On the Use of Expectations Data in Estimating Structural Dynamic Models: An Analysis of Career Choices

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Abstract

In surveys individuals are frequently asked for their expectations about future events and to predict their own future behavior. This paper introduces a new methodology for the use of subjective expectations or intentions data in the estimation of dynamic stochastic decision models. Assuming that expectations about future behavior accurately portray optimal future behavior conditional on current information, it is shown that these data can provide similar information about the decision process as can data on current or retrospective behavior. To illustrate the value of such data, I use information from the NLS-72 about each individual's self-reported expected future occupation in estimating a structural dynamic model of teacher career decisions under uncertainty. The resulting increase in the precision of the parameter estimates indicates that subjective expectations data can be fruitfully used to augment objective data on current choice behavior in estimating dynamic behavioral models.

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I. Introduction

Most large-scale micro-based data sets, such as the NLS surveys, the NLS-72, the PSID, the RHS, and the HRS contain questions concerned with individual's expectations or intentions about future life events or choices, such as mortality, fertility, labor force behavior, schooling and occupation. Economists have made relatively little use of this kind of data.[1] This is surprising given the importance of expectations in most theoretical models of decision behavior under uncertainty. In dynamic behavioral models individuals are assumed to base their current choices not only on current utility but also on expected future choices and utility levels. Skeptical of the reliability of subjective expectations data, and given the lack of an appropriate methodology for incorporating these data in the estimation of their models, most economists have avoided their use. Instead they have chosen to rely on assumptions about the expectations formation process implicit in the specification of their decision model. As pointed out by Dominitz and Manski (1996,1997), a researcher seeking to learn expectations from realizations must assume that he or she knows what information the household or individual possesses and how this information is used to form expectations. Misspecification of the information set or expectations formation process is likely to lead to incorrect model estimates (see Manski, 1993).

This paper shows how these frequently available but much ignored subjective expectations or intentions data can provide a valuable source of information in studying economic behavior.[2] Assuming that reported expectations about future choices accurately portray optimal future behavior conditional on current information, it is shown that in estimating dynamic behavioral models these data can provide similar information about the decision process as can data on current or retrospective behavior. While the methodology developed

[1] There has been a long history of collecting expectations or intentions data, such as those used to generate the University of Michigan's Index of Consumer Sentiment and the Conference Board's Consumer Confidence Index, but these data have been used mainly for descriptive purposes.

[2] Within the context of a particular model, it is useful to distinguish between expectations about endogenous and exogenous future events, that is, events which probability distribution does or does not depend on the current and subsequent choice behavior being modelled. Expectations about future changes in government policy would generally fit under the former, while intentions data (expectations about future decisions) would fit under the latter. While expectations of future exogenous events may be directly used as an exogenous explanatory variable, the use of endogenous expectations data is more complex, requiring a model of how such expectations are formed and reported, and is the focus of this paper.

here is applied to the study of teacher career decisions, it is general to the study of other life cycle decisions, such as savings, investment, schooling, fertility and marriage decisions.

The paper is organized as follows. The next section provides a brief review of the literature on the use of expectations data in studying economic decision behavior. A simple dynamic model of occupational choice and career mobility is presented in section 3. Section 4 describes the data set and the estimation of the model, and provides a brief discussion of the estimation results.[3] Section 5 will describe the self reported expectations data, provides validation tests of these data, and describes the manner in which they can be incorporated in the estimation of the structural model. Estimates obtained after incorporating these data are also reported. Finally, section 6 offers some concluding comments and areas for future research.

II. Earlier Studies using Expectations Data

Studies in which expectations data have been used can be broadly divided into two groups. In the first, self-reported expectations about future events or decisions have been used directly as explanatory variables in the analysis of current decision behavior. Examples of such studies include those by Sandell and Shapiro (1980), Shaw and Shapiro (1987), Gronau (1988) and Blau and Ferber (1991). In these studies, reported plans of future labor market separations and subjective preferences for future labor force participation were used to test the human capital theory of job and occupational sex-segregation. Another example is the study by Bernheim and Levin (1989), where subjective expectations about future social security benefits were used to explain current savings behavior.

The use of expectations data in estimating 'reduced form' model specifications in these studies raises some important concerns. In a dynamic framework, expectations of future decisions are functions of current information sets and thus will generally depend on the same observables and unobservables as current decisions. For example, expected future social security benefits will depend on the planned date of retirement, expected future savings and all wages earned until that date, which will generally have the same determinants as current work and savings decisions. As a result, treating subjective expectations as exogenous explanatory variables is likely to lead to endogeneity biases. It also implies that it will be

[3]A more detailed discussion of estimates and policy implications of an extended version of the model can be found in a separate paper titled 'The Supply and Early Careers of Teachers' (van der Klaauw, 1999).

difficult, if not impossible to disentangle the causal effects of expectations on current actions and vice versa. Do planned labor force separations lead to lower human capital investment on the job and the choice of jobs with lower wages and flatter wage-earnings profiles, or do lower wages and flatter wage profiles lead to higher quit rates, or both? These concerns make clear that to fruitfully use subjective expectations data, one will have to explicitly model the expectations formation process jointly with current choice behavior and its dependence on expectations.

The second group of studies take the subjective expectations as their dependent variables and empirically analyze their determinants and formation process. Most of these studies have been concerned with testing for 'rationality', that is, whether expectations are unbiased and use all available information, by comparing expectations to actual realizations. For example, Griliches (1980) used data from the NLS on expected plans for obtaining additional education and on expectations about the preferred occupation at a given future age. Comparing these with actual realizations he found the correlations between expectations and realizations to be low, but found that the expectations appeared to be close to being 'rational', in the sense that it was difficult to improve on them by using variabes that were known to the respondents at the time of reporting their plans. Using data from a small survey, Hamermesh (1985) analyzed self-reported probabilities of living to at least age 60 and age 80 as well as data on the expected age of death. He found that the respondents appeared to extrapolate from changing life tables when calculating their subjective life expectancy and he found the qualitative variation in the subjective expectations with risk factors (such as social status or cigarette smoking) to be similiar to what is found in epidemiological data. Similarly, in several studies by Bernheim (1988, 1989, 1990), respondents in the HRS were found to have made relatively accurate and 'rational' forecasts regarding their age of retirement and their social security entitlement.

Although it is often said that 'expectations' about future events are important in economic models based on forward-looking behavior, it is more accurate to say that it is the probability distribution of future events that enters the models. Using detailed expectations data from the survey of Economic Expectations (SEE) in which individuals were directly asked about probabilities, Dominitz and Manski (1997) were able to estimate each respondent's subjective probability distribution for next year's household income. They also related differences in these subjective distributions to differences in previous income realizations and in other individual characteristics. Their estimates reveal considerable heterogeneity in the subjective probability distributions. In further analysis by Dominitz and Manski (1996), the median of the subjective distribution of future income was found to vary almost one-to-one with that of actual incomes. By obtaining better expectations data from more carefully worded questions such as those in the SEE, the authors argue, much can be learned about the expectations formation process, making it possible to improve on the conventional approach of inferring expectations from realizations data alone.

Honig (1994) analyzed similar data from the HRS about subjective probabilities of working full-time beyond age 62 and 65 to examine the extent to which women take into account their own economic opportunity set (their wages, employer provided coverage for health and disability insurance and changes in pension and social security wealth) in forming retirement plans. The estimates indicated a strong dependence of these probabilities on the expected net rewards to working. The same expectations data, as well as similar data on subjective life expectancies, were also analyzed by Hurd and McGarry (1995) who found the subjective probabilities to be both internally consistent (in particular, they imply conditional probabilities in the unit interval) and to correlate closely with observed retirement probabilities and life expectancies in the population. Subjective probabilities of survival beyond age 75 and 85 were found to covary with other variables (such as social status or smoking behavior) in the same way actual outcomes vary with these variables.

While these reduced form analyses of expectations data do provide important information about the elements in the information set and possible heterogeneity therein, they provide little information about how expectations are actually formed and updated over time. Furthermore, commonly used tests for rational expectations in these studies are often invalid. First, as pointed out by Manski (1990), in case of binary expectations (where people report whether or not they think they will take a particular decision in the future or whether they believe something will happen or not) individual differences between reported intentions and realizations do not average out in the aggregate. Second, realizations may not be independent across individuals as forecast errors are likely to be correlated across observations due to macro events (aggregate shocks). While individuals are likely to take the possibility of such events into account in their decisions and expectations, a difference between average expectations and realizations could still be consistent with rational behavior. Unless we measure individual expectations and realizations over a long period of time, in which case we may be able to average out the aggregate shocks, we cannot test for the rationality of reported expectations.

