Training and Search On the Job*

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Abstract

The paper studies the accumulation of human capital (both general and specific) over workers' careers in a frictional labor market setting with search on the job and heterogenous firms. Training and wages are set in optimally designed renegotiation proof contracts that also specify response to outside competition for the worker. Both kinds of training imply increasing wages within the same job and higher wages with future employers, even conditional on the type of the future employer. Specific training results in a better bargaining position with future employers. Thus, both general and specific training contribute to experience and tenure effects in wage dynamics estimations.

The analysis imposes a hold-up problem on training through the assumption of risk averse workers. In this environment more generous contracts provide more training for a given firm type, and more productive firms provide more training. The analysis contains (as a partial equilibrium mechanism) the Acemoglu and Pischke (1999) result that increased labor market friction reduces the hold-up problem which results in more training. But due to increased mismatch and less generous contracts, the analysis arrives at the opposite result; For an equilibrium calibrated to the U.S. labor market, increased labor market friction reduces training.

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1 Introduction

In the United States, worker reallocation between firms most commonly happens without an intervening unemployment spell.[1] Job-to-job transitions involve a direct competition between the two employers, whereas reallocation through unemployment resets the worker's bargaining position to her valuation of unemployment.[2] Christensen et al. (2005) show that job-to-job reallocations are motivated by the worker's search for more productive positions and higher wages. In this paper, we study the investment in workers' human capital, be it general or specific, during their careers in a frictional setting with heterogeneous firms that includes on-the-job search and optimally designed long-term employment contracts that specify training and wage paths, as well as responses to outside competition for the worker.

The inclusion of on-the-job search and heterogenous firms in the frictional environment offers new insights into the interaction between training and frictions, and their impact on wage dynamics: The impact of human capital accumulation on within and between firm wage dynamics does not in qualitative sense vary by its specificity. In particular, both perfectly general and perfectly specific training result in increasing wages within the job as well as between jobs.[3] The classic distinction between labor market experience and firm tenure effects in wage regressions as studied in among others Altonji and Shakotko (1987), Topel (1991), Altonji and Williams (2005), Dustman and Meghir (2005), and Buchinsky et al. (2010) is therefore a murky reflection of the specificity of accumulated human capital during careers.

The employment contracts in the paper are required to be renegotiation proof and as a result they respond to outside competition in a manner identical to the offer matching process in Postel-Vinay and Robin (2002). General training results in an increased valuation of the worker across all potential employers. The occasional arrival of outside offers delivers the valuation increase to the worker through higher wages either within the job if the outside

[1] Rogerson and Shimer (2011) document an annual employment to employment hazard of about 0.3 for the period 2000-06. The corresponding employment to unemployment hazard is 0.24. Finally, the unemployed job finding rate is 5.2 at annual frequency. As documented in Fujita and Moscarini (2013), these numbers over-estimate reallocation to new employers through the unemployment channel because a large part of the outflow from unemployment are recalls.

[2] Recent notable exceptions are Fujita and Moscarini (2013) and Carrillo-Tudela and Smith (2014).

[3] The one exception to this result is that wages with future employers after an unemployment spell are unaffected by specific training. But even that exception is eliminated in settings with for example recall, such as Fujita and Moscarini (2013) and Carrillo-Tudela and Smith (2014).

employer is not capable of matching the current employer's willingness to pay, or in a new match if it can.

Specific training increases the current employer's valuation of the worker, only. But due to productive heterogeneity across firms, the match is not insulated from increased competitive pressure. More productive outside firms can challenge the current firm's increased valuation of the worker. Thus, similar to the case of general training, the occasional meeting with more productive outside employers gradually delivers the valuation increase to the worker either within the job if the outside employer's valuation of the worker does not match that of the current employer, or through a better bargaining position in a job with the new employer. Thus, specific training delivers higher wages with future employers through a better bargaining position, even though the training has no productive impact on the future match.[4] Furthermore, the competitive pressure from more productive employers forces an increasing wage profile within the job as well.[5]

Frictional competition implies that the rents from productive gains caused by either general or specific training are partially delivered to the worker ex post training. In line with Becker (1964), firms therefore make workers "pay" for training up front through lower wages during training, but the result now extends to specific training, as well. The analysis imposes a hold-up problem on training through the introduction of worker risk aversion which makes backloaded wage profiles costly. The hold-up problem reduces training intensity, and again, the effect applies to both general and specific training.

Firm heterogeneity allows the analysis to consider variation in training across firms and how training is affected by mismatch. Training can vary across firms purely due to production function complementarities between firm productivity and worker human capital. In the risk neutral case where the hold up problem is absent from the analysis, training is increasing (decreasing) in the firm type if and only if the production function is supermodular (submodular). This applies both to general and specific training. The hold-up problem by itself

[4]The model also implies that specific training is associated a positive selection effect on future employers; conditional on moving, specific training increases the expected productivity type of the future employer. This is a well known concern that confounded the analyses in Altonji and Shakotko (1987) and Topel (1991). The effect is distinct from the increased bargaining position whereby wages increase conditional on employer type.

[5]Thus, in contrast to Felli and Harris (1996) we obtain the result that purely specific training implies increasing wages within the job.

implies that training intensity is increasing in the generosity of a given firm's employment contract, and in our calibration to the U.S. economy, training is also on average increasing in firm type.

These insights cause us to reconsider the conclusions in Acemoglu and Pischke (1999) regarding the relationship between training and frictions. They argue that labor market friction relieves the hold-up problem associated with general training through a reduction in the upward wage pressure ex post training. Therefore, in a second best setting subject to a hold-up problem, increased labor market friction results in more general training. Our analysis includes and validates this mechanism as a partial equilibrium result, which now pertains both to specific and general training. In particular, an employment contract will for a given employer type and a given utility promise to the worker provide more training as labor market friction increases. However, increased labor market friction implies that in equilibrium, workers tend to have worse bargaining positions and they are matched with worse firms, that is, there is increased mismatch. Given the imposed hold-up problem, training is decreasing in both of these dimensions. In the calibrated model, these equilibrium effects turn out to dominate. Thus, we arrive at the opposite conclusion; that training is decreasing in the extent of labor market friction.

The worker's human capital accumulation is employment history dependent. This is not an unusual feature in models with learning by doing or with human capital depreciation during unemployment. But in these cases, it is typically time spent in unemployment that matters. In our setting, variation in human capital accumulation across workers is tied to the degree of mismatch the worker has experienced throughout her career. Thus, there is a positive association between favorable employment history realizations and human capital accumulation.[6] A wage variance decomposition that measures the contributions from human capital variation as well as labor market frictions must in this case account for the positive covariance between the two contributions.[7] It also implies a positive sorting effect where

[6]Recent results in Guvenen et al. (2015) find that wages are decreasing in the accumulation of past mismatch, which is consistent with the mechanisms in our model with training subject to hold-up and/or a supermodular production function.

[7]An example of such a decomposition that accounts for a positive correlation between the two can be found in Bagger and Lentz (2013). They emphasize that a positive correlation between favorable match outcomes and worker human capital can arise through the reverse causality: that higher human capital workers lose relatively more by mismatch and therefore search more intensely for favorable matches.

workers matched with better firms end up with more human capital, ex post. In our calibrated model, the positive correlation between worker human capital and firm productivity turns out to be quite strong despite the complete absence of assortative matching.

General and specific training have sharply different implications for mobility, and they also differ in terms of social efficiency. General training does not impact future worker mobility, at all: If the worker meets a more productive firm, the worker will move to it, regardless. However, specific training implies that the current match moves up the "willingness to pay for the worker" hierarchy, and it therefore reduces the job-to-job hazard.

It is in relation to the match destruction rate that the two kinds of training differ in terms of social efficiency as well. In the risk neutral case (that is, in the absence of the hold-up problem), general training is socially efficient. However, specific training is too high and the problem is greater for lower productivity firms. This is partially a feature of the wage determination process whereby a future firm always perfectly compensates the current match for its destruction in case of a job-to-job move. The social planner understands that a low productivity match is more likely to be destroyed in favor of a better match and consequently invests less in specific training. But privately, the match does not internalize the loss of specific capital associated with the worker moving since the future firm is fully compensating the loss. The analysis includes consideration of side payment schemes that can resolve the inefficiency, although we do not believe these schemes easy to implement.

