated game.

For economy of notation, the superscript 'l', 's' or 'k' that indicates a bank or transaction type is also used as the index number for summations, where $l \in \{1, ..., L\}$, $k \in \{1, ..., K\}$ and $s \in \{1, ..., S\}$. For each lowercase variable, its uppercase P_t^i, F_t^i, M_t^i or W_6^i denotes the sum for type i at period t. For instance, $P_t^s = \sum_{s=1}^{S} p_t^s$ and $P_t^l = \sum_{l=1}^{L} p_t^l$ for $t \in \{3, 6\}$. Banks are competitive, so they take prices and aggregate quantities F_t^i and W_t^i as given. The aggregate payment shocks from small banks to large banks equals the aggregate payment shocks from large banks to small banks, implying $P_t^s = -P_t^l$. Aggregate payment shocks among large banks must aggregate to zero, implying $P_t^k = 0$ for $t \in \{3, 6\}$.

Payments shocks have zero mean, with a uniform distribution $p_t^i \sim U[-\overline{p}^i, \overline{p}^i]$, $i \in \{l, s\}$, and an unspecified distribution for p_t^k, for $t \in \{3, 6\}$. For simplicity, we assume that P_t^i has a uniform distribution, where $P_t^i \sim U[-\overline{P}, \overline{P}]$, for $i \in \{l, s\}$ and $t = \{3, 6\}$. $\overline{P} = \gamma^i \overline{p}^i$ for $i \in \{l, s\}$, where $\gamma^l \in (0, L)$ and $\gamma^s \in (0, S)$, which implies that shocks for type $i \in \{l, s\}$ are not perfectly positively or negatively correlated.[3] Bank i has combined liquid assets in the form of bonds and reserves greater that its potential payment shocks to other banks: $m_1^i + b_1^i \geq 2\overline{p}^i + \overline{p}^k \mathbf{1}_{i=l}$ for $i \in \{l, s\}$.

[3] It is natural to think of unexpected payments as having zero mean, because any expected payments would typically be funded by repos or fed funds traded in the morning fed funds market. The uniform distribution of P_t^i is assumed for simplification and should not qualitatively effect the results. Consider the correlation of p_t^i across all banks of a particular type $i \in \{l, s\}$ and period $t \in \{3, 6\}$. If the correlation is negative one, P_t^i has a degenerate uniform distribution of $U[0, 0]$ and corresponds to the limiting case of $\gamma^i = 0$. If the correlation is one, P_t^i has a uniform distribution of $U[-L\overline{p}^i, L\overline{p}^i]$ for $i = l$ and $U[-S\overline{p}^i, S\overline{p}^i]$ for $i = s$, which corresponds to the limiting case of γ^i equal to L and S, respectively. If the correlation is zero, the central limit theorem implies that as L and S go to infinity, the distributions of P_t^l and P_t^s, would approach normal given by $N(0, \frac{L(\overline{p}^l)^2}{3})$ and $N(0, \frac{S(\overline{p}^s)^2}{3})$, respectively. Instead, the variance of P_t^i with its assumed uniform distribution is $\frac{(\gamma^i \overline{p}^i)^2}{3}$. For $\gamma^l = L^{\frac{1}{2}}$ and $\gamma^s = S^{\frac{1}{2}}$, P_t^i has the same variance as it would under the central limit theorem. The difference is that a uniform distribution implies P_t^i has much "fatter tails," or extremely lower kurtosis, than P_t^i would have under a normal distribution. This can be interpreted as a positive correlation of p_t^i, with a particularly high correlation among tail values of p_t^i.

4 Bank Optimizations

The bank $i \in \{l, s\}$ optimization problem to maximize profits is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
\max_{\boldsymbol{A}^i} \quad & E[\pi^i] && (1)\\
\text{s.t.} \quad & m_3^i \leq b_1^i + m_1^i && (2)\\
& -f_3^l \mathbf{1}_{i=l} + f_3^s \mathbf{1}_{i=s} \geq 0 && (3)\\
& w_6^i \geq 0 && (4)\\
& m_9^i \geq 0. && (5)
\end{aligned}$$

For bank l,

$$\begin{aligned}
m_6^l &= m_3^l - p_3^l - p_3^k - f_3^l - f_3^k && (6)\\
m_9^l &= m_6^l - p_6^l - p_6^k - f_6^k + w_6^l && (7)\\
\pi^l &= (1 + R_1^b) b_3^l + m_3^l - R_6^w w_6^l + R_6^k f_6^k + R_3^s f_3^l + R_3^k f_3^k - b_1^l - m_1^l\\
\boldsymbol{A}^l &= \{m_3^l, f_3^l, f_3^k, f_6^k, w_6^l\}.
\end{aligned}$$

For bank s,

$$\begin{aligned}
m_6^s &= m_3^s - p_3^s - f_3^s && (8)\\
m_9^s &= m_6^s - p_6^s + w_6^s\\
\pi^s &= (1 + R_1^b) b_3^s + m_3^s - R_6^w w_6^s + R_3^s f_3^s - b_1^s - m_1^s\\
\boldsymbol{A}^s &= \{m_3^s, f_3^s, w_6^s\}.
\end{aligned}$$

Constraint (2) gives the maximum reserve balances m_3^i that can be held at $t = 3$. We call m_3^i bank i's "clean balances," and is equal to the bank's daily starting reserve balances net of any fed funds or discount window loans, and before any payments shocks for the day. Constraint (3), where $\mathbf{1}_{[\cdot]}$ represent the indicator function, gives the restriction that small banks cannot borrow from large banks. Constraint (4) restricts discount window loans to be non-negative, and constraint (5) requires that overnight reserve balances m_9^i are non-negative.

We examine equilibria that are symmetric among type $i \in \{l, s\}$, and for which constraint (3) does not bind. As equilibrium conditions, aggregate interbank lending among large banks must net to zero each period, implying $F_t^k = 0$ for $t \in \{3, 6\}$, and aggregate interbank lending between large and small banks must satisfy $F_3^l(R_3^s) = -F_3^s(R_3^s)$. We solve the model starting at $t = 6$.

6pm results For bank l,

$$\pi^l = (b_1^l + m_1^l - m_3^l)R_1^b - R_6^w w_6^l + R_6^k f_6^k + R_3^s f_3^l + R_3^k f_3^k.$$

Bank l chooses discount window borrowing w_6^l and interbank lending f_6^k. Constraints (4) and (5) imply that

$$w_6^l = \max\{0, -m_6^l + p_6^l + p_6^k + f_6^k\}, \tag{9}$$

which is greater than zero if the bank cannot borrow enough on the interbank market to ensure its overnight balance m_9^l is not overdrawn. The first order condition for f_6^k gives

$$R_6^k = R_6^w \frac{dw_6^l}{df_6^k} = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } w_6^l = 0 \\ R_6^w & \text{if } w_6^l > 0, \end{cases} \tag{10}$$

except $m_9^l = w_6^l$, which implies $w_6^l = 0$ and $\frac{dw_6^l}{df_6^k}|_{w_6^l = m_9^l}$ is not defined. In order for the first order condition to hold for all large banks for which $m_9^l \neq w_6^l$, either they all borrow from the discount window or none do. This means that no large banks borrow at the discount window while others hold excess overnight balances. This allows for deriving the aggregate discount window borrowing $W_6^l = \sum_{l=1}^{L} w_6^l = \max\{0, -M_6^l + P_6^l\}$, where

$$M_6^l = M_3^l - P_3^l - F_3^l. \tag{11}$$

If $W_6^l = 0$, there is sufficient aggregate balances among large banks. No large banks borrow at the discount window, and those that need funds borrow from those with excess funds at $R_6^k = 0$. If $W_6^l > 0$, there is an aggregate shortage of balances among large banks, which requires borrowing at the discount window. The interbank lending rate equals the discount window rate, so it is arbitrary how large banks choose between w_6^l and f_6^k. For simplicity, we assume that all large banks borrow equally from the discount window according to

$$\begin{aligned} w_6^l &= \frac{1}{L} W_6^l \\ &= \max\{0, \frac{1}{L}(-M_6^l + P_6^l)\}, \end{aligned}$$

and trade in the interbank market to give themselves equal overnight balances. Banks are indifferent because if $R_6^k = 0$, then $w_6^l = 0$ and they borrow in the fed funds market at no cost. If $R_6^k = R_6^w$, then all large banks hold $m_9^l = 0$, and borrow at the same rate in the fed funds as at the discount window. This implies that for each large bank, $m_9^l = \frac{1}{L} M_9^l = \frac{1}{L} \sum_{l=1}^{L} m_9^l$. Substituting for m_9^l from (7) and simplifying,

$$m_6^l - p_6^l - p_6^k - f_6^k + w_6^l = \frac{1}{L}(M_6^l - P_6^l + W_6^l).$$

Substituting for $w_6^l = \frac{1}{L} W_6^l$ and solving for f_6^k gives

$$f_6^k = -\frac{1}{L}(M_6^l - P_6^l) + m_6^l - p_6^l - p_6^k,$$

to complete bank l's optimization at $t = 6$.

