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Education, lifetime labor supply, and longevity improvements*

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Abstract

This paper presents an analysis of the differential role of mortality for the optimal schooling and retirement age when the accumulation of human capital follows the so-called “Ben-Porath mechanism”. We set up a life-cycle model of consumption and labor supply at the extensive margin that allows for endogenous human capital formation based on [Card \(2001\)](#). This paper makes two important contributions. First, we provide the conditions under which a decrease in mortality leads to a longer education period and an earlier retirement age. Second, those conditions are decomposed into a Ben-Porath mechanism and a lifetime-human wealth effect vs. the years-to-consume effect. Finally, using

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Swedish data for cohorts born between 1865 and 2000, we show that our model can match the empirical evidence.

JEL-classification: J10 J24 J26.

1 Introduction

In many countries, development has been accompanied with significant increases in life expectancy and reductions in labor supply. Since the nineteenth century life expectancy has increased by 40 years at a rate of 3 months per year (Oeppen and Vaupel (2002) and Lee (2003)), while labor supply has decreased at two extensive margins: later entrance in the labor market and earlier retirement. Prior to industrialization, male literacy rates started to increase in the most advanced countries (Cippola (1969), Cervellati and Sunde (2005), and Boucekkine et al. (2007)). This process continued with an expansion of primary education enrollment rates at the end of the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth century (Benavot and Riddle (1988)). By 1950, the average length of schooling for males was around six years in the most advanced countries and has increased up to twelve years in 2010 (Barro and Lee (2013)). Simultaneously, labor force participation rates for old workers started to fall until recently, even before the introduction of pension systems (Costa (1998) and Schieber and Shoven (1999)). In 1970, the average retirement age was 68 in OECD countries and has declined up to age 63 in 2010 (see OECD (2009)).

Existing theoretical models that analyze the effect of mortality on education and retirement, however, find results that contradict the historical empirical evidence. In particular, these models assume a causal positive relation between human capital investments, retirement age, and life expectancy (see (Boucekkine et al., 2002), Echevarria (2004), Echevarria and Iza (2006), Ferreira and Pessoa (2007), and Zhang and Zhang (2009), among others). The positive link between human capital investment and life expectancy, through the well-known Ben-Porath (1967)'s mechanism, is undisputed (de la Croix and Licandro (1999), Kalemli-Ozcan et al. (2000), Zhang et. al. (2001), Zhang et. al. (2003), Cervellati and Sunde (2005), Soares (2005), Zhang and Zhang (2005), Jayachandran and Lleras-Muney (2009), and Oster et al. (2013)), except for Hazan and Zoabi (2006). However, studies about the effect of mortality improvements on the decline in retirement age are scarce and offer several complementary explanations. For instance, Kalemli-Ozcan and Weil (2010) suggest that the decline in retirement age might be explained by reductions

in the risk of dying before retirement, named “uncertainty effect”. More recently, [Bloom et al. \(2014\)](#) point out that positive income effects along the twentieth century might have offset the gains in healthy life after retirement, or “compression of morbidity” effect (see [Bloom et al. \(2007\)](#)).

In the last two decades, improvements in the understanding of the Ben-Porath mechanism and the link between mortality and retirement have come from two different sources. On the one hand, empirical investigations of the mortality decline over the last two centuries show that mortality does not improve uniformly across age groups ([Lee \(1994\)](#), [Wilmoth and Horiuchi \(1999\)](#), and [Cutler et al. \(2006\)](#)). Early stages of the mortality transition are mainly characterized by reductions of mortality in infants and children, while recent mortality declines occur at older ages. Motivated by this demographic feature, several authors have recently shown that the link between life expectancy and labor supply depends on the age pattern of mortality improvements. In particular, mortality declines during adulthood may cause early retirement, while reductions in mortality at older ages delay retirement ([d’Albis et al. \(2012\)](#) and [Strulik and Werner \(2012\)](#)). Also, it was shown that improvements in survival during prime-working ages increase human capital investment ([Cervellati and Sunde \(2013\)](#)). On the other, recent literature on the returns to education show that, despite the rising returns to high education in the US, on average individuals underinvest in human capital due to high psychic costs of school, risk and uncertainty, or unobserved differences in skills ([Carneiro et al. \(2003\)](#), [Cunha et al. \(2005\)](#), and [Heckman et al. \(2006\)](#)). In other words, individuals do not choose the optimal number of years of education that maximize their lifetime earnings (see [Becker \(1967\)](#) and [Willis \(1986\)](#)). To cope with this problem, [Card \(2001\)](#) proposes a model in which individuals have different aptitudes or tastes for schooling relative to work.

In our paper, we explain the differential role of mortality for optimal schooling and retirement age. We set up a life-cycle model of consumption and labor supply at the extensive margin that allows for endogenous human capital formation based on [Card \(2001\)](#). Since the decline in mortality does not occur uniformly across age-groups, following [d’Albis et al. \(2012\)](#) we model the age-specific mortality rates non-parametrically. Thus, using the derivative of a functional (see [Ryder and Heal \(1973\)](#) and [d’Albis et al. \(2012\)](#)) we study the impact of a mortality decline at any arbitrary age on human capital investment and retirement.

Under this setup, we first derive analytically conditions under which a decrease in mortality may induce higher education and lower labor supply, thereby reconciling the empirical evidence shown by [Hazan \(2009\)](#) with economic theory. We provide the economic intuition of our results by decomposing

the differential effect of mortality on schooling and retirement into the “lifetime human wealth” and “years-to-consume” effects. “Lifetime human wealth” effect stands for the positive impact that a mortality decline has on consumption because it raises the likelihood of receiving a future labor income stream. On the contrary, the “years-to-consume” effect, which is always negative, reflects the overall reduction in consumption due to a longer lifespan. Second, we empirically analyze our model using Swedish schooling, retirement, and mortality data for cohorts born between 1865 and 2000. Our results show two important facts. First, when the life expectancy rises, our model is capable of producing an optimal decline in retirement age and an increase in years of schooling (Hazan, 2009). Second, since in the earlier stage of mortality transition, a decline in mortality belongs mainly to younger people, whereas in the later stage, a decline in mortality has mainly occurred at older ages, we show that the optimal retirement age bottomed out for cohorts born in the 1920s and it is expected to increase from now on.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows: Section 2 introduces the model setup and presents the first-order conditions for optimal consumption, length of schooling, and retirement. Furthermore, the relationship between the optimal length of schooling and retirement is explained. In Section 3, we study –using the Volterra derivative of a functional– the differential role of mortality on the optimal length of schooling and retirement. For a better understanding on the role of mortality on each variable, we distinguish between the direct and indirect impact of mortality on education and retirement, separately. In Section 4, we solve the model numerically and demonstrate, using a simple quantitative exercise, how the mortality transition may increase the length of schooling and reduce the retirement age. Concluding remarks are made in Section 5.

2 The model

We setup a consumer’s problem that consists in choosing the optimal number of years of schooling (S), optimal retirement age (R), and the optimal consumption path ($c(x)$) in order to maximize the expected lifetime utility ($V(S, R, c)$). We assume time is continuous. Agents face lifetime uncertainty, which is represented by the survival function

$$p(x) = e^{-\int_0^x \mu(q) dq}, \quad (1)$$

where $p(x)$ is the (unconditional) probability of surviving to age x , $p(0) = 1$, $p(\omega) = 0$, being $\omega \in (0, \infty)$ the maximum age, and $\mu(q) \geq 0$ is the mortality

hazard rate at age q .

Schooling and labor supply are indivisible and the transitions from schooling to working and from working to retirement are irreversible, as in [Boucekkine et al. \(2002\)](#), [Echevarria \(2004\)](#), [Echevarria and Iza \(2006\)](#), and [Cai and Lau \(2012\)](#). We also assume that agents do not save with a bequest motive in mind and there exists a perfect annuity market, which grants that agents borrow and lend freely at a fixed interest rate. Thereby, consumers optimally choose to purchase annuities (see [Yaari \(1965\)](#)). The instantaneous expected utility depends positively on current consumption and negatively on current non-leisure time. The utility of consumption $U(c)$ is an increasing and concave function (i.e. $U_c(\cdot) > 0$, $U_{cc}(\cdot) < 0$).¹ Let $\tilde{\phi}(S, x)$ denote the disutility of non-leisure time at age x of an individual who has completed S years of schooling. Assume $\tilde{\phi}(S, x)$ is a positive and increasing function with respect to age (i.e. $\tilde{\phi}(S, x) > 0$, $\tilde{\phi}_x(S, x) > 0$), which reflects the fact that the disutility of not enjoying leisure is increasing with age (see [Hazan \(2009\)](#), [Kalemli-Ozcan and Weil \(2010\)](#), [d'Albis et al. \(2012\)](#), and [Cai and Lau \(2012\)](#), among others). After retirement, $\tilde{\phi}(S, x)$ equals zero. Then, assuming that agents discount future utility flows at a subjective discount rate ρ , the expected lifetime utility, conditional on the years of schooling (S), retirement (R), and consumption path (c) is

$$V(S, R, c) = \int_0^\omega e^{-\rho x} p(x) U(c(x)) dx - \int_0^R e^{-\rho x} p(x) \tilde{\phi}(S, x) dx. \quad (2)$$

Following [Card \(2001\)](#), we generalize most existing theoretical papers by assuming that agents may have different tastes for schooling relative to work

$$\tilde{\phi}(S, x) = \begin{cases} \phi(x) + \psi(x) & \text{if } x \leq S, \\ \phi(x) & \text{if } x > S, \end{cases} \quad (3)$$

where $\phi(x) > 0$ (with $\phi_x(x) \geq 0$) is the underlying disutility of non-leisure time and $\psi(x)$ is the relative disutility of school versus work. Factor $\psi(x)$ is positive when the agent prefers work to schooling or negative when schooling is preferred to work. We assume that if $\psi(x)$ is positive, the relative disutility of schooling increases with age (i.e. $\psi_x(x) \geq 0$), whereas if $\psi(x)$ is negative, our agent has a decreasing preference for schooling, or $\psi_x(x) \leq 0$. As a particular case, notice $\psi(x) = 0$ for all $x \in (0, \omega)$ is also included in [Card \(2001\)](#), which is implicitly assumed in [Hazan \(2009\)](#), [Kalemli-Ozcan and Weil \(2010\)](#), [Cai and Lau \(2012\)](#), among many others.

¹We use subscripts to denote the derivative with respect to the variable in the subscript, and apply the same notation for partial derivatives.

Labor income, denoted by y , is assumed to be proportional to years of schooling (S) and years of post-schooling experience (E), which is equal to $x - S$ (see [Mincer \(1974\)](#)). Thus, we write labor income at age $x = S + E$ conditional on S years of schooling as $y(S, S + E) = w(E)h(S + E)$, where $w(E) > 0$ represents the wage rate per unit of human capital with $E = x - S$ years of post-schooling experience and $h(S + E)$ is the stock of human capital of an individual at age x with S years of schooling. We assume there exists an $\bar{E} \in [0, R - S]$, for $R > S$, such that

$$\begin{cases} w_E(E) \geq 0 & \text{if } E \leq \bar{E}, \\ w_E(E) \leq 0 & \text{if } E \geq \bar{E}, \end{cases} \quad (4)$$

which represents the usual hump-shape pattern of the labor income found in empirical data (see [Heckman et al. \(2006\)](#)).² Assume the law of motion of human capital of an individual at age x with S years of schooling accumulates according to a [Ben-Porath \(1967\)](#) technology

$$h_x(x) = \begin{cases} q(h(x)) - \delta h(x) & \text{if } x \leq S \\ -\delta h(x) & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases} \quad (5)$$

where $q(\cdot)$ is the human capital production function (with $q_h(\cdot) > 0$ and $q_{hh}(\cdot) < 0$), and $\delta > 0$ is the human capital depreciation rate, which is assumed constant across age.³ As a result, the law of motion of financial wealth at age x ($a(x)$) is

$$a_x(x) = \begin{cases} [r + \mu(x)]a(x) + y(S, x) - c(x) & \text{if } S < x < R, \\ [r + \mu(x)]a(x) - c(x) & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases} \quad (6)$$

with boundary conditions $a(0) = 0$ and $a(\omega) = 0$, where r is the real interest rate. Integrating (6) with respect to age, subject to the boundary conditions, we obtain the standard lifecycle budget constraint faced by our individual:

$$\int_0^\omega e^{-rx} p(x) c(x) dx = \int_S^R e^{-rx} p(x) y(S, x) dx \equiv W(S, R), \quad (7)$$

where $W(S, R)$ is the lifecycle earnings (measured at age 0) conditional on S years of schooling and retirement age R . For the sake of comparison with

²Using data from the US Decennial Censuses, the estimated coefficients from Mincer log earnings regressions for white males during the period 1940-90 report an average \bar{E} value of 30.1 years ([Heckman et al., 2006](#), Table 2, p. 326).