Section 2 contains the model description and the analysis. The general optimal contract is analyzed in Section 2.3, and the risk neutral case is studied in Section 2.4 with a particular focus on efficiency. Section 3 calibrates the model to the U.S. economy and numerically solves for the equilibrium and presents counterfactuals. Section 4 concludes.

2 Model

There is a unit measure of workers who can be either employed or unemployed. Time is continuous and both firms and workers discount time at rate ρ. Workers die at rate d. Matches are formed through a frictional search process. Unemployed and employed workers meet employment opportunities at rates λ_u and λ_e, respectively, where a meeting is characterized by the productivity of the employer, $p \in [0, 1]$. An employment relationship consists of two productive activities: The match produces an output that generates a revenue stream, and second the firm provides training that increases the worker's human capital. Training can be both general and specific.

Competition over workers takes place as in Lentz (2014): If a firm meets an unemployed worker, it can make the worker a take-it-or-leave-it lifetime utility offer, which the unemployed worker will accept as long as it exceeds the value of unemployment. If a firm meets an already employed worker, the worker can choose to reveal the meeting to her current employer, at which point both firms learn their respective productivity types. The worker's current contract specifies how the incumbent firm responds to an outside meeting with a particular productivity type, and the outside firm can then respond to the worker's current terms.

The contract is required to be renegotiation proof. Consequently, contracts always match outside offers, see Lentz (2014). If two firms are serenading a worker for her services, the most productive firm will win at a utility promise equal to the loser's willingness to pay; the utility promise such that the firm's discounted future profits are exactly zero.

There is limited commitment on the part of both firms and workers: Each can without cost leave the relationship for their respective outside options. Thus, the discounted profit value of the contract cannot be negative, and the worker's valuation of the contract cannot be less than the value of unemployment.

A firm designs an employment contract to maximize its profits subject to the utility promise it has made to the worker. An employment relationship delivers utility to a worker in three ways: (1) The contract promises a wage payment stream as a function of the employment history, which includes arrivals of outside meetings. (2) The contract promises employment history contingent general and specific human capital training rates. (3) The contract may facilitate rent extraction with future employers.

The firm can invest in two kinds of human capital: General and specific. Denote by h the worker's general human capital level, which we will also refer to as the worker's skill. Let m be the match specific capital level. To keep the analysis simple assume skill has only two support points: Skilled ($h = 1$) and unskilled ($h = 0$). Make a similar assumption for the match specific capital, $m \in \{0, 1\}$. All workers are born into the labor market unskilled and unemployed. Furthermore, assume human capital does not depreciate. It is straightforward to relax these assumptions, but we maintain them throughout the paper for the sake of exposition. Let $f_{hm}(p)$ be the output of a match between a productivity p firm and a skill h worker with match specific capital m. Assume that the production function is strictly increasing in h, m, and p.

The firm's training decision is modeled as a choice that controls the stochastic process governing the evolution of the worker's human capital. Specifically, the firm can pick the Poisson rate η for which the unskilled worker becomes skilled, and the Poisson rate μ by which a $m = 0$ match transitions to $m = 1$. All firms have access to the same training technology, which is reflected in the monetary general training cost $c_h(\eta)$ and specific training cost $c_m(\mu)$. Both cost functions are increasing and convex.

As emphasized by Becker (1964), privately efficient training decisions can be made if the contract can make the worker "pay" for training up front through low initial wages. Inefficiency may arise, if it is costly to implement such a contract, and Acemoglu and Pischke (1999) argue that in this case labor market frictions help reduce the inefficiency in the provision of general human capital. In our model, making the worker pay for training up front is made costly through the assumption of risk aversion in worker preferences, and the degree of risk aversion then controls the magnitude of the cost.

2.1 Worker lifetime utility

Workers are risk averse and consume whatever income they have at a given instant which delivers utility, $u(w)$, where w is the wage level. An unemployed worker with human capital h receives benefits b_h. All employed workers are laid off at exogenous layoff rate δ. For the purposes of expressing the worker's lifetime utility, define a firm's willingness to pay $\bar{V}_{hm}(p)$ as a function of its productivity, worker skill h, and specific capital m. It is a result in the analysis that this object is monotonically increasing in p. Define the inverse function $p_{hm}(V)$ by $V = \bar{V}_{hm}(p_{hm}(V))$. Let $F_h(V)$ be the distribution of willingness to pay levels in the vacancy offer distribution for skill h workers and $m = 0$. Furthermore, use the shorthand $\hat{F}_h(V) = 1 - F_h(V)$.

Consider a skill h worker currently employed at a productivity p firm and match specific capital m. Define the worker's effective discount rate $r = \rho + d$. The lifetime utility of the contract can be expressed recursively,

$$\begin{aligned}(r+\delta+\eta+\mu)V &= u(w)+\eta H+\mu M+\delta U_h+\dot{V}+ \\ &\quad+\lambda_e\left[\int_V^{\bar{V}_{hm}(p)}(V'-V)\,dF_h(V')+\hat{F}_h\left(\bar{V}_{hm}(p)\right)\left(\bar{V}_{hm}(p)-V\right)\right] \\ &= u(w)+\eta H+\mu M+\delta U_h+\dot{V}+\lambda_e\int_V^{\bar{V}_{hm}(p)}\hat{F}_h(V')\,dV',\end{aligned}$$

where the second line follows by integration by parts. $\left(w,\dot{V},H,M,\eta,\mu\right)$ are dictated by the contract, H is the continuation utility if the worker's skill level increases. M is the continuation promise if the match specific capital increases. H and M are of course only relevant if $h=0$ and $m=0$, respectively. Since only in these cases will training rates η and μ be positive. U_h is the value of unemployment. Denote by $O\left(\bar{V}',V|\bar{V}\right)$ the contract's offer response conditional on the worker revealing a meeting with an outside firm with willingness to pay $\bar{V}'$ conditional on the firm's own willingness to pay $\bar{V}$ and the contract currently delivering V. Lentz (2014) shows that the optimal renegotiation proof strategy for the firm is,

$$O\left(\bar{V}',V|\bar{V}\right)=\min\left[\bar{V}',\bar{V}\right].$$

Thus, the contract matches the outside firm's willingness to pay up to the firm's own willingness to pay. Off equilibrium path, the contract specifies that if the worker reveals a meeting with a firm that has willingness to pay below the value of the worker's current contract, the firm will reduce the value of the contract to the outside firm's willingness to pay.[8] There are other optimal strategies, but they all have the same impact on the worker's evaluation of the value of an outside meeting.

The value of unemployment is given by,

$$rU_h=u(b_h).$$

The worker meets firms at rate λ_u. However, regardless of the type of the meeting, the associated employment contract delivers utility promise U_h.

[8]It is implicitly assumed that any firm's willingness to pay exceeds the worker's valuation of unemployment. This will be satisfied in equilibrium.

