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**The Pennsylvania Reemployment Bonus
Experiments: How a survival model helps in the
analysis of the data**

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***ABSTRACT.** Survival models for life-time data and other time-to-event data are widely used in many fields, including medicine, the environmental sciences, engineering etc. They have also found recognition in the analysis of economic duration data. This paper provides a reanalysis of the Pennsylvania Reemployment Bonus Experiments, which were conducted in 1988-89 to examine the effect of different types of reemployment bonus offers on the unemployment spell. A Cox-proportional-hazards survival-model is fitted to the data and the results are compared to the results of a linear regression approach and to the results of a quantile regression approach. The Cox-proportional-hazards model provides for a remarkable goodness of fit and yields less effective treatment responses, therefore lower expectations concerning the overall implications of the Pennsylvania experiment. An influence analysis is proposed for obtaining qualitative information on the influence of the covariates at different quantiles. The results of the quantile regression and of the influence analysis show that both the linear regression and the Cox-model still impose stringent restrictions on the way covariates influence the duration distribution, however, due to its flexibility, the Cox-proportional hazards model is more appropriate for analysing the data.*

Keywords: Reemployment Experiments, Survival Analysis, Quantile Regression

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Unemployment Insurance (UI) Program provides short-term income support to involuntarily unemployed individuals while they seek work. Both from a social and an economic point of view, it is certainly an important policy goal to reduce the duration of unemployment spells. The Pennsylvania Reemployment Bonus Experiments tested the effect of different types of reemployment bonus offers on the unemployment spell. Six treatments that varied in the amount of bonuses that are offered and in the time period in which the bonus offer remains valid, were tested and compared to a control group.

The Pennsylvania Reemployment Bonus Experiment data have been analysed based on different statistical approaches: In the Final Report (Corson *et al.* (1992)), the treatment response analysis is done by calculating the mean unemployment time for each treatment group. Using a linear regression approach, Corson *et al.* (1992) control for the relevant individual characteristics of the claimants and for the experimental design, such as the timing of the sample selection. Meyer (1995, 1996) presents the same results. Additionally, he gives an excellent review of the experiments, some general conclusions about their efficacy and a critique of their policy relevance. Koenker&Bilias (2001) perform a reanalysis of the results of the Pennsylvania Experiment based on a quantile regression analysis. They examine different covariates, focusing on particular quantiles of the distribution and they show that this approach is successful in providing a detailed picture of the varied effects of the covariates on the unemployment time.

This paper intends to fit the experimental data to a Cox proportional hazards model and to provide a comparison between the Cox-model fit and both the quantile regression results as well as the linear regression results. An influence analysis is proposed for obtaining qualitative information on the influence of the covariates at different quantiles. An overall benefit-cost analysis of the effect of the different treatments is omitted here, since this is a straightforward procedure that doesn't produce new insights about the experiment.

2. THE PENNSYLVANIA REEMPLOYMENT BONUS EXPERIMENTS

The current framework of the U.S. unemployment insurance system provides short-term monetary assistance to the involuntarily unemployed. A frequent criticism of the system has been that the unemployment insurance benefit acts as a disincentive for job-seekers and prolongs the duration of unemployment insurance spells. During the 1980's several controlled experiments tested alternative compensation schemes for UI. In these experiments, UI claimants were offered a cash bonus if they found a job within some specified period of time and if the job was retained for some specified duration. The question was: would the promise of a monetary lump-sum benefit provide a significant inducement for more intensive job-seeking?

The first two experiments were conducted in Illinois in 1984 and 1985 and are described in detail by Woodbury and Spiegelman (1987). In the first experiment, a random sample of new claimants were told that they would receive a bonus of \$500 if they found full-time employment within 11 weeks of filing their initial claim, and if they retained their new job for at least 4 months. In the second experiment, a random sample of new claimants were told that their prospective employer would be entitled to a bonus of \$500 provided that the claimants were able to find a job and keep it under the same conditions as the previous experiment. The two treatments were tested against a control group of claimants who followed the usual rules of the Illinois UI system.

The Illinois experiments, and especially the bonus offer made directly to claimants provided a very encouraging initial indication of the incentive effects of such policies. They showed that bonus offers could result in a significant reduction in the duration of unemployment spells and consequently of the regular amounts paid by the state to UI beneficiaries. This finding led to further "bonus experiments" in the states of New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Washington with a variety of new

treatment options. In this paper we will focus more narrowly on a reanalysis of data from only the Pennsylvania Reemployment Bonus Demonstration described in detail in Corson *et al.* (1992).

2.1. TREATMENT DESIGN

The Pennsylvania experiments were conducted by the U.S. Department of Labor between July 1988 and October 1989. During the enrolment period, claimants who became unemployed and registered for unemployment benefits in one of the selected local offices throughout the state were randomly assigned either to a control group or one of the six experimental treatment groups. In the control group the existing rules of the unemployment insurance system applied. Individuals in the treatment groups were offered a cash bonus if they became reemployed in a full-time job, working more than 32 hours per week, within a specified period we call the qualification period. In addition, to qualify for the bonus, claimants were required to work in the new job continuously for at least 16 weeks, or they were allowed to change jobs as long as the transition took place within a period of 5 days. The latter requirements were imposed to discourage cases of fraudulent hiring for purposes of obtaining the bonus, and to avoid the possibility of bonus payments to seasonal workers.

Two bonus levels were tested. The lower bonus was three times the weekly benefit amount, and the higher bonus was six times the weekly benefit. Bonuses were tied to the weekly benefit rather than offering a fixed amount as in the Illinois experiment, because it was felt that such a policy yielded more uniform incentives across individuals. It was also thought that such a system was politically more feasible than the fixed bonus scheme. The low bonus averaged \$500 and the high bonus averaged \$997. Two qualification periods were considered: a short period of 6 weeks and a longer one of 12 weeks. The long qualification period was close to that studied in Illinois and New Jersey. The choice of the shorter period was intended to test the sensitivity of the treatment effect to alternative specifications of the qualification periods.