³The functional form $h(S) = e^{\theta(S)}$, used by [Hazan \(2009\)](#), p. 1834, can be obtained assuming either that $\delta = 0$ or that $q(h(x))$ is equal to $(\theta_x(x) + \delta)h(x)$.

the literature on the impact of mortality on retirement and education, notice that we implicitly assume that the only cost of schooling is foregone labor income (see [Kalemli-Ozcan et al. \(2000\)](#), [Hazan \(2009\)](#), [Cai and Lau \(2012\)](#), and [Cervellati and Sunde \(2013\)](#)). Tuition costs, earnings while in school, and taxes are also modeled in the returns to education literature (see [Willis \(1986\)](#), [Card \(2001\)](#), [Heckman et al. \(2006\)](#)).

2.1 Optimal consumption, length of schooling, and retirement age

Following [d’Albis and Augeraud-Véron \(2008\)](#), [Heijdra and Romp \(2009\)](#), and [d’Albis et al. \(2012\)](#) we obtain our agent’s optimal consumption path, length of schooling, and retirement in two steps. First, we derive the optimal consumption path. We define the optimal consumption at age x , conditional on the length of schooling (S) and retirement age (R), as $c(x, S, R)$. Second, based on the conditional consumption path derived in the first step, we obtain the optimal length of schooling and retirement age. Let us define $\hat{V}(S, R)$ as the expected lifetime utility conditional on the optimal consumption path.

In [Proposition 1](#), we characterize the optimal consumption path, the optimal length of schooling, and the optimal retirement age. The proof is given in [Appendix A](#).

Proposition 1 *For the life-cycle model given by (1)-(6), the optimal consumption path, conditional on a length of schooling S and a retirement age R , is characterized by*

$$U_c(c(x, S, R)) = e^{(\rho-r)x} U_c(c(0, S, R)). \quad (8)$$

Moreover, an interior optimal length of schooling (S^*) satisfies

$$\int_{S^*}^R e^{-r(x-S^*)} \frac{p(x)}{p(S^*)} y_S(S^*, x) dx = y(S^*, S^*) + \frac{e^{(r-\rho)S^*} \psi(S^*)}{U_c(c(0, S^*, R))}, \quad (9)$$

and an interior optimal retirement age (R^*) is given by

$$U_c(c(0, S, R^*)) e^{-rR^*} y(S, R^*) = e^{-\rho R^*} \phi(R^*). \quad (10)$$

Eq. (8) is the standard Euler condition characterizing the consumption path. The left-hand side of Eq. (9) is the marginal benefit of the S^* -th year of schooling, whereas the right-hand side represents the marginal cost of the

S^* -th year of schooling. Let us define $f(S, R)$ as the marginal effect of an additional unit of schooling (measured at age S) on lifecycle earnings:

$$f(S, R) \equiv \frac{W_S(S, R)}{e^{-rS}p(S)} = \int_S^R e^{-r(x-S)} \frac{p(x)}{p(S)} y_S(S, x) dx - y(S, S), \quad (11)$$

or, equivalently, the marginal benefit of the S -th year of schooling minus the foregone labor income at age S (measured at age S). Provided the labor income is separable in education and experience, from (5) Eq. (11) can be rewritten, after rearranging, as

$$f(S, R) = \frac{W(S, R)}{e^{-rS}p(S)} \left(\frac{q(h(S))}{h(S)} - \delta - r - \frac{\int_S^R e^{-(r+\delta)x} \mu(x) p(x) w(x-S) dx}{\int_S^R e^{-(r+\delta)x} p(x) w(x-S) dx} - \frac{e^{-rR} p(R) y(S, R)}{W(S, R)} \right), \quad (12)$$

where $q(h(S))/h(S) - \delta$ is the rate of return to education at the S -th unit of schooling (henceforth $r^h(S)$). The third and fourth terms inside the parenthesis represent the average return lost in the capital market from postponing the entrance in the labor market. Specifically, the fourth term is the average risk premium lost from the S -th unit of schooling, which hereinafter we denote by $\bar{\mu}_{[S,R]}$. The last term is the income lost at retirement relative to the lifetime wealth. For notational convenience, let denote the sum of the negative terms in (12) as $\bar{r}(S, R)$; that is

$$\bar{r}(S, R) = r + \bar{\mu}_{[S,R]} + \frac{e^{-rR} p(R) y(S, R)}{W(S, R)}. \quad (13)$$

Eq. (13) represents the annuitized marginal cost of the S -th unit of schooling, expressed in terms of foregone earnings, conditional on the retirement age R . Assuming there is no mortality risk and considering that R tends to infinity, Eq. (13) reduces to the real interest rate. Thus, if $\psi(S^*)$ is zero, we obtain the result that individuals invest in schooling until the marginal return to education equals the return to capital, see Willis (1986).

Substituting (11)-(13) in (9), and rearranging, gives

$$r^h(S^*) - \bar{r}(S^*, R) = \frac{e^{-\rho S^*} p(S^*) \psi(S^*)}{W(S^*, R) U_c(c(0, S^*, R))}, \quad (14)$$

or the difference between the return to education at the S -th unit of schooling and the marginal cost of the S^* -th unit of schooling expressed in terms of

foregone earnings. Eq. (14) implies that when working is preferred to schooling ($\psi(S^*) > 0$), individuals underinvest in education since $r^h(S^*) - \bar{r}(S^*, R) > 0$. In contrast, when schooling is preferred to work ($\psi(S^*) < 0$), individuals overinvest in education since $r^h(S^*) - \bar{r}(S^*, R) < 0$. As a consequence, if education were considered a pure investment good ($\psi(S^*) = 0$), $r^h(S^*) = \bar{r}(S^*, R)$.

Empirically, the econometric estimations of returns to education report values of $r^h(S^*)$ exceeding those of $\bar{r}(S^*, R)$. For example, Card (1999) finds a wide range of rates of returns to education in the US centered around 8% per year, while Heckman et al. (2008) estimate also for the US that the returns to education range between 10 to 15% per year. In contrast, when education is considered a pure investment good, the rate of return to education for an individual with 10 years of education does not exceed 3% per year for a wide range of feasible retirement ages.⁴ Several explanations are suggested in the literature for the positive difference between $r^h(S^*)$ and $\bar{r}(S^*, R)$. The most common ones are high “psychic cost” of school, uncertainty, and heterogeneity among individuals (see Carneiro et al. (2003), Cunha et al. (2005), and Heckman et al. (2006)), while credit constraints might be important for going to college decisions (Belley and Lochner, 2007), but not for most students (Carneiro and Heckman, 2002; Heckman et al., 2006). Henceforth, following the literature on returns to education, we assume hereinafter that $\psi(x) > 0$ for all $x \in (0, S)$. As a consequence, $r^h(S^*) - \bar{r}(S^*, R) > 0$.

Eq. (10) is the optimal retirement age condition. Eq. (10) implies that the marginal benefit of continued working at age R^* , which is equivalent to the additional labor income at age R^* measured in utility terms, equals the marginal cost of working at age R^* , or the disutility of continued working at age R^* . This optimal retirement age condition was first derived by Sheshinski (1978).

The first important results one can obtain from Proposition 1 are the effects of an increase in the optimal length of schooling and retirement age on the optimal consumption path. Differentiating (7) and (8) with respect to S , substituting, and using (11) gives

$$\frac{c_S(0, S^*, R)}{c(0, S^*, R)} = \frac{e^{-rS^*} p(S^*) \sigma(c(0, S^*, R)) f(S^*, R)}{\int_0^\omega e^{-rx} p(x) \sigma(c(x, S^*, R)) c(x, S^*, R) dx}. \quad (15)$$

⁴A value of 3% has been calculated based on the wage rate per unit of human capital $\log w(x - S) = \log w(0) + 0.094(x - S) - 0.0013(x - S)^2$ withdrawn from Table 2 (Heckman et al., 2006, p. 326), US death rates of males from the cohort born in year 1900 (Bell et al., 1992), an interest rate of 3%, and no human capital depreciation rate.

where

$$\sigma(c) = -\frac{U_c(c)}{c \cdot U_{cc}(c)} > 0, \quad (16)$$

is the intertemporal elasticity of substitution (IES) for consumption c . Using (7) and (12)-(14), Eq. (15) becomes⁵

$$\frac{c_S(0, S^*, R)}{c(0, S^*, R)} = \frac{\sigma(c(0, S^*, R))}{\sigma(c(\bar{x}, S^*, R))} (r^h(S^*) - \bar{r}(S^*, R)), \quad (18)$$

Assuming a constant IES, Eq. (18) implies that the relative increase in the initial consumption due to an additional unit of schooling is equal to the difference between the return to education and the marginal cost of the S^* -th unit of schooling expressed in terms of foregone earnings. As a consequence, an additional investment in schooling is efficient when $r^h(S^*) - \bar{r}(S^*, R) > 0$, and inefficient when $r^h(S^*) - \bar{r}(S^*, R) < 0$.

To analyze the impact of retirement on the optimal consumption path we differentiate (7) and (8) with respect to R . Substituting and using (10), we have

$$\frac{c_R(0, S, R^*)}{c(0, S, R^*)} = \frac{e^{-rR^*} p(R^*) \sigma(c(0, S, R^*)) y(S, R^*)}{\int_0^\omega e^{-rx} p(x) \sigma(c(x, S, R^*)) c(x, S, R^*) dx}, \quad (19)$$

which is equivalent to

$$\frac{c_R(0, S, R^*)}{c(0, S, R^*)} = \frac{\sigma(c(0, S, R^*)) e^{-rR^*} p(R^*) y(S, R^*)}{\sigma(c(\bar{x}, S, R^*)) W(S, R^*)}. \quad (20)$$

For a constant IES, Eq. (20) states that the relative impact of delaying retirement on the initial consumption is equal to the weight of labor income at age R^* in lifecycle earnings. Thereby, contrary to an increase in the length of schooling, an increase in the retirement age always raises the optimal consumption path because the agent receives an additional labor income at age R^* .

⁵Applying the mean value theorem for integration, there exists an $\bar{x} \in (0, \omega)$ such that

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_0^\omega e^{-rx} p(x) \sigma(c(x, S^*, R)) c(x, S^*, R) dx \\ &= \sigma(c(\bar{x}, S^*, R)) \int_0^\omega e^{-rx} p(x) c(x, S^*, R) dx = \sigma(c(\bar{x}, S^*, R)) W(S^*, R). \end{aligned} \quad (17)$$

2.2 Relationship between years of schooling and retirement

In the previous subsection we have shown the first-order conditions for an optimum of S^* and R^* , separately, and how they impact on the optimal consumption path. In this subsection, we turn to a detailed study about the relationship between the optimal years of schooling and the optimal retirement age.