2.2 Firm profits

Let $\Pi_{hm}(V,p)$ be the optimal profit value to a firm with productivity p in a (h,m) state match subject to a utility promise V. The firm's valuation of the discounted stream of profits associated with a contract can be written recursively by,

$$(r+\delta)\,\Pi_{hm}(V,p) = \max_{\left(w,\dot{V},\eta,\mu,H,M\right)\in\Gamma_{hm}(V,p)} \Bigg\{ f_{hm}(p) - w - c_h(\eta) - c_m(\mu) + \lambda_e \int_V^{\bar{V}_{hm}(p)} \Pi'_{hm}(V',p)\,\hat{F}_h(V')\,dV' + \eta\left[\Pi_{1m}(H,p) - \Pi_{hm}(V,p)\right] + \mu\left[\Pi_{h1}(M,p) - \Pi_{hm}(V,p)\right] + \Pi'_{hm}(V,p)\,\dot{V} \Bigg\}, \quad (1)$$

where the feasible set of contract design choices is given by,

$$\Gamma_{hm}(V,p) = \Bigg\{ \left(w,\dot{V},\eta,\mu,H,M\right) \;\Big|\; u(w) + \eta H + \mu M + \delta U_h + \dot{V} + \lambda_e \int_V^{\bar{V}_{hm}(p)} \hat{F}_h(V')\,dV' = (r+\delta+\eta+\mu)\,V, \quad U_h \le M \le \bar{V}_{h1}(p), \quad U_1 \le H \le \bar{V}_{1m}(p) \Bigg\}.$$

The last two set of constraints reflect the participation constraints of the worker and firm both. It is assumed that production technology is such that the willingness to pay of a firm is never strictly below the value of unemployment for a given human capital level. The first constraint is the promise keeping constraint. The willingness to pay for a given human capital level is given by,

$$\Pi_{hm}\left(\bar{V}_{hm}(p),p\right) = 0. \quad (2)$$

2.3 Optimal contract design

Let the Lagrange multiplier on the promise keeping constraint be $\gamma_{hm}(V,p)$, where $\gamma_{hm}(V,p) > 0$ is a sufficient condition for the recursive formulation of the contracting problem to be valid. Denote by $\varphi_m(V,p)$ the Lagrange multiplier on the worker's participation constraint, $U_{1m} \le H$. It is verified that the other constraints are not binding for the optimal contract.

Since benefits are general human capital dependent, the analysis must consider the possibility that the contracting problem can face a binding worker participation constraint in the case where the worker's skill increases. Since an increase in match specific capital involves an increase in joint match value and neither the worker's or firm's outside options are affected, the participation constraints will not bind in the case where match specific capital increases.

2.3.1 Profit function and willingness to pay

The profit function is decreasing and strictly concave. Lentz (2014) provides proof of concavity in the more general setting with hidden search (absent training decisions). It is also straightforward to show that the firm's willingness to pay $\bar{V}_{hm}(p)$ is monotonically increasing in all three arguments, which is a direct implication of the monotonicity of the production function.

2.3.2 Wages

In the absence of minimum wages or other constraints on the wage design, the slope of the profit function must satisfy,

$$\Pi'_{hm}(V,p) = -(r+\delta)\gamma_{hm}(V,p) = \frac{-1}{u'(w_{hm}(V,p))}, \tag{3}$$

which follows from the first order conditions on the choices of w and $\dot{V}$. By implication wages $w_{hm}(V,p)$ are strictly increasing in the utility promise if and only if the profit function is strictly concave. For a given utility promise, wages are decreasing in firm type, because of the greater expected gain in future utility promises.

2.3.3 Tenure conditional utility promise and wage paths.

By the derivative of the Lagrangian $\partial\mathcal{L}/\partial V = \Pi'(V)$, and the envelope theorem, one obtains,

$$\Pi'_{hm}(V,p) + (r+\delta)\gamma_{hm}(V,p) = \frac{\Pi''_{hm}(V,p)}{r+\delta+\lambda\hat{F}_h(V)+\eta_m(V,p)+\mu_h(V,p)}\dot{V}_{hm}(V,p). \tag{4}$$

Together with equation (3), it must be that in the absence of outside offers and skill increases, the optimal employment contract is flat,

$$\dot{V}_{hm}(V,p) = 0. \tag{5}$$

Thus, in the absence of outside offer arrivals or changes in human capital, the contract's wage profile is flat in tenure. In the limit case where the worker is risk neutral, the flat contract remains optimal, but there is now a multitude of optimal paths.[9] The analysis will use the flat contract in the limit case where the worker is risk neutral.

Unconditionally, the employment contract involves expected changes in the utility promise over job duration through two channels. The contract matches the willingness to pay of firms that the worker meets, which in isolation implies an expected increasing utility promise path in duration. For a given utility promise V, the expected growth rate in the utility promise within the job due to on-the-job search is $\lambda_e \int_V^{\bar{V}_{hm}(p)} (V' - V)\, dF_h(V') \geq 0$. By wages increasing in the utility promise, on-the-job search in isolation implies an increasing wage path in tenure. This is a simple replication of the offer matching process in Postel-Vinay and Robin (2002).

Furthermore, should the match specific capital or the worker's general human capital change, the continuation utility promise may jump in these events. The following lemma characterizes the optimal contract's response to human capital changes.

Lemma 1. *The optimal contract is for any $p \in [0,1]$ and $V \in \left[U_h, \bar{V}_{hm}(p)\right]$ characterized by $V < H_m(V,p) < \bar{V}_{1m}(p)$ and $V \leq M_h(V,p) < \bar{V}_{h1}(p)$ with strict inequality if $p < 1$. Wages are smooth across human capital capital increases: $w_{h0}(V,p) = w_{h1}(M_h(V,p),p)$ and $w_{0m}(V,p) = w_{1m}(H_m(V,p),p)$ for $\varphi_m(V,p) = 0$. If $\varphi_m(V,p) > 0$ then $H_m(V,p) = U_1$ and $w_{0m}(V,p) < w_{1m}(H_m(V,p),p)$.*

Proof. The human capital change conditional utility promises satisfy the first order equations,

$$\Pi'_{1m}(H_m(V,p),p) - \Pi'_{0m}(V,p) = \frac{-(r+\delta)\varphi_m(V,p)}{\eta_m(V,p)} \tag{6}$$

$$\Pi'_{h1}(M_h(V,p),p) - \Pi'_{h0}(V,p) = 0. \tag{7}$$

If the worker participation constraint is not binding ($\varphi_{hm}(V,p) = 0$) one finds that the wage profile is flat over human capital jumps,

$$\Pi'_{0m}(V,p) = \Pi'_{1m}(H_m(V,p),p)$$

$$\Pi'_{h0}(V,p) = \Pi'_{h1}(M_h(V,p),p),$$

[9] As documented in Lentz (2014), the optimal contract will itself be backloaded ($\dot{V} > 0$) in the case where the worker can engage in hidden search in order to increase the chance of an outside meeting.

which implies,

$$w_{0m}(V,p) = w_{1m}(H_m(V,p),p)$$
$$w_{h0}(V,p) = w_{h1}(M_h(V,p),p).$$

If the worker's participation constraint in case of a skill increase is binding, wages jump up in case of a skill increase. This follows directly from the concavity of the profit function and that wages are increasing in the utility promise. The participation constraint forces the firm to offer a greater utility promise than the one that makes wages smooth across the skill jump. By concavity the binding participation implies, $\Pi'_{0m}(V,p) > \Pi'_{1m}(H_m(V,p),p)$ and therefore $w_{0m}(V,p) < w_{1m}(H_m(V,p),p)$.

Now, consider the claim that $V < M_h(V,p) < \bar{V}_{h1}(p)$ for $p < 1$. Proof is by contradiction. Suppose first that $M_h(V,p) = \bar{V}_{h1}(p)$. For the sake of simplicity, take the case where $h = 1$. Trivially, it must be that $w_{11}\left(\bar{V}_{11}(p),p\right) = f_{11}(p)$ since there is no possibility of future wage gains within the contract. It must then be that $w_{10}(V,p) \leq w_{10}\left(\bar{V}_{10}(p),p\right) \leq f_{10}(p) - c_m\left(\mu\left(\bar{V}_{10}(p),p\right)\right) < f_{11}(p)$. This is because at $M_1(V,p) = \bar{V}_{11}(p)$ the firm hands over all gains to specific training to the worker. Hence, $\Pi_{10}\left(\bar{V}_{10}(p),p\right) = 0$ implies that wages w_{10} cannot exceed production less training cost. Thus, $M_h(V,p) = \bar{V}_{h1}(p)$ implies that $w_{10}(V,p) < w_{11}(M_h(V,p),p)$, violating (7). Suppose instead, also by contradiction that $M_1(V,p) \leq V$. By the utility promise constraint we have that,

$$\begin{aligned}
(r+\delta) M_1(V,p) &= u(w_{11}(M_1(V,p),p)) + \delta U_1 + \lambda_e \int_{M_1(V,p)}^{\bar{V}_{11}(p)} \hat{F}_1(V')\, dV' \\
&= u(w_{10}(V,p)) + \delta U_1 + \lambda_e \int_{M_1(V,p)}^{\bar{V}_{11}(p)} \hat{F}_1(V')\, dV' \\
&> u(w_{10}(V,p)) + \mu(V,p)[M_1(V,p) - V] + \delta U_1 + \lambda_e \int_{V}^{\bar{V}_{10}(p)} \hat{F}_1(V')\, dV' \\
&= (r+\delta) V.
\end{aligned}$$

