Developments in the application of data analytics techniques to mortality modelling

Andrés VILLEGAS

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Dilan SriDaran

Salvatory Kessy



Review of developments in mortality modelling

Two examples

- 1. A data analytics paradigm for the construction, selection, and evaluation of mortality models
- 2. Mortality model combination using stacked regression ensembles
- Conclusions and outlook



- Unexpected mortality improvements for senior populations have substantial economic consequences.
- The estimated potential size of the global longevity risk market for pension liabilities is between USD 60trn and USD 80trn (Blake et al. 2018).
- Each additional year of unanticipated life expectancy at age 65 can increase pension liabilities by 4%- 5%.
- Diverse models such as the Lee-Carter fail to fully capture the human mortality dynamics.
- A growing need for accurately modeling and forecasting mortality rates and life expectancy.
- Even a small improvement in the mortality forecasting accuracy can provide considerable financial savings among different entities.



Figure 2: Actual and projected period life expectancy at birth, Australia males, 1945-2055. Source: CEPAR (2015).

Mortality forecasting methodologies

A good overview of methodologies is given in the review papers Booth and Tickle (2008), Wong-Fupuy and Haberman (2004), Pitacco (2004) and in book Pitacco et al. (2009)

Expert based

- Explanatory
 - Structural Modelling (Explanatory or Econometric).
 - Cause of death decomposition

Extrapolation

Trend modelling

A timeline of "recent" mortality modelling methodologies



Time

Extrapolation mortality models.

Extrapolative methods are still compelling for modeling and predicting mortality rates in actuarial readership.

Examples include

- Parametric mortality models such as the Lee-Carter model and Cairns-Blake-Dowd (CBD).
- Non-parametric models such as functional principal analysis (Hyndman and Shahid Ullah 2007).
- Bayesian probabilistic mortality models (Wiśniowski et al. 2015).

Statistical Machine Learning Techniques for Mortality Modeling

Statistical learning methods are used to complement the existing standard stochastic mortality models rather than substituting them.

- Neural networks
- Clustering
- Trees
- Gaussian Processes

Statistical Machine Learning Techniques for Mortality Modeling: Neural Networks

- Nigri et al. (2019) integrated a recurrent neural network with a long short-term memory architecture in Lee-Carter model.
- (Hainaut 2018) applied neural networks to learn the logarithm of the mortality death rates directly from the features of the mortality data.
- Richman and Wuthrich (2018) extended Lee-Carter model for multi-population modeling using Artificial Neural Network.

Statistical Machine Learning Techniques for Mortality Modeling: Clustering

- Piscopo and Resta (2017) applied spectral biclustering to Italian mortality data.
- Hatzopoulos and Haberman (2011) applied fuzzy clustering to cluster the 35 European countries' populations for the period 1960-2006 into similar groups.
- Carracedo et al. (2018) applied the Spatio-temporal framework to identify the significant clusters among the 26 European countries based on time and the geographical location.

Statistical Machine Learning Techniques for Mortality Modeling: Other Methods

- (Ludkovski, Risk, and Zail 2016) used Gaussian Process (GP) regression to model the mortality rates.
- Deprez, Shevchenko, and Wüthrich (2017) and Levantesi and Pizzorusso (2019) integrated tree methods in Lee-Carter and its extensions.

Statistical Machine Learning Techniques for Mortality Modeling: Two detailed examples

In what follows we will discuss two examples of applying fairly standard statistical learning approaches to mortality modelling:

- 1. Regularisation and cross-validation
- 2. Ensemble learning

1. A Data Analytics Paradigm for the Construction, Selection, and Evaluation of Mortality Models

A Data Analytics Paradigm for the Construction, Selection, and Evaluation of **Mortality Models**

$$\ln(\mu_{x,t}) = + +$$

$$\ln(\mu_{x,t}) = \alpha_x + +$$

$$\ln(\mu_{x,t}) = \alpha_x + \qquad \qquad \kappa_t^{(i)} +$$

$$\ln(\mu_{x,t}) = \alpha_x + \qquad f^{(i)}(x)\kappa_t^{(i)} +$$

$$\ln(\mu_{x,t}) = \alpha_x + \sum_{i=1}^N f^{(i)}(x)\kappa_t^{(i)} +$$

$$\ln(\mu_{x,t}) = \alpha_x + \sum_{i=1}^N f^{(i)}(x)\kappa_t^{(i)} + \gamma_{t-x}$$