The bonus levels and qualification periods of the six treatment groups are described in *TABLE 2.1*. All of the treatments, except the last one, involved a voluntary option of attending a workshop designed to aid job search. However, less than three percent of eligible participants attended the workshop so we follow the practice established by prior analysts of ignoring the workshop option. In effect this enables us to pool treatments 4 and 6. Four of the treatments were created by the combination of a bonus amount and a qualification period plus the offer of the workshop. The fifth treatment included an initially high, but declining bonus over the period of 12 weeks plus the optional workshop. The sixth treatment combined the high bonus with the long qualification period without the workshop.

2.2. SAMPLE DESIGN

The Pennsylvania experiments were designed to answer two questions. Could "policy relevant", i.e. politically feasible, treatments yield detectable cost savings to existing UI benefit programs? And how sensitive are program cost to various elements of the treatment design? For a more detailed description of the design goals one can consult Corson *et al.* (1992). Based on these objectives, as well as prior estimates of the magnitude of the response to the bonus offers, and a budget constraint for the experiment, a formal sample allocation model was developed that fulfilled the goals. The design provided 3,000 control and 10,120 treatment plan members; the allocation to the specific treatments is shown in *TABLE 2.2*.

The sample was drawn randomly from claimants at twelve Job Services (JS) offices located throughout the state of Pennsylvania. The limited selection of sites constituted a compromise between the need to obtain a fairly large sample that could accurately reflect the demographic and occupational characteristics of the state, and the need for an easy monitoring and low operational cost of the study. Effort was made to select twelve local offices, which were representative of the insured unemployed

population of Pennsylvania. More specifically, the state was divided in eight UI/JS regions. One or more clusters of local offices were formed within each region according to average duration of UI caseloads. Finally, one office was selected randomly from each cluster to participate in the demonstration. The twelve Job-Service offices chosen were: Coatesville, Philadelphia-North, Philadelphia-Uptown, Reading, Lancaster, Lewistown, Butler, Connellsville, McKeesport, Erie, Pittston and Scranton. Corson *et al.* (1992) comment, "UI claimants were selected randomly from claimants at local offices throughout Pennsylvania. The most cost-effective way to meet this objective was first to select a random sample of local UI/JS offices, and then to select a random sample of UI claimants from each of the selected offices. This process was undertaken in a manner which ensured that each eligible claimant in the state had an equal probability of selection into the demonstration sample."

Several criteria were imposed on potential UI claimants to determine their eligibility in the experiment. To be selected and assigned to one of the six treatments or to the control group, an individual had to:

- file a non-transitional claim in one of the selected offices between July, 1988 and October, 1989,
- indicate on union or employer attachment,
- apply for benefit starting no more than 2 weeks before their selection day,
- be separated from their old job for reasons other than a labour dispute

These eligibility criteria were imposed to increase the homogeneity of the sample and thus ensure that possible differences in the response could be attributed primarily to variation in treatment. Claimants who filed for a transitional claim were excluded because of the likelihood of a previous job offer. For the same reason there was exclusion from the experiment of individuals who indicated that it was possible they could find a new job through a union channel rather than the market, or if they were waiting for some definite recall within 60 days from their former employer. This category of claimants was very unlikely to respond to a bonus offer by searching for a new job intensively. The bonus payments would simply constitute a "windfall" gain for them. The fourth eligibility criterion was established to attain the operational goal of the program to offer bonuses to claimants as soon as possible after they became eligible for UI. On the other hand, the Pennsylvania UI system permits backdating applications as long as claimants had been eligible for benefits during previous weeks. Requiring the unemployed not to have been separated from the most recent employer due to a labour dispute was dictated from the need to conduct a test for the effectiveness of job-search services; state and federal regulations prohibit the provision of such services to such claimants.

2.3. THE DATA

The final collected sample was the result of fifty-two weekly sub-samples selected in all twelve offices beginning on October 26, 1988. Prior to that date, fifteen weekly sub-samples were drawn from the Pittston site for a pilot test of all operations, which are also included in the final "collected-sample". Thus, the enrolment period for the experiment started July 1988 and ended October 1989. The design target was to identify and select 13,120 claimants with each site contributing roughly 1,100 individuals in total and a weekly target of 21 claimants per site. However, since some claimants who initially apply for benefits do not return to a local office to file further, a larger sample was selected to achieve the desired sample size for analysis. Thus a sample ranging from 22 to 40 claimants was selected at each office per week, depending on the historical experience. Overall, 15,005 individuals were initially selected to participate in the demonstration. A total of 14,086 individuals filed for a week of UI and were included in the study. *TABLE 2.2.* presents the distribution of the final sample by treatment group under the header "Collected n". Missing values for certain variables that are needed as

covariates during our data analysis stage necessitated that we restrict our attention to a total of 13,913 subjects; the last column of *TABLE 2.2.* presents the allocation of our analysis sample over the control and the six experimental groups.

An examination of the distribution of claimants in each treatment group by quarter of entry into the experiment confirms two interventions that took place during the enrolment period. One change was dictated by the low participation rate in the job-search assistance services provided along with the group of treatments 1 to 5. As previously noted, the attendance in the workshop was less than 3%, which made the fourth and the sixth treatments indistinguishable. Therefore, as of July 1989-four months before the end of the experiment-individuals who would have been assigned to treatment 6 were assigned to other treatments. A second change was made because preliminary demonstration results showed that treatment 1 had a larger than expected effect. Initially, only a small proportion of the total sample was assigned to this treatment due to its perceived low policy significance. Beginning October 1989, experimenters increased its sample. This change is reflected in a relatively high percentage, 18.3%, of entries during the last quarter.