The second equality follows from (7). The inequality follows directly from the presumption that $M_1(V,p) \leq V$ and that $\bar{V}_{11}(p) > \bar{V}_{10}(p)$. Therefore $M_1(V,p) \leq V$ is contradicted. The basic intuition is that since wages are smooth across the human capital change, a utility promise $M_1(V,p) \leq V$ implies greater future utility promise growth than prior to the human capital increase. At an unchanged current wage level, a greater future utility promise growth is inconsistent with a reduction in the utility promise. Hence it must be that $V < M_h(V, p) < \bar{V}_{h1}(p)$. The $p = 1$ case is the exception. In this case $M_1(V, 1) = V$. The reason being that $\bar{V}_{10}(1)$ is the upper bound on the support of $F_1(V)$. The fact that the firm's willingness to pay increases from $\bar{V}_{10}(1)$ to $\bar{V}_{11}(1)$ does not result in an increase in the worker's expected utility promise growth rate for any given utility promise, because there are no outside firms to challenge the increase.

Arguments for $h = 0$ as well as the skill increase conditional utility promise $V < H_m(V, p) < \bar{V}_{1m}(p)$ go along the same lines. □

Lemma 1 is significant in that it states that gains from human capital growth are given to both firm and worker. In the case of general human capital the worker will not manage to extract all of the gains, which is a confirmation of the arguments in Acemoglu and Pischke (1999) that frictions endow general human capital with specificity allowing the firm to extract some of the rents. The more novel part of Lemma 1 is that the same is true for gains from specific training: The frictional competition environment with heterogenous firms forces the firm to hand over part of the gains from specific training to the worker. Our setup provides a particular formalization of Becker's (1964) conjecture that competition may induce the firm to share the ex post return to even perfectly specific training.

The worker receives the gains from training through higher expected wage growth subsequent to the human capital increase (both general and specific). The sources of competitive pressure on wages differ depending on the specificity of human capital. Consider an $(h, m) = (0, 0)$ worker with a current utility promise of V who is employed with a firm that has willingness to pay $\bar{V}_{00}(p)$. First, to quantify the competitive pressure on the match define the worker's expected utility growth rate from on-the-job search,

$$\Omega_{00}(V, p) = \lambda_e (1 - \Phi(p)) \left[\bar{V}_{00}(p) - V\right] + \lambda_e \int_{p_{00}(V)}^{p} \left(\bar{V}_{00}(p') - V\right) d\Phi(p'). \tag{8}$$

Integration by parts and the definition of the willingness to pay offer distribution, $F_0(V) = \Phi(p_{00}(V))$, imply that $\Omega_{00}(V, p) = \lambda_e \int_V^{\bar{V}_{00}(p)} \hat{F}_0(V')\, dV'$. The first term on the right hand side of equation (8) reflects job-to-job transitions from the current firm to an outside firm where the receiving firm will deliver an employment contract with utility promise $\bar{V}_{00}(p)$. The second term reflects how competition forces transfers from the firm to the worker within the current match. If the worker meets a firm with productivity $p' \in [p_{00}(V), p]$, the meeting results in the worker staying in the current match with an increased utility promise of $\bar{V}_{00}(p') > V$.

Suppose the worker becomes skilled. Holding the current utility promise fixed at V, the increased competitive pressure on the match is reflected in the now greater expected utility growth rate from on-the-job search,

$$\Omega_{10}(V,p) = \lambda_e (1-\Phi(p)) \left[\bar{V}_{10}(p) - V\right] + \lambda_e \int_{p_{10}(V)}^{p} \left(\bar{V}_{10}(p') - V\right) d\Phi(p').$$

All outside firms are now willing to pay more for the worker, $\bar{V}_{10}(p') > \bar{V}_{00}(p')$. In addition, the support of firm types that can impose competitive pressure on the match expands downward from $p_{00}(V)$ to the lower firm type $p_{10}(V)$. Should the worker move, she will move with a better bargaining position, $\bar{V}_{10}(p)$.

Consider alternatively an increase in specific capital from $m=0$ to $m=1$. Holding the utility promise fixed at V, the competitive pressure on the match increases to

$$\Omega_{01}(V,p) = \lambda_e \left(1-\Phi\left(p_{00}\left(\bar{V}_{01}(p)\right)\right)\right) \left[\bar{V}_{01}(p) - V\right] + \lambda_e \int_{p_{00}(V)}^{p_{00}\left(\bar{V}_{01}(p)\right)} \left(\bar{V}_{00}(p') - V\right) d\Phi(p').$$

In this case, the incumbent firm's willingness to pay for the worker increases to $\bar{V}_{01}(p) > \bar{V}_{00}(p)$. Outside firms do not change their willingness to pay for the worker, but the upper bound on the set of firms that will force up the utility promise within the job increases to $p_{00}\left(\bar{V}_{01}(p)\right) > p$. Furthermore, when the worker moves to a better firm, she moves with a stronger bargaining position of $\bar{V}_{01}(p)$.

2.3.4 Job-to-job mobility, tenure and wages

Both Altonji and Shakotko (1987) and Topel (1991) emphasize that tenure effects in wages may be associated with a selection effect on the type of future firms which complicates the distinction between experience and tenure effects in their analyses. Our analysis exhibits exactly this effect in the case of specific human capital accumulation. As specific capital increases, the firm type threshold such that the worker is indifferent between moving to it and staying with the current firm goes up. Thus, conditional on moving, the expected firm type of the new firm increases as specific capital goes up, and consequently increased specific capital will have a positive wage impact beyond the current match through this selection effect.

In addition, our analysis contains another important channel through which specific training will result in higher wages with future firms: Even though specific capital is not portable between firms, bargaining power carries over. Specific training increases the willingness to pay of the worker's current employer, which means that conditional on moving, the worker will do so with a greater utility promise with the new firm. Hence, even conditional on the type of the future employer, specific training in the current firm raises wages with future employers - this despite the fact that the willingness to pay of the future employer is unchanged.

Thus, specific training raises wages with future employers. As established above, it also raises wages with the current employer. We make the point that in our frictional labor market setting, accumulation of strictly specific capital will have positive wage tenure effects and will raise wages with future employers as well, even conditional on the future employer type.

2.3.5 Training rates

The first order conditions for the two training rates are given by,

$$[\Pi_{1m}(H_m(V,p),p) - \Pi_{0m}(V,p)] - \Pi'_{0m}(V,p)[H_m(V,p) - V] = c'_h(\eta_m(V,p)) \quad (9)$$

$$[\Pi_{h1}(M_h(V,p),p) - \Pi_{h0}(V,p)] - \Pi'_{h0}(V,p)[M_h(V,p) - V] = c'_m(\mu_h(V,p)), \quad (10)$$

where the capital change conditional utility promises satisfy equations (6) and (7).

The first order conditions on training state that the marginal cost of training must equal the marginal profit gain from the increase in either general or specific human capital. The first bracketed term on the right hand sides of the first order conditions (9) and (10) is the direct jump in profits due to the capital increase. The second term reflects the profit value of the change in worker's utility promise, where by equation (3), $\Pi'_{hm}(V,p) = -1/u'(w_{hm}(V,p))$ is the profit impact of a one unit increase in the utility promise.