Let us denote $c(0, S^*, R^*)$ as c^* and $c(\bar{x}, S^*, R^*)$ as \bar{c} . Applying the implicit-function theorem to the first order condition for S^* around the point (S^*, R^*) , we can examine the impact on the optimal length of schooling of a change in the retirement age. Totally differentiating (9) with respect to R and S , taking $\psi(S^*)$ as common factor, and rearranging, we obtain

$$\left. \frac{dS^*}{dR} \right|_{R=R^*} = \frac{\frac{f_R(S^*, R^*)}{f(S^*, R^*)} - \frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{c_R^*}{c^*}}{\frac{\psi_S(S^*)}{\psi(S^*)} + \frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{c_S^*}{c^*} - \frac{f_S(S^*, R^*)}{f(S^*, R^*)}}. \quad (21)$$

Similarly, applying the implicit-function theorem, we totally differentiate (10) with respect to S and R to examine the impact on the optimal retirement age of a change in the length of schooling

$$\left. \frac{dR^*}{dS} \right|_{S=S^*} = \frac{-\frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{c_S^*}{c^*} + r^h(S^*) + \delta - \frac{w_{R-S}(R^*-S^*)}{w(R^*-S^*)}}{\frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{c_R^*}{c^*} - \frac{w_{R-S}(R^*-S^*)}{w(R^*-S^*)} + \delta + \frac{\phi_R(R^*)}{\phi(R^*)}}. \quad (22)$$

Provided (S^*, R^*) is an interior solution of our problem, substituting (11) and (20) in (21)-(22), and using (13), we have

$$\text{sign} \left[\frac{dS^*}{dR^*} \right] = \text{sign} \left[\frac{\bar{r}(S^*, R^*) + \sigma(\bar{c}) \left[\delta - \frac{w_{R-S}(R^*-S^*)}{w(R^*-S^*)} \right]}{1 - \sigma(\bar{c})} - r^h(S^*) \right], \quad (23)$$

Eq. (23) implies that the length of schooling S^* and the retirement age R^* may be either positively or negatively related. On the one hand, looking at Eq. (22), we have that an additional year of schooling after age S^* increases the labor income at age R^* by $r^h(S^*) + \delta - \frac{w_{R-S}(R^*-S^*)}{w(R^*-S^*)}$, which increases the marginal benefit of working. As a consequence, our individual optimally postpones the retirement age in order to reap the benefits of schooling. On the other hand, the increase in education may also change the marginal utility of consumption, and hence the marginal benefit of working, by $-\frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{c_S^*}{c^*}$.⁶ Thus, the net effect of

⁶Differentiating (8) with respect to S , we have

$$\frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{c_S^*}{c^*} = \frac{1}{\sigma(c(x, S^*, R^*))} \frac{c_S(x, S^*, R^*)}{c(x, S^*, R^*)} \text{ for all } x \in [0, \omega].$$

a change in education on retirement depends upon the strength of the income effect, reflected by the IES (see Imrohoroglu and Kitao (2009) and Keane (2011)), and the difference between $r^h(S^*)$ and $\bar{r}(S^*, R^*)$. At the extreme cases, when $\sigma(\bar{c})$ tends to one or $\bar{r}(S^*, R^*) = r^h(S^*)$, we have that the sign of $\frac{dS^*}{dR^*}|_{R=R^*}$ and $\frac{dR^*}{dS^*}|_{S=S^*}$ depend on that of $\bar{r}(S^*, R^*) + \delta - \frac{w_{R-S}(R^*-S^*)}{w(R^*-S^*)}$, which is always positive whenever $R^* - S^* \geq \bar{E}$.

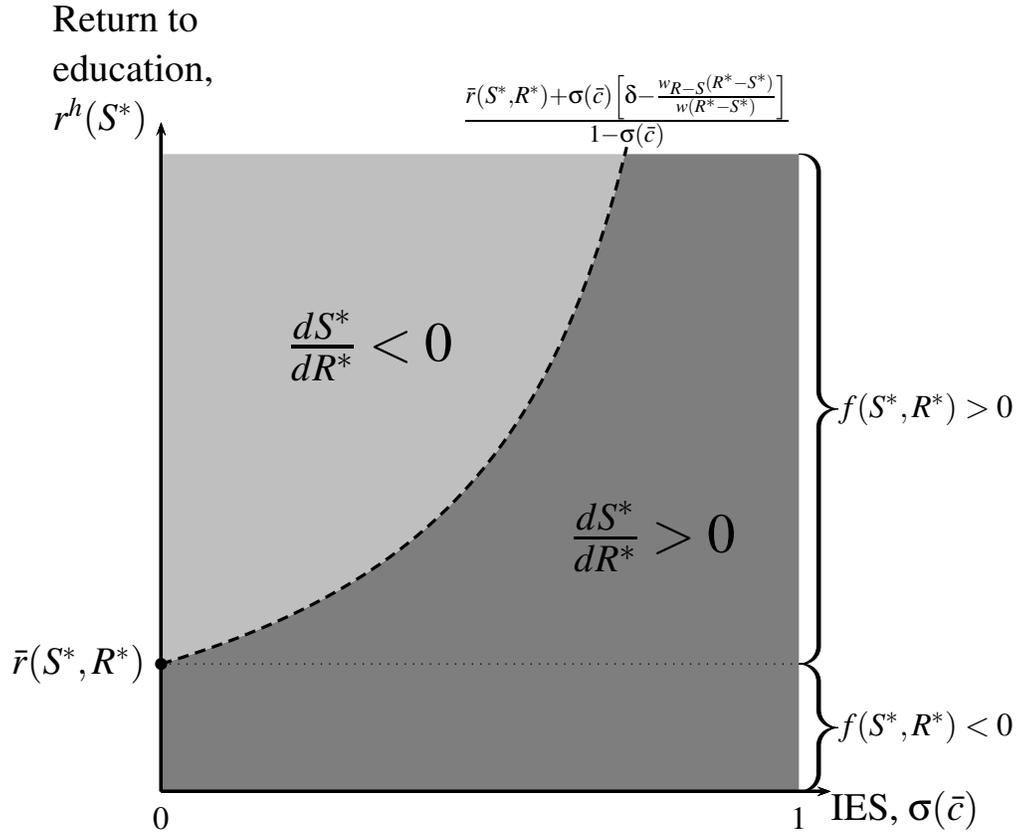


Figure 1: Relationship between S^* and R^* by return to education and intertemporal elasticity of substitution

Figure 1 summarizes the result obtained in Eq. (23). For any given wage rate per unit of human capital, Figure 1 is broken into two shaded areas. A dark gray area that contains the combination of $(r^h(S^*), \sigma(\bar{c}))$ values for which S^* and R^* are positively related, and a light gray area with the combination

of $(r^h(S^*), \sigma(\bar{c}))$ values for which S^* and R^* are negatively related. It is clear looking at Figure 1 that S^* and R^* are positively related whenever the return to education is equal to, or lower than, $\bar{r}(S^*, R^*)$ (dark gray area below the horizontal dotted line in Figure 1). In this region, an increase in the retirement age leads to an increase in the optimal length of schooling (Ben-Porath, 1967), as well as an increase in schooling yields an increase in the retirement age (see Boucekkin et al. (2002) and Echevarria and Iza (2006)). However, when the return to education is higher than $\bar{r}(S^*, R^*)$, S^* and R^* can either be positively or negatively related. The black dashed line in Figure 1 delimits the combination of $(r^h(S^*), \sigma(\bar{c}))$ values at which there isn't a relationship between S^* and R^* ; i.e. $\frac{dS^*}{dR^*} = 0$. The light gray area, located at the upper-left corner, is characterized by low IES and high return to education. In this area, the income effect dominates. Thus, for a sufficiently high return to education and low IES, when a positive income shock increases the optimal years of schooling, the optimal retirement age decreases, since individuals purchase more leisure time, and the positive effect on years of schooling gets reinforced. The same effect would take place if the positive income shock initially reduces the retirement age. Notice, however, the negative relation between S^* and R^* vanishes as the return to education approaches to the dashed line, which eventually occurs when the length of schooling is sufficiently large. On the contrary, in the dark gray area, where the strength of the income effect diminishes –when a positive income shock raises the retirement age– the optimal years of schooling increases and the rise in the retirement age gets also reinforced.

3 Differential impact of mortality decline on optimal schooling years and retirement age

In this Section, we study the impact of a mortality decline at an arbitrary age (x_0) on the optimal length of schooling (S^*) and the optimal retirement age (R^*). For exposition clarity, we make explicit the dependence of the optimal schooling and retirement age on each other and on the underlying mortality schedule; i.e. $S^* \equiv S^*(R^*; \mu)$ and $R^* \equiv R^*(S^*; \mu)$.⁷

Eqs. (24a)-(24b) below show how the effect of a mortality decline at an arbitrary age x_0 is characterized by the sum of a direct and an indirect effect:

⁷Let the continuous function $\mu : [0, \omega) \rightarrow \mathbf{R}_{\geq 0}, x_0 \mapsto \mu(x_0)$ represents the mortality hazard rate at any age $x_0 \in [0, \omega)$.

$$\text{sign} \left[\frac{-dS^*}{d\mu(x_0)} \right] = - \text{sign} \left[S_{\mu(x_0)}^*(R^*; \mu) + \frac{dS^*}{dR^*} R_{\mu(x_0)}^*(S^*; \mu) \right], \quad (24a)$$

$$\text{sign} \left[\frac{-dR^*}{d\mu(x_0)} \right] = - \text{sign} \left[R_{\mu(x_0)}^*(S^*; \mu) + \frac{dR^*}{dS^*} S_{\mu(x_0)}^*(R^*; \mu) \right]. \quad (24b)$$

See the proof in Appendix D. The direct effect is the impact of a mortality decline at x_0 on S^* and R^* –respectively– holding all other variables unchanged, while the indirect effect is the impact of retirement (resp. schooling) on schooling (resp. retirement) that is mediated by a change in mortality. Thus, as shown in (24a) and (24b), the effect of mortality on S^* and R^* are intertwined.

For exposition clarity, in Section 3.1 we first focus on the analysis of the direct effects and, in Section 3.2, we study the total impact of a mortality decline on both variables.

3.1 Direct effect

Following the same order as the derivation of the first-order conditions, we first study the direct impact that a mortality decline has on the optimal consumption path and, second, we continue with the analysis of the direct effects of a mortality decline on the optimal length of schooling and retirement age.

To study the effect of mortality on our variables of interest, we make use of the derivative of a functional (Ryder and Heal (1973) and d’Albis et al. (2012)) to obtain, through (1), that

$$-\frac{\partial p(x)}{\partial \mu(x_0)} = \begin{cases} p(x) & \text{if } x_0 \leq x, \\ 0 & \text{if } x_0 > x. \end{cases} \quad (25)$$

Eq. (25) means that a mortality decline at age x_0 has no effect on the survival probability before age x_0 , but it increases the survival probability at ages above or equal to x_0 . From (25) we derive the impact that a mortality decline at an arbitrary age x_0 has on the optimal consumption path and, in particular, on the initial optimal consumption (c^*). Differentiating (7) and (8) with respect to $-\mu(x_0)$, substituting, and rearranging gives

$$\frac{1}{c^*} \frac{-\partial c^*}{\partial \mu(x_0)} = - \frac{\sigma(c^*)}{\sigma(\bar{c})} \frac{e^{-rx_0} p(x_0) a(x_0)}{W(S^*, R^*)}. \quad (26)$$

Notice in Eq. (26) that if the IES is constant across the lifecycle, the relative impact of a mortality decline at age x_0 on the initial consumption is minus the

ratio between the financial wealth position at age x_0 and lifecycle earnings. Thereby, the sign of the impact of a decline in mortality at age x_0 on the optimal consumption path is equal to minus the sign of the financial wealth at age x_0 . Moreover, according to Eq. (26) a decline in mortality at two different ages does not necessarily have the same impact on consumption.⁸

Eq. (26) is the extension of Eq. (B.5) in d’Albis et al. (2012) to a model with endogenous human capital investment. Like d’Albis et al. (2012) we show that the optimal consumption path increases with a decline in mortality at age x_0 when $a(x_0) < 0$, while the optimal consumption declines when $a(x_0) > 0$, for all $x_0 \in [0, \omega)$. The intuition is simple. On the one hand, a decline in mortality increases the number of years the agent is expected to live. As a consequence, agents compensate a longer lifespan with an overall reduction in consumption. This effect, which is always negative, is named the “years-to-consume” effect. On the other hand, a mortality decline during the working period raises the likelihood of receiving a future labor income stream, which leads to an overall increase in the consumption path. This other effect, which is always positive, is named the “lifetime human wealth” effect. For a better understanding, Proposition 2 gives the net result of these two opposite effects using a CIES utility function. The proof is given in Appendix B.

Proposition 2 *For the life-cycle model given by (1)-(6), if $U_c(c)$ is a power function, the overall result of $\frac{1}{c^*} \frac{-\partial c^*}{\partial \mu(x_0)}$ is the same as that of*

$$g(x_0) = \frac{\int_{S^*}^{R^*} e^{-rx} \left[\frac{-\partial p(x)}{\partial \mu(x_0)} \right] y(S^*, x) dx}{\int_{S^*}^{R^*} e^{-rx} p(x) y(S^*, x) dx} - \frac{\int_{x_0}^{\omega} e^{-[(1-\sigma)r+\sigma\rho]x} p(x) dx}{\int_0^{\omega} e^{-[(1-\sigma)r+\sigma\rho]x} p(x) dx}, \quad (28)$$

where $\sigma \in [0, 1]$ is the intertemporal elasticity of substitution. Moreover, there exists a critical point x_c within the open interval (S^*, R^*) such that

$$\begin{cases} g(x_0) > 0 & \text{for all } x_0 < x_c, \\ g(x_0) = 0 & \text{for all } x_0 = x_c, \\ g(x_0) < 0 & \text{for all } x_0 > x_c. \end{cases} \quad (29)$$

The first component of (28) is the “lifetime human wealth” effect, while the second component represents the “years-to-consume” effect. An illustration of

⁸The direct impact of a mortality decline at all ages on the initial consumption is

$$\frac{1}{c^*} \frac{-\partial c^*}{\partial \mu} = \int_0^{\omega} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{-\partial c^*}{\partial \mu(x)} d\mu(x) = -\frac{\sigma(c^*)}{\sigma(\bar{c})} \frac{\int_0^{\omega} e^{-rx} p(x) a(x) d\mu(x)}{W(S^*, R^*)}. \quad (27)$$

the shape of both effects across the life-cycle is given in Figure 2. Notice the lifetime human wealth effect dominates the years-to-consume effect up to age $x_c \in (S^*, R^*)$, the year at which the financial wealth is zero, $a(x_c) = 0$. Therefore, a mortality decline early in life leads to an overall increase in consumption. In contrast, a decline in mortality at ages above x_c leads to an overall decline in consumption because the years-to-consume effect dominates the lifetime human wealth effect. Though for simplicity we have not modeled any retirement pension system, our results are robust to the introduction of a more general and realistic framework. Indeed, realize that the introduction of an income during the retirement period will extend the lifetime human wealth effect up to age ω , shifting the age x_c toward older ages.