For bank s,

$$\pi^s = (b_1^s + m_1^s - m_3^s) R_1^b - R_6^w w_6^s + R_3^s f_3^s.$$

Bank s chooses only discount window borrowing. Constraints (4) and (5) imply that bank s chooses

$$w_6^s = \max\{0, -m_3^s + p_3^s + f_3^s + p_6^s\}.$$

3pm results At $t = 3$, banks choose interbank lending. Bank l chooses interbank lending $f_3^l(R_3^s)$ to small banks (in negative amounts) and $f_3^k(R_3^k)$ to large banks. The first order conditions for f_3^l and f_3^k are

$$R_3^s = \frac{d}{df_3^l} E_3[R_6^w w_6^l - R_6^k f_6^k - R_3^k f_3^k] \tag{12}$$

$$R_3^k = \frac{d}{df_3^k} E_3[R_6^w w_6^l - R_6^k f_6^k - R_3^s f_3^l], \tag{13}$$

respectively. For solutions such that constraint (3) does not bind, $f_3^l < 0$ implies $R_3^k = R_3^s$. To show this, suppose $R_3^k < R_3^s$. Bank l would borrow infinitely from small banks to lend to other large banks, implying $f_3^k = \infty$. In aggregate, $F_3^k = \sum_{l=1}^{L} f_3^k = \infty$, a contradiction to the equilibrium condition of $F_3^k = 0$. Suppose instead $R_3^s > R_3^k$. Bank l would demand to borrow from other large banks and not from small banks, implying $f_3^l(R_3^s) = 0$ for all l, a contradiction to $f_3^l < 0$.

Since $R_3^k = R_3^s$, bank l is indifferent between lending to large or small banks, so its choice between f_3^l and f_3^k is arbitrary. We assume for simplicity that all large banks borrow equally from small banks according to $f_3^l = \frac{F_3^l}{L}$ and then redistribute funds among themselves. This structure would also correspond to a model of small banks lending in a correspondent banking relationship to large banks, which then relend the funds on the interbank market.

Net borrowing at $t = 6$ is

$$R_6^w w_6^l - R_6^k f_6^k = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{if } W_6^l = 0 \\ R_6^w(-m_6^l + p_6^l + p_6^k) & \text{if } W_6^l > 0, \end{cases} \tag{14}$$

found by substituting into the left-hand side of (14) for w_6^l from (9), and for R_6^k from (10), noting that $w_6^l > 0$ if and only if $W_6^l > 0$.

Expected net borrowing at $t = 6$ is

$$\begin{aligned} E_3[R_6^w w_6^l - R_6^k f_6^k] &= R_6^w \int_{-\overline{P}}^{\overline{P}} \int_{-\overline{p}^l}^{\overline{p}^l} \int_{-\overline{p}^k}^{\overline{p}^k} (-m_6^l + p_6^l + p_6^k) \mathbf{1}_{W_6^l > 0} \psi(p_6^k, p_6^l, P_6^l) dp_6^k dp_6^l dP_6^l \\ &= R_6^w \int_{-\overline{P}}^{\overline{P}} \int_{-\overline{p}^l}^{\overline{p}^l} \int_{-\overline{p}^k}^{\overline{p}^k} (-m_6^l + p_6^l + p_6^k) \mathbf{1}_{P_6^l > M_6^l} \psi(p_6^k, p_6^l, P_6^l) dp_6^k dp_6^l dP_6^l \\ &= R_6^w \int_{M_6^l}^{\overline{P}} \int_{-\overline{p}^l}^{\overline{p}^l} \int_{-\overline{p}^k}^{\overline{p}^k} (-m_6^l + p_6^l + p_6^k) \psi(p_6^k, p_6^l, P_6^l) dp_6^k dp_6^l dP_6^l, \end{aligned} \tag{15}$$

where $\psi(\cdot)$ is a uniform (joint where appropriate) p.d.f. Substituting the right-hand side for the left-hand side of (15) into (12), substituting for m_6^l from (6), noting $R_3^k = R_3^s$ and simplifying gives

$$
\begin{aligned}
R_3^s &= (1+\frac{df_3^k}{df_3^l})R_6^w \int_{M_6^l}^{\overline{P}} \int_{-\overline{p}^l}^{\overline{p}^l} \int_{-\overline{p}^k}^{\overline{p}^k} \psi(p_6^k, p_6^l, P_6^l) dp_6^k dp_6^l dP_6^l - R_3^s \frac{df_3^k}{df_3^l} \\
&= R_6^w \int_{M_6^l}^{\overline{P}} \int_{-\overline{p}^l}^{\overline{p}^l} \int_{-\overline{p}^k}^{\overline{p}^k} \psi(p_6^k | p_6^l, P_6^l)\psi(p_6^l|P_6^l)\psi(P_6^l) dp_6^k dp_6^l dP_6^l \\
&= R_6^w \int_{M_6^l}^{\overline{P}} \frac{1}{2\overline{P}} dP_6^l \\
&= \frac{R_6^w(\overline{P} - M_6^l)}{2\overline{P}}.
\end{aligned}
$$

Substituting similarly as above into (13) and simplifying gives the same solution:

$$
\begin{aligned}
R_3^s &= (1+\frac{df_3^l}{df_3^k})R_6^w \int_{M_6^l}^{\overline{P}} \int_{-\overline{p}^l}^{\overline{p}^l} \int_{-\overline{p}^k}^{\overline{p}^k} \psi(p_6^k, p_6^l, P_6^l) dp_6^k dp_6^l dP_6^l - R_3^s \frac{df_3^l}{df_3^k} \\
&= \frac{R_6^w(\overline{P} - M_6^l)}{2\overline{P}}.
\end{aligned}
$$

Substituting for M_6^l from (11) gives

$$
R_3^s = R_6^w \frac{(\overline{P} + P_3^l + F_3^l - M_3^l)}{2\overline{P}}. \tag{16}
$$

Solving for $-F_3^l$ gives the large banks' aggregate demand for borrowing from small banks:

$$
-F_3^l(R_3^s) = -2\frac{R_3^s}{R_6^w}\overline{P} - M_3^l + P_3^l + \overline{P}.
$$

To interpret this, first note that

$$
\begin{aligned}
E_3[R_6^k] &= R_6^w E[\mathbf{1}_{W^C>0}] \\
&= R_6^w \int_{M_6^l}^{\overline{P}} \frac{1}{2\overline{P}} dP_6^l \\
&= R_3^s,
\end{aligned}
$$

where we substitute for R_6^s on the left-hand side from (10). Since $E_3[R_6^k] = R_3$ and (16) are independent of f_3^l and f_3^k, bank l is indifferent to borrowing/lending at $t = 3$ versus at $t = 6$. For simplicity, we assume large banks trade at $t = 3$ to hold equal balances: $m_3^l = \frac{M_3^l}{L}$. The individual bank l first order conditions for f_3^l and f_3^k require that in (16), aggregate large bank borrowing F_3^l equates the return on a marginal unit of fed funds borrowed by large banks in aggregate, R_3^s, with the expected cost of large banks needing to borrow a marginal unit from the discount window, which is the return on discount window borrowing, R_6^w, multiplied by the probability that large banks have to borrow from the discount window based on F_3^l, which is the last factor on the right-hand side of (16). Substituting for m_6^l from (6) into $m_6^l = \frac{M_6^l}{L}$, simplifying and solving for f_3^k,

$$f_3^k = -\frac{M_6^l}{L} + m_3^l - p_3^l - p_3^k - f_3^l. \tag{17}$$

For bank s, the first order condition for f_3^s is

$$R_3^s = R_6^w \frac{d}{df_3^s} E_3[w_6^s],$$

where

$$\begin{aligned} E[w_6^s] &= E[w_6^s | p_6^s > m_6^s] \Pr(p_6^s > m_6^s) \\ &= \left(\frac{\overline{p}^s - m_6^s}{2\overline{p}^s}\right)\left(\frac{\overline{p}^s - m_6^s}{2}\right). \end{aligned}$$