Increases in the capital change conditional utility promises, $H_m(V,p)$ and $M_h(V,p)$, reduce the direct profit gains from training, but the loss is compensated by the worker's greater expected utility gains, which are translated into current profits through reduced wages today. In a risk neutral setting these two effects exactly offset each other and the training decisions are unaffected by the particular choice of $H_m(V,p)$ and $M_h(V,p)$. Thus, Becker's (1964) insight that even though a perfectly competitive environment dictates that the firm has to deliver all match surplus to the skilled worker, $H_m(V,p) = \bar{V}_1(p)$, the training choice remains privately efficient since the firm is perfectly compensated via lower wages during the training period.

When the worker is risk averse, future utility promises can no longer be translated into profits one-to-one through a lowering of current wages. Therefore, training comes to depend on both the current utility promise V and the contract's optimal choice of $H_m(V,p)$ and $M_h(V,p)$. It follows by differentiation of the first order conditions (9) and (10) that,

$$\mu_h'(V,p) = \frac{-\Pi_{h0}''(V,p)\left[M_h(V,p) - V\right]}{c_\mu''(\mu_h(V,p))}$$
$$\eta_m'(V,p) = \frac{-\Pi_{0m}''(V,p)\left[H_m(V,p) - V\right]}{c_\eta''(\eta_m(V,p))}.$$

By Lemma 1, both specific and general training are increasing in the utility promise iff the profit function is strictly concave in V, which is the case given $u(\cdot)$ strictly concave. We discuss variation in training across firm types in detail in Section 3.

Risk aversion imposes the classic hold-up problem on the training choice: Increased human capital (both general and specific) implies increased competitive pressure on the match and consequently greater rents to the worker. The firm will want to reduce current wages to capture the ex post rents flowing to the worker. However, risk aversion imposes a cost on this mechanism. The concavity of the profit function is a reflection that the hold-up problem is more severe for low utility promises because the contract is operating on a higher curvature part of the worker's utility function.

2.4 Risk neutral case

It is illustrative to consider the case of risk neutrality. Thus, $u'' = 0$ and without loss of generality transform the utility function so that $u'(w) = 1$. Thus, the profit function takes the form $\Pi_{hm}(V,p) = \bar{V}_{hm}(p) - V$. The first order conditions for the optimal contract's training rates are then by equations (9) and (10),

$$c_h'(\eta_m(V,p)) = \bar{V}_{1m}(p) - \bar{V}_{0m}(p)$$
$$c_m'(\mu_h(V,p)) = \bar{V}_{h1}(p) - \bar{V}_{h0}(p).$$

It is immediately seen that the training rates do not depend on the particular utility promise in the contract. The risk neutral case eliminates the hold-up problem from the analysis, and in particular the variation of the severity of the problem as a function of the utility promise.

The firm's willingness to pay solves,

$$(r+\delta)\bar{V}_{hm}(p) = f_{hm}(p) + \delta U_h + (1-h)\left[\eta_m(p)\left[\bar{V}_{1m}(p) - \bar{V}_{hm}(p)\right] - c_h(\eta_m(p))\right] \\ + (1-m)\left[\mu_h(p)\left[\bar{V}_{h1}(p) - \bar{V}_{hm}(p)\right] - c_m(\mu_h(p))\right],$$

where the dependency of the training rates on V has been eliminated. By differentiation it follows that,

$$\eta_1'(p) = \frac{f_{11}'(p) - f_{01}'(p)}{\left[r+\delta+\eta_1(p)\right]c_h''(\eta_1(p))}$$
$$\mu_1'(p) = \frac{f_{11}'(p) - f_{10}'(p)}{\left[r+\delta+\mu_1(p)\right]c_m''(\mu_1(p))}.$$

The expressions for $\eta_0'(p)$ and $\mu_0'(p)$ account for possible complementarities between general and specific training both direct and through firm productivity,

$$c_h''(\eta_0(p))\eta_0'(p) = \frac{f_{10}'(p) - f_{00}'(p) + \mu_1(p)c_m''(\mu_1(p))\mu_1'(p) - \mu_0(p)c_m''(\mu_0(p))\mu_0'(p)}{r+\delta+\eta_0(p)}$$
$$c_m''(\mu_0(p))\mu_0'(p) = \frac{f_{01}'(p) - f_{00}'(p) + \eta_1(p)c_h''(\eta_1(p))\eta_1'(p) - \eta_0(p)c_h''(\eta_0(p))\eta_0'(p)}{r+\delta+\mu_0(p)}.$$

In the case of a modular production function one immediately obtains that, $\eta_m'(p) = \mu_h'(p) = 0$. Thus, in the risk neutral case, if the production function does not have complementarities between firm productivity and training, then training is constant across firm types. Competitive pressure varies across firms, but whatever the share of ex post gains to training it delivers to the worker, the firm can translate it into profits through lower wages at the time of training without any efficiency loss. Specifically, notice that the meeting rates λ_u and λ_e do not affect $\bar{V}_{hm}(p)$ and therefore do not impact the training levels.

In the risk neutral case, variation in training across firms is driven purely by complementarities in production between firm productivity and training. Positive complementarities imply that training is increasing in firm type. Negative complementarities induce a negative relationship between training and firm type.

Finally, the offer matching aspect of the wage determination process also contributes to why competitive pressure (λ_e) does not affect training in the risk neutral case: Whenever the worker moves to another firm, that firm fully compensates the destruction of the previous match. In particular, this includes the value of human capital investments that were made in the match. If the worker's gains associated with a move to another firm fall short of the old firm's losses, one would expect that general training be decreasing in the degree of competitive pressure on the match, since it now raises the effective discount rate on the returns to human capital investments. In the Supplemental Appendix, Sanders and Taber (2012) discuss such a case in an environment where wages are statically bargained based on an outside worker option of unemployment. Fu (2011) presents an analysis with a supermodular production function and a piecewise wage posting environment where matches are not perfectly compensated for their destruction when workers reallocate.

2.4.1 Social planner

General training is in the risk neutral case socially efficient as long as it is not affected by complementarities with specific training. This is documented in the Appendix.

But for specific training, the environment has an intriguing inefficiency: In the modular production function case, the decentralized economy provides the same level of specific training everywhere on the ladder. However, the social planner solution for specific training is increasing in firm type: The planner discounts match specific capital in low productivity firms at a greater rate because workers are more likely to reallocate to better firms. Therefore, the social planner invests more in specific training further up the ladder. The inefficiency in the decentralized economy is a result of future employers perfectly compensating the old match for its destruction, which includes the value of the match specific capital. Thus, there is a private return to match specific capital investment that is not present in the social returns. It implies that there tends to be too much specific training in low type firms. The following formalizes the argument.

For the sake of simplicity, disregard general human capital. Assume a modular production function. Without loss of generality assume $f_m(p) = f(p) + m$. Consider a utilitarian social planner problem of maximizing the contribution of a worker in a low match specific capital match. Denote the contribution by,

$$(r+\delta)\,\mathcal{V}_0(p) = \max_{\mu}\left[f(p) - c_m(\mu) + \delta\mathcal{U} + \mu\left(\mathcal{V}_1(p) - \mathcal{V}_0(p)\right) + \lambda_e \int_p^1 \left[\mathcal{V}_0(p') - \mathcal{V}_0(p)\right] d\Phi(p)\right]$$
$$= f(p) + \delta\mathcal{U} + \mathcal{M}(p) + \lambda_e \int_p^1 \frac{\left[f'(p') + \mathcal{M}'(p')\right]\hat{\Phi}(p')}{r+\delta+\lambda_1\hat{\Phi}(p')} dp',$$

where the value of a high match specific capital match is,

$$(r+\delta)\,\mathcal{V}_1(p) = f(p) + m + \delta\mathcal{U} + \lambda_e \int_{\tilde{p}(p)}^1 \left[\mathcal{V}_0(p') - \mathcal{V}_0(\tilde{p}(p))\right] d\Phi(p)$$
$$= f(p) + m + \delta\mathcal{U} + \lambda_e \int_{\tilde{p}(p)}^1 \frac{\left[f'(p') + \mathcal{M}'(p')\right]\hat{\Phi}(p')}{r+\delta+\lambda_1\hat{\Phi}(p')} dp'.$$