These problems notwithstanding, these empirical analyses of subjective expectations data clearly imply that such data have great promise in making a substantial contribution to our understanding of intertemporal decision-making under uncertainty. Like Dominitz and Manski, I believe that the potential value of expectations data as a means of understanding behavior has been overlooked. Just as current choices are taken to portray optimal behavior given current information, expectations about future choices portray optimal future behavior conditional on current information. These data can therefore provide useful information about the decision process in the same way as does data on current or retrospective behavior. Like differences in actual choices, differences in reported expectations can therefore be explained using the same behavioral model.

In this paper I illustrate the value of expectations data by using data from the NLS-72 on each respondent's reported expectations about future occupation and employment status, but the methododology developed here is general to other decisions as well. I show how expectations data and data on current and past choices can be combined to obtain more precise parameter estimates, while assuming that the two data sources used are consistent, that is, assuming that the expectations data were generated by the same model governing the actual choices.[4] In addition, along the lines proposed by Wolpin and Gonul (1985), I will use estimates of the model obtained from data on observed behavior alone to test whether the reported expectations, which must be a function of the same structural parameters, are consistent with this model.

[4]While there are important differences, in some respects our approach of incorporating subjective data in estimating a structural model is similar to that of using of subjective information on reservation wages in the job search literature (see, for example, Lancaster and Chesher (1983) and Flinn and Del Boca (1984)). In that literature reservation wage data are typically used to identify some of the model parameters, while in our case the expectations data represent purely overidentifying information.

III. A Dynamic Model of Teacher Career Decisions

This section presents a brief description of a simple model of teacher career decisions. In a separate paper (van der Klaauw, 1999), an extended version of this model is estimated and used to evaluate the effectiveness of several policy experiments designed to help improve the composition and quality of the teacher force in the US.

The model described below characterizes each individual's initial occupational choice decision of whether or not to become a teacher as well as subsequent occupational mobility decisions (ie. exit out of and re-entry into teaching) in each year since graduating from a teacher training program. These career choices are constrained by the arrival of teaching job offers. The model also incorporates the labor force participation decision itself to explain temporary exits (particularly of women) from the labor market. Each occupational choice and work decision involves a tradeoff between pecuniary and non-pecuniary rewards in the teaching and non-teaching sector, as well as the utility derived when not working in the labor market. Because individuals face uncertainty about current and future economic conditions, these career decisions involve a formation of expectations about future earnings, non-pecuniary benefits and employment opportunities in each occupation. In this sense my model is similar to those of Gotz and McCall (1985) and Keane and Wolpin (1997).

Upon graduating from a teacher training program each graduate is assumed to maximize the present value of utility over a known finite horizon (T) by choosing whether to work as a teacher (if such a job is available), work in the non-teaching sector, or choose not to work in the labor market. The objective of the individual is to maximize

$$E\sum_{t=1}^{T}\delta^{t-1}U(P_t, C_t) \tag{1}$$

where the utility function is specified as

$$U(P_t, C_t) = \alpha C_t - b_{1t}\, \mathcal{I}(P_t = 1) - b_{2t}\, \mathcal{I}(P_t = 2) \tag{2}$$

by choosing a path $\{(P_t \in I_t, C_t \in \Re); t = 1, \cdots, T\}$, where the choice decision P_t equals $P_t = 0$ if the individual opts for the non-market alternative, $P_t = 1$ when choosing to work as teacher, and $P_t = 2$ if deciding to work in the non-teaching sector. C_t represents consumption in period t of a composite good, $\mathcal{I}(\ )$ is the indicator function with $\mathcal{I} = 1$ if the argument is true and $\mathcal{I} = 0$ if not. I_t represents the set of choice possibilities for P_t in period t, δ is the subjective discount factor and E is the expectations operator.

In the specification of the utility function α represents the marginal utility of consumption and b_{1t} and b_{2t} represent the disutility of working in the labor market, relative to the utility of staying at home. The disutility of working in each occupation (which could be negative) will depend on the individual's preferences for each different type of work and on the non-pecuniary benefits provided by the occupation. To model this, we specify

$$b_{kt} = X'\beta_{k1} + S'_{kt}\beta_{k2} + u_{kt} \qquad k = 1, 2 \tag{3}$$

where X is a vector of individual characteristics, including the individual's race, sex, type of degree obtained, and a constant term. The vector S_{kt} includes the time-varying variables age, and the individual's total work experience (total number of years) exp_{kt} in occupation k since graduation from a teacher training program. Occupation specific work experience evolves over time according to the following law of motion:

$$exp_{kt} = exp_{kt-1} + I(P_{t-1} = k) \qquad exp_{k0} = 0 \qquad k = 1, 2 \tag{4}$$

The disutility and non-pecuniary benefits associated with working in occupation or sector k is thus allowed to depend on the individual's work experience, age and characteristics X. This dependence reflects both differences across individuals in tastes for working in occupation k as well the varying degree of access within each occupational sector to jobs with higher non-pecuniary benefits. The stochastic components u_{kt} in (3) represent unobserved individual differences in preferences and non-pecuniary returns in period t and may be serially correlated.

The period specific budget constraint is given by

$$C_t = N_t + W_{1t}\,\mathcal{I}(P_t = 1) + W_{2t}\,\mathcal{I}(P_t = 2) \tag{5}$$

where N_t represents non-labor income in period t, and W_{kt} are the wage earnings an individual receives in period t when choosing occupation k. Wage earnings in each employment sector depend on the total work experience in that occupation, a vector Z of ability measures and other individual characteristics affecting the earnings in occupation k, as well as a quadratic trend in calender time (with yr_t representing the calender year corresponding to period t), to capture a trend in average teacher salary levels over time:

$$W_{1t} = Z'\gamma_{11} + \gamma_{12}exp_{1t} + \gamma_{13}exp_{1t}^2 + \gamma_{14}exp_{1t}^3 + \gamma_{15}yr_t + \gamma_{16}yr_t^2 + \nu_{1t} \quad (6)$$

$$W_{2t} = Z'\gamma_{21} + \gamma_{22}exp_{2t} + \gamma_{23}exp_{2t}^2 + \gamma_{24}exp_{2t}^3 + \gamma_{25}exp_{1t} + \gamma_{26}yr_t + \gamma_{27}yr_t^2 + \nu_{2t} \quad (7)$$

The vector Z includes a constant, the individual's race, sex, types of degrees obtained, and SAT score. It further includes the state's average manufacturing wage earnings over the sample period, as an indicator of the average strength of regional demand for labor. Teacher salary schedules differ from school district to district but within a school district depend solely on educational background and teaching experience. The vector of individual characteristics Z was included in the teacher wage equation to allow for the possibility that teachers with desirable characteristics may be able to obtain jobs in better paying school districts. The average state's manufacturing wages were included in the teacher wage equation as a (crude) proxy for variations in the average teaching salary across states and school districts. Note that while nonteaching wages may depend on teaching experience, teacher salaries do not depend on exp_{2t} as actual teacher salary schedules do not depend on nonteaching work experience.

Earnings in each occupation are further stochastic, depending on a random component ν_{kt} with mean zero, representing stochastic fluctuations in earnings over time. At the time of each period's choice decision each individual knows both the current value of W_{kt} in each sector k, as well as the wage structure in (6) and (7), but does not know the future values of W_{kt}.