Mortality Models: Generalised Age-Period-Cohort Models

Name	Form	Parameters
LC	$\alpha_x + \beta_x^{(1)} \kappa_t^{(1)}$	$2n_a + n_y$
LC2	$\alpha_x + \beta_x^{(1)} \kappa_t^{(1)} + \beta_x^{(2)} \kappa_t^{(2)}$	$3n_a + 2n_y$
RH	$\alpha_x + \beta_x^{(1)} \kappa_t^{(1)} + \beta_x^{(0)} \gamma_c$	$3n_a + n_y + n_c$
APC	$\alpha_{x} + \kappa_{t}^{(1)} + \gamma_{c}$	$n_a + n_y + n_c$
CBD	$\kappa_t^{(1)} + (x - ar{x})\kappa_t^{(2)}$	$2n_y$
M7	$\kappa_t^{(1)} + (x - \bar{x})\kappa_t^{(2)} + ((x - \bar{x})^2 - \sigma_x^2)\kappa_t^{(3)} + \gamma_c$	$3n_y + n_c$
sPLAT	$\alpha_{x} + \kappa_{t}^{(1)} + (\bar{x} - x)\kappa_{t}^{(2)} + \gamma_{c}$	$n_a + 2n_y + n_c$
cPLAT	$\alpha_{x} + \kappa_{t}^{(1)} + (\bar{x} - x)\kappa_{t}^{(2)} + (\bar{x} - x)^{+}\kappa_{t}^{(3)} + \gamma_{c}$	$n_a + 3n_y + n_c$

Mortality Models: CBD Model



Mortality Models: cPLAT Model



Mortality Models: Key research questions

- 1. What model features are desired for different applications?
- 2. Why do we only consider a fixed set of models?
- 3. How can we be confident we have selected the best model?

Mortality Models: What is the "**best**" model?

Goodness-of-fit: Cairns et al. (2009) and Dowd et al. (2010b)

- Desirable theoretical properties, e.g. parsimony
- BIC, likelihood ratio test, and analysis of robustness

Forecasting: Cairns et al. (2011) and Dowd et al. (2010a)

- Biological reasonableness, plausibility, and robustness
- Ad-hoc backtests

Our objective

Provide a comprehensive framework to **construct**, **select**, and **evaluate** discrete-time mortality models for forecasting applications, using various **statistical learning** and predictive analytics techniques.

- Construction based on regularisation techniques
- Selection based on cross-validation techniques

A **Data Analytics** Paradigm for the Construction, Comparison, and Selection of Mortality Models

Data Analytics: Predictive Modelling

Objective: Predict response using linear combination of predictors,

$$y_i = \beta_0 + \sum_{j=1}^{p} x_{ij} \beta_j + \epsilon_j, \qquad (1)$$

where β_0 and $\beta = (\beta_1, \beta_2, ..., \beta_p)$ are unknown parameters.

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Typically, parameters are estimated by minimising OLS,

$$\frac{1}{N}\sum_{i=1}^{N}(y_i - \beta_0 - \sum_{j=1}^{p} x_{ij}\beta_j)^2.$$
 (2)

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Problem: Interpretation and prediction accuracy.

Data Analytics: Regularisation Solution: Minimise

$$\frac{1}{N}\sum_{i=1}^{N}(y_i - \beta_0 - \sum_{j=1}^{p}x_{ij}\beta_j)^2,$$
(3)

subject to ℓ_2 -norm constraint (ridge regression),

$$\sum_{j=1}^{p} \beta_j^2 \le t, \tag{4}$$

or ℓ_1 -norm constraint (lasso),

$$\sum_{j=1}^{p} |\beta_j| \le t.$$
(5)

Data Analytics: Lasso and Ridge Constraints


Data Analytics: Group Lasso

Consider the linear predictor structure,

$$\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{X}\boldsymbol{\beta} = \sum_{j=1}^{J} \mathbf{X}_{j}\boldsymbol{\beta}_{j},$$
 (6)

where β_i is a vector of coefficients for group *j*.