A detailed description of the characteristics of the claimants under study can be found in Corson *et al.* (1992). Age, race, gender, number of dependents, location in the state, existence of recall expectations, and type of occupation have been recorded. Standard χ^2 - tests for nonrandomness of the allocations to the 7 treatments for each of the covariates fall well within conventional confidence limits, confirming the success of the randomization procedure. Categorical variables related to these characteristics are used in our model - the coding was chosen as follows:

- *RECALL*: 1 if the claimant answered "yes" when asked if he/she had any expectation to be recalled to his/her prior job
- *BLACK*: 1 if the claimant is black, 0 otherwise
- *HISPANIC*: 1 if the claimant is hispanic and 0 otherwise
- *OTHRACE*: 1 if the claimant is neither black, nor hispanic nor white, 0 otherwise
- *FEMALE*: 1 for female claimant, 0 for male
- *LUSD*: 1 if the claimant filed in one of the three sites that were considered to be characterised by low unemployment rate and therefore shorter durations of unemployment, 0 otherwise.
- *MULD*: 1 if the claimant filed in one of the five sites that were considered to be characterised by moderate unemployment rate and long duration of unemployment, 0 otherwise.
- *HUSD*: 1 if the claimant filed in one of the three sites that were considered to be characterized by high unemployment rate and short duration of unemployment, 0 otherwise.
- *DURABLE*: 1 if the occupation of the claimant was in the sector of durable manufacturing, 0 otherwise
- *NONDURABLE*: 1 if the occupation of the claimant was in the sector of nondurable manufacturing, 0 otherwise
- *DEP*: indicates the number of dependents of the claimant. Coded 0, 1, or 2 if the number of dependents is 2 or greater
- *AGELT35*: 1 if the claimant's age was less than 35 years, 0 otherwise
- *AGEGT54*: if the claimant's age was more than 54 years, 0 otherwise
- *Q1,...,Q5*: five indicator variables indicating the quarter of enrolment of each claimant
- *TG0,...,TG5*: indicator variables indicating the treatment group 0,...,5 (characterized by bonus amount and qualification period) in which each claimant was enrolled

Payment of Unemployment Insurance (UI) in Pennsylvania usually starts after one waiting week and the potential UI duration of the vast majority (99 percent) was 26 weeks. Looking at the

exit rates in week 1 and in week 27, we realize that they have extreme peaks for these weeks. Due to the exponential form of the Cox-PH-Model, a high peak of the exit rates at week one is not supposed to affect the fit of the model in an absolutely unreasonable way, but the peak at week 27 constitutes a considerable irregularity. Therefore, this paper will present two analyses: One analysis based on the whole data-set (hereafter referred to as case (I)) and a second analysis based on a reduced data set: All individuals with unemployment durations higher than 26 weeks are excluded (hereafter referred to as case (II)).

Furthermore, we chose to pool the claimants assigned to treatments 4 and 6 into a single treatment, which is referred to as treatment 4. A rationale for this is given in the other papers on the Pennsylvania Bonus Experiments. Like our predecessors, we assume that the process of randomly attributing the subjects to the experimental groups was effective. It follows that the treatment effect is considered to be exclusively responsible for the differences in the length of the unemployment spells.

3. FITTING THE COX-MODEL

3.1. THE COX -MODEL

Translating the experimental situation into the language of our survival framework, the time from entering the study until an individual leaves the unemployment status is interpreted as the *survival time* for this individual. Consequently, the phenomenon that an individual becomes reemployed is an *event* in our model

Doksum and Gasko (1990) provide a very useful survey of survival analysis emphasizing the fundamental link with binary response models and the transformation model

$$h(T_i) = x_i' \beta + u_i \quad (1)$$

Many important parametric and semiparametric models may be expressed in this form: some monotone transformation of an observed survival time, T_i , represented as a linear predictor plus iid error.

In the Cox proportional hazards model (hereafter: Cox-PH-model), which is undoubtedly the leading example, we have

$$\log h(t | x) = \log h_0(t) + x' \beta \quad (2)$$

Due to the baseline-hazard $h_0(t)$ being an unspecified function, the Cox-PH-model is a semiparametric model. Even though the baseline hazard is not specified, the Cox-PH-model is considered to yield reasonably good estimates of regression coefficients, hazard ratios and adjusted survival curves; it is a relatively robust model, which is probably the key reason for its popularity. Since we cannot be totally sure about the correct parametric model, the Cox-PH-model is a sensible choice.

According to the Cox-model, the hazard for individual j is specified as

$$h_j(t, x) = h_0(t) \exp(X_j(t) \beta) \quad (3)$$

Here, $h_0(t)$ is the aforementioned baseline hazard, an unspecified nonnegative function of time, $\beta = (\beta_1, \dots, \beta_p)$ is the vector of coefficients and $X_j = (X_{j,1}, \dots, X_{j,p})$ is the vector of covariates of subject j .

The survival function based on the Cox-model then has the form:

$$S(t, X) = [S_0(t)]^{\exp(X_j(t) \beta)}, \quad (4)$$

where $S_0(t)$ is the baseline survival function.

We anticipate here that the covariates of the Cox-model presented in this paper are fixed - this will be motivated later. The proportional hazards assumption of the Cox-model means that the hazard ratio for a model with covariates that are independent of time is constant over time:

$$HR = \frac{\hat{h}(t, X^*)}{\hat{h}(t, X)} = \frac{\hat{h}_0(t, X^*) \exp(X^*(t) \beta)}{\hat{h}_0(t, X) \exp(X(t) \beta)} = \exp((X^* - X) \beta) \quad (5)$$

Here, X and X^* denote two different specifications of the explanatory variables; we can think of two different individuals or two different groups.

In our model, the hazard $h(t, X)$ can be interpreted as the instantaneous potential per time unit for an individual to get reemployed, given that the individual was unemployed up to time t . Due to the proportional hazards assumption, the hazard ratio for two different values of one covariate is the same regardless of time.

Nonproportionality appears in the form of time-varying coefficients. There are several methods to test the proportional hazards assumption for the different covariates, but even if there is strong evidence of nonproportionality, often the Cox-PH-model is still the best and most robust choice one can make (see Therneau and Grambsch (2000) for further details).

One common method to test nonproportionality is based on the Schoenfeld-residuals, as proposed in Schoenfeld (1980). Since we added a very small, normally distributed random noise to the event weeks, we do not have tied event times, and in this case the Schoenfeld residuals s_k correspond to the simple expression:

$$s_k = X_{(k)} - \bar{x}(\hat{\beta}, t_k), \quad (6)$$

where $\bar{x}(\hat{\beta}, t_k)$ is the weighted mean of the covariates over those still unemployed at time t_k . $X_{(k)}$ is the covariate vector of the individual experiencing the k -th event, at the time of that event.