The correlation structure of the different error terms in the model is specified as follows:

$$u_{kt} = \mu_k + \omega_t \qquad k = 1,2 \quad (8)$$

$$\nu_{kt} = \kappa_k\mu_k + \xi_{kt} \qquad k = 1,2 \quad (9)$$

where μ_k denotes a person- and alternative-specific time-invariant disturbance and κ_k are wage-specific factor loadings. The component ω_t represents transitory unobserved changes in the disutility of working across individuals and over time and the ξ_{kt} are individual specific transitory wage shocks. The three transitory random components ξ_{1t}, ξ_{2t} and ω_t are assumed to be joint normally distributed with variance-covariance matrix Σ, to be independently distributed over time and individuals, and to be uncorrelated with μ_1 and μ_2.[5]

The distribution of the permanent unobserved heterogeneity components μ_1 and μ_2 is specified to be discrete joint multinomial, as in Heckman and Singer (1984). Accordingly, we distinguish between J different "types" of individuals, where each type j, $j = 1, \cdots, J$ is characterized by a different vector $\underline{\mu}_j = (\mu_{1j}, \mu_{2j})$. The population proportions of each type are given by $q_j = Pr(\mu_1 = \mu_{1j}, \mu_2 = \mu_{2j}), \;\; j = 1, \cdots, J$. In the estimation of the model I allow for 4 types of individuals who differ in the values of μ_1 and μ_2, each of which can take on two different values, representing a low or high preference for working in each occupation.[6] The population proportions are defined as

$$\begin{array}{llll} Pr(\mu_1 = 0, \mu_2 = 0) & = q_1 & Pr(\mu_1 = \rho_1, \mu_2 = 0) & = q_2 \\ Pr(\mu_1 = 0, \mu_2 = \rho_2) & = q_3 & Pr(\mu_1 = \rho_1, \mu_2 = \rho_2) & = 1 - q_1 - q_2 - q_3 \end{array}$$

Note that, by allowing μ_1 and μ_2 to be correlated, the u_{kt} and ν_{kt} will be correlated across time and across choice alternatives.

One aspect of each period's occupational choice decision that has not yet been discussed, concerns the definition and evolution over time of the choice set I_t. During the seventies and eighties the number of individuals seeking and applying for teaching jobs greatly exceeded the number of vacancies in teaching. Rather than assuming that each individual has the option to work as teacher in each period, I will therefore allow for the possibility that the choice set I_t may not include the teaching option in some periods. In addition, I will allow the probability of such an event to vary across individuals, by characterizing the realization of a teaching job offer in each period by an arrival rate which depends on a vector of individual characteristics Y_t, containing the individual's race, degree background, age and teaching experience. It is further assumed that all individuals currently teaching (with $P_{t-1} = 1$) will always have the option to remain in teaching. Given that during the sample period of our data few teachers were laid off, I do not believe this to be a very restrictive assumption. Accordingly, the arrival rate is specified as:

$$Pr(I_t = J_0 | \; P_{t-1} = 1) \;\; = \;\; 1$$

[5]Identification requires a normalization of one of the parameters. $var(\omega_t)$ was therefore fixed to 1.
[6]See van der Klaauw (1996) for a similar specification of the unobserved heterogeneity distribution.

$$
\begin{aligned}
Pr(I_t = J_0 | \ P_{t-1} = k) &= \Phi(Y_t'\omega) && k = 0, 2 \\
Pr(I_t = J_1 | \ P_{t-1} = k) &= 1 - Pr(I_t = J_0 | \ P_{t-1} = k) && k = 0, 1, 2
\end{aligned}
$$

where $J_0 = \{P_t \in (0, 1, 2)\}$, $J_1 = \{P_t \in (0, 2)\}$ and $\Phi(\cdot)$ is the standard normal distribution function. The stochastic probability of receiving a teaching job offer in each period is assumed to be known to the individual.

In deciding each period whether to work in the teaching, non-teaching or household sector, the individual compares the sum of current and expected discounted future utility associated with each option. Expected future utility in turn depends on the expected future growth in wage earnings and in non-pecuniary benefits, i.e. on the rate of return to total and occupation specific work experience, in each sector. The dependence of wage earnings, the disutility of working (or nonpecuniary benefits of working) as well as future teaching job offer arrival rates on the individual's employment history, therefore causes an individual to consider in the current decision its effects on future utility levels and choices through a change in work experience. If work experience accumulated in one occupational sector has a lower wage return in the other, we can expect occupational mobility to decline with the number of years in the labor market. A high return to work experience will also lead to an increase in the opportunity cost of leaving the labor force.

The Dynamic Programming Solution

Substituting the budget constraint into the utility function, utility equals

$$
\begin{aligned}
\bar{U}_t(k) &= \alpha N_t && \text{when } P_t = 0 \\
&= \alpha(N_t + W_{1t}) - b_{1t} && \text{when } P_t = 1 \\
&= \alpha(N_t + W_{2t}) - b_{2t} && \text{when } P_t = 2
\end{aligned}
$$

The individual's maximization problem in each period t, $t = t_0, ..., T$ can then be stated as follows:

$$
\max_{\{d_{ks} \in I_s, s \geq t\}} E\Big[\sum_{s=t}^{T} \delta^{s-t} \sum_{k=0}^{2} \bar{U}_s(k) \ \cdot d_{ks} \mid \Omega_t\Big] \tag{10}
$$

where Ω_t is the relevant information set or state space in period t, containing all factors known to the individual in that period which either affect current returns or the probability distribution of future returns, and where $d_{ks} = 1$ if alternative k is chosen in period s and $d_{ks} = 0$ if not and $\sum_{k=0}^{2} d_{ks} = 1$.

An alternative 'reduced form' representation of the maximization problem can be obtained by substituting both earnings equations into the utility function in (9). The utility levels associated with each choice alternative can then be defined as

$$\begin{aligned}
\bar{U}_t(k) &= \alpha N_t && \text{when } k = 0 \\
&= \alpha N_t + \mathcal{X}_t' \lambda_1 + (\alpha\kappa_1 - 1)\mu_1 + \epsilon_{1t} && \text{when } k = 1 \\
&= \alpha N_t + \mathcal{X}_t' \lambda_2 + (\alpha\kappa_2 - 1)\mu_2 + \epsilon_{2t} && \text{when } k = 2
\end{aligned}$$

where the reduced form coefficients λ_i are functions of the utility and the occupation specific earnings equations parameters, and the vector $\mathcal{X}_t$ consists of all explanatory variables in equations (3), (6) and (7) combined. The composite errors are defined as $\epsilon_{kt} = \alpha\xi_{kt} - \omega_t$ and, given the distributional assumptions made earlier, are joint normally distributed.

Given the utility specification above, the maximum expected present discounted value of lifetime utility at time t, $t < T$, equals

$$V_t(\Omega_t) = \max_{i \in I_t} [\ \bar{U}_t(i) + \delta E[V_{t+1}(\Omega_{t+1}) | d_{it} = 1, \Omega_t]\ ] \tag{11}$$

where the information set Ω_t at time t contains the current realizations of the error terms ϵ_{it}, the vector $\mathcal{X}_t$ (which includes measures of the decision history until t), the values of μ_1 and μ_2 and the choice set I_t. The expectation in (11) is taken with respect to all stochastic components in Ω_{t+1}, including the realization of next period's choice set (i.e., the arrival of teaching job offers), and the realization of the stochastic earnings and utility components, conditional on Ω_t and $d_{it} = 1$.

It is possible to derive all $V_t(\Omega_t)$ functions $t = 1, .., T$ and to solve for the optimal policy at each t by exploiting the finite horizon nature of the dynamic programming problem. In period T we have $V_T(\Omega_T) = \max_{j \in I_T} [\bar{U}_T(j)]$. Further, for each period $t < T$ and for each state vector $\mathcal{X}_t$ and error vector $\underline{\mu}$, we can define two values $\epsilon^*_{kt}(\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}),\ k = 1, 2$ such that

$$\delta E[V_{t+1}(\Omega_{t+1}) | d_{0t} = 1, \mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}] + \epsilon^*_{kt} = \mathcal{X}_t' \lambda_k + (\alpha\kappa_k - 1)\mu_k + \delta E[V_{t+1}(\Omega_{t+1}) | d_{kt} = 1, \mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}] \tag{12}$$