Data Analytics: Group Lasso

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where β_i is a vector of coefficients for group *j*.

The group lasso minimises the objective function,

$$Q(eta|\mathbf{X},oldsymbol{\eta}) = L(eta|\mathbf{X},oldsymbol{\eta}) + \sum p_{\lambda}(\|eta_{j}\|),$$
 (7)

where $p_{\lambda}(\cdot)$ is a penalty applied to the ℓ_2 -norm of each group.

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where $p_{\lambda}(\cdot)$ is a penalty applied to the ℓ_2 -norm of each group.

If group *j* is selected, $\beta_{jk} \neq 0$ for all *k*; else $\beta_{jk} = 0$ for all *k*.

A Data Analytics Paradigm for the Construction, Comparison, and Selection of Mortality Models

Construction: Data



Data Source: Human Mortality Database (30 Countries, 2 Genders) Years: 1960 - 2015

Ages: 20 - 89

Construction: "Formalised" Model-Building Framework We start with a huge model,

$$\ln(\mu_{x,t}) = \alpha_x + \sum_{i=1}^B f^{(i)}(x)\kappa_t^{(i)} + \gamma_{t-x},$$

where the suite of basis functions $(f^{(i)}(x))$ included are:

$$f^{(i)}(x) = egin{cases} 1, & {
m Unit}\ (x-ar{x})^n & {
m Polynomia}\ (x-n)^+ & {
m Call}\ (n-x)^+ & {
m Put}\ 1_{x < n} & {
m Below}\ 1_{x > n} & {
m Above} \end{cases}$$

(8)

Construction: Our Model



Construction: GLM Representation

$$\eta_{\mathbf{x},t} = \ln(\mu_{\mathbf{x},t}) = \alpha_{\mathbf{x}} + \sum_{i=1}^{B} f^{(i)}(\mathbf{x})\kappa_{t}^{(i)} + \gamma_{c},$$

can be expressed as a GLM (Currie 2016),

$$\eta = \mathbf{X}\beta = \sum_{j=0}^{B+1} \mathbf{X}_j \beta_j, \qquad \mathbf{X} = [\mathbf{X}_0 : \mathbf{X}_1 : \mathbf{X}_2 : \dots : \mathbf{X}_B : \mathbf{X}_{B+1}],$$

where,

$$\beta = \{\beta_i\}_{i=0}^{B+1}, \quad \beta_0 = \{\alpha_x\}_{x=1}^{n_x}, \quad \beta_i = \{\kappa_t^{(i)}\}_{t=1}^{n_t}, \quad \beta_{B+1} = \{\gamma_c\}_{c=1}^{n_c},$$

Construction: Parameter Estimation

We minimise

$$Q(\beta|\boldsymbol{X},\boldsymbol{\eta}) = \frac{1}{2n} \|\boldsymbol{\eta} - \boldsymbol{X}\beta\| + \sum_{i=1}^{B} p_{\lambda}(\|\boldsymbol{\kappa}^{(i)}\|) + p_{\lambda}(\|\boldsymbol{\gamma}\|).$$
(9)

with the minimax concave penalty (MCP)

$$p_{\lambda,\gamma}(\theta) = \begin{cases} \lambda \theta - \frac{\theta^2}{2\gamma}, & \text{if } \theta \le \gamma \lambda, \\ \frac{1}{2}\gamma \lambda^2, & \text{if } \theta > \gamma \lambda, \end{cases}$$
(10)

Fix $\gamma = 3$

- \blacktriangleright λ controls the trade-off between goodness-of-fit and parsimony
- ▶ Use the R package **grpreg** (Breheny and Huang 2013)
- ## StMoMo: Start fitting with grpreg
- ## StMoMo: Finish fitting with grpreg

Selection and Evaluation: Cross Validation Framework

Training/Test Set: 1960 - 1990 Validation Set: 1991 - 2015

Test Set Width: Forecasting Horizon

Selection and Evaluation: Cross Validation Framework

Training/Test Set: 1960 - 1990 Validation Set: 1991 - 2015

Test Set Width: Forecasting Horizon

Selection: 5 Year Horizon (Training vs. Test error)