The direct impact of a decline in mortality on the length of schooling and retirement age is given in Proposition 3. The proof is given in Appendix C.

Proposition 3 *For the life-cycle model given by (1)-(6),*

(a) *the sign of $-S_{\mu(x_0)}^*$ is the same as that of*

$$\frac{r^h(S^*) - \bar{r}(S^*, R^*)}{\sigma(\bar{c})} a(x_0), \quad (30)$$

when $x_0 \leq S^$ and $x_0 \geq R^*$, and*

$$\frac{r^h(S^*) - \bar{r}(S^*, R^*)}{\sigma(\bar{c})} a(x_0) + \int_{x_0}^{R^*} e^{-r(x-x_0)} \frac{p(x)}{p(x_0)} y_S(S^*, x) dx, \quad (31)$$

when $x_0 \in (S^, R^*)$, and*

(b) *the sign of $-R_{\mu(x_0)}^*$ is the same as that of $a(x_0)$.*

In Proposition 3(b) we obtain the same “consumption-leisure” relationship as in d’Albis et al. (2012). That is, given that consumption and leisure are normal goods, Proposition 3(b) implies that if a mortality decline yields an increase in consumption because the lifetime human wealth effect dominates the years-to-consume effect, agents anticipate their optimal retirement age in order to enjoy more leisure time. Similarly, when the decline in mortality implies that the years-to-consume effect dominates the lifetime human wealth effect, agents diminish their consumption and postpone their optimal retirement age.

Proposition 3(a) extends the years-to-consume effect and lifetime human wealth effect reasoning to the accumulation of human capital. In this regard, we obtain unambiguous results concerning the sign on the optimal length of schooling of a mortality decline at ages before the entrance into the labor

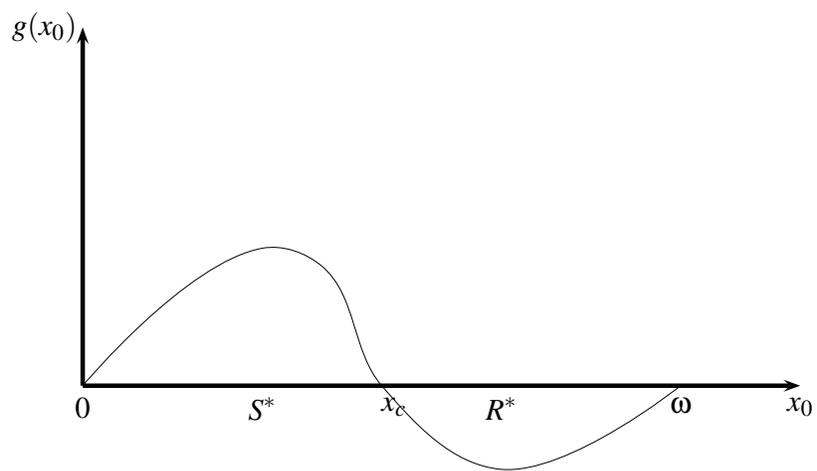
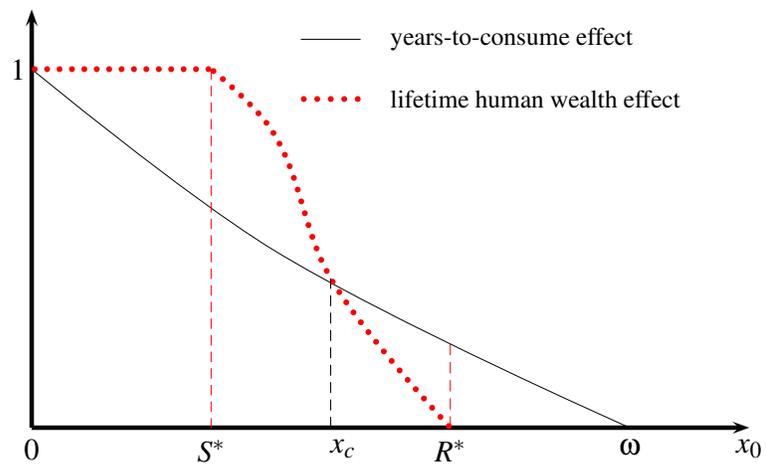


Figure 2: The lifetime human wealth and years-to-consume effect

market, S^* , and after the optimal retirement age, R^* . Specifically, Proposition 3(a) implies that when $r^h(S^*) > \bar{r}(S^*, R^*)$, if a mortality decline yields an increase in consumption because the lifetime human wealth effect dominates the years-to-consume effect, agents reduce their investment in education. Recall that this happens during the schooling period as Figure 2 shows. In contrast, a decline in mortality after the optimal retirement age leads to more years of schooling. Instead, if $r^h(S^*) = \bar{r}(S^*, R^*)$ –as frequently assumed in the literature– a decline in mortality during the schooling period or during retirement period does not have an impact on the optimal length of schooling.

During the working period, Proposition 3(a) shows that a decline in mortality positively affects education through the second term in Eq. (31), which reflects the effect of a mortality decline at age x_0 on the marginal benefit of schooling (measured at age x_0), also known as the Ben-Porath mechanism. Actually, this is the only component driving the effect of mortality on the length of schooling when $r^h(S^*) = \bar{r}(S^*, R^*)$, but it is not the case whenever $r^h(S^*) \neq \bar{r}(S^*, R^*)$.

Next we use the results obtained in Proposition 3 to derive the total effects.

3.2 Total effects

In this section we complete the analysis studying the total impact of a mortality decline at an arbitrary age on the optimal length of schooling and retirement age. To do so, we combine the direct effects, presented in Section 3.1, with the indirect effects.

Proposition 4 gives under the strict concavity of the expected lifetime utility, $\hat{V}(S, R)$ at (S^*, R^*) , the sign of a decline in mortality at an arbitrary age x_0 on the optimal length of schooling and retirement age. See Appendix D for the proof.

Proposition 4 *Assuming the strict concavity of $\hat{V}(S, R)$ at (S^*, R^*) , for the life-cycle model given by (1)-(6),*

(a) *the sign of $\frac{-dS^*}{d\mu(x_0)}$ is the same as that of*

$$\begin{cases} a(x_0) \frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{dc^*}{dS^*} + \int_{x_0}^{R^*} e^{-r(x-x_0)} \frac{p(x)}{p(x_0)} y_S(S^*, x) dx & \text{if } S^* < x_0 < R^*, \\ a(x_0) \frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{dc^*}{dS^*} & \text{otherwise,} \end{cases} \quad (32)$$

(b) and the sign of $\frac{-dR^*}{d\mu(x_0)}$ is the same as that of

$$\begin{cases} a(x_0) \frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{dc^*}{dR^*} + \frac{dS^*}{dR^*} \int_{x_0}^{R^*} e^{-r(x-x_0)} \frac{p(x)}{p(x_0)} y_S(S^*, x) dx & \text{if } S^* < x_0 < R^*, \\ a(x_0) \frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{dc^*}{dR^*} & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases} \quad (33)$$

Eqs. (32) and (33) show that the total impact of a decline in mortality at an arbitrary age x_0 on the optimal length of schooling and retirement age is given by three factors: (i) the “lifetime human wealth” effect versus the “years-to-consume” effect, which is reflected by the financial wealth at age x_0 , i.e. $a(x_0)$; (ii) the total impact of years of schooling and retirement on the initial consumption; and (iii) the effect of mortality on the marginal benefit of schooling. Factors (i) and (ii) only have an impact when $r^h(S^*) \neq \bar{r}(S^*, R^*)$. The first thing to notice is that the increase in the marginal benefit of schooling due to a decline in mortality, or Ben-Porath mechanism, always has a positive impact on education, but it is not necessarily true on the optimal retirement age since it depends on the relationship between education and retirement. If S^* and R^* are negatively related, agents anticipate their retirement age and enjoy more leisure time when a decline in mortality causes an increase in the marginal benefit of schooling. In contrast, if S^* and R^* are positively related, agents postpone their retirement age in order to reap the benefits of schooling. This is because in the former alternative the income effect dominates over the substitution effect, whereas in the latter the substitution effect dominates over the income effect.

During the schooling period and the retirement period, the effect of mortality on the marginal benefit of schooling is null. Thereby, in these two periods, the sign of the total impact of a decline in mortality on the optimal length of schooling and retirement age solely depend on the lifetime human wealth effect versus the years-to-consume effect and the total impact of years of schooling and retirement on the initial consumption:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{sign} \left[\frac{-dS^*}{d\mu(x_0)} \right] &= \text{sign} \left[a(x_0) \frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{dc^*}{dS^*} \right], \\ \text{sign} \left[\frac{-dR^*}{d\mu(x_0)} \right] &= \text{sign} \left[a(x_0) \frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{dc^*}{dR^*} \right], \end{aligned}$$

for all $x_0 \in [0, S^*] \cap [R^*, \omega]$. On the one side, from (6) we know that $a(x_0) < 0$ during the schooling period, while $a(x_0) > 0$ during the retirement period. On

the other side, combining (18), (20)-(22) we have

$$\frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{dc^*}{dS^*} = (1-\lambda^R) \frac{r^h(S^*) - \bar{r}(S^*, R^*)}{\sigma(\bar{c})} + \lambda^R \left(r^h(S^*) + \delta - \frac{w_{R-S}(R^* - S^*)}{w(R^* - S^*)} \right), \quad (34)$$

where

$$\lambda^R = \frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{c_R^*}{c^*} \Big/ \left(\frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{c_R^*}{c^*} - \frac{w_{R-S}(R^* - S^*)}{w(R^* - S^*)} + \delta + \frac{\phi_R(R^*)}{\phi(R^*)} \right). \quad (35)$$

Since λ^R takes values between zero and one, assuming $r^h(S^*) - \bar{r}(S^*, R^*) > 0$ and $R^* - S^* > \bar{E}$, it is straightforward to show that (34) is always positive. Therefore, like Cai and Lau (2012) a decline in mortality during the schooling period has a negative impact on education, while a decline in mortality during the retirement period has a positive impact on education. On the contrary, the total impact on the initial consumption of an increase in the optimal retirement age is *a priori* ambiguous. In particular, it can be shown

$$\frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{dc^*}{dR^*} \begin{cases} \geq 0 \Leftrightarrow \frac{dS^*}{dR^*} \geq -\frac{c_R^*}{c_S^*}, \\ \leq 0 \Leftrightarrow \frac{dS^*}{dR^*} \leq -\frac{c_R^*}{c_S^*}. \end{cases} \quad (36)$$

Consequently, according to (23), the total impact of a decline in mortality –during the schooling and retirement periods– on the optimal retirement age coincides with that on the length of schooling if, and only if, the relationship between the optimal years of education and retirement age is positive; otherwise, when $\frac{dS^*}{dR^*} < 0$, both alternatives are possible.

The direct consequence of this ambiguity is that the impact of a reduction of $\mu(x_0)$ on $R^* - S^*$ is in general ambiguous. As a consequence, in the next section we use real data in order to calibrate the model.

4 Application to Swedish data

In this Section we study numerically the impact of the epidemiological transition on the optimal years of schooling and retirement age when both variables are endogenous. Our analysis delivers two important results. First, when the life expectancy rises, our model is capable of producing an optimal decline in retirement age and an increase in years of schooling (Hazan, 2009). Second, since in the earlier stage of mortality transition, a decline in mortality belongs mainly to younger people, whereas in the later stage, a decline in mortality decline has mainly occurred at older ages (see Figure 4), we show that the optimal retirement age stops declining after the cohort born in year 1920 and increases thereafter.