The threshold $\tilde{p}(p)$ is defined by $\mathcal{V}_1(p) = \mathcal{V}_0(\tilde{p}(p))$. Since $\mathcal{V}_0(p) < \mathcal{V}_1(p)$ and the value is increasing in p, it must be that $\tilde{p}(p) > p$. The loss of firm specific capital that is associated with switching firms must be compensated by a sufficiently large gain in firm type. The value of the investment option is,

$$\mathcal{M}(p) = \max_{\mu}\left[-c_m(\mu) + \mu\left(\mathcal{V}_1(p) - \mathcal{V}_0(p)\right)\right].$$

And the socially optimal specific investment choice solves,

$$c_m'(\mu(p)) = \mathcal{V}_1(p) - \mathcal{V}_0(p).$$

Some algebra yields,

$$\mathcal{V}_1(p) - \mathcal{V}_0(p) = \max_{\mu} \frac{m + c_m(\mu) - \int_p^{\tilde{p}(p)} \frac{\left[f'(p') + \mu\left[\mathcal{V}_1'(p') - \mathcal{V}_0'(p')\right]\right]\hat{\Phi}(p')}{r+\delta+\lambda_1\hat{\Phi}(p')} dp'}{r+\delta+\mu}. \tag{11}$$

Differentiation and the envelope theorem leads to,

$$\mathcal{V}_1'(p) - \mathcal{V}_0'(p) = \frac{f'(p)}{r+\delta}\left[\frac{\hat{\Phi}(p)}{r+\delta+\lambda_e\hat{\Phi}(p)} - \frac{\hat{\Phi}(\tilde{p}(p))}{r+\delta+\lambda_e\hat{\Phi}(\tilde{p}(p))}\right].$$

By $\tilde{p}(p) > p$ it follows that $\mathcal{V}_1'(p) - \mathcal{V}_0'(p) > 0$. Therefore, the social planner's choice of specific investment is increasing in p, $\mu'(p) = \left[\mathcal{V}_1'(p) - \mathcal{V}_0'(p)\right]/c_m''(\mu(p)) > 0$.

2.4.2 Commitment

The inefficiency in specific human capital training in low type firms arises because a future employer fully compensates its destruction if the worker moves. Therefore, if the current match can extract all rents from future employer meetings, it will internalize the value of the destruction of match specific capital in case the worker moves. There is an instrument that can achieve this outcome: The current firm can issue the following obligation: If the worker moves, the firm will pay the holder of the obligation the difference between the outside firm's willingness to pay and its own willingness to pay, that is $B = \bar{V}(p') - \bar{V}(p)$ where $p' > p$ is the type of the type of the outside firm and p is the type of the firm itself. In a competitive market the firm can sell this obligation at flow rate $\lambda_e \int_{\bar{V}(p)}^{\bar{V}(1)} \left[V - \bar{V}(p)\right] dF(V)$. With the obligation, the firm's willingness to pay for the worker comes to equal that of the outside firm.[10] Thus, the obligation allows for efficient separation and the current match extracts all the rents from future employers.

Continue the example above where general human capital has been eliminated from the analysis. With that and subject to the obligation, the value of the current contract to the worker is,

$$(r + \delta + \mu) V = w + \mu M + \delta U + \lambda_e \int_{V}^{\bar{V}(1)} \hat{F}(V') \, dV'.$$

The firm is maximizing the profit expression,

$$(r + \delta) \Pi_0 (V, p) = f_0 (p) - w - c_m (\mu) + \mu [\Pi_1 (M, p) - \Pi_0 (V, p)] - \lambda_e \int_{V}^{\bar{V}(p)} \hat{F}(V') \, dV',$$

where the expected liability payment from the obligation due to the worker quitting is perfectly offset by the revenue flow from the sale of the obligation. Furthermore, linearity of the profit function simplifies the profit loss integral from outside offers.

Insert the utility promise expression into the firm's profits to obtain,

$$(r + \delta) \bar{V}_0 (p) = f_0 (p) - c_m (\mu) + \delta U + \mu \left[\bar{V}_1 (p) - \bar{V}_0 (p)\right] + \lambda_e \int_{\bar{V}_0(p)}^{\bar{V}_0(1)} \hat{F}(V') \, dV',$$

where the optimal specific training rate solves,

$$c_m' (\mu) = \bar{V}_1 (p) - \bar{V}_0 (p).$$

[10]This implies that with the obligation a firm type p will be setting a continuation value conditional on a higher type outside firm meeting of $V^o\left(\bar{V}'\right) = \bar{V}' > \bar{V}$, which would involve a violation of the firm's participation constraint should the worker decide to stay with the firm. Thus, the obligation needs to state that in case the worker ends up staying with the current firm and it subsequently lays off the worker due to a violation of the participation constraint, then the firm must honor the payment, B, to the holder of the obligation in this case as well.

By the analogous steps it follows that,

$$(r+\delta)\bar{V}_1(p) = f_1(p) + \delta U + \lambda_e \int_{\bar{V}_1(p)}^{\bar{V}_0(1)} \hat{F}(V')\,dV'.$$

By change of variable in the integration one obtains,

$$(r+\delta+\mu)\left[\bar{V}_1(p) - \bar{V}_0(p)\right] = f_1(p) - f_0(p) + c_0(\mu) - \lambda_e \int_p^{\tilde{p}(p)} \frac{f_0'(p) + \mu\left[\bar{V}_1'(p) - \bar{V}_0'(p)\right]}{r+\delta+\lambda_e \hat{\bar{\Phi}}(p)} \hat{\Phi}(p')\,dp'. \tag{12}$$

Equation (12) is identical to the planner solution (11). Hence, the privately optimal specific training intensity coincides with that of the social planner.

Variations on the style of obligation as that above can in our analysis undo the limitations to commitment that is implied be the requirement that the contract be renegotiation proof, and as we rule out that markets exist for such instruments. However, the mechanisms of the obligation instrument above are instructive: Efficiency is obtained by adoption of side payments not within the match, but rather with a third party so as to ensure a credible bargaining position with a possible future employer of the worker. Side payments within the match will be undone by other side payments in a renegotiation proof contract. Consider for example an instrument such as an unvested pension scheme where the firm's pension liability to the worker is eliminated should the worker leave for another firm. An unvested pension scheme will not give the worker any additional bargaining power with a future employer because the current firm would have incentives to provide side payments in order to ensure efficient separation and an elimination of its pension liability.

2.5 Steady state

Denote by e_{hm} the mass of employment of general skill h workers in jobs with match specific capital, m. Let u_h be the mass of unemployed general skill h workers. Normalize the population at unity, $1 = \sum_h (u_h + \sum_m e_{hm})$. Furthermore, denote by $G_{hm}(V,p)$ the cumulative distribution of match states for type (h,m) matches, where by definition $G_{hm}\left(\bar{V}_{hm}(1), 1\right) = 1$. The steady state conditions on the employment and unemployment stocks follow the simple logic that the flow into the stock must equal the flow out.