Selection Results: Optimal Models

Data	1 Year Horizon	Parameters	
USA (F)	$\alpha_x + \kappa_t^1 + (x - \bar{x})\kappa_t^2 + \gamma_c$	262	
AUS (M)	$lpha_x + \kappa_t^1 + (x - ar{x})^2 \kappa_t^2 + (x - 25)^+ \kappa_t^3 + (25 - x)^+ \kappa_t^4 + \gamma_c$	344	
UK (M)	$\alpha_x + \kappa_t^1 + (x - \bar{x})\kappa_t^2 + (x - \bar{x})^2\kappa_t^3 + \gamma_c$	303	
CAN (F)	$lpha_x+\kappa^1_t+(x-ar x)\kappa^2_t+(25-x)^+\kappa^3_t+\gamma_c$	303	
Data	10 Year Horizon	Parameters	
USA (F)	$\alpha_x + \kappa_t^1 + (x - \bar{x})\kappa_t^2 + \gamma_c$	262	
AUS (M)	$\alpha_x + \kappa_t^1 + (x - \bar{x})^2 \kappa_t^2 + \gamma_c$	262	
UK (M)	$\alpha_x + \kappa_t^1 + (x - \bar{x})\kappa_t^2 + (x - \bar{x})^2\kappa_t^3 + \gamma_c$	303	
CAN (F)	$\alpha_x + \kappa_t^1$	111	

Evaluation Results: Rankings for 1 Year vs 10 Year Forecasting

	1 Year	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6	Rank 7	Rank 8	Rank 9
1	GL	27	10	16	5	1	0	1	0	0
2	LC2	21	14	6	7	7	4	1	0	0
3	cPLAT	4	13	3	6	6	17	9	2	0
4	LC	3	6	6	9	3	10	10	8	5
6	APC	1	10	12	15	14	4	2	2	0
8	sPLAT	0	1	7	7	15	12	13	5	0
	10 Years	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Rank 6	Rank 7	Rank 8	Rank 9
1	GL	15	17	9	11	5	3	0	0	0
2	APC	15	11	13	15	2	3	1	0	0
3	LC	13	10	11	15	10	1	0	0	0
4	LC2	7	15	22	11	4	1	0	0	0
7	sPLAT	0	0	1	0	4	19	21	10	5
8	cPLAT	0	0	0	1	3	5	25	22	4

Key Findings



Key Takeaways

- Complex models perform well for short-term forecasting;
- Simpler models perform well for long-term forecasting;
- Complex models perform well on large populations;
- Complex models perform poorly on small populations;
- Simpler models perform relatively consistently across population size;
- Complex models produce very volatile outputs;
- Small populations do not support strong cohort effects.

No pre-defined model will perform well for all contexts.

2. Mortality model combination using stacked regression ensembles

Model Combination: Motivation

- Forecasting model selection and combination are the two competing approaches in the forecasting literature.
- Criteria to select a model
 - Coefficient of determination
 - Akaike Information Criterion (AIC)
 - Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC)
 - Cross-validation technique.
- ▶ These selection methods can lead to different model choices
- Difficult to identify one forecasting method that performs consistently well over all time horizons and data sets.

Model Combination: Motivation

- Model combination could be a successful alternative to model selection
- Forecasts from a particular forecasting method can provide some useful information that is not contained in forecasts from other forecasting techniques.
- Combining models improves the forecasting accuracy and reduce model uncertainty as the modeler is not forced to select one forecasting model.
- Forecasting combination is more apparent when it is hard to identify the best model or the true data generating process.
- Multiple forecasting techniques usually generate varying forecasts.

Model Combination: Motivation in a mortality context

- Comparing different mortality models does not always lead to the selection of the one best mortality model (Janssen 2018).
- It is difficult to identify the best mortality model
 - Different fitting periods lead to different mortality forecasts (Janssen and Kunst 2007).
 - Modelling different life table statistics give different mortality forecasts (Bergeron-Boucher and Kj 2019).
 - ▶ No model dominates both qualitative and quantitative criteria (Cairns et al. 2007).
 - No single mortality model performs the best in all the countries and time horizons (Rabbi and Mazzuco 2018).