4.1 Data

We are interested in analyzing the marginal effect of the decline in mortality on the length of schooling and retirement age for cohorts born in the 19th and 20th centuries. We implement our analysis to Sweden because there exist reliable economic and demographic information dating back to the 19th century. In particular, we collect information on retirement, schooling, and mortality data for cohorts born between 1865 and 2000.

4.1.1 Retirement data

Effective retirement age for men born between years 1865 and 1920 has been calculated using employment rates, based on census data, for the period 1910-1985 and labor force participation rates, taken from labor force surveys, for the period 1975-2004 published by Statistics Sweden.⁹

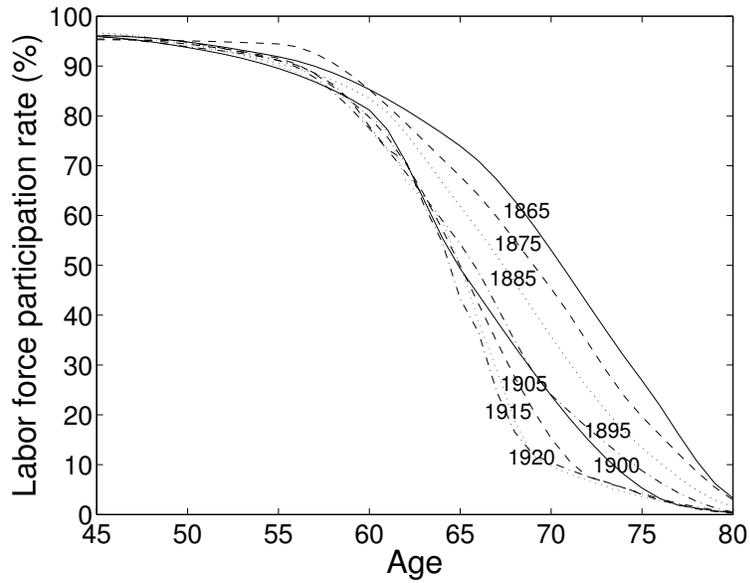
Figure 3(a) shows that participation rates have fallen at all older ages. For cohort 1865, 85 percent of all sixty-year-olds were in the labor force, for cohort 1900, the participation rates fell to 81 percent, and for cohort 1920 the figures fell to 77 percent, respectively. The decline at older ages has fallen even more sharply. For cohort 1865, 75 percent of all sixty-five-year-olds and 50 percent of all seventy-year-olds were in the labor force, but, for cohort 1920, the participation rates had fallen to 45 and 10 percent, respectively. As a result, the effective retirement age declined from age sixty nine, for cohort 1865, to less than sixty four for the cohort born in year 1920 (see Figure 3(b)). Also, it is worth noticing in Figure 3(b) how the declining trend in retirement age accelerates for cohorts 1875-1895 and decelerates for cohorts born after year 1900.

4.1.2 Schooling data

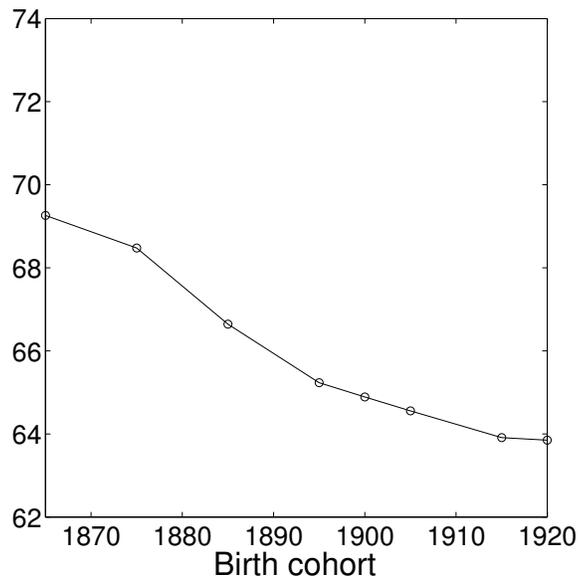
Information about years of schooling by birth cohort is calculated based on the number of students by educational attainment reported by [de la Croix et al. \(2008\)](#).¹⁰ Their estimates can be decomposed into three groups: (i) primary

⁹Employed and working age population in Sweden during the period 1910-1985 is available at <http://www.scb.se/tidsseriehafteforvarvsarbetandefob1910-1985>. Before the 1980s, unemployment rates above age 45 were roughly constant and lower than 2 percent (see [Ljungqvist and Sargent \(1995\)](#) and [Holmlund \(2009\)](#)). Therefore, we do not expect a significant error by combining both datasets.

¹⁰Information on number of students and enrollment rates by educational attainment in Sweden from year 1768 to 2002 are withdrawn from <http://perso.uclouvain.de/david.delacroix/data/swedish-educ-data.pdf>.



(a) Labour force participation rates by birth cohort (men)



(b) Effective retirement age (men)

Figure 3: Labor force participation rate by age and effective retirement age across cohorts: Sweden, 1865-1920. Labor force participation rates by single year of age are calculated using interpolation techniques.

and lower secondary, (ii) integrated upper secondary, and (iii) tertiary. The average length of schooling has been calculated multiplying the enrollment rate by the expected-years lived in each educational group. To obtain both the enrollment rate and the expected-years lived we make use of the information contained in the [Human Mortality Database \(2013\)](#).

4.1.3 Mortality data

We produce survival probabilities for cohorts born between 1865 and 2000 using Swedish death rates by single-years of age from year 1800 to 2011, taken from the [Human Mortality Database \(2013\)](#). Deaths rates for cohorts born after year 1911 are constructed applying the Lee-Carter model ([Lee and Carter, 1992](#)).¹¹

Figure 4(a) shows the evolution of the conditional survival probabilities from age 6 for cohorts born in 1865, 1900, 1920, 1950, and 2000, whereas Figure 4(b) depicts the corresponding absolute decline in the mortality hazard by age across cohorts. It can be seen in Figure 4(b) how the mortality improvements for cohorts born before 1920 have mainly occurred at young and working ages. The peak for cohorts born between 1865 and 1900 shows the influence of the Spanish flu. However, although mortality improvements for cohorts born after 1920 mainly occur at older ages – in relative terms –, there are still gains in years lived at young ages.

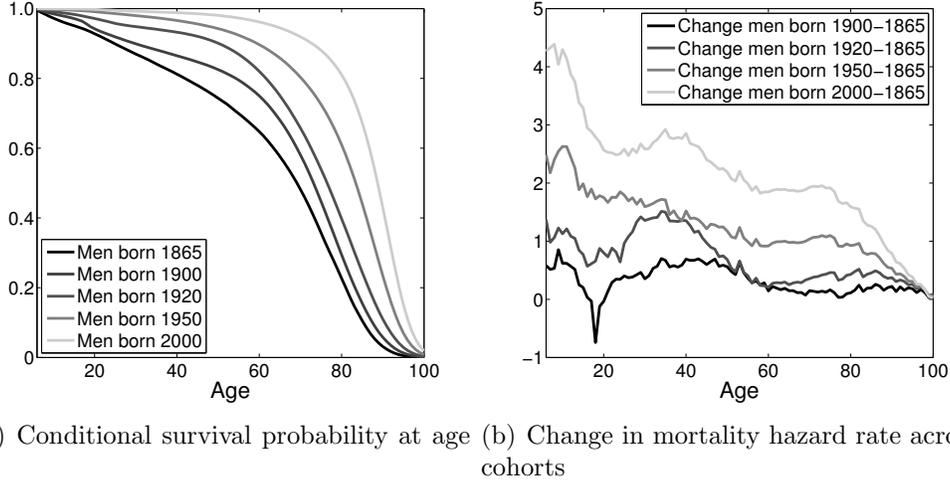
4.1.4 Expected length of work in Sweden

Table 1 summarizes the relevant labor supply statistics for our model based on the information collected for cohorts born between 1865 and 1920. Columns two and three report years of schooling and retirement ages across cohorts. Column four shows the significant increase of almost 9 years in the life expectancy (LE) at the age of leaving school, while column five report the corresponding increase of 7.6 years in the life expectancy from retirement. Like [Lee \(2001\)](#), we obtain that the expected length of work (in years) has been

¹¹Future age-specific death rates from year 2011 are projected applying the Lee-Carter method to actual Swedish period-death rates from year 1945 up to 2011. Thus, it is assumed that the log of the death rate is explained by the following multiplicative process:

$$\log m_{t,x} = a_x + k_t b_x + \epsilon_{t,x}, \text{ where } \epsilon_{t,x} \text{ is } i.i.d.(0, \sigma_\epsilon),$$

where $m_{t,x}$ is the death rate at age x in year t , a_x , b_x are age-specific constants, and k_t is a time-varying index obtained through the singular-value decomposition of a matrix of death rates.



(a) Conditional survival probability at age 6
 (b) Change in mortality hazard rate across cohorts

Figure 4: Conditional survival probability at age 6 and changes in the mortality hazard rate across cohorts by age: Sweden, 1865-2000.

roughly constant and equal to fifty, whereas the last column in Table 1 shows a significant reduction of almost 6 years in the average number of years worked.¹²

4.2 Calibration

To solve the model, we follow [Cervellati and Sunde \(2013\)](#) and consider a constant intertemporal elasticity of substitution (CIES) utility function,

$$U(c) = \frac{c^{1-\frac{1}{\sigma}} - 1}{1 - \frac{1}{\sigma}}, \text{ with } \sigma \in (0, 1]. \quad (37)$$

The underlying disutility of non-leisure time is assumed constant $\phi(x) = \phi$. For simplicity, we assume a constant relative disutility of school versus work, $\psi(x) = \psi$, for all $x \in (0, S)$. Since our individual devotes her full time to education while she is in school, we use the following simplified version of the Ben-Porath human capital production function

$$q(h(S, x)) = \xi \cdot h(S, x)^\gamma, \text{ with } \xi > 0 \text{ and } \gamma \in (0, 1), \quad (38)$$

¹²Recent estimations applied to cohorts born between 1850 to 1990 of US men workers obtain that the expected number of years worked from age 20 has been roughly stable between forty one and forty two years ([Lee, 2001](#)).

Table 1: Estimates of the expected length of work, Sweden, Cohorts: 1865-1920

| Birth cohort | Years of schooling | Retirement age | LE from schooling | LE from retirement | Expected length of work | Number of years worked |
|--------------|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| | (S) | (R) | $LE(6+S)$ | $LE(R)$ | | (R)-(6+S) |
| | II | III | IV | V | VI | VII |
| 1865 | 6.0 | 69.3 | 53.4 | 6.2 | 50.2 | 57.3 |
| 1875 | 6.5 | 68.5 | 54.1 | 7.1 | 50.2 | 56.0 |
| 1875 | 6.3 | 66.6 | 55.0 | 8.6 | 49.7 | 54.3 |
| 1895 | 6.6 | 65.2 | 55.9 | 10.0 | 49.2 | 52.6 |
| 1900 | 6.6 | 64.9 | 57.1 | 10.7 | 49.6 | 52.3 |
| 1905 | 6.5 | 64.6 | 58.6 | 11.4 | 50.3 | 52.1 |
| 1915 | 6.3 | 63.9 | 61.2 | 13.1 | 51.1 | 51.6 |
| 1920 | 6.4 | 63.9 | 62.1 | 13.8 | 51.4 | 51.5 |

Source: Own calculations. Note: LE stands for life expectancy.

where ξ is a scaling factor and γ is the returns to scale in human capital investment. Similar to Hazan (2009) and Cervellati and Sunde (2013) the wage rate is assumed to be constant.

To shed light on the effects of mortality on S^* and R^* , we introduce the next simplifying assumptions. We assume zero discounting, $r = \delta = \rho = 0$, so that the inverse of $\bar{r}(S^*, R^*)$ coincides with the expected length of work (Lee, 2001)¹³

$$\bar{r}(S^*, R^*) = \left[\int_{S^*}^{R^*} \frac{p(x)}{p(S^*)} dx \right]^{-1}. \quad (40)$$

Integrating (5) and using (38) the return to education at age S becomes

$$r^h(S^*) = \xi / (h(0) + (1 - \gamma)\xi S^*). \quad (41)$$

We set $\gamma = 0.65$ as in Cervellati and Sunde (2013). In order to show the importance on the results of the relationship between S^* and R^* , we run six alternative simulations combining three different returns to education function

¹³Under the assumptions zero discounting and constant wage rate, the annuitized marginal cost of the S -th unit of schooling becomes

$$\bar{r}(S^*, R^*) = \frac{\int_{S^*}^{R^*} \mu(x)p(x)dx}{\int_{S^*}^{R^*} p(x)dx} + \frac{p(R^*)}{\int_{S^*}^{R^*} p(x)dx}. \quad (39)$$

Since it follows from (1) that $-dp(x) = \mu(x)p(x)dx$, substituting it in (39), and rearranging, gives Eq. (40).

and two different IES. We fix $h(0) = 1$ and set ξ to 1, .25, and 0.075 so as to have a return to education after 13 years in school around 18%, 11.5% (Heckman et al., 2008), and 5.5%.¹⁴ To avoid any spurious result driven by an income effect, in all simulations the labor income faced by the cohort born in 1865 is unitary regardless the return to education function. Thereby, the wage rate per unit of human capital w is set at $1/h(S_{1865}^*, S_{1865}^*)$. To see the role of the IES on our results, we consider two alternative CIES $\sigma = \{0.50, 0.75\}$.¹⁵ Finally, the values of ϕ and ψ are calculated in each simulation so as to have an optimal length of schooling of 6 years and an optimal retirement age of 69.3 years for the cohort born in 1865.