The steady state condition on $e_{00}G_{00}(V,p)$ is given by,

$$\lambda_u u_0 \Phi(p) + \lambda e_{01} \int_0^{\bar{p}_{01}(V)} \int_{U_0}^{\bar{V}_{01}(p')} \left[F_0\left(\bar{V}_{00}(p)\right) - F_0\left(\bar{V}_{01}(p')\right)\right] g_{01}(V',p')\, dV'dp' =$$

$$e_{00}\Bigg\{ \int_0^{\bar{p}_{00}(V)} \int_U^{\bar{V}_{00}(p')} \left[d + \delta + \eta_0(V',p') + \mu_0(V',p') + \lambda \hat{F}_0\left(\bar{V}_{00}(p)\right)\right] g_{00}(V',p')\, dV'dp' +$$

$$\int_{\bar{p}_{00}(V)}^{p} \int_U^{V} \left[d + \delta + \eta_0(V',p') + \mu_0(V',p') + \lambda \hat{F}_0(V)\right] g_{00}(V',p')\, dV'dp' \Bigg\}.$$

The first term on the left hand side is the flow into the $e_{00}G_{00}(V,p)$ pool from unemployment. The second term is the flow in from the pool of matches with high match specific capital where the worker nevertheless receives a better offer and consequently moves into low match specific capital. The integral is over types of matches with high match specific capital. The outer integral is over firms that have willingness to pay less than V. Any firm with a willingness to pay more than V may be beat, but the worker would move into the e_{00} pool with a utility promise greater than V. The inner integral is then all the possible utility promises that workers may have in these firms. The term $\left[F_0\left(\bar{V}_{00}(p)\right) - F_0\left(\bar{V}_{01}(p')\right)\right]$ is the probability that a worker in a type p' firm will receive an offer that is better than her current firm's willingness to pay, but is from a type firm less than p. If that happens, the worker moves into the $e_{00}G_{00}(V,p)$ pool. The terms on the right hand side are standard: The worker leaves the pool upon death, unemployment, general and specific skill acquisition, and if the worker receives an outside offer that takes her out of the pool. The latter can happen in two ways: If a worker is currently employed with a firm that has willingness to pay less than V then an outside offer must be from a firm better than p to make her leave the pool. If she is with a firm with willingness to pay greater than V, then it is sufficient that the outside offer be better than V.

The steady state conditions on $e_{01}G_{01}(V,p)$, $e_{10}G_{10}(V,p)$, and $e_{11}G_{11}(V,p)$ follow the same type of argument and are given in Appendix A.

3 Model calibration

Table 1: Calibration

Parameters	Values	
δ	0.1	job destruction rate
λ_0	2	job offer rate: unemployed
λ_1	0.3	job offer rate: employed
m	0.03	death rate
ρ	0.05	discount factor
θ	2	risk aversion
$c_0^h = c_0^m$	2	training cost: constant
$c_1^h = c_1^m$	1	training cost: variable
h_0	0.25	unskilled
h_1	0.5	skilled
m_0	0.25	unspecialized
m_1	0.5	specialized
β_0	2	beta distribution
β_1	3	beta distribution

3.1 Model specification

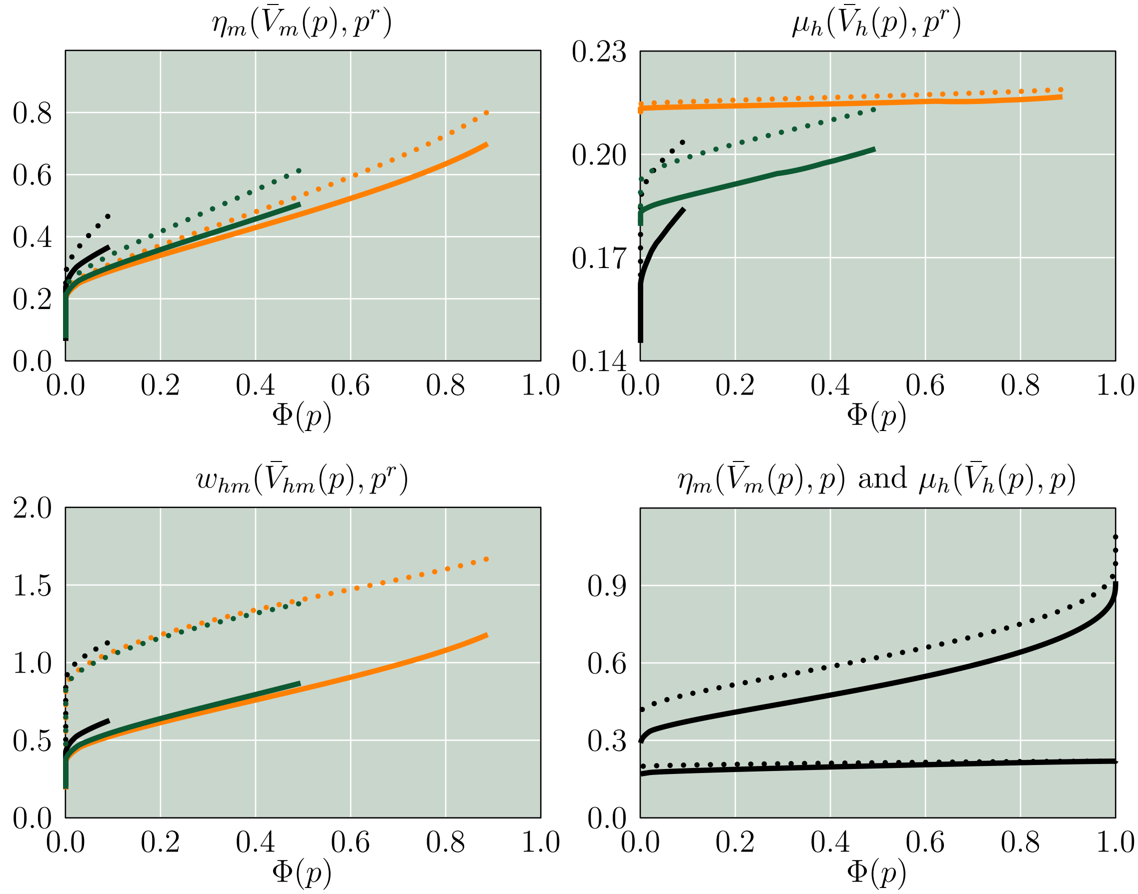
We use the following functional forms:

$$\begin{aligned} u(w) &= \frac{c^{1-\theta}}{1-\theta} \\ c_h(\eta) &= \frac{\left(c_0^h \eta\right)^{1+c_1^h}}{1+c_1^h} \\ c_m(\mu) &= \frac{\left(c_0^m \mu\right)^{1+c_1^m}}{1+c_1^m} \\ f_{ij}(p) &= h_i + m_j + p, \qquad (i,j) \in \{0,1\}^2 \end{aligned}$$

The calibrated parameter values are reported in Table 1.

The parameters $(\rho, \theta, m, \delta, \lambda_0, \lambda_1)$ are set a priori using estimates from the literature. We choose a coefficient of risk aversion $\theta = 2$. The death rate $m = 0.025$ to reflect an average working life of 40 years. The discount rate is set to 5% annual rate $\rho = 0.05$. The job destruction rate $\delta = 0.1$ and job finding rate of $\lambda_0 = 2$ are set to reflect recalls (see Fujita and Moscarini (2015)). Job offer rate are picked to reproduce observed job-to-job transition and the exit rate from unemployment. We pick the parameter of the human capital accumulation technology to match the age-earnings profile. The distribution of firm productivity F_p is a Beta distribution with parameters $(2, 3)$.

Figure 1: Employment contracts by firm type.



Note: Firm type conditional contracts drawn for $r \in \{0.1, 0.5, 0.9\}$. Upper left panel: Solid lines for $m = 0$ and dotted lines for $m = 1$. Upper right panel: Solid lines for $h = 0$ and dotted lines for $h = 1$. Lower left panel: Dashed lines for $(h, m) = (0, 0)$ and dotted lines for $(h, m) = (1, 1)$. Lower right panel: Training at full rent extraction. Solid lines for $h = 0$ and $m = 0$, respectively. Dotted lines for $h = 1$ and $m = 1$, respectively.