Model Combination: Recent advances in a mortality context

- Shang (2012) applied the Bayesian Model Averaging (BMA) to combine 14 mortality forecasting models.
- Kontis et al. (2017) applied a probabilistic BMA to combine 21 mortality models to project age-specific death rates for 35 industrialized countries.
- Shang and Haberman (2018) combined multiple mortality models using the model confidence sets technique.

Stacking Ensemble Techniques

- The original idea of the stacking ensemble was first introduced by (Wolpert D. 1992).
- The stacking ensemble has been successfully applied and improved the predictive accuracy on a wide range of problems:
 - 1. Forecasting global energy consumption (Khairalla et al. 2018).
 - 2. Credit risk assessment (Doumpos and Zopounidis 2007).
 - 3. Planning and budgeting (Hansen and Nelson 2002).
 - 4. Financial time series datasets (Ma and Dai 2016).
 - 5. Forecasting Warfarin dosing (Ma et al. 2018).
 - 6. Prediction of infectious disease epidemics (Ray and Reich 2018).
- The stacking ensemble has been used by most winning teams in the data science competitions (Sill et al. 2009; Puurula, Read, and Bifet 2014).

Ensemble Techniques



- Ensemble methods use multiple learning algorithms to obtain better predictive performance than could be obtained from any of the constituent learning algorithms.
- Bagging and Boosting
- Stacked regression ensemble combines the point predictions from diverse and accurate predictors (Wolpert D. 1992).
- If a set of base learners does not contain the true prediction function, ensembles can give a good approximation of that function.
- Ensembles can perform better than individual base algorithms.

Stacked Regression Ensemble



Stacked Regression Ensemble

- Suppose that stacked regression estimate M base learners L_1, \dots, L_M which produces the mortality forecasts $\hat{f}_1(x), \dots, \hat{f}_M(x)$.
- Under the stacked regression setting, the mortality forecasts can be combined by:

$$\widehat{f}_{ ext{stacking}}(x) = \sum_{m=1}^{M} w_m \widehat{f}_m(x).$$

• Our goal is to compute w_1, \dots, w_M by minimizing the generalization error of stacked regression ensemble:

$$\min_{w_1...w_M} \sum_{i=1}^N \left(y_i - \sum_{m=1}^M w_m \widehat{f}_m(x_i) \right)^2.$$

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Creating the Diversity Among the Base Learners

- Using different base learners.
- Extrapolative mortality models based on different life table statistics: death rates, death probabilities, survival probabilities, life table deaths and life expectancy at birth (Bergeron-Boucher and Kj 2019).
- Fitting same mortality model to different historical fitting periods (Janssen and Kunst 2007).

Training the Base Learners using cross-validation

- ▶ Split the dataset $\mathcal{D} = \{(y_n, x_n), n = 1, \cdots, N\}$ into K folds.
- Train each base learners L_1, \dots, L_M on the training data set $\mathcal{D}^K = \mathcal{D} \mathcal{D}_K$ for each K^{th} fold.
- For each base learners L₁, · · · , L_M, predict the outcomes of the target variable y using the validation set D_K in each fold based on the corresponding D^K = D − D_K training set.
- Level-one data/metadata is given by these cross-validation predictions.

Integration of Base Learners

A lasso regression is used to learn the weights for combining the output of base learners while minimizing the generalization error:

$$\mathbf{w} = \min_{w_1 \dots w_M} \sum_{t=t_1}^{t_n} \sum_{x=x_1}^{x_n} \left(\ln(\mu_{x,t}) - \sum_{m=1}^M w_m \widehat{\ln(\mu_{x,t})}_m \right)^2 + \lambda \sum_{m=1}^M |w_m|.$$

▶ The final super learner algorithm is given by:

$$\widehat{L}_{ ext{Stacking}}(\mathcal{D}_{ ext{test}}) = \sum_{m=1}^{M} \widehat{w}_m \widehat{L}_m(\mathcal{D}_{ ext{test}}).$$
Very Preliminary Results

- ▶ Use US and England and Wales male mortality data from HMD.
- We train the base learners using the mortality data from 1960 to 1990 for ages 50-89 using StMoMo package.
- ▶ We fitted LC, RH, APC, CBD, Plat, and M7.
- The fitted models were used to predict the 1 to 15 steps ahead mortality rates.
- Lasso regression is used as the meta learner to learn the optimal weights for combining the predictions from the multiple base learners.
- Evaluation done using data for 1991-2016