Then the optimal policy for each information vector $\mathcal{X}_t$ and heterogeneity vector $\underline{\mu}$ when the choice set $I_t = J_0$ equals:

$$\begin{cases}
d_{1t} = 1,\ d_{0t} = 0,\ d_{2t} = 0 & \text{iff } \epsilon_{1t} \geq \epsilon^*_{1t}(\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}) \text{ and } \epsilon_{1t} - \epsilon_{2t} \geq \epsilon^*_{2t}(\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}) - \epsilon^*_{1t}(\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}) \\
d_{2t} = 1,\ d_{0t} = 0,\ d_{1t} = 0 & \text{iff } \epsilon_{2t} \geq \epsilon^*_{2t}(\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}) \text{ and } \epsilon_{1t} - \epsilon_{2t} < \epsilon^*_{2t}(\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}) - \epsilon^*_{1t}(\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}) \\
d_{0t} = 1,\ d_{1t} = 0,\ d_{2t} = 0 & \text{iff otherwise}
\end{cases} \tag{13'}$$

and when $I_t = J_1$:

$$\begin{cases} d_{2t} = 1,\ d_{0t} = 0,\ d_{1t} = 0 & \text{iff } \epsilon_{2t} \geq \epsilon^*_{2t}(\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}) \\ d_{0t} = 1,\ d_{1t} = 0,\ d_{2t} = 0 & \text{iff } \epsilon_{2t} < \epsilon^*_{2t}(\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}) \end{cases} \tag{13''}$$

The two values ϵ^*_{1t} and ϵ^*_{2t} divide the 2 dimensional space up into three regions in each of which one (assuming no ties) of the alternatives is optimal. Given the specified normal distribution for the ϵ_{kt}'s, the decision rule in each period, the terminal value function V_T and the Bellman equation (11), it is possible to solve, by backward recursion, for all $V_t(\Omega_t)$ functions and all ϵ^*_{kt} values. Note that this involves the calculation of the expectations $E[V_{t+1}(\Omega_{t+1})|d_{it} = 1, \mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}]$ which each involves the evaluation of a bivariate normal intergral.

IV. Data and Estimation

To estimate the model I will use data from the National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972 (NLS-72). This study surveyed over 22,000 high school seniors in 1972 and includes 5 additional followup surveys until the last survey in 1986 at which point most members were in their early thirties. Given that teachers were oversampled in the survey design, the NLS-72 surveys combined provide a valuable source for the study of the early career decisions and mobility patterns of a cohort of teachers. The analysis will be restricted to the subsample of individuals who were part of the final 1986 followup survey and who became eligible or qualified to teach, i.e. who graduated from a teacher training program, during the 1976-1979 period. The latter group is defined to include all individuals who received at least one of the following (1) a Bachelors degree in education, (2) a Masters degree in education or (3) a teaching certificate. The first observation year for each individual in the sample is then the year in which the individual has become qualified to teach and has left full-time education. The final observation year for most individuals is the final survey year 1986, but for a small number instead will be the year after which information about their career history was missing or incomplete. For the resulting unbalanced panel of 817 individuals, the average number of years available is about 9 years per individual. Summary statistics of the variables used in the study are given in table 1. A definition of these variables is given in the data appendix.

For each individual the choice of each alternative i is observed for each individual k

for T_k periods. In the periods in which the individual works, also the wage earnings are observed. Let the decision set for individual k be $\underline{d}_t^k = [d_{0t}^k, d_{1t}^k, d_{2t}^k]$ and $\mathbf{d}^k = [\underline{d}_1^k, ..., \underline{d}_{T_k}^k]$ where d_{it}^k specifies the actual choice of alternative i for individual k at time t. Thus $\underline{d}_t^k$ is the vector defining the alternative chosen at time t by individual k and $\mathbf{d}^k$ is the vector describing the choice sequence over the individual's observed sample period. Further let $\mathbf{w_1}^k = [W_{11}^k, ..., W_{1T_k}^k]$ and $\mathbf{w_2}^k = [W_{21}^k, ..., W_{2T_k}^k]$ be the sequences of the teacher and non-teacher earnings observed for individual k, elements of which will be zero (missing) if in that period the individual did not work in that sector, or if earnings data are missing.

The objective is to estimate the structural parameters, θ, given the observed data on the individuals' choices and occupation specific earnings, where θ includes the utility function parameters (α and the β_{kj} parameters), the parameters in the two earnings equations, (γ_1 and γ_2), the teaching job offer probability parameters (ω), the discount factor (δ) and the error distribution parameters, ρ_1, ρ_2, $\{q_j,\ j = 1, \cdots, J\}$, κ_1, κ_2 and Σ.

Estimates of the structural parameters of the model can be obtained using relatively standard maximum likelihood methods.[7] Given the optimal policy in (13') and (13") it is possible to calculate for each pair of vectors ($\mathcal{X}_t$,$\underline{\mu}$) the probability that alternative i is chosen in period t as

$$Pr(d_{it} = 1|\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}) = \Upsilon \cdot Pr(d_{it} = 1|\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}, J_0) + (1 - \Upsilon) \cdot Pr(d_{it} = 1|\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}, J_1) \tag{14}$$

where $\Upsilon = Pr(I_t = J_0|\ P_{t-1} = k)$ is the arrival rate of teaching job offers defined earlier. The choice probabilities $Pr(d_{it} = 1|\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}, J_k)$ for each choice set J_k and alternative i are equal to the probability that the values of the two normally distributed error terms ϵ_{1t} and ϵ_{2t} satisfy the conditions described in (13') and (13"). The calculation of these choice probabilities therefore requires the evaluation of a bivariate normal integral. For example,

$$\begin{aligned} Pr(d_{1t} = 1|\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}, J_0) &= Pr[\epsilon_{1t} \geq \epsilon_{1t}^*(\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}),\ \epsilon_{1t} - \epsilon_{2t} \geq \epsilon_{2t}^*(\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu}) - \epsilon_{1t}^*(\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{\mu})] \\ &= \int_{\epsilon_{1t}^*}^{\infty} \int_{\infty}^{\epsilon_{1t}+\epsilon_{1t}^*-\epsilon_{2t}^*} \phi(\epsilon_{1t}, \epsilon_{2t}) d\epsilon_{2t} d\epsilon_{1t} \end{aligned} \tag{15}$$

where $\phi(\cdot, \cdot)$ represents the joint normal density function of ϵ_{1t} and ϵ_{2t}.

[7] For useful reviews of solution and estimation methods for similar dynamic programming models, see Eckstein and Wolpin (1989) and Rust (1991,1994,1996).

The likelihood function for our sample of K individuals is then defined as

$$\begin{aligned} L(\theta) &= \prod_{k=1}^{K} L_k = \prod_{k=1}^{K} \sum_{j=1}^{J} L_{kj} \cdot q_j = \prod_{k=1}^{K} \sum_{j=1}^{J} Pr(\mathbf{d}^k, \mathbf{w_1}^k, \mathbf{w_2}^k | \theta, \underline{\mu}_j) \cdot q_j \\ &= \prod_{k=1}^{K} \sum_{j=1}^{J} \Big(Pr[\underline{d}^k_{T_k}, W^k_{1T_k}, W^k_{2T_k} | \underline{d}^k_{T_k-1}, ..., \underline{d}^k_2, \underline{d}^k_1] \cdots \\ &\qquad\qquad \cdots \; Pr[\underline{d}^k_2, W^k_{12}, W^k_{22} | \underline{d}^k_1] \; Pr[\underline{d}^k_1, W^k_{11}, W^k_{21}] \Big) \cdot q_j \end{aligned}$$

where the conditioning on θ and $\underline{\mu}_j$ in the second equation has been omitted to simplify notation. The joint probability terms can further be written as the product of a conditional and marginal probability as follows:

$$Pr[\underline{d}^k_t, W^k_{1t}, W^k_{2t} | \cdot] = Pr[\underline{d}^k_t | \cdot , W^k_{1t}, W^k_{2t}] Pr(W^k_{1t}, W^k_{2t} | \cdot)$$

Each of the choice probabilities $Pr[\, \underline{d}^k_t \mid \cdot , W^k_{1t}, W^k_{2t}]$ is equal to the probability that the chosen alternative is the optimal one (given the employment history and the values of the current period's wage offers), which is equal to the probability, for each possible choice set I_t, that the draw of the $(\epsilon_{it})_{i \in I_t}$ vector falls in the region of the (ϵ_t) space where the chosen alternative is optimal. With normally distributed ϵ's, the likelihood function equals the product of weighted averages of multinomial probit probabilities such as the one in (15). Thus an algorithm for estimating the model amounts to calculating these probabilities for each individual and time period. As we saw earlier, the backward recursive solution to the dynamic programming problem will provide us with these probabilities.