In the second line, the first factor is the probability of being overdraft, and the second factor is the expected discount window borrowing given that the bank is overdraft. Taking the derivative with respect to f_3^s gives

$$\begin{aligned} E_3[w_6^s] &= \int_{-\overline{p}^s}^{\overline{p}^s} (p_3^s + p_6^s + f_3^s - m_3^s) \mathbf{1}_{p_6^s > m_3^s - p_3^s - f_3^s} \psi(p_6^s) dp_6^s \\ &= \int_{m_3^s - p_3^s - f_3^s}^{\overline{p}^s} (p_3^s + p_6^s + f_3^s - m_3^s) \psi(p_6^s) dp_6^s \\ &= \frac{(p_3^s + f_3^s - m_3^s + \overline{p}^s)^2}{4\overline{p}^s}, \end{aligned} \tag{18}$$

giving

$$R_3^s = R_6^w \left[\frac{\overline{p}^s - (m_3^s - p_3^s - f_3^s)}{2\overline{p}^s} \right].$$

This first order condition for f_3^s shows that bank s chooses f_3^s to equate its return on a marginal unit of fed funds lending, R_3^s, with its expected cost of needing to borrow a marginal unit from the discount window, which is the return on discount window borrowing, R_6^w, multiplied by the probability bank s has to borrow based on f_3^s.

Solving for f_3^s,

$$f_3^s(R_3^s) = 2\overline{p}^s \frac{R_3^s}{R_6^w} - p_3^s + m_3^s - \overline{p}^s. \tag{19}$$

The aggregate supply of interbank loans by small banks is

$$\begin{aligned} F_3^s(R_3^s) &= \sum_{s=1}^{S} f_3^s(R_3^s) \\ &= S[2\overline{p}^s \frac{R_3^s}{R_6^w} + m_3^s - \overline{p}^s] - \sum_{s=1}^{S} p_3^s, \end{aligned}$$

where $\sum_{s=1}^{S} m_3^s = S m_3^s$ since banks of type $i \in \{l, s\}$ are ex-ante identical and choose the same m_3^i at $t = 1$. Solving for R_3^s gives

$$R_3^s = \frac{R_6^w (F_3^s + P_3^s - M_3^s + S\overline{p}^s)}{2S\overline{p}^s}.$$

The competitive market equilibrium for fed funds, determined by $F_3^s(R_3^s) = -F_3^l(R_3^s)$, is

$$F_3^s = -P_3^s + \frac{\overline{P} M_3^s - S\overline{p}^s M_3^l}{S\overline{p}^s + \overline{P}} \tag{20}$$

$$R_3^s = \tfrac{1}{2} R_6^w \{1 - \frac{M_3^s + M_3^l}{S\overline{p}^s + \overline{P}}\}. \tag{21}$$

R_3^s does not depend on P_3^s. An early payment shock P_3^s shifts the aggregate small banks' supply curve and large banks' demand curve in equal amounts to the right, so the fed funds amount increases but the price is unchanged.

The amount borrowed from small banks is equal across large banks by assumption from above. By (19), bank lending across small banks is equal except for the p_3^s term.

Thus, in equilibrium $-f_3^l = \frac{F_3^s}{L}$ and $f_3^s = -p_3^s + \frac{F_3^s - P_3^s}{S}$, which gives

$$-f_3^l = \frac{P_3^l}{L} + \frac{\overline{P}M_3^s - S\overline{p}^s M_3^l}{L\left(S\overline{p}^s + \overline{P}\right)} \tag{22}$$

$$f_3^s = -p_3^s + \frac{\overline{P}M_3^s - S\overline{p}^s M_3^l}{S\left(S\overline{p}^s + \overline{P}\right)}. \tag{23}$$

1pm results At $t = 1$, bank i chooses m_3^i by buying Δb_1^i bonds according to their first order condition for m_3^i. For bank l, this is

$$R_1^b = \frac{d}{dm_3^l} E_1[-R_6^w w_6^l + R_6^k f_6^k + R_3^s f_3^l + R_3^k f_3^k].$$

Substituting for R_3^k with R_3^s, for $-R_6^w w_6^l + R_6^k f_6^k$ from (14), for f_3^k from (17) and simplifying gives

$$\begin{aligned} R_1^b &= \frac{d}{dm_3^l} E_1[R_6^w(\frac{M_6^l}{L} - p_6^l - p_6^k)\mathbf{1}_{W_6^l>0} - R_3^s(\frac{M_6^l}{L} - m_3^l + p_3^l + p_3^k)] \\ &= E_1[R_3^s]. \end{aligned}$$

For bank s, the first order condition is

$$\begin{aligned} R_1^b &= \frac{d}{dm_3^s} E_1[-R_6^w w_6^s + R_3^s f_3^s] \\ &= \frac{d}{dm_3^s} E_1[E_3[-R_6^w w_6^s + R_3^s f_3^s]] \end{aligned}$$

Substituting for w_6^s from (18) and for f_3^s from (19) and simplifying gives the same result,

$$\begin{aligned} R_1^b &= \frac{d}{dm_3^s} E_1[-R_6^w \overline{p}^s(\frac{R_3^s}{R_6^w} + 1)^2 + R_3^s[2\overline{p}^s \frac{R_3^s}{R_6^w} - p_3^s + m_3^s - \overline{p}^s]] \\ &= E_1[R_3^s] \\ &= R_3^s. \end{aligned}$$

Substituting R_1^b for R_3^s into (21) and solving for the aggregate clean balances gives

$$M_3^s + M_3^l = (1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w})(S\overline{p}^s + \overline{P}). \tag{24}$$

From the equilibrium solution for f_3^s in (23) and f_3^l in (22), if

$$\overline{P}M_3^s - S\overline{p}^s M_3^l > p_3^s S(S\overline{p}^s + \overline{P}) \text{ for all } s, \tag{25}$$

then $f_3^s > 0$ for all s, and $f_3^l < 0$ for all l, since $f_3^l = -\frac{S}{L}F_3^s$, so constraint (3) holds and does not bind.

The inequality (25) always holds if

$$\gamma^s M_3^s - SM_3^l > S\overline{p}^s(\gamma^s + S), \tag{26}$$

and implies that

$$F_3^s = \sum_{s=1}^{S} f_3^s > S\overline{p}^s - \overline{P} > 0. \tag{27}$$

This shows that when each bank s holds optimal balances so that its borrowing constraint is not binding, their precautionary reserves imply that there is always aggregate strictly positive lending to large banks. For solutions satisfying (24) and (26),

$$\begin{aligned} M_3^l &< \overline{P}(1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w}) - S\overline{p}^s < 0 \\ M_3^s &> 2S\overline{p}^s(1 - \frac{R_1^b}{R_6^w}) > 0 \end{aligned}$$

which imply

$$m_3^l < \frac{\overline{P}}{L}(1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w}) - \frac{S}{L}\overline{p}^s < 0 \tag{28}$$

$$m_3^s > 2\overline{p}^s(1 - \frac{R_1^b}{R_6^w}) > 0. \tag{29}$$

To satisfy constraint (2), $m_3^s < 2\overline{p}^s$, which implies $m_3^l \geq \frac{\overline{P}}{L}(1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w}) - \frac{S}{L}\overline{p}^s(1 + \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w})$. Thus, to satisfy constraints (2) and (3),

$$\begin{aligned} m_3^l &\in \left(\frac{\overline{P}}{L}(1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w}) - \frac{S}{L}\overline{p}^s(1 + \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w}), \frac{\overline{P}}{L}(1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w}) - \frac{S}{L}\overline{p}^s\right) \\ m_3^s &\in \left(2\overline{p}^s(1 - \frac{R_1^b}{R_6^w}, 2\overline{p}^s\right), \end{aligned}$$

subject to (24).