4.3 Results

In each of the six simulations we compute the optimal length of schooling (S^*) and optimal retirement age (R^*) for each cohort born between 1865 and 2000. Thereby under this controlled experiment any variation in S^* and R^* across cohorts is solely due to changes in mortality. In addition, to understand the impact of S^* on R^* and of R^* on S^* we also compare the results from the full model to a partial model in which one of the variables is fixed. Hence, differences in S^* , or in R^* , across cohorts between the full model and the partial model are explained by the introduction of an additional endogenous variable.

A summary of the impact of the mortality transition on S^* and R^* is given in Table 2. Specifically, Table 2 reports for the full model and the partial models the absolute change in S^* and R^* for male cohorts born in Sweden between year 1865 and 2000. Looking at Table 2 we obtain the following results. First, in a model with fixed length of schooling, the effect of a decline in mortality on retirement is always positive and constant regardless the return to education function and the IES (see column I). Second, in a model with fixed retirement age, the length of schooling increases in all simulations. Nevertheless, smaller differences between returns to education (i.e. $r^h(S^*) - \bar{r}(S^*, R^*) \uparrow 0$) and higher IES boost the positive effect of mortality on the length of schooling. Third, in a model with endogenous schooling and retirement decisions, the impact of mortality on the optimal retirement age changes depending upon the return to education and the IES (see column III in Table 2). Fourth, the

¹⁴Notice that when $h(0) = 1$, ξ is equal to the initial return to education $r_h(0)$.

¹⁵The importance of the IES value on retirement and human capital investment decisions is frequently stressed in the literature. See Imrohroglu and Kitao (2009) and Rogerson and Wallenius (2009) for an empirical study and Keane (2011) and Keane and Rogerson (2012) for a survey.

Table 2: ABSOLUTE CHANGE IN YEARS OF SCHOOLING AND RETIREMENT AGE FOR SWEDISH MALE COHORTS BORN BETWEEN 1865 AND 2000

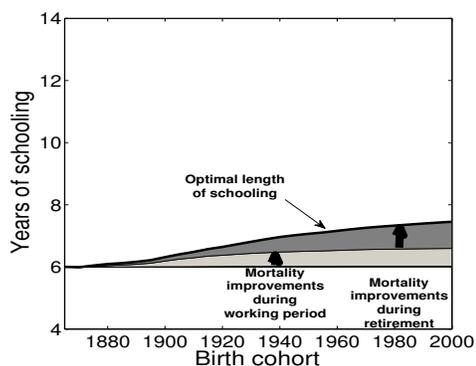
| | PARTIAL MODEL | | FULL MODEL | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | Endogenous R^* | Endogenous S^* | Endogenous S^* and R^* | | |
| | Fixed S_{1865}^* | Fixed R_{1865}^* | $R_{2000}^* - R_{1865}^*$ | $S_{2000}^* - S_{1865}^*$ | $L_{2000}^* - L_{1865}^*$ |
| | $R_{2000}^* - R_{1865}^*$ | $S_{2000}^* - S_{1865}^*$ | | | |
| I | II | III | IV | V=III-IV | |
| CIES ($\sigma = 0.50$) | | | | | |
| $\xi = 1.000$ | 9.1 | 1.0 | -2.7 | 1.4 | -4.1 |
| $\xi = 0.250$ | 9.1 | 2.3 | -1.2 | 2.7 | -3.9 |
| $\xi = 0.075$ | 9.1 | 7.0 | 3.4 | 6.7 | -3.3 |
| CIES ($\sigma = 0.75$) | | | | | |
| $\xi = 1.000$ | 9.1 | 2.1 | 1.5 | 2.0 | -0.5 |
| $\xi = 0.250$ | 9.1 | 4.1 | 3.7 | 3.9 | -0.2 |
| $\xi = 0.075$ | 9.1 | 8.9 | 10.5 | 9.7 | 0.8 |

Note: ' S_t^* ' is the optimal length of schooling for cohort born in year t , ' R_t^* ' is the optimal retirement age for cohort born in year t , and L_t^* stands for the number of years worked conditional upon survival by an individual who belongs to cohort t , i.e. $R_t^* - (S_t^* + 6)$. After thirteen years of education, the return to education is 18, 11.5, and 5.5 percent for ξ values 1.000, 0.250, and 0.075, respectively.

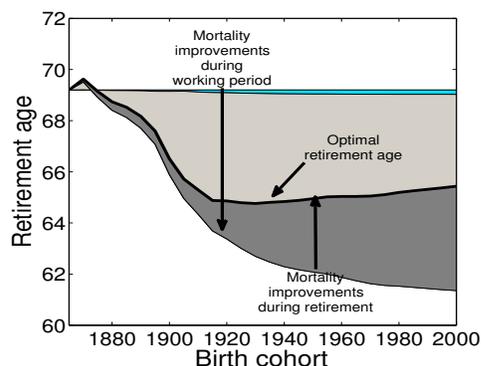
results on optimal length of schooling do not significantly change between a model with and without endogenous retirement decisions (c.f. columns II and IV). Fifth, in a full model with endogenous education and retirement decisions, the impact of a decline in mortality on the number of years worked becomes negative whenever the difference between returns to education are high and the IES is low, and vice versa (see column V).

Finally, we conclude the empirical analysis by plotting in Figure 5 the contribution of mortality improvements at different stages of life on the optimal years of schooling and optimal retirement age. In this simulation, we divide the lifespan in three periods: childhood (ages 6-15), adulthood (ages 16-65), and retirement (ages 66+); and calculate the optimal schooling and retirement considering exclusively the gains in survival during either childhood, or adulthood, or retirement across cohorts ceteris paribus the survival probability in the other stages of life.

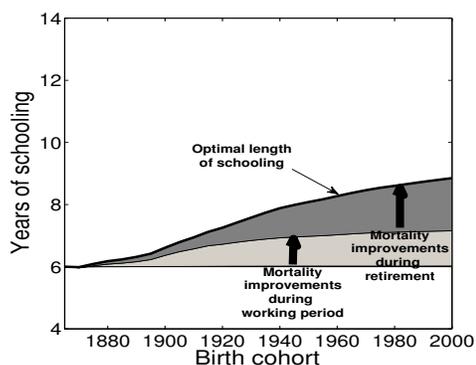
The figures on the left-hand side show how mortality improvements during both the working period (light gray area) and the retirement period (dark gray area) raise the optimal years of schooling, as it is pointed out by the upward arrows. According to Proposition 4, in the first case, a decline in mortality during the working period raises the marginal benefit of schooling because



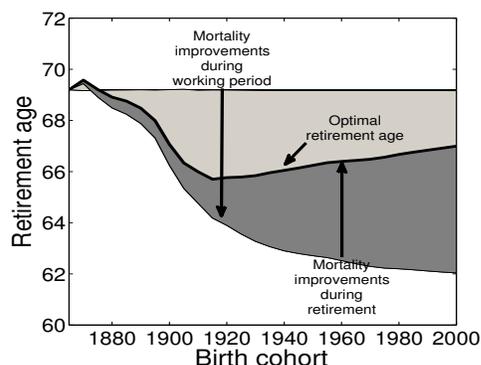
(a) Years of schooling, $\xi = 1.000$



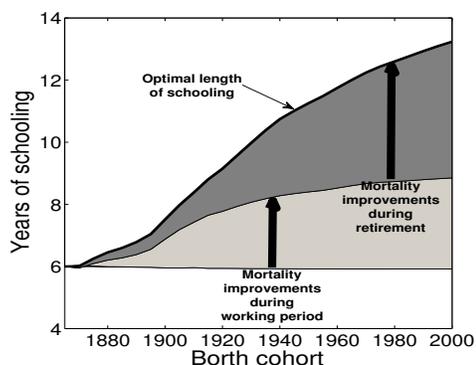
(b) Retirement age, $\xi = 1.000$



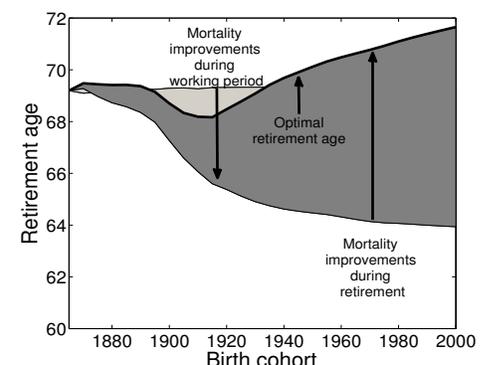
(c) Years of schooling, $\xi = 0.250$



(d) Retirement age, $\xi = 0.250$



(e) Years of schooling, $\xi = 0.075$



(f) Retirement age, $\xi = 0.075$

Figure 5: Contribution of mortality decline by stage of life on the optimal years of schooling and retirement age across cohorts by average return to education, Swedish males cohorts born in 1865-2000

the likelihood of receiving a future labor earning increases –also known as the Ben-Porath’s mechanism–, while, in the second case, a decline in mortality during retirement leads agents to continue studying in order to finance the consumption after retirement through an increase in lifetime earnings –that is, the years-to-consume effect dominates over the lifetime human wealth effect–. The sum of these two positive effects of mortality on the optimal length of schooling is represented by the black solid line.¹⁶

The figures on the right-hand side show how mortality improvements during childhood, working period (light gray area), and the retirement period (dark gray area) affect the optimal retirement age. On the one hand, since the parameter values assumed imply that the income effect dominates over the substitution effect (i.e. $\frac{dS^*}{dR^*} < 0$), a decline in mortality during the working period leads to early retirement (see the second term in Eq. 33). Individuals use the additional income to increase consumption and enjoy more leisure time. The extent to which mortality improvements during the working period reduce the optimal retirement age for each cohort is indicated by the downward arrow in Figures 5(b), 5(d), and 5(f). Note that the length of this arrow decreases with lower returns to education. This is because the negative relation between education and retirement vanishes when $r^h(S^*)$ tends to $\bar{r}(S^*, R^*)$ (see Figure 1). Consequently, if the relation between S^* and R^* were positive, a decline in mortality during the working period would lead to a delay in the retirement age. On the other hand, mortality declines late in life delay the optimal retirement age because individuals need more earnings to finance the additional consumption due to a longer retirement period. This positive effect on retirement is indicated by the upward arrow, while the strength is represented by the dark gray area. The net effect of mortality improvements at different stages of life on the optimal retirement age is represented by the black solid line. Notice that in all cases we observe a turning point in the evolution of the optimal retirement age after the cohorts born in the 1920s. This is because mortality improvements for cohorts born before the 1920s mainly occurred at young and working ages, whereas the improvements in mortality for more recent cohorts mainly occur at older ages. Therefore, this finding suggests that the recent increase in retirement in some developed countries might be partially explained by the decline in mortality at older ages as well as by the negative relation between education and retirement.

¹⁶The contribution of mortality improvements during childhood on the optimal length of schooling is almost negligible. For this reason, we opted for not representing the effect.

5 Conclusion

Existing theoretical models derive a causal positive relation between increasing life expectancy and human capital investments and retirement age. However, one salient feature of the economic development during the last two centuries is the negative relation between life expectancy and labor supply (Hazan, 2009). To reconcile the empirical evidence with economic theory, we develop a lifecycle model with endogenous human capital investment and labor supply in which mortality declines may cause higher schooling and early retirement.

This article makes two important contributions. First, we derive the differential impact of the mortality decline at any arbitrary age on education and retirement. Thereby, our results extend the findings of d’Albis et al. (2012) and Cervellati and Sunde (2013) in a unified framework. We show that a mortality decline at older ages always result in higher human capital investment and may or may not result in early retirement, whereas a mortality decline at young ages leads to lower investments in human capital and may cause late retirement.