The test for nonproportionality we use here simply tests whether the least squares line fitted to the scaled Schoenfeld residuals of a certain covariate has slope 0, which would indicate proportional hazards for the particular covariate. For both versions of our model, (I) and (II), the nonproportionality-test is highly significant for the variable *RECALL* (Chi-Square=354 for (I) and Chi-Square=372 for (II)). For both versions, we find some other variables that are significant, but for all variables the significance is totally different in (I) and (II). E.g. the variable *AGELT35* is not significant for the short version ($p=0.79$), but it is highly significant for the long version ($p=0.000017$). Apparently, *RECALL* is the only covariate that significantly varies with time and in both versions. All other variables do vary slightly over the run, but the assumption of a fixed covariate is still reasonable and - as we will see later - still allows for a relatively good fit of our Cox-PH-model. The PH-assumption turns out to be reasonable for all our covariates except from *RECALL*, since we expect all other covariates to have a more or less constant influence on the hazard rate over the whole time of the experiment.

3.2. INFLUENCE ANALYSIS AND STRATIFICATION

Before we introduce stratification - one of the concepts that is applied to covariates, such as *RECALL*, that are obviously nonproportional - we will propose a method how we can get some information about the effect of a particular covariate on the survival distribution at different quantiles. Similar to the regular case of an ordinary least squares fit, residuals in a Cox-model can be used to assess the impact of each point on the fit of a model. Reid and Crépeau (1985) show a nice derivation of the dfbeta-residual-matrix. Those dfbeta-residuals are the approximate change in the coefficient vector if that observation were dropped. Due to the exponential form of our survival distribution, most observations are made in the lower tail of the distribution. Therefore, dfbeta-residuals that measure the *influence* of each point and that are very "sensitive" in the upper tail - far from the mean of the observations - yield significantly better results in showing the time dependency of *RECALL* than plotting Schoenfeld- or deviance-residuals. Using the influence works like a magnifying glass that is especially important in our survival curve. The dfbeta-residuals can

be computed based on a slightly changed Newton-Raphson algorithm that estimates the influence of each point by dropping the points successively. *FIGURE 3.1.* and *FIGURE 3.2.* present a residual plot for the *RECALL*-covariate. This residual-plot is based on the short data set (II); this corresponds to choosing the quantile τ such that $\tau \leq 0.8$. *FIGURE 3.1.* shows the dfbeta-residuals ordered by index of the observation. Note that those 1364 observations where the subjects have anticipated recall to their prior job, have deliberately been indexed with the highest numbers, e.g. their index is higher than 9421.

In the dfbeta-plot, an observation has a negative dfbeta-residual if its removal caused $\hat{\beta}$ (the corresponding coefficient for the fitted model) to increase. The interpretation is obvious: The residuals for the subjects that indicated recall (index > 9421) are below zero in the lower tail of the distribution, and above zero in the upper tail. A smoothing line through those residuals (with *RECALL*=1) had a positive slope, indicating that the residuals for those subjects tend to ask for a lower fitted value of $\hat{\beta}$ for the lower tail of the distribution, but for a higher fitted value of $\hat{\beta}$ for the upper tail of the distribution. This has an interesting interpretation: Anticipated recall to one's prior job has an estimated detrimental effect over the lower tail, i.e. subjects with recall expectation made less efforts to become reemployed in the first weeks of their unemployment. *FIGURE 3.2.* makes that clear. Here, we plotted the residuals over the event time. *FIGURE 3.1.* has shown that the line of residuals with the positive slope can be attributed to those subjects that anticipated recall, and the line with the negative slope is the line for those individuals that had not anticipated recall. We performed this graphical analysis by just fitting the model to the covariate *RECALL*. However, the result is nearly identical if we plot the residuals after having fitted the model including all significant covariates.

Note that this interpretation here is not limited to a certain group of people, such as white males, but we included the whole dataset (up to event week 26) in this plot. Certainly, this idea can also be limited to only a particular group, and - depending on the chosen subgroup - the effect can be seen to be even stronger or weaker. However, we have to keep in mind that the graphical argument given above is rather qualitative, no quantitative information about the strength of the effect is obtained and the confidence of this interpretation is not measured.

The dfbeta-residual plot also shows useful results for other covariates. But since the time-dependency of the *RECALL* variable was obviously the strongest of all covariates (as the test for nonproportionality has shown), the presentation of the residual-plot of the *RECALL* variable is the most interesting.

There are two ways of dealing with the *RECALL*-variable: We can introduce time-dependent covariates or we can stratify on the *RECALL*-covariate. In our case, it would make sense to fit the model to the new covariate *RECALL*Time*, instead of simply fitting it to the covariate *RECALL*. This way, the effect of the covariate *RECALL* would increase over time and a better fit could be expected according to what the graphical analysis above has shown. Due to the small proportion of the recall-subjects, the success of the introduction of this time-dependency was rather modest - no better fit (as measured by the value of the partial-likelihood) can be achieved. Therefore, we decide to stratify on the *RECALL*-covariate.

According to the *general stratified Cox model*, the hazard for individual j is given as:

$$h_{g,j}(t, x) = h_{g,0}(t) \exp(X_j(t) \beta). \quad (7)$$

$g = 1, 2, \dots, k$ are the strata that are defined as the different categories of the stratification variable. Consequently, in our case $k = 2$, i.e. we have 2 strata, *RECALL*=0 and *RECALL*=1.

Note that the stratified variable is not explicitly included in the model, this means that due to stratification, *RECALL* is not a covariate any more. The notation shows that the baseline hazard function $h_{g,0}(t)$ is different for each stratum. However, the coefficients β_1, \dots, β_p are the same for each stratum. As a consequence, the estimates of hazard ratios are also the same for each stratum.

But since the baseline hazard functions are different for each stratum, the fitted stratified Cox-PH-model will yield different estimated survival curves for each stratum. This is exactly what we want to achieve since the RECALL covariate has an influence on the survival curve that is strongly time-dependent.