The estimates of the structural parameters are shown in table 2.[8] Considering first the earnings equation estimates, the most interesting results are the much higher returns in the nonteaching sector for having a Masters degree, a science degree and a higher SAT score, as well as the relatively large gender wage gap in the nonteaching sector relative to the teaching sector. The estimate of α, the marginal utility of consumption, is large and positive significant, which implies that wage considerations are important in decisions to enter and remain in teaching. The positive coefficients of exp_{1t} and exp_{2t} indicate that the disutility of

[8]Because of usual problems in estimating the discount factor, it was fixed at 0.9. The finite horizon T corresponds to age 45. Note that the maximum observed age in our panel is 33, which, given a discount rate of 0.9, suggests that the results are unlikely to be very sensitive to an increase in T.

working in either sector increases with previous work experience, and the negative coefficient on age implies that utility associated with working in the teaching sector declines with age.

The arrival rate parameter estimates show that the probability of receiving a teaching job offer was greater for those with a Bachelors degree in education and for individuals who were somewhat older. Those with more teaching experience, on the other hand were less likely to receive a teaching job offer than those with less teaching experience, possibly reflecting the tradeoff between hiring better and more experienced teachers and hiring more cheaper inexperienced teachers. The error covariance estimates reveal a positive correlation between the two wage errors of about 0.6 and negative correlations between the disutility of working error u_t and the two wage errors. The estimates of the heterogeneity distribution parameters reveal significant permanent unobserved heterogeneity.

V. Self-Reported Expectations Data

Like many micro-based data sets, the NLS-72 includes several questions regarding the respondent's expectation or intention about future events or decisions. To illustrate the value and use of such data, we focus here only on one question in which individuals were asked about their career expectations. More specifically, the expectations data to be used in this study are the responses of the panel members to a question posed in the survey year 1979. In that year all individuals who participated in the NLS-72 were asked about their expected occupation and labor force status at the age of 30. The exact question asked was: "What kind of work will you be doing when you are 30 years old? (circle <u>one</u> that comes closest to what you expect to be doing)". Given an average age in 1979 of 25, the expectation therefore refers on average to 5 years in the future. In addition to the homemaker/not-working and 'school teacher' options, individuals could choose from a list of 15 additional occupations, including: clerical work, crafsman, farmer, manager, services, sales, and others. For the purposes of this study, the answer to this question asked in period t will be represented by the variable ES_t defined as

$$\begin{aligned} ES_t &= 0 \text{ if not-working} \\ ES_t &= 1 \text{ if school teacher} \\ ES_t &= 2 \text{ if a non-teaching occupation} \end{aligned}$$

Table 3 provides cross-tabulations of the responses with both the individual employment status in the survey year 1979 and with the actual labor force status at age 30. The fact that the diagonal elements in the bottom part of the table are generally much larger than the off-diagonal elements, clearly indicate that the expectations data contain information about actual future behavior.[9] The top part of the table also indicates that the expectations data provide information beyond that contained in the individual's current labor force status.

I will interpret the answer to the posed question on the expected occupation and labor force status at the age of 30, to represent the choice alternative which at the current date has the greatest probability of maximizing the individual's utility at age 30, that is, the alternative with the greatest probability of being chosen at age 30 (i.e. the mode). With this interpretation, it is clear that these expectations or intentions data contain information about individual choice behavior. Future behavior will depend in part on conditions known to the individual at the time of the survey and in part on events that have not yet occurred and are not perfectly foreseeable. In our model the actual stochastic process generating these subsequent events (the random preference shock u_t, the arrival of teaching job offers, and future wage shocks ν_{1t} and ν_{2t}) has been specified up to a vector of unknown parameters. Given these specifications and the associated optimal decision rules (13') and (13"), each future period's choice probabilities can be calculated for each possible work history in that future period. Consequently, it is possible to calculate the age 30 choice probabilities conditional on the current period's work history. These future choice probabilities will be a function of the same parameters that determine the current choice probabilities and work decisions.

More formally, given the specified structure of the individual's maximization problem and given values of the parameters, the expected probability of choosing a particular alternative at age 30 corresponds to the probability that the error terms ϵ_1 and ϵ_2 in the corresponding period take values such that inequalities (13') or (13") hold, where this probability is calculated conditional on the current information set. This structure therefore allows us to calculate these future choice probabilities for each individual (and each type). Under the assumption that the behavioral model is correct (and ignoring sampling variation that causes

[9] Recall that even in absence of aggregate shocks, differences between the mean expected and actual proportions choosing each state do not imply that the expectations are not rational (see Manski, 1990).

the estimated parameters to differ from the true parameters), the alternative with the largest choice probability, i.e. the most likely choice at age 30 at the current date, should then equal each individual's self-reported most likely choice at age 30.

Let us define the calculated or implied expected choice probabilities at age 30, given current information, as P_0^*, P_1^* and P_2^* where $P_j^* = Pr(d_{jt+m} = 1|\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{d}_t, \underline{\mu}_l)$ for $j = 0, 1, 2$, where $t+m$ represents the year in which the individual is 30 years old. Then, with ES_t representing the expected (or most likely) choice in period $t+m$ reported in year t, as defined above, we have (for each type $\underline{\mu}_l$)

$$\begin{aligned} Pr(ES_t = i|\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{d}_t, \underline{\mu}_l) = Pr(ES_t = i|P_0^*, P_1^*, P_2^*) &= 1 \text{ iff } i = argmax \ \{P_j^*\} \\ &= 0 \text{ otherwise} \end{aligned} \tag{16}$$

for all $i = 0, 1, 2$, where the $Pr(d_{jt+m} = 1|\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{d}_t, \underline{\mu}_l)$, $j = 0, 1, 2$ can be calculated as described earlier.[10]

Incorporation of these probabilities in the likelihood function will make the likelihood function discontinuous and non-differentiable.[11] This problem is resolved once we allow for the possibility that individuals make errors in reporting their expectations[12]. It is likely that respondents may not take sufficient time to give a precise answer when responding to survey questions about expectations, but use more precise forecasts when making (or reporting) actual career choices. While individuals are assumed to calculate future choice probabilities (the $Pr(d_{jt+m} = 1|\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{d}_t, \underline{\mu}_l)$) correctly, instead of reporting the maximum of these probabilities, we assume that they report each alternative with probability

$$Pr(ES_t = i|\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{d}_t, \underline{\mu}_l) = \frac{e^{Pr(d_{it+m}=1|\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{d}_t, \underline{\mu}_l)/r}}{\sum_{j=0}^{2} e^{Pr(d_{jt+m}=1|\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{d}_t, \underline{\mu}_l)/r}} = \frac{e^{P_i^*/r}}{\sum_{j=0}^{2} e^{P_j^*/r}} \qquad i = 0, 1, 2 \tag{17}$$

Note that as $r \rightarrow 0$ these probabilities will approximate those in (16), that is if $r = 0$, individuals would in fact report the alternative with the greatest expected future probability.[13] Thus r provides a measure of the degree of misreporting.

[10] Note that $Pr(d_{jt+m} = 1|\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{d}_t, \underline{\mu}_l) = \sum_{\mathcal{X}_{t+m}} Pr(d_{jt+m} = 1|\mathcal{X}_{t+m}, \underline{d}_t, \underline{\mu}_l) \cdot Pr(\mathcal{X}_{t+m}|\mathcal{X}_t, \underline{d}_t, \underline{\mu}_l)$.

[11] A similar problem arises in the case of the maximum score estimator of Manski (1975,1985). There the goal is to choose parameter values which maximize the number of correct choice predictions, where a prediction is either correct or incorrect. The likelihood function becomes a stepfunction, complicating the maximization routine as well the derivation of the asymptotic properties of the estimator.

[12] Bernheim (1988, 1990) finds indirect evidence of the existence of reporting errors in expectations. In the job search literature, subjective reservation wages are similarly assumed to be measured with error.

[13] Note that when r becomes small, our allowance for reporting errors has the same effect, or plays the same role as the smoothing method proposed by Horowitz (1992) to overcome the discontinuous and non-differentiable likelihood problem for the maximum score estimator.

Note that in comparison to (16), the degree by which the choice probabilities in (17) will differ from 1 and 0 will depend on how similar to each other the future choice probabilities are. If one alternative clearly has the greatest future probability of being chosen, the probability that the individual will report that alternative will be close to 1. On the other hand, when two choices are almost equally likely to be chosen in future period $t+m$ (in which case it may be more difficult for the individual to determine the one with the maximum probability), the reported expected future state could be either with equal probability and the probability of a reporting error will be greatest.