Provided data on the Swedish mortality transition for cohorts born between year 1865 and 2000, the second important contribution is to show that the decline in labor supply along with an increasing life expectancy stems from the negative relation between schooling and retirement. The intuition is as follows. Higher human capital investment cause two opposite effects. First, an increase in earnings at all ages which raises the marginal benefit of working. Second, an increase in consumption and hence a decline in the marginal utility of consumption that reduces the marginal benefit of working. The net effect on the optimal retirement age depends upon the strength of the income effect and may, or may not, result in early retirement.

Although our model abstracts from realistic features like the existence of a pension system, the intervention of governments in the access to all levels of education, the introduction of mandatory years of schooling and retirement ages, among many others, our results offer an explanation to the empirical evidence, collected during the last centuries in Sweden, on the evolution of education and retirement. In addition, our model is robust to the introduction of such features. For instance, if education and retirement are negatively related, positive spillovers from education and publicly provided education will increase the marginal benefit of schooling and will reduce even further the retirement age. Similarly, the existence of pension incentives for early retirement and the overall increase in the labor-augmenting technological progress during the last century would have induced earlier retirement ages and higher increases in the marginal benefit of schooling. Therefore, our results suggest

some interesting directions for future research. In particular, first, a logical extension of our framework is the consideration of realistic pension systems. Second, the implementation of the model in a computable general equilibrium setting in order to analyze the effect of changes in wages and interest rates. The implementation of these issues can provide researchers and policy-makers a better understanding of the effect of changes in the population on modern economic growth.

A Proof of Proposition 1

We first derive the optimal length of schooling condition (S^*) and optimal retirement age (R^*) introduced in Eqs. (9)-(10). Second, we study the conditions for a maximum in S^* and R^* . Substituting the conditional optimal consumption, $c(x, S, R)$, into (2) and differentiating it with respect to S , we obtain

$$V_S(S, R) = \int_0^\omega e^{-\rho x} p(x) U_c(c(x, S, R)) c_S(x, S, R) dx - e^{-\rho S} p(S) \psi(S). \quad (42)$$

Substituting (8) in (42), and rearranging, gives

$$V_S(S, R) = U_c(c(0, S, R)) \int_0^\omega e^{-rx} p(x) c_S(x, S, R) dx - e^{-\rho S} p(S) \psi(S). \quad (43)$$

Differentiating (7) with respect to S , and simplifying, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \int_0^\omega e^{-rx} p(x) c_S(x, S, R) dx \\ = e^{-rS} p(S) \left(\int_S^R e^{-r(x-S)} \frac{p(x)}{p(S)} y_S(S, x) dx - y(S, S) \right). \end{aligned} \quad (44)$$

Substituting (44) in (43), and taking $U_c(c(0, S, R)) e^{-rS} p(S)$ as common factor, we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} V_S(S, R) = U_c(c(0, S, R)) e^{-rS} p(S) \times \\ \left(\int_S^R e^{-r(x-S)} \frac{p(x)}{p(S)} y_S(S, x) dx - y(S, S) - \frac{e^{(r-\rho)S} \psi(S)}{U_c(c(0, S, R))} \right). \end{aligned} \quad (45)$$

Setting $V_S(S, R)$ to zero and simplifying, the first-order condition for an optimal length of schooling is given by (9).

Applying a similar approach, the derivative of (2) with respect to R becomes

$$V_R(S, R) = p(R) \left(U_c(c(0, S, R)) e^{-rR} y(S, R) - e^{-\rho R} \phi(R) \right). \quad (46)$$

Then, setting $V_R(S, R)$ to zero and simplifying, the first-order condition for an optimal retirement age is given by (10).

Let $\hat{V}(S, R)$ be the expected lifetime utility conditional on the optimal consumption path. Also, let c^* be optimal initial consumption condition on $S = S^*$ and $R = R^*$. In order for \hat{V} to be strictly concave at $S = S^*$ and $R = R^*$ it needs to satisfy

$$\hat{V}_{SS} < 0, \hat{V}_{RR} < 0, \left| \begin{array}{cc} \hat{V}_{SS} & \hat{V}_{SR} \\ \hat{V}_{RS} & \hat{V}_{RR} \end{array} \right| > 0. \quad (47a)$$

Substituting (11) in (45), differentiating with respect to S around (S^*, R^*) , using (16), and simplifying gives

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{V}_{SS}(S^*, R^*) &= U_c(c^*) e^{-rS^*} p(S^*) \\ &\times \left(f_S(S^*, R^*) - f(S^*, R^*) \left(\frac{\psi_S(S^*)}{\psi(S^*)} + \frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{c_S^*}{c^*} \right) \right). \end{aligned} \quad (48)$$

Since the sign $\left[\frac{\psi_S(S^*)}{\psi(S^*)} \right]$ and sign $[c_S^*]$ is the same as the sign of $f(S^*, R^*)$, a necessary and sufficient condition for $S^* < R^*$ to be a maximum of $\hat{V}(S, R^*)$ is

$$f_S(S^*, R^*) < f(S^*, R^*) \left(\frac{\psi_S(S^*)}{\psi(S^*)} + \frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{c_S^*}{c^*} \right). \quad (49)$$

For $f(S^*, R^*) > 0$ notice that $\frac{f_S(S^*, R^*)}{f(S^*, R^*)} - \frac{\psi_{S^*}(S^*)}{\psi(S^*)} < \frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{c_S^*}{c^*}$. It is also worth noticing that for $f(S^*, R^*) = 0$, $f_S(S^*, R^*) < 0$.

Differentiating (46) with respect to R , at $S = S^*$ and $R = R^*$, gives

$$\begin{aligned} \hat{V}_{RR}(S^*, R^*) &= U_c(c^*) e^{-rR^*} p(R^*) y(S^*, R^*) \\ &\times \left(-\frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{c_R^*}{c^*} + \frac{y_R(S^*, R^*)}{y(S^*, R^*)} - \frac{\phi_R(R^*)}{\phi(R^*)} \right). \end{aligned} \quad (50)$$

Provided $y_R(S^*, R^*) = \frac{w_{R-S}(S^*-R^*)}{w(R^*-S^*)} - \delta \leq 0$ for all $R^* - S^* \geq \bar{E}$ and since $\phi_x(x) \geq 0$, we conclude that $\hat{V}_{RR}(S^*, R^*) < 0$ is strictly negative. Finally, the second-order conditions of the maximum in $S = S^*$ and $R = R^*$ is satisfied, if (49) holds, $y_R(S^*, R^*) \leq 0$, and

$$\frac{\hat{V}_{SR}(S^*, R^*)}{-\hat{V}_{SS}(S^*, R^*)} \times \frac{\hat{V}_{RS}(S^*, R^*)}{-\hat{V}_{RR}(S^*, R^*)} < 1. \quad (51)$$

Since $\frac{dS^*}{dR}\Big|_{R=R^*} = \frac{\hat{V}_{SR}(S^*, R^*)}{-\hat{V}_{SS}(S^*, R^*)}$ and $\frac{dR^*}{dS}\Big|_{S=S^*} = \frac{\hat{V}_{RS}(S^*, R^*)}{-\hat{V}_{RR}(S^*, R^*)}$, it follows from (51) that the impact of a change in S^* on R^* differs from the impact of a change in R^* on S^* ; i.e. $\frac{dS^*}{dR}\Big|_{R=R^*} \times \frac{dR^*}{dS}\Big|_{S=S^*} < 1$.

B Proof of Proposition 2

If $U_x(x) = x^{-\frac{1}{\sigma}}$, where σ is the intertemporal elasticity of substitution, from (8) we have $c(x, S, R) = c(0, S, R)e^{\sigma(r-\rho)x}$, for all $x \in (0, \omega)$, substituting it in (7), and simplifying, we obtain

$$c(0, S, R) = \frac{\int_S^R e^{-rx} p(x) y(S, x) dx}{\int_0^\omega e^{-[(1-\sigma)r+\sigma\rho]x} p(x) dx}. \quad (52)$$

Taking logarithms at both sides of (52) and differentiating with respect to $-\mu(x_0)$ gives

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{1}{c(0, S, R)} \frac{-\partial c(0, S, R)}{\partial \mu(x_0)} &= \frac{\int_S^R e^{-rx} \left[\frac{-\partial p(x)}{\partial \mu(x_0)} \right] y(S, x) dx}{\int_S^R e^{-rx} p(x) y(S, x) dx} - \frac{\int_{x_0}^\omega e^{-[(1-\sigma)r+\sigma\rho]x} p(x) dx}{\int_0^\omega e^{-[(1-\sigma)r+\sigma\rho]x} p(x) dx}, \end{aligned} \quad (53)$$

Note that the right-hand side of (53) at $S = S^*$ and $R = R^*$ is (28). Now, from (28), we obtain $g(S^*) > 0$, $g(R^*) < 0$,

$$g'(x_0) = -\frac{e^{-rx_0} p(x_0) y(S^*, x_0)}{\int_{S^*}^{R^*} e^{-rx} p(x) y(S^*, x) dx} + \frac{e^{-[(1-\sigma)r+\sigma\rho]x_0} p(x_0)}{\int_0^\omega e^{-[(1-\sigma)r+\sigma\rho]x} p(x) dx}, \quad (54)$$

and

$$\begin{aligned} g''(x_0) &= \frac{\left[r + \mu(x_0) - \frac{y_{x_0}(S^*, x_0)}{y(S^*, x_0)} \right] e^{-rx_0} p(x_0) y(S^*, x_0)}{\int_{S^*}^{R^*} e^{-rx} p(x) y(S^*, x) dx} \\ &\quad - \frac{[(1-\sigma)r + \sigma\rho + \mu(x_0)] e^{-[(1-\sigma)r+\sigma\rho]x_0} p(x_0)}{\int_0^\omega e^{-[(1-\sigma)r+\sigma\rho]x} p(x) dx}, \end{aligned} \quad (55)$$

for any x_0 within the interval (S^*, R^*) . Since $g(\cdot)$ is a continuous function in (S^*, R^*) , $g(S^*) > 0$, and $g(R^*) < 0$ imply that there exists at least a critical age x_c within the interval (S^*, R^*) such that $g(x_c) = 0$.

In order to prove that x_c is unique, we show that there exists only one local optimum in the interval (S^*, R^*) . At a local optimum (denoted by \tilde{x}_0 , with $g'(\tilde{x}_0) = 0$), from (54) and (55) we obtain

$$g''(\tilde{x}_0) = \frac{\left[\sigma(r - \rho) - \frac{y_{x_0}(S^*, x_0)}{y(S^*, x_0)} \right] e^{-r\tilde{x}_0} p(\tilde{x}_0) y(S^*, \tilde{x}_0)}{\int_{S^*}^{R^*} e^{-rx} p(x) y(S^*, x) dx}. \quad (56)$$

Let \tilde{x}_0^i and \tilde{x}_0^{ii} be two possible candidates, which satisfy that $g'(\tilde{x}_0^i) = 0$ and $g'(\tilde{x}_0^{ii}) = 0$ with $\tilde{x}_0^i < \tilde{x}_0^{ii}$. Provided that $y(S^*, x)$ is strictly concave within the interval (S^*, R^*) , \tilde{x}_0 is unique ($\tilde{x}_0^i = \tilde{x}_0^{ii}$) either because $\sigma(r - \rho) - \frac{y_{x_0}(S^*, x_0)}{y(S^*, x_0)} < 0$ or $\sigma(r - \rho) - \frac{y_{x_0}(S^*, x_0)}{y(S^*, x_0)} > 0$ for all $\tilde{x}_0 \in (S^*, R^*)$, or \tilde{x}_0^i is a local maximum and \tilde{x}_0^{ii} a local minimum, which proves that x_c is unique.