3.3. FITTING THE COX-PH-MODEL WITH THE STEPWISE REGRESSION PROCEDURE

A major interest of this survival analysis is to identify from the many available covariates a small subset of prognostic factors that relate significantly to the length of the unemployment time of the subjects. Including a predictor that has no real relationship to survivorship should certainly be avoided, i.e. the type I - error has to be minimized. To achieve this, we proceed similar to the case of standard multiple regression analysis: According to a specified criterion for including a covariate, we add into or remove the covariates from the model, one at a time. Of course, the most significant covariate is automatically chosen first.

Le (1997) proposes the *stepwise regression procedure* for fitting a survival model. Our criterion is the value of the likelihood ratio chi-squared statistic, which is applied after each removal or addition of a new covariate:

$$\chi_{LR}^2 = 2[\ln L(\hat{\beta}, X_1, \dots, X_n) - \ln L(\hat{\beta}, X_1, \dots, X_{i-1}, X_{i+1}, \dots, X_n)] \quad (8)$$

Note that the likelihood function $L(\cdot)$ used here is the *partial likelihood* function introduced by Cox, (1972).

For fitting our model, we choose a significance-level of 0.05 for the likelihood ratio chi-squared statistic and - due to its relevance for our interpretation - the variables indicating the treatment group, $TG1, \dots, TG5$, are a priori included as a covariate. (The variable $TG0$ is not included since it causes convergence problems of the Newton-Raphson-algorithm - but the interpretation of the results is still straightforward.)

The long data set (I) then yields the following sequence of covariates added to the model (sorted by the order they have been added to the model):

AGEGT54 - AGELT35 - LUSD - FEMALE - NONDURABLE - BLACK - HISPANIC - DURABLE - Q4

TABLE 3.1. shows estimates for the covariate-coefficients together with their significance after fitting the model to all covariates that have been found by the stepwise regression procedure:

For the short data set (II), the following sequence of covariates has been added to the model:

BLACK - Q2 - AGELT35 - NONDURABLE - LUSD - HISPANIC - AGEGT54 - DEP - OTHRACE - MULD

The table below gives the coefficient estimates and their significance:

Obviously the likelihood ratio test is much better for the long data set (I). Furthermore, we see that we have 9 significant variables (we do not count the treatment indicator variables here) for (I) but 10 significant variables for (II) and that the significant covariates (and also their ordering) are not the same in both cases. There are 6 variables that are significant in both models: *AGEGT54*, *AGELT35*, *LUSD*, *NONDURABLE*, *BLACK* and *HISPANIC*. The effects are similar in both models; however, the absolute effect is stronger for *BLACK* and *HISPANIC* in version (II) but stronger for *AGELT35*, *LUSD* and *AGEGT54* in version (I).

3.4. COMPARISON WITH THE RESULTS OBTAINED BY THE QUANTILE REGRESSION AND THE LINEAR REGRESSION

Are these results approximately as anticipated in the quantile regression analysis? We have to keep in mind that the covariates in the Cox-PH-model act as a scale shift of the baseline hazard. A particular coefficient obtained by fitting our model characterizes the effect over the entire distribution without paying special attention to the effect at certain quantiles of the distribution.

Koenker&Xiao's (2001) results show that "not only the treatment effect of the bonus payment, but many other of the covariates appear to affect the conditional distribution of unemployment duration in ways that are poorly approximated either by pure location and/or scale shifts." The pure scale shift assumption of the survival model proposed here obviously paints a less complete picture of the varied effects of the covariates on the survival, but for assessing the overall effect of one covariate on the expected mean or median unemployment time, we have to rely on these "condensed" coefficients.

In both versions, *AGEGT54* has a negative effect on the hazard, meaning that the unemployment spell of individuals that are older than 54 years is generally longer. This can be expected from the quantile regression results. Surprisingly, the linear regression in the Final Report yields a positive effect of *AGEGT54* on the hazard - but the reported effect is less strong than that for the other age-groups (Ages 25-34 and Ages 35-54). The coefficient of *AGELT35* is positive in both the linear and the quantile regression, indicating that young people are reemployed more quickly. This corresponds to the results in all other analyses. As expected, *LUSD* has a negative effect on the unemployment duration, this corresponds to the findings of the quantile regression and the linear regression. *NONDURABLE* has a positive impact on the hazard, implying that the unemployment duration for subjects working in the sector of nondurable manufacturing is generally lower. In the linear regression case, *NONDURABLE* also had a negative influence on the employment duration; it has not been tested in the quantile regression.

BLACK has very strong positive effect on the hazard in the short version (II), and a considerably weaker positive effect in the long version (I). These results correspond to the linear and the quantile regression. Additionally, a graphical influence analysis as in section 3.2. shows that the positive effect of the covariate *BLACK* is most distinct in the lower tail of the distribution. This explains why the coefficient is much higher in the shorter version (II) of the model. The positive effect of *HISPANIC* corresponds to the findings in the linear and the quantile regression. In (II), *Q2* has a negative effect on the hazard, meaning that entering the study in the second quarter generally decreased the exit rate. The quantile regression shows an opposite result: Here, entering the study in *Q2* reduced the duration of unemployment, mostly in the centre of the distribution. For the covariates *Q1*, *Q3*, *Q4* and *Q5*, this effect was seen to be stronger - this explains why *Q2* has a negative effect on the hazard in our model.

All other coefficients correspond to the findings in quantile and linear regression. It is interesting to note that variables such as *DEP*, where the quantile regression shows nearly no effect in the upper tail, are not significant in the longer version, but they are significant in the shorter version.

Of course, the main idea of the whole experiment was to examine the impact of the different treatments on the unemployment spell. With regard to the treatment effects, both versions of the model generate qualitatively similar results. Treatment 4, offering the high bonus amount and the long duration of qualification period, was not only the most effective in reducing the unemployment spell, but also the most significant in both versions of the model. Treatment 2 has a less strong negative effect on unemployment time than treatment 4; unlike the results of the linear regression, treatment 1, 3 and 5 have a very weak effect on the unemployment reduction. Looking at the confidence intervals, we even see that they have no significant effect. Moreover, the confidence bands show that *all* our conclusions regarding the treatment effects stand on relatively shaky ground.