5 Precautionary Balances and Bank Lending

We compare the percentage of available balances that large and small banks lend on the interbank market at $t = 3$, under the assumption that aggregate reserve balances are positive. We show that for a given bank reserve balance, controlling for the size of the bank by scaling by the maximum $t = 6$ shock size, large banks lend a greater percentage of available reserve balances than small banks. The net amount that bank l lends at $t = 3$ is

$$\begin{aligned} f_3^k + f_3^l &= -m_3^l + \frac{P_3^l}{L} + \frac{F_3^l}{L} + m_3^l - p_3^l - p_3^k && (30) \\ &= m_3^l - p_3^l - p_3^k - \frac{\overline{P}}{L}(1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w}), && (31) \end{aligned}$$

which is found by substituting on the right-hand side of (30) for $\frac{F_3^l}{L} = f_3^l$ from (22), solving for M_3^s in (24) and substituting for it, then simplifying. The reserve balances that bank l has available to lend at $t = 3$ are

$$m_3^l - p_3^l - p_3^k. \tag{32}$$

The net amount that bank s lends at $t = 3$ is

$$f_3^s = m_3^s - p_3^s - \overline{p}^s(1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w}), \tag{33}$$

which is found by solving for M_3^l in (24) and substituting for it in (23). The reserve balances that bank s has available to lend at $t = 3$ are

$$m_3^s - p_3^s. \tag{34a}$$

To compare lending percentage between bank l and s when their scaled bank balances are equal, set the right-hand side of (32) divided by $\overline{p}^l + \overline{p}^k$ equal to the right-hand side of (34a) divided $\overline{p}^s$:

$$\frac{m_3^l - p_3^l - p_3^k}{\overline{p}^l + \overline{p}^k} = \frac{m_3^s - p_3^s}{\overline{p}^s}. \tag{35}$$

We want to show that bank l lends a greater percentage of available balances at $t = 3$ than bank s:

$$\frac{m_3^l - p_3^l - p_3^k - \frac{\overline{P}}{L}(1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w})}{m_3^l - p_3^l - p_3^k} > \frac{m_3^s - p_3^s - \overline{p}^s(1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w})}{m_3^s - p_3^s}, \tag{36}$$

where the percentage of balances lent by bank l is on the left-hand side and by bank s is on the right-hand side.

With positive available reserve balances, substituting from (35) and for $\overline{P} = \gamma^l \overline{p}^l$ and simplifying gives the inequality condition as

$$L > \frac{\overline{p}^l}{\overline{p}^l + \overline{p}^k}\gamma^l,$$

which always holds. The precautionary balances held are found by subtracting balances lent from balances available, and are equivalent to m_6^i balances held at the end of period $t = 3$. Banks target to hold the same amount of precautionary balances m_6^i across their type at the end of $t = 3$. The amount of precautionary balances that they do not lend out during $t = 3$ is m_6^i. Bank l holds (scaled) precautionary balances at $t = 3$ of

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{m_6^l}{\overline{p}^l + \overline{p}^k} &= \frac{\overline{P}}{L(\overline{p}^l + \overline{p}^k)}(1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w}) \\ &< (1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w}), \end{aligned} \tag{37}$$

compared to that of bank s, which holds

$$\frac{m_6^s}{\overline{p}^s} = (1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w}), \tag{38}$$

and implies the following results.

Proposition 1. *Small banks hold larger scaled precautionary balances at 3pm than large banks.*

Bank i holds fixed precautionary balances at $t = 3$ (and bank l will borrow if necessary to acquire them) to have available entering $t = 3$ regardless of the amount of reserve balances the bank has available to lend at $t = 3$. Hence, the percentage of balances that large or small banks lend increases with their available balances.

Taking the derivative of the left-hand side (right-hand side) of (36) with respect to the left-hand side (right-hand side) of (35) shows that the lending percentage of bank l (s) is a concave function of its scaled balances. The lending percentage increases for bank s and l with scaled balances, and the difference of lending percentage between bank s and l decreases with scaled balances.

Rewriting (37) and (38) as

$$R_6^w(\frac{\overline{P} - M_6^l}{2\overline{P}}) = R_3^s \tag{39a}$$

$$R_6^w(\frac{\overline{p}^s - m_6^s}{2\overline{p}^s}) = R_3^s, \tag{39b}$$

respectively, shows that these $t = 3$ precautionary balances equalize the expected marginal cost R_6^w of having to borrow from the discount window due to $t = 6$ shocks times the probability of discount window borrowing, with the marginal opportunity cost $R_3^s = R_1^b$ of holding excess precautionary balances at $t = 3$. When $R_1^b = \frac{1}{2}R_6^w$, banks hold zero precautionary balances to give a one-half probability of borrowing at the discount window with a one-half probability of holding excess $t = 3$ precautionary balances. When $R_1^b < \frac{1}{2}R_6^w$, banks hold strictly positive precautionary balances since the cost of excess balances is less than the cost of the discount window. Bank s holds greater scaled precautionary balances because it cannot borrow at $t = 6$. Bank l can borrow from other large banks, so it only has to borrow at the discount window if the aggregate shock to large banks at $t = 6$ is greater than the aggregate balances held. This is why (39a) is written with the probability of overdraft of large banks in aggregate as a factor, whereas (39b) is written with the probability of overdraft of an individual small bank.

These precautionary balance and lending percentage results are derived assuming that large banks hold equal balances at the end of $t = 3$. However, large banks are indifferent to the relative balances held among themselves. The rate R_3^k at which they trade among themselves at $t = 3$ is equal to the expected rate they trade at $t = 6$. If there were a cost of trading, they would trade less at $t = 3$, which could possibly show that they lend a lower percentage of balances than small banks lend. However, if large banks were slightly risk averse, or if there were any trading frictions at $t = 6$, they would strictly prefer this amount of trading.

We also examine lending by large banks at $t = 6$. The percentage of available balances that is lent is

$$\frac{f_6^k}{m_6^l - p_6^l - p_6^k} = \frac{m_6^l - p_6^l - p_6^k - \frac{1}{L}(M_6^l - P_6^l)}{m_6^l - p_6^l - p_6^k}.$$

For $W_6^l = 0$, this is less than one since $M_6^l - P_6^l \geq 0$. Since there are excess balances, banks do not lend them all, and the fed funds rate R_6^k is zero. As reserve balances increase for bank l, the percentage lent increases toward one, which gives the following result.

Proposition 2. *Large banks lending percentage of scaled balances increases with the fed funds rate.*

For $W_6^l > 0$, $M_6^l - P_6^l < 0$, so the lending percentage is actually greater than one. This is because we assume large banks borrow equally from the discount window. Anticipating this, banks who need the least amount (or zero) borrowing at the discount window lend to others at the fed funds rate of $R_6^k = R_6^w$. A more natural assumption may be that banks with $m_6^l - p_6^l - p_6^k \geq 0$ do not borrow from the discount window, and only banks with $m_6^l - p_6^l - p_6^k < 0$ do borrow from the discount window. This still implies that banks with available balances lend all of them at a rate of $R_6^k = R_6^w$.

The model also gives more general implications when there is any market friction that prevents a random positive epsilon amount of reserves from being tradable efficiently at the end of the day, such that the segment of the market that is trading at the end of the day is always in aggregate long or short of reserves. If this segment trades efficiently, then R_6^k is either zero or R_6^W. Greater end-of-day rate volatility implies greater market efficiency given that the full market does not trade. This also holds true if the random long or short for the market is due to "misses" by the Fed's open market operations desk that targets the supply of reserves in the market and if this "miss" information is only revealed throughout the day.