Model weights by horizon



England and Wales



Mean Square Error by horizon



England and Wales



$$\mathsf{MSE} = rac{1}{n_{a}(n_{y}+1)}\sum_{t=t_{1}}^{t_{n}}\sum_{x=x_{1}}^{x_{n}}\left(\widehat{\mathsf{ln}(\mu_{x,t})} - \mathsf{ln}(\mu_{x,t})\right)^{2}$$

Summary and future work

- The stacked regression ensemble outperformed other models and simple averaging at least for longer horizons
 - ▶ We need to compare with BMA and Model Confidence set for model combination
- Without even considering more base models than Genaralized APC models, it seems it is still a good idea to combine the GAPC models as they seem to give better mortality predictions.
- The optimal weights for combining the base models vary depending on the forecasting horizon, and therefore, the models that form the final ensemble prediction changes depending on the forecasting horizons.
 - Develop weights that vary with forecasting horizons.

Conclusion and outlook

Conclusion outlook

- There is a thriving literature on the application of statistical/machine learning techniques to mortality modelling
 - Use of new techniques
 - Data analytic mindset to approach more classical techniques
- ▶ We have shown two examples with very promising results
 - Techniques will be made available in open-source code via StMoMo
- Important to have the problem in mind and adapt techniques rather than applying off-the-shelf algorithms

Conclusion outlook

- Space for application into more complex problems beyond modelling single populations and all-cause mortality
 - Multipopulation modelling
 - Cause of death modelling
- Application of statistical/machine learning techniques to individual level data
 - Quantify mortality heterogeneity
 - Impact of socio-economic factors
 - Impact of risk factors

Questions?

Email: a.villegas@unsw.edu.au

Reserve slides

Implementation in StMoMo

Mortality data for Denmark
Series: male
Years: 1835 - 2016
Ages: 0 - 110
Exposure: central

Implementation in StMoMo - Define model

Gaussian model with predictor: $\log m[x,t] = a[x] + k1[t] +$ $f_2[x] k_2[t] + f_3[x] k_3[t] + f_4[x] k_4[t] + f_5[x] k_5[t] + f_6[x]$ k6[t] + f7[x] k7[t] + f8[x] k8[t] + f9[x] k9[t] + f10[x] k10[t] +f11[x] k11[t] + f12[x] k12[t] + f13[x] k13[t] + f14[x] k14[t] + $f_{15}[x] k_{15}[t] + f_{16}[x] k_{16}[t] + f_{17}[x] k_{17}[t] + f_{18}[x] k_{18}[t] +$ f19[x] k19[t] + f20[x] k20[t] + f21[x] k21[t] + f22[x] k22[t] + $f_{23}[x] k_{23}[t] + f_{24}[x] k_{24}[t] + f_{25}[x] k_{25}[t] + f_{26}[x] k_{26}[t] +$ f27[x] k27[t] + f28[x] k28[t] + f29[x] k29[t] + f30[x] k30[t] +f31[x] k31[t] + f32[x] k32[t] + g[t-x]74 / 94

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Implementation in StMoMo - Fit model with grouped penalised regularisation
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StMoMo: Start fitting with grpreg
StMoMo: Finish fitting with grpreg

Implementation in StMoMo - Parameter paths

plot(extractStMoMo(bMgrpfit, 10), nCol = 3)



Implementation in StMoMo - Parameter paths

plot(extractStMoMo(bMgrpfit, 15), nCol = 3)



Implementation in StMoMo - Parameter paths

plot(extractStMoMo(bMgrpfit, 20), nCol = 3)



Implementation in StMoMo - Parameter paths plot(extractStMoMo(bMgrpfit, 25), nCol = 5)



StMoMo: Start fitting with grpreg
StMoMo: Finish fitting with grpreg

Construction: Estimated Parameters (Denmark Males)

Construction: Fitted Values (Denmark Males)

Construction: Estimated Parameters (Denmark Females)

Construction: Fitted Values (Denmark Females)

Construction: Estimated Parameters (UK Males)

Construction: Fitted Values (UK Males)

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