Based on the PH-assumption, we can conclude from the short model for example that a member of treatment group 4 has a 1.095 fold increase of its probability to leave unemployment in the next time-step in comparison to a member in the control group. Remember that the scale-shift assumption becomes very clear here: In the Cox-PH-Model Treatment 4 just causes a scale shift

of the survival distribution, not reflecting the fact that was found in the QR-regression, that the effect of TG4 is very strong in the 2nd and 3rd quartile of the distribution, but very weak in the first and the last quartile.

From a policy standpoint, information on the mean or median unemployment time in response to different treatments is more interesting - e.g. for a benefit-cost analysis - than an analysis of the treatment effects on the hazard.

Since it obviously doesn't make sense in our case to create something like a "mean individual", the estimates for mean and median survival time are calculated for the following covariate values (Individuals with these characteristics were very frequent in the sample):

Long version (I):

$AGEGT54=0, AGELT35=0, LUSD=0, FEMALE=0, NONDURABLE=0, BLACK=0, HISPANIC=0, DURABLE=0, Q4=0$

Short Version (II):

$BLACK=0, Q2=0, AGELT35=0, NONDURABLE=0, LUSD=0, HISPANIC=0, AGEGT54=0, DEP=0, OTHRACE=0, MULD=0$

After having estimated the baseline hazard $h_0(t)$ for each of the two strata we can calculate the survival function as presented in equation (2). Then, for the median survival time T_{median} , we have: $S(T_{\text{median}}) = 0.5$.

The mean survival time T_{mean} is calculated as the area under the survival curve:

$$T_{\text{mean}} = E(T) = \int_0^{\infty} S(t) dt \quad (9)$$

There is a discussion on whether the mean or the median survival time is more meaningful. Since we want to compare our results to the results of the linear regression, we should focus on the mean survival time instead of the median survival time. The following brief proposition explains why:

Proposition: *The mean survival as calculated in the Final Report is the same as the area under the Kaplan-Meier-survival-curve of the long data set (1).*

Proof. Note that our model is discrete in time (time unit = [weeks]). In the Final Report, the mean survival time MSF is then calculated as:

$$MSF(T) = \sum_{t=1}^T \frac{P(t-1) - P(t)}{PT} \cdot t, \quad \text{where } P(t) \text{ is the number of people that are still unemployed at}$$

time t . PT is the total number of people that take part in the experiment. Obviously: $P(0)=PT$. T is the total number of weeks of the analysed experiment, in our case $T=52$.

According to the Kaplan-Meier-estimate, the surviving proportion of people at time t is $\frac{P(t)}{PT}$.

Then the mean survival time MSK is calculated as the area under the Kaplan-Meier-survival curve:

$$MSK(T) = \sum_{t=0}^T \frac{P(t)}{PT} \cdot t.$$

Remember that we have no censored events. This implies that at we have no unemployed individual at the end of the experiment, after 52 weeks. The estimates for the mean survival time of the Final Report have been calculated based on the 13913 individuals that are registered as reemployed in week 52. No censoring implies that $P(52)=P(T)=0$.

Now, Complete Induction helps:

Induction Start: $T=1$

$$MSK(1) = \frac{1}{PT} (P(0) + P(1)) = \frac{1}{PT} PT = 1 = \frac{1}{PT} (P(0) - P(1)) = \frac{1}{PT} PT = MSF(1)$$

Induction Step: $T \rightarrow T+1$

$$MSK(T+1) = MSK(T) + \frac{1}{PT} P(T)$$

$$MSF(T+1) = MSF(T) + \frac{1}{PT} (-P(T)) \cdot T + \frac{1}{PT} (P(T) - 0) \cdot (T+1) = MSF(T) + \frac{1}{PT} P(T)$$

Since $MSF(T) = MSK(T)$ by hypothesis, we find the desired result: $MSF(T+1) = MSK(T+1)$

Obviously, this result holds in general for all uncensored and time-discrete survival distributions.

The following tables¹ present the results. Note that the two different strata have different survival curves, as expected.

Long version (I):

Short version (II):

If we look at the change of unemployment weeks in response to the different treatments, we find the results that we have expected from our analysis of the treatment covariates. The results for the mean unemployment duration are generally the same as those in Corson *et al.* (1992) and in Meyer (1995), although - logically - the induced reduction in unemployment spell is lower in the results of the short version (II). The weakness of the effect of treatment 3 in the long version is remarkable, especially in comparison with the linear and the quantile regression results. However, the standard errors are significantly lower than in the other studies based on linear regression (in these studies, we have standard errors from 0.26 to 0.34). This can be attributed to the survival regression that provides a better fit than a linear regression. Note also that the standard errors are the lowest in the short version of the model. In this version, we avoided the huge "irregularity" in week 27. A general comparison with the linear regression results shows that the survival analysis implies less strong treatment effects than the linear regression.

We conclude this analysis with a graph of the Kaplan-Meier estimate of the survival, along with pointwise 95% confidence intervals (figure 3.3). The shape of this curve shows that the idea of using the Cox-model to analyse the data instead of a standard linear regression model is quite reasonable, at least if we restrict ourselves to the observations with event-time smaller than 26 weeks. The small standard errors in the mean survival time analysis of version (II) seem to confirm that. For investigating covariate effects, and especially for comparing the short-term treatment effects, the restriction to a shorter data set might be reasonable and yields reliable estimates, since the Cox-PH-model provides a good fit in our case.

4. CONCLUSION

We have shown that the Pennsylvania Reemployment Bonus Experiment can be analysed with a survival analysis framework and a reasonable fit is obtained. The results are similar to the results obtained in the Final Report of this experiment. However, the standard errors for the mean unemployment time *TABLE 2.3.* and *TABLE 2.4.* are considerably lower than those obtained in the linear regression framework of the Final Report. This shows that our survival model is helpful for an analysis of different covariate effects in the Pennsylvania Bonus Experiment data - here the

survival analysis seems to outperform the linear regression approach; but since random sampling of the experiment is generally considered to be accurate, this shouldn't have important implications for the overall results and the cost-benefit analysis of the Pennsylvania Experiment. The overall results of the survival analysis present a slightly less optimistic picture of the effectiveness of the different treatments than the linear regression.