The average (or expected) amount of discount window borrowing, scaled for size, is larger for small banks than for large banks. For bank s,

$$\begin{aligned} E[\frac{w_6^s}{\overline{p}^s}] &= \left(\frac{p_3^s + f_3^s - m_3^s + \overline{p}^s}{2\overline{p}^s}\right)^2 \\ &= \left(\frac{R_1^b}{R_6^w}\right)^2, \end{aligned}$$

found by substituting for $E[w_6^s]$ from (18) and then for f_3^s from (33), whereas for bank l,

$$\begin{aligned}
E[\frac{w_6^l}{\overline{p}^l + \overline{p}^k}] &= E[\frac{(-M_6^l + P_6^l)^+}{L(\overline{p}^l + \overline{p}^k)}] \\
&= \frac{1}{L(\overline{p}^l + \overline{p}^k)} \int_{-\overline{P}}^{-M_6^l} (-M_6^l + P_6^l) \frac{1}{2\overline{P}} dP_6^l \\
&= \left(\frac{\gamma^l \overline{p}^l}{L(\overline{p}^l + \overline{p}^k)} \right) \left(\frac{R_1^b}{R_6^w} \right)^2 \\
&< \left(\frac{R_1^b}{R_6^w} \right)^2 ,
\end{aligned}$$

giving the following results.

Proposition 3. *Discount window borrowing for small banks compared to that for large banks is less correlated among the bank type, occurs more frequently and is of larger average scaled amounts.*

The average amount of nonborrowed reserves held overnight, scaled for size, is equal to m_6^i, the precautionary reserves held at $t = 3$, since banks' shocks (and large banks' fed funds lending) is zero on average at $t = 6$. Thus, the scaled amount of nonborrowed reserves is also larger for small banks than large banks. For bank s,

$$\begin{aligned}
E[\frac{m_9^s - w_6^s}{\overline{p}^s}] &= \frac{m_6^s}{\overline{p}^s} \\
&= (1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w}),
\end{aligned} \tag{40}$$

whereas for bank l,

$$\begin{aligned}
E[\frac{m_9^l - w_6^l}{\overline{p}^l + \overline{p}^k}] &= \frac{m_6^l}{\overline{p}^l + \overline{p}^k} \\
&= \frac{\overline{P}}{L(\overline{p}^l + \overline{p}^k)} (1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w}) \\
&< (1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w}).
\end{aligned} \tag{41}$$

Proposition 4. *Small banks hold larger average scaled amounts of nonborrowed reserves than do large banks.*

Note that while we include the shock size $\overline{p}^k$ for payments between large banks, all results hold for $\overline{p}^k = 0$. The term $\overline{p}^k$ shows that the results hold even more strongly as the amount of payments shocks among large banks increases.

The clean balances held by banks from (8) is

$$\begin{aligned} m_3^s &= m_6^s + p_3^s + f_3 \\ &> \overline{p}^s(1 - \frac{2R_1^b}{R_6^w}) + \overline{p}^s, \end{aligned}$$

where the second line is from (29) and (38). The first term of the second line is the $t = 3$ precautionary balances of bank s. The second term is the bank's pre- $t = 3$ precautionary balances to self-insure against p_3^s. Any excess $f_3^s = m_3^s - m_6^s - p_3^s$ is lent at $t = 3$. Thus, bank s always lends a strictly positive amount, even when it ends up borrowing at the discount window at day's end. The clean balances held by bank l is shown by (28) to be negative. In expectation, bank l rolls-over overnight fed funds borrowing every day to hold $t = 3$ precautionary balances during the day and positive balances overnight. Since bank s has to choose its lending before $t = 6$ shocks, it has to lend every day, whereas bank l can borrow on the aggregate market after $t = 6$ shocks, which explains why aggregate fed funds lending (27) from small to large banks is strictly positive

$$F_3^s = S\overline{p}^s - \overline{P} > 0.$$

The model offers a partial explanation for the large amount of interbank lending relative to bank reserves. The interbank market lends for an overnight term multiples of the amount of aggregate reserve balances held by banks. At first, this phenomenon may appear to imply that banks must lend the same funds multiple times among banks. However, this model offers a different explanation. In this model, large banks have negative clean balances, $M_3^l < 0$, and rely on borrowing from small banks to achieve non-negative overnight reserves. The amount of funds lent F_3^s may exceed the net supply of reserve balances $M_3^s + M_3^l$, even if there is no relending of reserves. The model also explains why fed funds lending that acts as a large source of financing from small to large banks is primarily of overnight term. Since the lending is a way for small banks to self-insure against daily shocks, the small banks require daily repayment for its potential liquidity needs.

Proposition 5. *Small banks hold positive clean balances (balances net of fed funds and discount window loans) and large banks hold negative clean balances. Small banks lend positive amount of fed funds each night.*

The aggregate amount of clean balances equals the aggregate amount of nonborrowed reserves, and also equals the aggregate amount of $t = 3$ precautionary balances:

$$\begin{aligned} M_3^l + M_3^s &= (M_9^l - W_6^l) + (M_9^s - W_6^s) \\ &= M_6^l + M_6^s, \end{aligned}$$

found by substituting (41) and (40) into the right-hand side of (24). In aggregate, the only purpose for reserves is for precautionary reasons at $t = 3$, because the aggregate pre-$t = 3$ precautionary balances held by small banks that are not used for $t = 3$ shocks are lent to large banks. Anticipating this lending, large banks hold negative clean balances.

Aggregate reserves can also be interpreted in the context of an interest rate corridor, with a deposit facility rate of zero and a lending facility rate of R_6^w. If $R_3^s = \frac{1}{2}R_6^w$, (24) shows aggregate reserves equal zero. The marginal opportunity cost depositing excess reserves and borrowing needed reserves are equal since banks have a one-half probability of either occurring. As R_1^b decreases below the corridor midpoint, overnight shortages are costlier than overnight excesses, so aggregate reserves increase.

6 Conclusion

In order to study precautionary balances, we examine a simple model of trading frictions in the interbank fed funds market. Banks have payment shocks at 3pm and 6pm. Large banks can lend or borrow fed funds at 3pm and 6pm after their shocks. We assume that for credit and other trading friction reasons, small banks can lend but not borrow fed funds at 3pm after their shock, and cannot lend or borrow at 6pm. After 6pm, banks have to borrow at a penalty rate at the discount window to cover any overdrafts.

The friction from small banks produces the following results, where balances and borrowing and lending amounts are scaled by the size of the banks based on their payment shock size. Since small banks cannot lend at 6pm, large banks hold precautionary balances that they do not lend out at 3pm. These 3pm precautionary balances are held to self-insure against aggregate shocks from large to small banks at 6pm. Since small banks cannot borrow at 6pm, they also hold precautionary balances at 3pm to self-insure against shocks at 6pm. Because large banks can borrow at 6pm, their 3pm precautionary balances are smaller than that of small banks. This implies that the percentage of 3pm balances lent by large banks is larger than that of small banks. The precautionary balances held by banks at 3pm translate into the value of their expected overnight nonborrowed reserves (overnight reserves net of discount window borrowing), which are held in excess and are thus higher for small banks. Small banks also borrow on average a greater amount at the discount window.

Because small banks cannot borrow at 3pm, they hold large clean balances, which are banks' daily starting reserve balances net of any fed funds or discount window loans, and before any payments shocks for the day. These large clean balances include both i) pre-3pm precautionary balances to allow small banks to self-insure against 3pm shocks, and ii) their 3pm precautionary balances. Each small bank every night lends to large banks strictly positive amounts of fed funds, which are the pre-3pm precautionary balances that the small bank holds plus or minus its 3pm shocks.

Thus, we show that the concept of precautionary balances can explain the stylized facts that small banks hold relatively large amounts of excess reserves overnight, while lending large amounts to large banks overnight, despite lending a lower percentage of available balances during the day than large banks lend. We also show there is an increase in the volatility of the fed funds rate late in the day, and that fed funds lending increases with the fed funds rate. Furthermore, we offer a new explanation for the phenomena of large amounts of fed funds lending that is multiples of aggregate bank reserves.