The expectations data can now be incorporated into the likelihood function to obtain

$$L(\theta) = \prod_{k=1}^{K} \sum_{j=1}^{J} Pr(\mathbf{d}^k, \mathbf{w_1}^k, \mathbf{w_2}^k, ES_t^k | \theta, \underline{\mu}_j) \cdot q_j \tag{18}$$

where

$Pr(\mathbf{d}^k, \mathbf{w_1}^k, \mathbf{w_2}^k, \underline{d}_s^{*k}(m)|\cdot) =$

$$Pr[\underline{d}_{T_k}^k, W_{1T_k}^k, W_{2T_k}^k | \underline{d}_{T_k-1}^k, ..., \underline{d}_2^k, \underline{d}_1^k] \cdots\cdots Pr[\underline{d}_{s+1}^k, W_{1s+1}^k, W_{2s+1}^k | \underline{d}_s^k, ..., \underline{d}_2^k, \underline{d}_1^k]$$
$$Pr[ES_s^k | \underline{d}_s^k, \underline{d}_{s-1}^k, ..., \underline{d}_2^k, \underline{d}_1^k] \; Pr[\underline{d}_s^k, W_{1s}^k, W_{2s}^k | \underline{d}_{s-1}^k, ..., \underline{d}_2^k, \underline{d}_1^k]$$
$$Pr[\underline{d}_{s-1}^k, W_{1s-1}^k, W_{2s-1}^k | \underline{d}_{s-2}^k, ..., \underline{d}_2^k, \underline{d}_1^k] \cdots\cdots Pr[\underline{d}_2^k, W_{12}^k, W_{22}^k | \underline{d}_1^k] \; Pr[\underline{d}_1^k, W_{11}^k, W_{21}^k]$$

and s equals the year in which the expectation about year $s+m$ was reported (where for notational convenience we have omitted a superscript k on s and m).

When incorporating the expectations data into the likelihood function we implicitly assume that the expectations data are consistent with observed individual behavior and with the specified behavioral model. This may in fact not be the case. It may be the case that respondents did not understand the question or provided random responses, thereby invalidating the expectations data. Use of these data in that case could lead to incorrect estimates. One way to test for the validity of the reported expectations is to compare the reported expectations with actual realizations. In our case we could simply compare the proportions of individuals expecting to work as teacher, work as non-teacher or expecting not to work at age 30 with actual choices at age 30. Table 3 shows that the reported expectations do in fact correspond reasonably well to the actual choices at age 30. The off-diagonal counts can then be explained by the fact that the sample size is relatively small, or by reporting errors or by the fact that the predicted choices are based on estimated parameters. However, as pointed out by Manski (1990), such validity or rationality tests are invalid in the case of binary intentions data, such as those considered here.[14]

As a second validation test, we can test whether the subjective responses are consistent with the optimal future behavior as implied by the behavioral model and the objective data on actual choices. Using the estimated parameters, we can determine the alternative with the maximum expected future choice probability as explained earlier, for each of the J types (unobserved heterogeneity values). Further, given our estimates we can assign type probabilities to each individual. Using Bayes'rule, the probability that an individual k is type j is $q_j \cdot L_{kj}/L_k$. We can then compare each individual's selfreported expected future choice with that predicted by the model for the individual's most likely type. A good fit would validate the subjective expectations question, under the assumption that our model is correct. Small differences between the reported and predicted choices can be explained by the fact that the prediction was based on an (imprecise) estimate of the individual's type and on estimated parameters, and by the presence of reporting errors.

Table 4 gives a cross-tabulation of the reported responses with the predicted choices implied by the model. There is a fairly close correspondence between the two. A chi-square test rejects their equality at the 95% but not at the 99% level[15]. The second part of the table shows that the predictions implied by the model are always closer to actual behavior at age 30 than the self-reported expectations, which may be an indication of the existence of reporting errors, but should also not be very surprising given that the model was estimated using the actual choice data (including the choices at age 30). Overall, the table shows that the model is able to explain both actual future choices and reported intentions data quite well.

So far, we have assumed that individuals were asked to choose from among the three different choice alternatives considered in our model (not-working, teaching, non-teaching occupation). However, in the survey individuals were provided a larger choice set which

[14]A simple example will make this clear: if all individuals forecast their future probabilities of choosing the teaching, non-teaching and not-working states to be 0.33, 0,33 and 0.34, then all would report to expect not to work at age 30 (the mode), even though in fact only approximately 34% will turn out doing so.

[15]The χ^2 statistic is 7.9, while $\chi^2(2, 0.05) = 5.99$ and $\chi^2(2, 0.01) = 9.21$.

included several different non-teaching professions. It is easy to show that answers may differ when a larger choice set is offered instead of the three alternatives considered in our model. In our case it may not be unreasonable to assume, however, that in answering the question the individuals in our sample (who are all qualified teachers) adopted a two-stage approach consistent with the model: one where in the first stage the probabilities of working as teacher, nonteacher and not working are compared and the alternative with the greatest probability is identified. Then, in the second stage, if the individual chose the nonteaching sector (i.e., the probability of working in the nonteaching sector at age 30 is the greatest), the individual selects the most likely alternative from amongst the 15 different nonteaching occupations.

It is important to stress that this assumption about the way in which an individual provides an answer to a particular question is much less of an ad-hoc assumption than it may initially appear. When using the actual choice data (where individuals report their current occupation by choosing from the same list of occupations) to estimate the model we have similarly implicitly assumed that individuals choose from among the three sectors in the two-stage manner described, and we similary ignore the second-stage choice decision and the data on the actual nonteaching occupation chosen.[16] For example, if someone reports to be employed as manager in a particular year, we similary interpret this in the context of our model as though the individual had chosen the nonteaching sector. Thus both actual choice data and expectations data are treated entirely symmetrically.

Incorporating the expectations data with reporting errors, the likelihood function is exactly that in (18). Estimates are presented in table 5. In general, they are very similar to those in table 2, providing additional evidence that the expectations data are consistent with the observed choice data and with the behavioral model. The reporting error variance is 0.33 and is significantly different from zero. In general, the estimates have smaller standard errors than those in table 2 (on average they are 5% smaller), reflecting the efficiency gains obtained from combining subjective expectations data with objective data on actual choice decisions.

[16] It is interesting to note that while these type of assumptions about the decision process are commonly made in order to match data with a proposed theoretical model, they are almost never explicitly stated.

VI. Conclusion

Most individual or household level surveys elicit respondents' intentions or expectations about future events or decisions. Recently, there has been an increased interest in the analysis and collection of such information by economists. Finding that expectations data contain valuable information, there is growing awareness that such data have great promise in making a substantial contribution to our understanding of intertemporal decision-making under uncertainty. To achieve this, in my view requires one to explicitly model the expectations formation process jointly with current choice behavior and its dependence on expectations.

This paper represents a first exploration in this direction, by presenting a methodology for the incorporation of subjective expectations or intentions data in the estimation of stochastic dynamic choice models. While applied to a study of teacher career decisions, it is general to other life cycle decisions. Using information about self-reported career expectations, it was shown that such data could be readily incorporated in the estimation of the model, under similar assumptions required to use objective choice data. While the efficiency gain from incorporating data from a single expectations question in our application was rather modest, one can expect this gain to become more substantial as the number of incorporated expectations increases.[17] The new Health and Retirement Study includes a large number of carefully designed questions to elicit respondents' expectations and intentions. Given that the HRS is still a relatively short panel with only a few waves, the answers to these questions could provide a very valuable source of additional data in estimating dynamic behavioral models with HRS data.

It is an interesting topic for future research to study how and whether expectations data could be used to relax some of the assumptions inherent in most structural dynamic models of decision behavior under uncertainty, about the way in which expectations are formed.

[17] An issue not explicitly addressed in this paper concerns the general quality of subjective expectations data. While the interpretation of the answers to the expectation question used here seems logical, it is clear that in general one could benefit greatly from more carefully worded and more detailed questions about future expectations. For example, to avoid any ambiguity about whether a question or response relates to a mean, median, or mode of future income, it would be preferable to elicit information about each individual's complete subjective probability distribution of future income (as done in the SEE, for example). It also would be useful if the question spelled out in more detail what an expected probability or the expectation should be conditioned on. For example, when asking someone whether or not they expect to work at age 65 (or the probability of such an event), it may not be obvious to the interviewee whether the question is conditional or unconditional on surviving to age 65, especially for individuals with an illness.