The comparison with the quantile regression approach has shown that - despite its good fit - the Cox-PH-model with its underlying assumption that the fixed covariates act as a scale shift of the baseline hazard is still very restrictive. A detailed influence analysis shows that most covariates effectively not only cause a scale shift, but the Cox-PH-model proposed in this paper doesn't account for this. This became especially apparent when we compared the covariate-coefficients of version (I) and version (II) and we found that those covariates that have a strong effect in the lower quartiles of the distribution, but a low effect in the upper quartiles, also had a stronger effect in version (II) that is only based on the data up to week 26.

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FOOTNOTES:

1) The fact that the numbers for the median results always have the decimals .98,.99,.00,.01,.02 comes from the fact that some normally distributed noise in the range $[-0.02, \dots, +0.02]$ has been added to the integer duration data (measured in weeks) in order to prevent ties.

TABLES AND FIGURES:*TABLE 2.1. TREATMENT GROUPS.*

Group	Bonus Amount	Qualification Period	Workshop Offer
Controls	0	0	No
Treatment 1	Low	Short	Yes
Treatment 2	Low	Long	Yes
Treatment 3	High	Short	Yes
Treatment 4	High	Long	Yes
Treatment 5	Declining	Long	Yes
Treatment 6	High	Long	No

Note: The low bonus was 3 times UI weekly benefit amount, the high benefit was 6 times this amount. The declining bonus declined from 6 times the weekly benefit to zero, over a 12 week period. The short qualification period was 6 weeks, and the long period was 12 weeks.

TABLE 2.2. TARGET, COLLECTED AND ANALYSIS SAMPLE SIZES.

Group	Target m	Collected n	Analysis n
Controls	3,000	3,392	3,354
Treatment 1	1,030	1,395	1,385
Treatment 2	2,240	2,495	2,428
Treatment 3	1,740	1,910	1,885
Treatment 4	1,590	1,771	1,745
Treatment 5	1,740	1,860	1,831
Treatment 6	1,780	1,302	1,285
Total	13,120	14,086	13,913

FIGURE 3.1. INFLUENCE GRAPH I

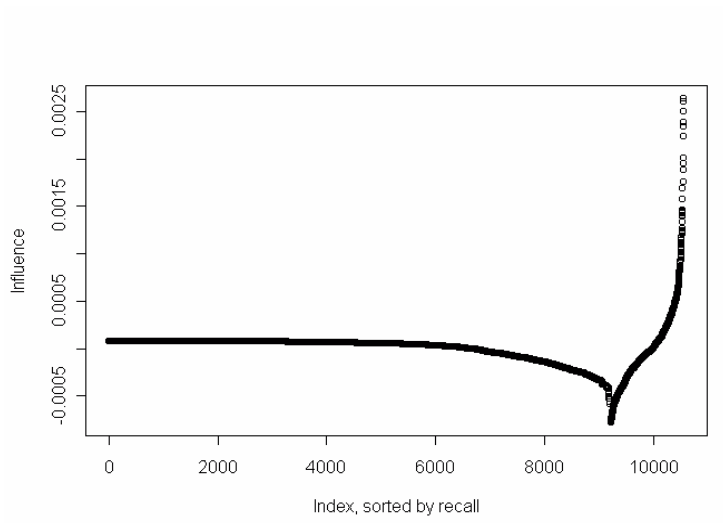


FIGURE 3.2. INFLUENCE GRAPH II

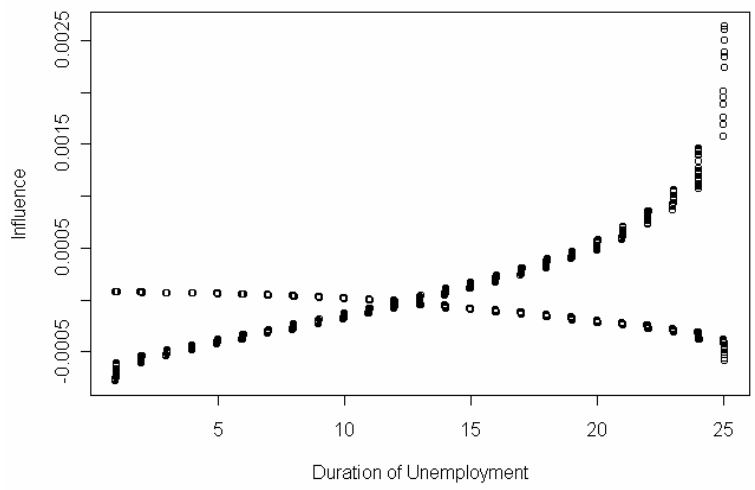


TABLE 3.1. RESULTS FOR THE LONG DATA SET (I)

n = 13913	$\hat{\beta}_i$	$\exp(\hat{\beta}_i)$	$se(\hat{\beta}_i)$	z	p	lower .95	upper .95
<i>TG1</i>	0.0358	1.036	0.032	1.119	2.60E-01	0.973	1.103
<i>TG2</i>	0.05816	1.06	0.0267	2.18	2.90E-02	1.006	1.117
<i>TG3</i>	0.00292	1.003	0.0288	0.101	9.20E-01	0.948	1.061
<i>TG4</i>	0.09433	1.099	0.0251	3.756	1.70E-04	1.046	1.154
<i>TG5</i>	0.02301	1.023	0.0291	0.791	4.30E-01	0.967	1.083
<i>AGEGT54</i>	-0.31552	0.729	0.0304	-10.376	0.00E+00	0.687	0.774
<i>AGELT35</i>	0.1643	1.179	0.0185	8.891	0.00E+00	1.137	1.222
<i>LUSD</i>	0.13086	1.14	0.0195	6.726	1.70E-11	1.097	1.184
<i>FEMALE</i>	-0.10846	0.897	0.0176	-6.175	6.60E-10	0.867	0.929
<i>NONDURABLE</i>	0.13341	1.143	0.0276	4.837	1.30E-06	1.083	1.206
<i>BLACK</i>	0.12431	1.132	0.0267	4.648	3.40E-06	1.075	1.193
<i>HISPANIC</i>	0.16166	1.175	0.0456	3.541	4.00E-04	1.075	1.285
<i>DURABLE</i>	-0.05597	0.946	0.0246	-2.277	2.30E-02	0.901	0.992
<i>Q4</i>	0.0421	1.043	0.0202	2.088	3.70E-02	1.003	1.085
Likelihood ratio test			486 on 14 df, p=0				
Wald test			466 on 14 df, p=0				
Score (logrank) test			471 on 14 df, p=0				