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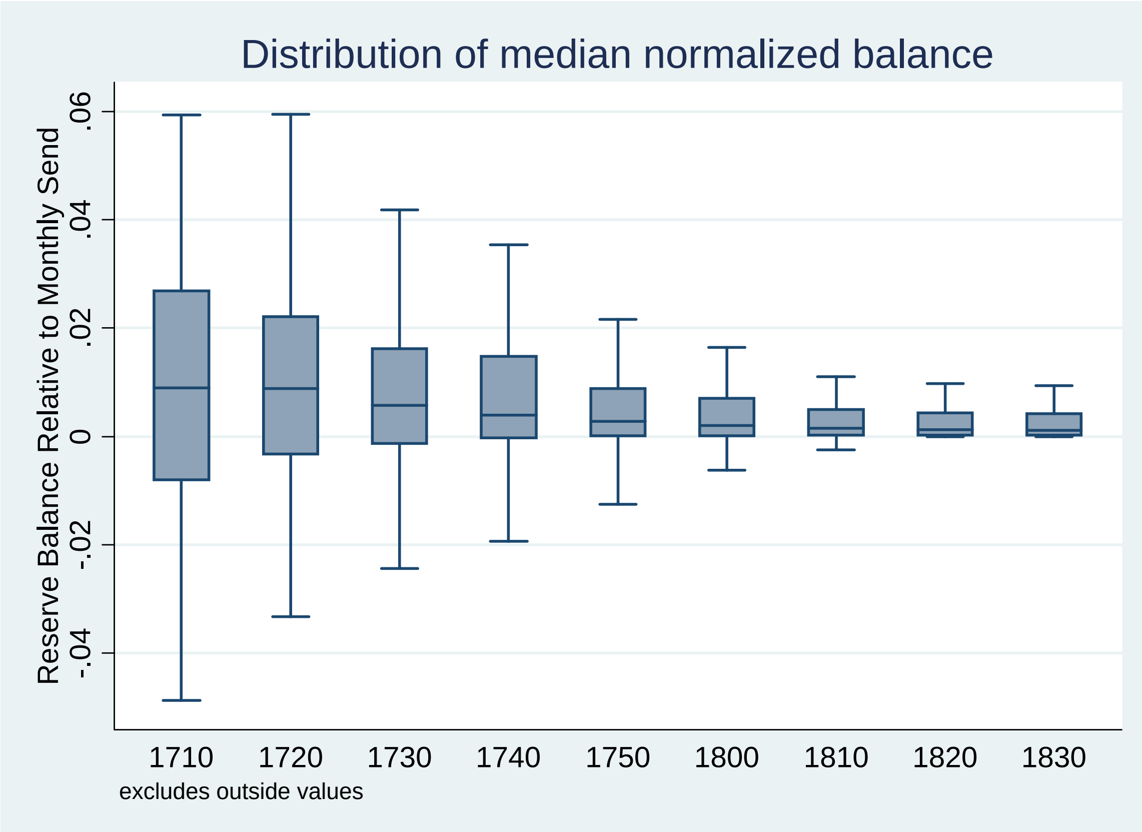

Figure 1: Distribution of reserves across banks over the day. Normalized balance is defined as the actual balance for that bank at that time of day divided by the amount sent by that institution using Fedwire over the month. The x-axis documents time of day for the last 90 minutes of the business day. The graph documents the massive redistribution of reserves which occurs within the top 100 institutions over the last 90 minutes of the day. Note that many institutions (typically the largest) have large negative balances throughout the day, making generous use of intra-day credit from the Federal Reserve, and rely on their ability to unwind these positions through Federal Funds borrowing quickly before the close of Fedwire at 6:30 pm.

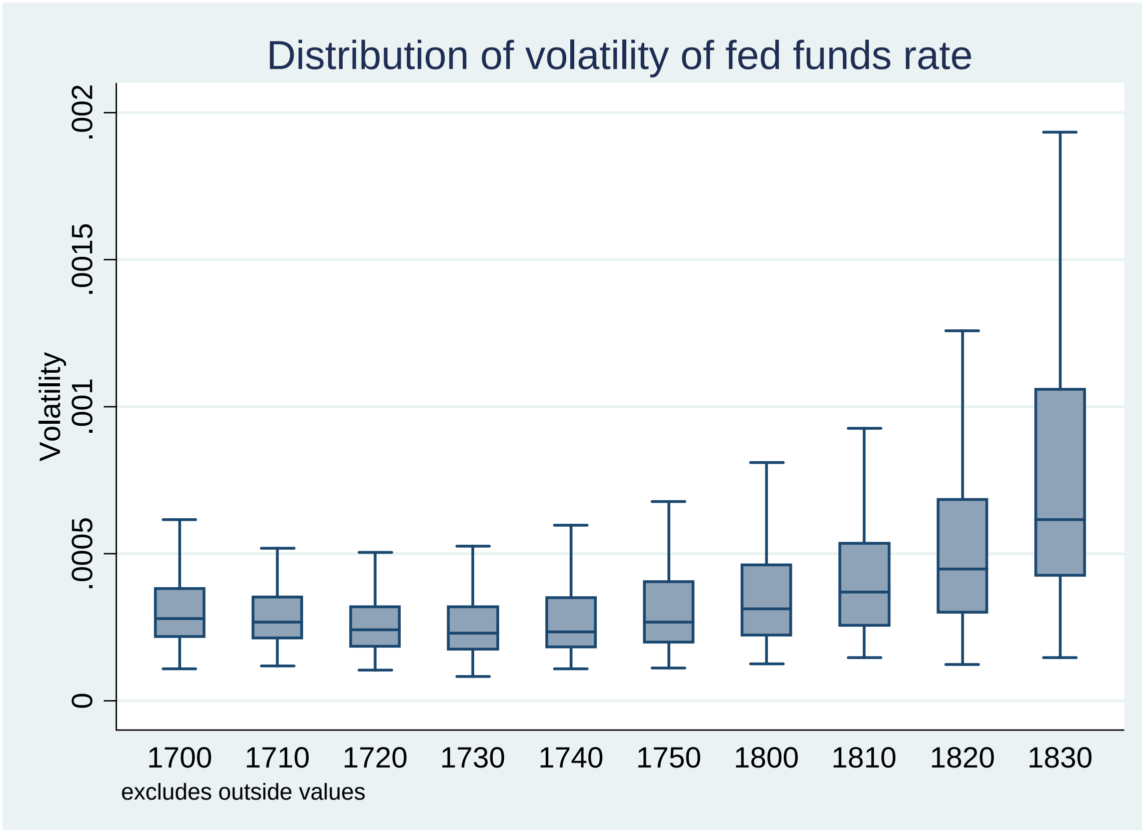

Figure 2. Distribution across days of federal funds interest rate volatility. The graph documents the time-series volatility the interest rate on federal funds loans between banks in the top 100 across the last 90 minutes of the day. The interest rate is a dollar-weighted average of all federal funds loans in a particular minute of the day. The figure illustrates a significant increase in interest rate volatility during the last 60 minutes of the day.