C Proof of Proposition 3

Given the implicit-function theorem holds, there is one unique function $\Gamma(R; \mu)$ that equals S^* for any $(R; \mu)$ around $(R^*; \mu(x_0))$. Provided the optimal length of schooling condition (9)

$$\hat{V}_S(\Gamma(R; \mu), R; \mu) = \hat{V}_S(S^*, R^*; \mu(x_0)) = 0, \quad (57)$$

and assuming $\hat{V}(S, R; \mu)$ is strictly concave around the point $(S^*, R^*; \mu(x_0))$. Then, we differentiate (57) with respect to a mortality decline at an arbitrary age x_0 , $-\mu(x_0)$, to obtain the marginal impact of a mortality decline on the optimal length of schooling. Applying the Chain rule in (57) we obtain

$$-S_{\mu(x_0)}^* = \frac{\frac{-\partial f(S^*, R^*)}{\partial \mu(x_0)} - \frac{f(S^*, R^*)}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{-\partial c^*}{\partial \mu(x_0)}}{f(S^*, R^*) \left(\frac{\psi_S(S^*)}{\psi(S^*)} + \frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{c_S^*}{c^*} \right) - f_S(S^*, R^*)}. \quad (58)$$

Thus, from (49) we have

$$\text{sign} [-S_{\mu(x_0)}^*] = \text{sign} \left[\frac{-\partial f(S^*, R^*)}{\partial \mu(x_0)} - \frac{f(S^*, R^*)}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{-\partial c^*}{\partial \mu(x_0)} \right]. \quad (59)$$

Note from (25) that the first term on the right-hand side of (59) is zero whenever $x_0 \leq S^*$ or $x_0 \geq R^*$. Substituting (12)-(13) and (26) in (59), and taking $e^{-r(x_0 - S^*)} \frac{p(x_0)}{p(S^*)}$ as common factor gives

$$\text{sign} [-S_{\mu(x_0)}^*] = \text{sign} \left[\frac{r^h(S^*) - \bar{r}(S^*, R^*)}{\sigma(\bar{c})} a(x_0) \right]. \quad (60)$$

when $x_0 \leq S^*$ and $x_0 \geq R^*$, and

$$\text{sign} [-S_{\mu(x_0)}^*] = \text{sign} \left[\frac{r^h(S^*) - \bar{r}(S^*, R^*)}{\sigma(\bar{c})} a(x_0) + \int_{x_0}^{R^*} e^{-r(x-x_0)} \frac{p(x)}{p(x_0)} y_S(S^*, x) dx \right]. \quad (61)$$

when $x_0 \in (S^*, R^*)$. This proves Proposition 3(a).

Similarly, given that the implicit-function theorem holds, there is one unique function $\Upsilon(S; \mu)$ that equals R^* for any $(S; \mu)$ around $(S^*; \mu(x_0))$. Provided the optimal retirement age condition (10)

$$\hat{V}_R(S, \Upsilon(S; \mu); \mu) = \hat{V}_R(S^*, R^*; \mu(x_0)) = 0. \quad (62)$$

Assuming $\hat{V}(S, R; \mu)$ is strictly concave around the point $(S^*, R^*; \mu(x_0))$. We obtain after differentiating (62) with respect to $-\mu(x_0)$, and applying the Chain rule,

$$-R_{\mu(x_0)}^* = \frac{-\frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{-\partial c^*}{\partial \mu(x_0)}}{\frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{c_R^*}{c^*} - \frac{w_{R-S}(R^*-S^*)}{w(R^*-S^*)} + \delta + \frac{\phi_R(R^*)}{\phi(R^*)}}. \quad (63)$$

From (50), we have

$$\text{sign} [-R_{\mu(x_0)}^*] = -\text{sign} \left[\frac{-\partial c^*}{\partial \mu(x_0)} \right]. \quad (64)$$

Now, in order to prove Proposition (3)(b) we show that the sign of $-R_{\mu(x_0)}^*$ is that of $a(x_0)$.

Differentiating (7) at $S = S^*$ and $R = R^*$ with respect to $-\mu(x_0)$, and rearranging, gives

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{x_0}^{\omega} e^{-rx} p(x) c(x, S^*, R^*) dx + \int_0^{\omega} e^{-rx} p(x) \frac{-\partial c(x, S^*, R^*)}{\partial \mu(x_0)} dx \\ = \int_{S^*}^{R^*} e^{-rx} \frac{-\partial p(x)}{\partial \mu(x_0)} w(x - S^*) h(S^*, x) dx. \end{aligned} \quad (65)$$

The intertemporal budget constraint at age x_0 can be expressed as

$$\begin{aligned} & e^{-rx_0} p(x_0) a(x_0) \\ = & \begin{cases} \int_{x_0}^{\omega} e^{-rx} p(x) c(x, S^*, R^*) dx - \int_{x_0}^{R^*} e^{-rx} p(x) w(x - S^*) h(S^*, x) dx & \text{if } S^* < x_0 < R^*, \\ \int_{x_0}^{\omega} e^{-rx} p(x) c(x, S^*, R^*) dx & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases} \end{aligned} \quad (66)$$

Substituting (66) into (65), we obtain

$$\int_0^\omega e^{-rx} p(x) \frac{-\partial c(x, S^*, R^*)}{\partial \mu(x_0)} dx = -e^{-rx_0} p(x_0) a(x_0). \quad (67)$$

Differentiating (8) at $S = S^*$ and $R = R^*$ with respect to $-\mu(x_0)$, and simplifying, gives

$$\frac{1}{c(x, S^*, R^*)} \frac{-\partial c(x, S^*, R^*)}{\partial \mu(x_0)} = \frac{\sigma(c(x, S^*, R^*))}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{-\partial c^*}{\partial \mu(x_0)}. \quad (68)$$

Substituting (68) into (67), and rearranging, we get (26). Finally, substituting (26) in (64), we have

$$\text{sign} [-R_{\mu(x_0)}^*] = -\text{sign} \left[\frac{-\partial c^*}{\partial \mu(x_0)} \right] = \text{sign} [a(x_0)], \quad (69)$$

which proves Proposition 3(b).

D Proof of Proposition 4

Given the implicit-function theorem holds, there are two unique functions $\Gamma(R; \mu)$ and $\Upsilon(S; \mu)$ that are equal to S^* and R^* , respectively, for any $(S, R; \mu)$ around $(S^*, R^*; \mu(x_0))$. Provided the optimal length of schooling and retirement age conditions, we have:

$$\hat{V}_S(\Gamma(R; \mu), \Upsilon(S; \mu); \mu) = \hat{V}_S(S^*, R^*; \mu(x_0)) = 0, \quad (70a)$$

$$\hat{V}_R(\Gamma(R; \mu), \Upsilon(S; \mu); \mu) = \hat{V}_R(S^*, R^*; \mu(x_0)) = 0. \quad (70b)$$

For notational simplicity, hereinafter we skip the arguments. Writing the system of equations (70) in differential form we have

$$\hat{V}_{S\Gamma} d\Gamma + \hat{V}_{S\Upsilon} d\Upsilon + \hat{V}_{S\mu} d\mu = 0, \quad (71a)$$

$$\hat{V}_{R\Gamma} d\Gamma + \hat{V}_{R\Upsilon} d\Upsilon + \hat{V}_{R\mu} d\mu = 0. \quad (71b)$$

If $\hat{V}_S(\cdot)$ and $\hat{V}_R(\cdot)$ are continuously differentiable with respect to $(S, R; \mu)$, (S^*, R^*) is a solution of the system at the mortality value $\mu(x_0)$, and the Jacobian matrix of the system (70) evaluated at $(S^*, R^*; \mu(x_0))$ is not singular, or $|J| \neq 0$, then the system can be locally solved at $(S^*, R^*; \mu(x_0))$.

The solution of (71), by Cramer's rule, is

$$\begin{pmatrix} \frac{dS^*}{d\mu(x_0)} \\ \frac{dR^*}{d\mu(x_0)} \end{pmatrix} = \frac{1}{|J|} \begin{pmatrix} -\hat{V}_{RR} \hat{V}_{S\mu(x_0)} + \hat{V}_{RS} \hat{V}_{R\mu(x_0)} \\ \hat{V}_{SR} \hat{V}_{S\mu(x_0)} - \hat{V}_{SS} \hat{V}_{R\mu(x_0)} \end{pmatrix}. \quad (72)$$

Taking $\hat{V}_{RR}\hat{V}_{SS}$ as common factor in the right-hand side of (72) gives

$$\begin{pmatrix} \frac{dS^*}{d\mu(x_0)} \\ \frac{dR^*}{d\mu(x_0)} \end{pmatrix} = \frac{\hat{V}_{RR}\hat{V}_{SS}}{|J|} \begin{pmatrix} \frac{\hat{V}_{S\mu(x_0)}}{-\hat{V}_{SS}} + \frac{\hat{V}_{RS}}{-\hat{V}_{SS}} \frac{\hat{V}_{R\mu(x_0)}}{-\hat{V}_{RR}} \\ \frac{\hat{V}_{R\mu(x_0)}}{-\hat{V}_{RR}} + \frac{\hat{V}_{SR}}{-\hat{V}_{RR}} \frac{\hat{V}_{S\mu(x_0)}}{-\hat{V}_{SS}} \end{pmatrix}. \quad (73)$$

Provided the strict concavity of $\hat{V}(S, R; \mu)$ at $(S^*, R^*; \mu(x_0))$ and multiplying both sides of (73) by -1 , since we are interested in the effect of a decline in mortality rather than an increase in mortality, we obtain

$$\text{sign} \left[\frac{-dS^*}{d\mu(x_0)} \right] = -\text{sign} \left[S_{\mu(x_0)}^*(R^*; \mu) + \frac{dS^*}{dR^*} R_{\mu(x_0)}^*(S^*; \mu) \right], \quad (74)$$

$$\text{sign} \left[\frac{-dR^*}{d\mu(x_0)} \right] = -\text{sign} \left[R_{\mu(x_0)}^*(S^*; \mu) + \frac{dR^*}{dS^*} S_{\mu(x_0)}^*(R^*; \mu) \right]. \quad (75)$$

This completes the proof of Eqs. (24a) and (24b).

We now differentiate (45) and (46) with respect to $-\mu(x_0)$ at (S^*, R^*) , respectively,

$$-\hat{V}_{S\mu(x_0)} = U_c(c^*)e^{-rS^*}p(S^*) \left(\frac{-\partial f(S^*, R^*)}{\partial \mu(x_0)} - \frac{f(S^*, R^*)}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{-\partial c^*}{\partial \mu(x_0)} \right), \quad (76)$$

$$-\hat{V}_{R\mu(x_0)} = U_c(c^*)e^{-rR^*}p(R^*)y(S^*, R^*) \left(-\frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{-\partial c^*}{\partial \mu(x_0)} \right). \quad (77)$$

Substituting (76)-(77) in (74), taking $\frac{U_c(c^*)e^{-rS^*}p(S^*)}{-\hat{V}_{SS}(S^*, R^*)}$ as common factor, and using (12), (18) and (20), we get

$$\text{sign} \left[\frac{-dS^*}{d\mu(x_0)} \right] = \text{sign} \left[\frac{-\partial f(S^*, R^*)}{\partial \mu(x_0)} - \frac{f(S^*, R^*)}{\sigma(c^*)} \frac{1}{c^*} \frac{-\partial c^*}{\partial \mu(x_0)} \left(1 + \frac{dR^*}{dS^*} \frac{c_R^*}{c_S^*} \right) \right]. \quad (78)$$

Using (11), (18), and (26) we obtain, after rearranging,

$$\text{sign} \left[\frac{-dS^*}{d\mu(x_0)} \right] = \text{sign} \left[\int_{S^*}^{R^*} e^{-r(x-S^*)} \frac{-\partial}{\partial \mu(x_0)} \left[\frac{p(x)}{p(S^*)} \right] y_S(S^*, x) dx - e^{-r(x_0-S^*)} \frac{p(x_0)}{p(S^*)} a(x_0) \frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)c^*} \left(c_S^* + c_R^* \frac{dR^*}{dS^*} \right) \right]. \quad (79)$$

Finally, taking $e^{-r(x_0-S^*)} \frac{p(x_0)}{p(S^*)}$ as common factor and using the fact that $\frac{dc^*}{dS^*} = c_S^* + c_R^* \frac{dR^*}{dS^*}$ we obtain Proposition 4(a), or Eq. (32).

Using the same steps for the sign of $\frac{-dR^*}{d\mu(x_0)}$ but now taking $-\hat{V}_{RR}$ as common factor, it can be shown that

$$\text{sign} \left[\frac{-dR^*}{d\mu(x_0)} \right] = \text{sign} \left[\frac{dS^*}{dR^*} \int_{S^*}^{R^*} e^{-r(x-S^*)} \frac{-\partial}{\partial \mu(x_0)} \left[\frac{p(x)}{p(S^*)} \right] y_S(S^*, x) dx - e^{-r(x_0-S^*)} \frac{p(x)}{p(S^*)} a(x_0) \frac{1}{\sigma(c^*)c^*} \left(c_R^* + c_S^* \frac{dS^*}{dR^*} \right) \right]. \quad (80)$$

Similarly, taking $e^{-r(x_0-S^*)} \frac{p(x)}{p(S^*)}$ as common factor and using the fact that $\frac{dc^*}{dR^*} = c_R^* + c_S^* \frac{dS^*}{dR^*}$ we obtain Proposition 4(b), or Eq. (33).

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