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Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation (Frequency)	Number of Observations
	Sample of 817 individuals		
Years in Sample	9.093	1.514	817
Age in 1st period	22.717	1.165	817
exp_{11}	0.039	0.272	817
exp_{21}	0.078	0.375	817
RACE	0.075	(61)	817
FEMALE	0.736	(602)	817
B.Ed.	0.811	(662)	817
M.Ed.	0.052	(43)	817
M.A.	0.028	(23)	817
SCIENCE	0.021	(17)	817
SAT	926.7	184.0	817
MANUFWG	17.740	2.583	817
	Sample of 7428 person-year observations		
age_t	26.754	2.793	7428
exp_{1t}	2.019	2.360	7428
exp_{2t}	1.469	2.080	7428
W_{1t}	15.806	4.744	2207
W_{2t}	16.883	7.465	1738
$P_t = 1$	0.450	(3342)	7428
$P_t = 2$	0.363	(2693)	7428

Teacher earnings, W_{1t}, are calculated for the sample of teachers with non-missing wage information. Earnings in the nonteaching sector, W_{2t}, are calculated for workers with nonmissing earnings information in the non-teaching sector only. Both earnings are in thousands of 1982 dollars. All entries are weighted using the sample weights. See the data appendix for definitions of other acronyms.

Table 2: Estimates of Life Cycle Model

	Variable	Estimate	SDE
Utility Function Parameters			
α	C_t	0.426*	0.070
β_{10}	constant	-0.297	0.548
β_{111}	RACE	-0.275	0.230
β_{112}	B.Ed.	-0.372*	0.148
β_{113}	M.Ed.	0.981*	0.445
β_{114}	M.A.	0.996*	0.378
β_{115}	SCIENCE	-0.878	0.649
β_{116}	FEMALE	0.257	0.153
β_{12}	age_t	0.164*	0.031
β_{13}	exp_{1t}	0.370*	0.058
β_{20}	constant	3.922*	0.839
β_{211}	RACE	-0.258	0.188
β_{212}	B.Ed.	-0.238*	0.122
β_{213}	M.Ed.	0.456	0.351
β_{214}	M.A.	0.376	0.316
β_{215}	SCIENCE	0.411	0.467
β_{216}	FEMALE	-0.195	0.135
β_{22}	age_t	0.033	0.026
β_{23}	exp_{2t}	0.089	0.055
Arrival Rate Teaching Jobs			
ω_1	constant	-0.985	1.041
ω_2	exp_{1t}	-0.095*	0.020
ω_3	yr_t	-0.246*	0.053
ω_4	age_t	0.083	0.050
ω_5	RACE	0.102	0.108
ω_6	B.Ed.	0.170*	0.089
ω_7	M.Ed.	-0.150	0.276
ω_8	M.A.	-0.471	0.331
ω_9	FEMALE	0.083	0.085
Error Covariance Matrix			
$cov(\omega_t, \xi_{1t})$		-3.346*	0.365
$var(\xi_{1t})$		25.786*	2.195
$cov(\omega_t, \xi_{2t})$		-6.664*	0.451
$cov(\xi_{1t}, \xi_{2t})$		19.691*	2.340
$var(\xi_{2t})$		53.513*	3.844

Teacher Earnings Equation			
γ_{111}	constant	8.561*	0.862
γ_{112}	RACE	0.711*	0.272
γ_{113}	B.Ed.	1.260*	0.236
γ_{114}	M.Ed.	2.400*	0.554
γ_{115}	M.A.	0.469	1.946
γ_{116}	SCIENCE	3.295*	0.768
γ_{117}	SAT	-1.317*	0.383
γ_{118}	FEMALE	-1.009*	0.199
γ_{12}	exp_{1t}	0.612*	0.240
γ_{13}	exp_{1t}^2	0.280	0.572
γ_{14}	exp_{1t}^3	-0.690	0.411
γ_{15}	yr_t	-1.175*	0.158
γ_{16}	yr_t^2	1.097*	0.126
γ_{17}	MANUFWG	1.562*	0.270
Non-teacher Earnings Equation			
γ_{211}	constant	2.173	1.234
γ_{212}	RACE	0.842	0.554
γ_{213}	B.Ed.	0.244	0.360
γ_{214}	M.Ed.	3.810*	0.610
γ_{215}	M.A.	4.763*	0.535
γ_{216}	SCIENCE	3.227*	0.935
γ_{217}	SAT	2.787*	0.531
γ_{218}	FEMALE	-4.651*	0.267
γ_{22}	exp_{2t}	1.516*	0.229
γ_{23}	exp_{2t}^2	-0.706*	0.355
γ_{24}	exp_{2t}^3	0.343*	0.142
γ_{25}	exp_{1t}	-0.101	0.076
γ_{26}	yr_t	-1.623*	0.191
γ_{27}	yr_t^2	1.297*	0.157
γ_{28}	MANUFWG	2.841*	0.520
Heterogeneity Distribution			
ρ_1		2.273*	0.245
ρ_2		0.127	0.168
κ_1		2.314*	0.324
κ_2		66.059*	88.016
q_2		0.407*	0.021
q_3		0.176*	0.019
q_4		0.242*	0.022
δ	discount factor	0.90	
	Log Likelihood L	-16761.2	

*: significant at 5 percent level. For a definition of the acronyms, see the data appendix.

Table 3: Current, expected and actual future occupation at age 30

	Expected status at age 30			
	Homemaker /Not-working	School Teacher	Other Specified Occupation	Total
Status in 1979				
Not-working	18	31	33	82
	(.22,.26)	(.38,.09)	(.40,.10)	(0.11)
Teaching job	32	281	100	413
	(.08,.46)	(.68,.77)	(.24,.29)	(0.53)
Non-teaching job	20	52	208	280
	(.07,.29)	(.19,.14)	(.74,.61)	(0.36)
Status at age 30				
Not-working	37	71	64	172
	(.22,.53)	(.41,.20)	(.37,.19)	(0.22)
Teaching job	12	209	78	299
	(.04,.17)	(.70,.57)	(.26,.23)	(0.39)
Non-teaching job	21	84	199	304
	(.07,.30)	(.28,.23)	(.65,.58)	(0.39)
Total	70	364	341	775
	(0.09)	(0.47)	(0.44)	

(Row and column percentages are given in parentheses). Each individual was asked the following question in October 1979:

"What kind of work will you be doing when you are 30 years old? (circle one that comes closest to what you expect to be doing)".

In addition to the homemaker/not-working and school teacher option a list of 15 additional occupations was given, including: clerical work, craftsman, farmer, manager, services, sales, etc.

Table 4: Predicted, expected and actual future occupation at age 30

	Predicted Status at age 30 (model) Homemaker /Not-working	School Teacher	Other Specified Occupation	Total
Expected Status at age 30				
Not-working	25 (.36,.27)	21 (.30,.06)	24 (.34,.07)	70 (0.09)
Teaching job	43 (.12,.46)	235 (.65,.70)	86 (.24,.25)	364 (0.47)
Non-teaching job	25 (.07,.27)	81 (.24,.24)	235 (.69,.68)	341 (0.44)
Actual status at age 30				
Not-working	71 (.41,.76)	61 (.35,.18)	40 (.23,.12)	172 (0.22)
Teaching job	4 (.01,.04)	267 (.89,.79)	28 (.09,.08)	299 (0.39)
Non-teaching job	18 (.06,.19)	9 (.03,.03)	277 (.91,.83)	304 (0.39)
Total	93 (0.12)	337 (0.43)	345 (0.45)	775

(Row and column percentages are given in parentheses).