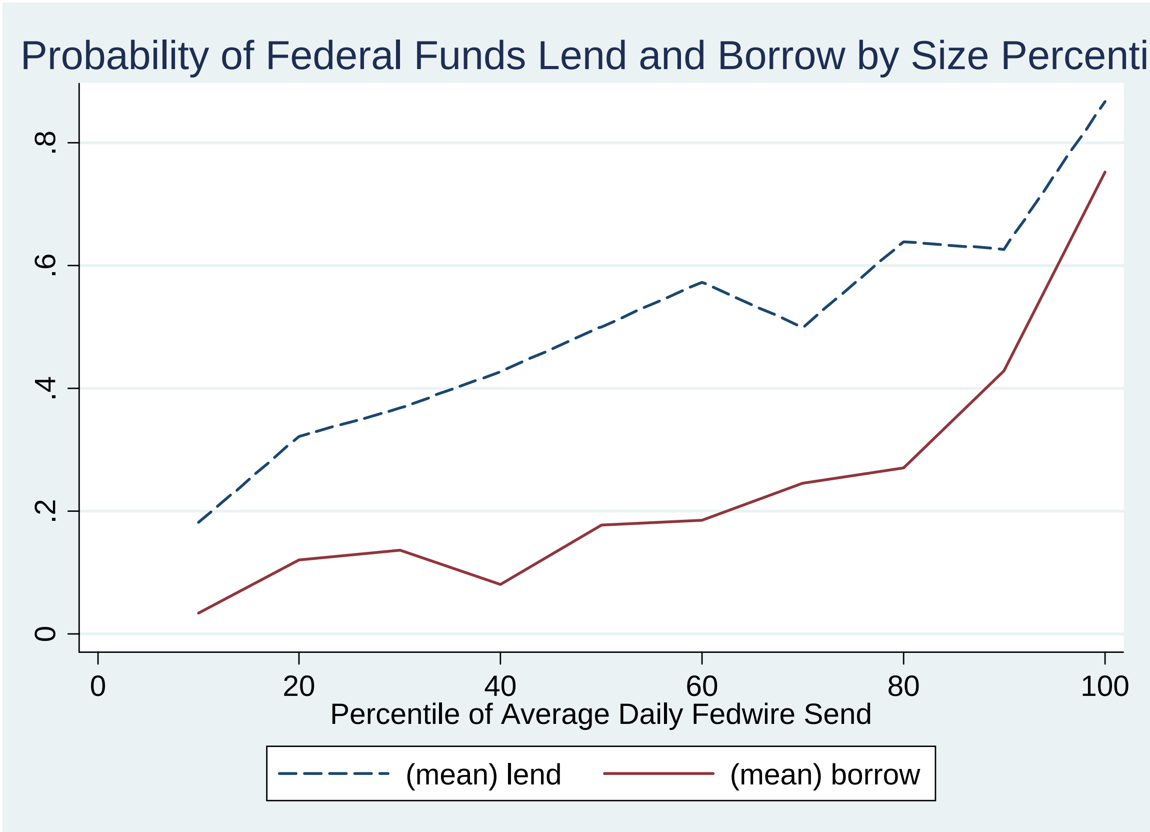

Figure 3: The propensity to borrow and lend across bank size. The graph documents the probability that a bank either borrows or lends in the federal funds market at least once during the day across institution size. Bank size is defined by the percentile of cross-sectional distribution of the average dollar amount sent over Fedwire. The sample is limited to approximately 700 banks which ever borrow or lend during January through February 2007. The picture illustrates that smaller banks are generally less likely to lend and borrow.

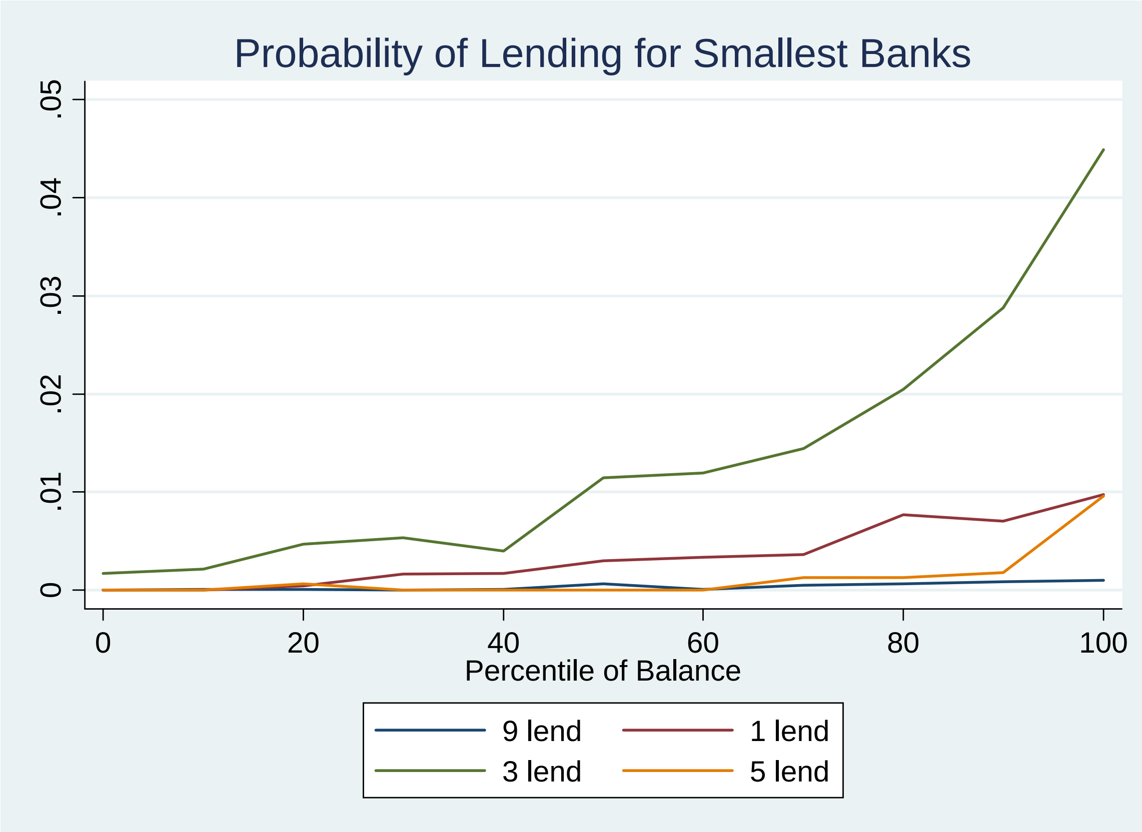

Figure 4: The propensity of small banks to lend. This picture documents the propensity of the smallest decile of banks to lend across the percentile of balance during four different time windows of the day: 9pm-1pm; 1pm-3pm; 3pm-5pm; and 5pm-6:30pm. The percentile of balance is measured for each institution at a given time of day across all days. The graph illustrates that the propensity of small banks to lend is maximized during the 3pm-5pm window, and that small banks are reluctant to lend even when hit with favorable liquidity shocks. At the highest percentile of reserve balance, small banks only lend at a frequency of about 4.5%.

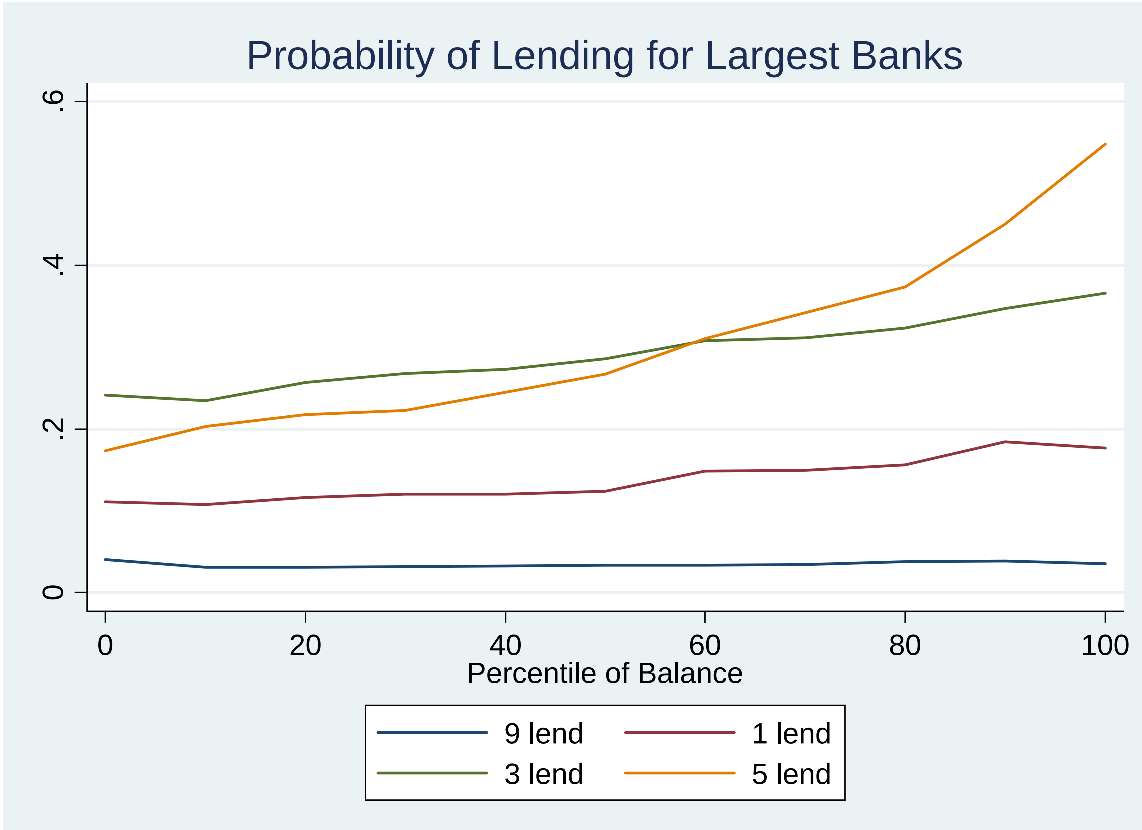

Figure 5: The propensity of large banks to lend. This picture documents the propensity of the largest decile of banks to lend across the percentile of balance during four different time windows of the day: 9pm-1pm; 1pm-3pm; 3pm-5pm; and 5pm-6:30pm. The percentile of balance is measured for each institution at a given time of day across all days. The graph illustrates that the propensity of large banks to lend is maximized during the 5pm-6:30pm window when balances are high. Moreover, large banks appear eager to lend during the late period even when hit with adverse liquidity shocks. At the lowest percentile of reserve balance, large banks still lend at a frequency of about 18%.