TABLE 3.2. RESULTS FOR THE SHORT DATA SET (II)

n = 10784	$\hat{\beta}_i$	$\exp(\hat{\beta}_i)$	$se(\hat{\beta}_i)$	z	p	lower .95	upper .95
<i>TG1</i>	0.04507	1.046	0.0367	1.2298	2.20E-01	0.974	1.124
<i>TG2</i>	0.07509	1.078	0.0303	2.4772	1.30E-02	1.016	1.144
<i>TG3</i>	0.0625	1.064	0.0329	1.8975	5.80E-02	0.998	1.135
<i>TG4</i>	0.0905	1.095	0.0285	3.1795	1.50E-03	1.035	1.158
<i>TG5</i>	-0.00105	0.999	0.0332	-0.0315	9.70E-01	0.936	1.066
<i>BLACK</i>	0.35167	1.421	0.032	10.9902	0.00E+00	1.335	1.513
<i>Q2</i>	-0.16239	0.85	0.0241	-6.7382	1.60E-11	0.811	0.891
<i>AGELT35</i>	0.05845	1.06	0.0212	2.7611	5.80E-03	1.017	1.105
<i>NONDURABLE</i>	0.13045	1.139	0.0304	4.2912	1.80E-05	1.073	1.209
<i>LUSD</i>	0.06281	1.065	0.0258	2.4336	1.50E-02	1.012	1.12
<i>HISPANIC</i>	0.19449	1.215	0.0508	3.8269	1.30E-04	1.1	1.342
<i>AGEGT54</i>	-0.11053	0.895	0.0364	-3.038	2.40E-03	0.834	0.962
<i>DEP</i>	-0.03731	0.963	0.0128	-2.9096	3.60E-03	0.939	0.988
<i>OTHRACE</i>	0.27849	1.321	0.1289	2.1613	3.10E-02	1.026	1.701
<i>MULD</i>	-0.05149	0.95	0.0244	-2.1108	3.50E-02	0.905	0.996
Likelihood ratio test			249 on 15 df, p=0				
Wald test			257 on 15 df, p=0				
Score (logrank) test			257 on 15 df, p=0				

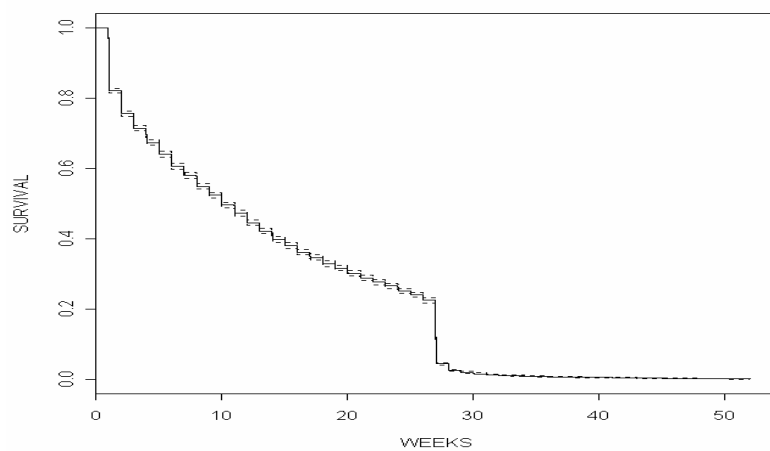
TABLE 3.3. SURVIVAL TIMES FOR DIFFERENT TREATMENTS - LONG VERSION (I)

Treatment Group	RECALL	mean	se(mean)	median	0.95 LCL	0.95 UCL
0	0	13.9	0.109	12.0	11	13.0
	1	14.5	0.224	13.01	13	14.0
1	0	13.6	0.105	11	10.0	12
	1	14.2	0.215	13	13.0	14
2	0	13.4	0.102	11.02	10.0	12.0
	1	14.1	0.209	13.0	12.0	14.0
3	0	13.9	0.108	12.0	10.0	13.01
	1	14.5	0.223	12.99	13.0	14.
4	0	13.0	0.0987	10	9	11
	1	13.8	0.2005	13	12	13
5	0	13.7	0.106	11	10	12.01
	1	14.3	0.218	13	13	14

TABLE 3.4. SURVIVAL TIMES FOR DIFFERENT TREATMENTS - SHORT VERSION (II)

Treatment Group	RECALL	mean	se(mean)	median	0.95 LCL	0.95 UCL
0	0	8.57	0.0846	6	5.98	6.98
	1	12.18	0.1698	12	12.00	12.02
1	0	8.24	0.0799	5.99	5.0	6.01
	1	11.93	0.1625	12.00	12.0	12.01
2	0	8.03	0.0768	5.01	5.0	6
	1	11.76	0.1578	12.00	12.0	12
3	0	8.12	0.078	5.98	5.0	6
	1	11.83	0.160	12.00	12.0	12
4	0	7.92	0.0752	5.01	5.0	6
	1	11.68	0.1555	12.00	11	12
5	0	8.57	0.0847	6	5.02	6.99
	1	12.18	0.1700	12	11.99	12.02

FIGURE 3.3. KAPLAN-MEIER SURVIVAL CURVE (WITH TWO-SIDED 0.95-CONFIDENCE INTERVAL)



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