Table 5: Estimates of Life Cycle Model using Expectations Data

	Variable	Estimate	SDE
	Utility Function Parameters		
α	C_t	0.435*	0.065
β_{10}	constant	0.546	0.573
β_{111}	RACE	-0.474*	0.231
β_{112}	B.Ed.	-0.441*	0.155
β_{113}	M.Ed.	0.929*	0.397
β_{114}	M.A.	0.623*	0.288
β_{115}	SCIENCE	-1.043	0.657
β_{116}	FEMALE	0.415*	0.143
β_{12}	age_t	0.121*	0.028
β_{13}	exp_{1t}	0.390*	0.060
β_{20}	constant	3.198*	0.875
β_{211}	RACE	-0.208	0.174
β_{212}	B.Ed.	-0.220	0.121
β_{213}	M.Ed.	0.396	0.370
β_{214}	M.A.	0.156	0.406
β_{215}	SCIENCE	0.371	0.526
β_{216}	FEMALE	-0.127	0.116
β_{22}	age_t	-0.020	0.023
β_{23}	exp_{2t}	0.105	0.059
	Arrival Rate Teaching Jobs		
ω_1	constant	-0.783	0.869
ω_2	exp_{1t}	-0.085*	0.018
ω_3	yr_t	-0.235*	0.045
ω_4	age_t	0.071	0.041
ω_5	RACE	0.106	0.092
ω_6	B.Ed.	0.199*	0.080
ω_7	M.Ed.	-0.109	0.260
ω_8	M.A.	-0.288	0.521
ω_9	FEMALE	0.033	0.083
	Error Covariance Matrix		
$cov(\omega_t, \xi_{1t})$		-4.142*	0.287
$var(\xi_{1t})$		26.054*	1.949
$cov(\omega_t, \xi_{2t})$		-6.974*	0.311
$cov(\xi_{1t}, \xi_{2t})$		21.521*	2.156
$var(\xi_{2t})$		54.725*	3.647
r	Reporting error variance	0.328*	0.024

Teacher Earnings Equation			
γ_{111}	constant	9.399*	0.860
γ_{112}	RACE	0.846*	0.268
γ_{113}	B.Ed.	1.291*	0.232
γ_{114}	M.Ed.	2.274*	0.546
γ_{115}	M.A.	-0.411	1.446
γ_{116}	SCIENCE	3.181*	0.844
γ_{117}	SAT	-1.062*	0.377
γ_{118}	FEMALE	-0.984*	0.197
γ_{12}	exp_{1t}	0.591*	0.238
γ_{13}	exp_{1t}^2	0.517	0.578
γ_{14}	exp_{1t}^3	-0.960*	0.424
γ_{15}	yr_t	-1.333*	0.162
γ_{16}	yr_t^2	1.245*	0.130
γ_{17}	MANUFWG	1.429*	0.263
Non-teacher Earnings Equation			
γ_{211}	constant	2.110	1.167
γ_{212}	RACE	0.719	0.545
γ_{213}	B.Ed.	0.152	0.356
γ_{214}	M.Ed.	4.047*	0.647
γ_{215}	M.A.	4.698*	0.530
γ_{216}	SCIENCE	3.291*	0.985
γ_{217}	SAT	2.380*	0.484
γ_{218}	FEMALE	-4.659*	0.257
γ_{22}	exp_{2t}	1.655*	0.228
γ_{23}	exp_{2t}^2	-1.036*	0.364
γ_{24}	exp_{2t}^3	0.494*	0.147
γ_{25}	exp_{1t}	-0.234*	0.074
γ_{26}	yr_t	-1.506*	0.192
γ_{27}	yr_t^2	1.305*	0.159
γ_{28}	MANUFWG	3.100*	0.494
Heterogeneity Distribution			
ρ_1		2.412*	0.217
ρ_2		0.285*	0.143
κ_1		1.911*	0.214
κ_2		26.933*	13.726
q_2		0.381*	0.022
q_3		0.171*	0.019
q_4		0.277*	0.023
δ	discount factor	0.90	
	Log Likelihood L	-17240.8	

*: significant at 5 percent level.

Data Appendix

The National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972 (NLS-72), surveyed over 22,000 high school seniors in 1972 and has surveyed this group until 1986 when most members were in their early thirties. After the first base year questionnaire in 1972, five follow-up surveys were held, in 1973, 1974, 1976, 1979 and 1986. In addition, the final survey included a special teacher supplement, which focused on the 1517 individuals in the sample who, during the 1972-1986 period, had taught or had become qualified to teach. The NLS-72 surveys combined provide a valuable source for the study of the early career decisions and mobility patterns of a cohort of high school and college graduates. It also contains detailed information on wages and educational background, including measures of academic ability and course subjects. Most important for our study, the NLS-72 population includes a relatively large national sample of school teachers, thereby representing one of the most comprehensive sources of information on the labor market experiences of school teachers.

I will restict my analysis to the subsample of individuals who were part of the fifth followup survey and who became eligible or qualified to teach, i.e. who graduated from a teacher training program, during the 1976-1979 period. I define the latter group to be all individuals who received at least one of the following (1) a Bachelors degree in education, (2) a Masters degree in education or (3) a teaching certificate. The first observation year for each individual in the sample is then the year in which the individual has become qualified to teach and has left full-time education. The final observation year for most individuals is the final survey year 1986, but for a small number instead will be the year after which information about their career history was missing or incomplete. For the resulting unbalanced panel of 817 individuals, the average number of years available is about 9 years per individual (see Table 1).

An individual is defined to teach in a particular year ($P_t = 1$) if he or she was teaching in October of that year, and did not also report to be in full-time education that month.[18] Similarly a person is defined to be employed in a non-teaching job ($P_t = 2$) in a year if the person was employed in such a job in October of that year and not enrolled full-time in college. Those not-working in a particular year includes all individuals working at home, enrolled in full-time education or unemployed (although in our sample very few individuals reported being unemployed). No distinction is made between full-time and part-time work. Yearly earnings in each occupation are defined as 2000 times the real (in 1982 dollars) hourly wage rate. The latter was obtained by dividing the reported weekly, monthly or yearly earnings in the job occupied in October of that year, by the reported number of hours worked in that time interval.

In addition to the information on their complete work and earnings history from the date of graduation until 1986, the analysis includes information about their educational attainment at the time of graduation, as well as a number of other individual characteristics, such as their race, gender, age and state of residence. RACE is defined as 0 if the person is white and 1 if otherwise. FEMALE equals 1 if the individual is a female. B.Ed. and M.Ed. equal 1 if the individual has a Bachelors or Masters degree in education and equal 0 if not. M.A. equals 1 if the individual has a Masters degree in another subject. If the individual received a Bachelors degree in one of the sciences, SCIENCE=1, and 0 if not. SAT represents the individual's total SAT scores, and MANUFWG is the mean state manufacturing wage earnings, in thousands of 1982 dollars, averaged over the 1975-1985 period. AGE, exp_{1t} and exp_{2t} represent the individual's age in the first period, the individual's total teaching experience and total years of work experience in the non-teaching sector. NPER measures the number of observation periods for each individual.

The means and standard deviations of the variables are shown in table 1. Because of

[18] While information is available about the individual's work status in all other months as well, this information was found to be somewhat less reliable than that for the status in October. The first 4 follow-up surveys were all conducted in October or shortly thereafter and individuals were asked about their status in that month specifically, reducing potential recall errors.

oversampling of various subgroups (including oversampling of school teachers) the NLS-72 sample does not constitute a nationally representative random sample of the population of all school teachers in this cohort. Therefore sample weights were applied in all estimations.

To obtain an idea of the extent of occupational mobility in the sample, table A1 shows the frequency counts of various career patterns. The table shows that only 244 individuals (30%) remained in the same labor force state throughout the sample period. 126 (15%) changed labor force status once (i.e. they had exactly two spells), and 185 (23%) had three spells. The remaining 262 individuals (32%) experienced more than 3 different spells.

Table A1: Frequencies of observed occupational choice sequences

LF Status Sequence	Number of Observations	LF Status Sequence	Number of Observations	LF Status Sequence	Number of Observations
O	6	T	146	N	92
OT	12	TO	50	NT	30
ON	18	TN	64	NO	54
OTO	5	TOT	49	NOT	5
OTN	1	TON	30	NON	43
ONO	7	TNO	8	NTO	16
ONT	4	TNT	17	NTN	0

Each letter represents a spell occurring over one or more years. O stands for out of labor force, T for teaching and N for employment in the non-teaching sector. Observed sequences end either at the end of the sample period (1986) or in the first year in which the occupation status is unknown. The first spell starts in the first year after graduation from a teacher training program in which the individual is no longer engaged in full-time study.