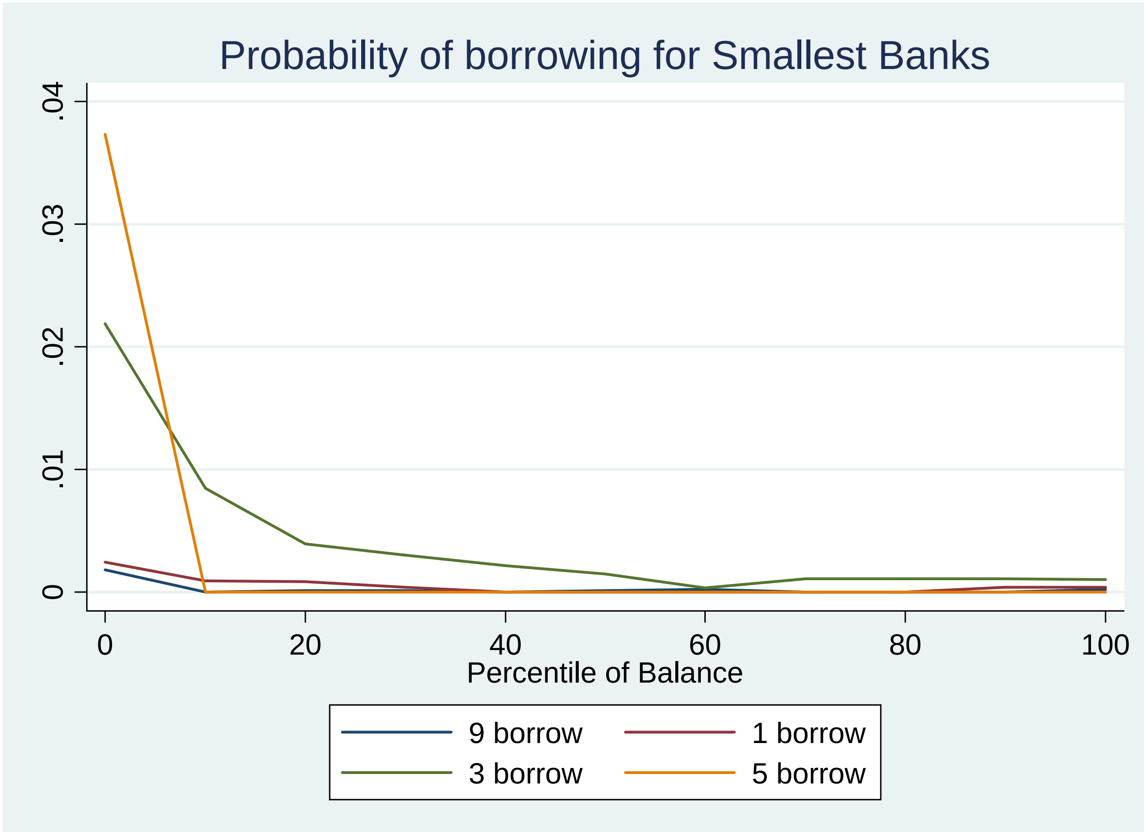

Figure 6: The propensity of small banks to borrow. This picture documents the propensity for the smallest decile of banks to borrow across the percentile of balance during four different time windows of the day: 9pm-1pm; 1pm-3pm; 3pm-5pm; and 5pm-6:30pm. The percentile of balance is measured for each institution at a given time of day across all days. The graph illustrates that the propensity of small banks to borrow is maximized during the 5pm-6:30pm window in the face of the most adverse liquidity shock, but that this figure is less then 4 percent. In other words, the vast majority of small banks survive the most adverse liquidity shocks by holding a high reserve balance.

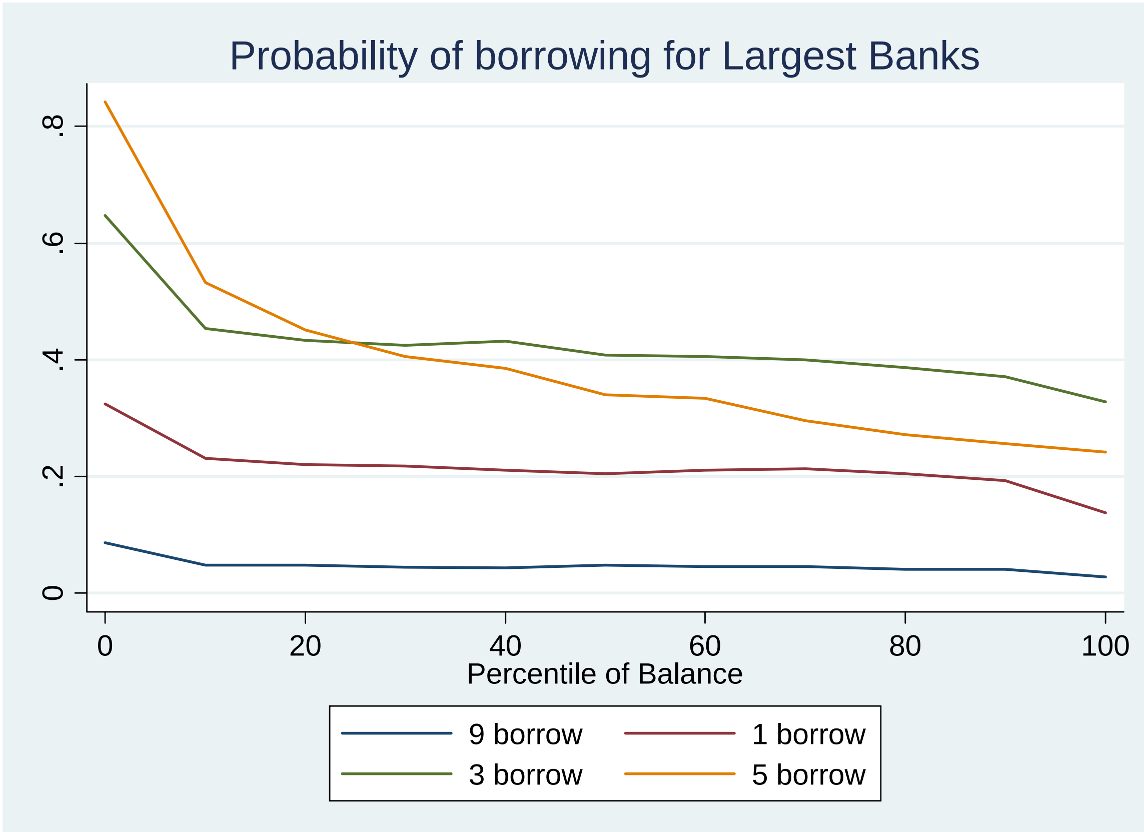

Figure 7: The propensity of large banks to borrow. This picture documents the propensity for the largest decile of banks to borrow across the percentile of balance during four different time windows of the day: 9pm-1pm; 1pm-3pm; 3pm-5pm; and 5pm-6:30pm. The percentile of balance is measured for each institution at a given time of day across all days. The graph illustrates that the propensity of small banks to borrow is maximized during the 5pm-6:30pm window in the face of the most adverse liquidity shock, where this figure is most than 80 percent. In other words, large banks rely extensively on the federal funds market in order to manage their reserve balance.