3.2 Individual contracts

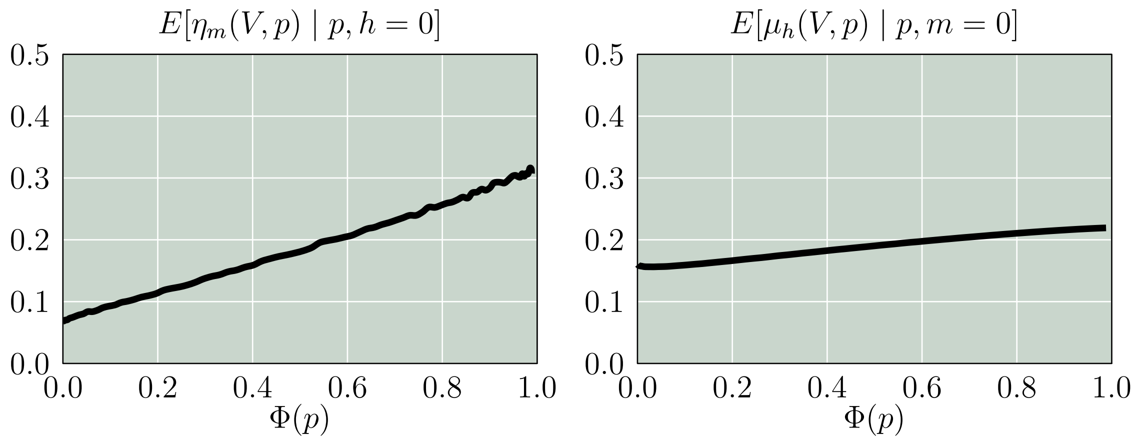
Figure 1 shows the employment contracts for the 10^{th}, 50^{th}, and 90^{th} percentile firm productivity types as a function of the utility promise in the contract. The figure expresses the utility promise in terms of the willingness to pay of a given percentile firm. This is done to facilitate comparison across contracts.

Within a contract, the wage is increasing in the utility promise. The picture is a bit more complex across firms. Holding the utility promise constant wages are decreasing in the firm type. This is a well known feature of the outside offer matching feature of the wage mechanism, also seen in Postel-Vinay and Robin (2002). For a given utility promise, an increase in firm type implies greater expected gains from the on-the-job search process, which the firm compensates for by lowering the current wage. The lower right hand panel in figure 1 shows the wage at full surplus extraction across firm types, which is seen to be monotonically increasing in firm type. Production function complementarities between human capital and firm productivity can introduce a compensating differential between wages and training, but such considerations are not relevant given the modular production function specification in the current calibration. However, even in this case, whether higher type firms on average give higher wages depends on the composition of utility promises across its workers. We explore this in the next section.

As expected, both general and specific training are increasing in the utility promise within a contract. The differences in competitive pressure across the two types of training show up in the figures as well. Specific training within the 90^{th} percentile firm is almost constant in the utility promise whereas general training is considerably more sensitive to the utility promise. The competitive pressure on future utility promises associated with specific training is determined primarily by the firm's position in the firm hierarchy: As the match becomes more productive due to an increase in m, competitive pressure on the worker's future utility promises is only affected in the event that the worker meets a more productive firm than the current firm. The wage is lowered up front to reflect the expected utility promise gains associated with training. The only reason the current utility promise does play a role in the provision of specific training is because the surplus loss associated with lowering the worker's wage is proportional to the worker's marginal utility, which is decreasing in the utility promise.

The increased competitive pressure associated with increased general human capital is on the other hand primarily determined by the current utility promise, V. A meeting with any productivity firm greater than $p_{1m}(V)$ is associated with an increased utility promise pressure due to the increase in h. Thus, for a lower V there is a larger mass of outside firms that can exert pressure on the match. In combination with the greater marginal utility of wages associated with the lower utility promise, V, the surplus loss of reducing the worker's wages up front in expectation of the future utility promise gains from general training is more sensitive to V.

Figure 2: Steady state training across firm types



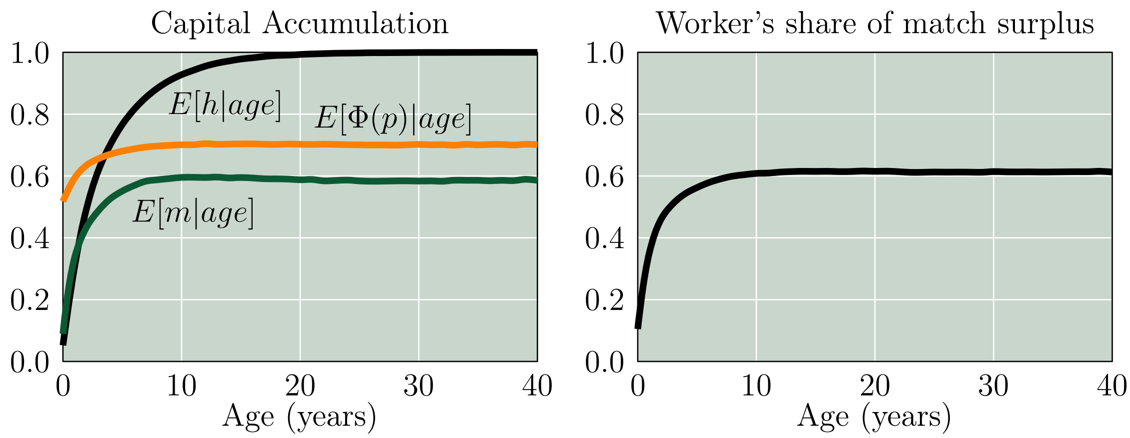
It is also worth noting that risk aversion is a separate source of positive complementarity between general and specific training. If a worker's skill increases, her utility promise increases and her wages come to increase faster. The associated lower marginal utility of wages reduces the surplus loss associated with the backloading of wages associated with specific training. The same effect applies for increased match specific capital on general training. This effect is related to the strategic complementarity results in Balmaceda (2005) and kessler and Lülfesmann (2006) where the existence of non-contractable specific training can counteract the hold-up problem in particular wage bargaining settings.

3.3 Training in steady state

The results in the previous section highlight the importance of utility promise and human capital level composition within firms as a determinant of realized training levels. Figure 2 shows the average steady state training levels across firm types. Both general and specific training are on average increasing in firm type. Firms higher in the hierarchy face less competitive pressure from specific training and on average utility promises are such that the same is true for general training.

The left panel of Figure 3 shows the accumulation of general, specific, and search capital over the careers of a cohort of workers. All three stocks are accumulating over time, which in combination give rise to an increasing wage profile over experience as shown in the right hand panel. Unemployment resets the search and specific capital stocks. Consequently, the

Figure 3: Steady state capital accumulation and wages by cohort age



fraction of the population that is specifically trained will not go to one. It will also not be the case that all workers will eventually find themselves employed with the best firm type. But conditional on survival, eventually all workers will become generally skilled given that there is no depreciation of general human capital in the model. The right panel shows the worker's average share of match surplus by age.

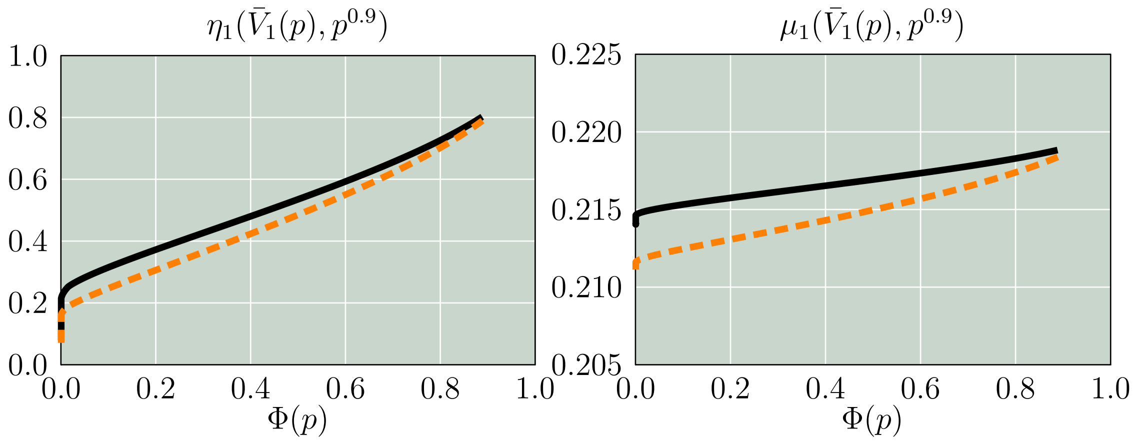
3.4 Training and frictions

Acemoglu and Pischke (1999) emphasize that increased labor market friction allows firms to provide more general training when it is costly to resolve the hold up problem by making the worker pay for training up front through lower wages. Wasmer (2006) adds to the argument that increased labor market friction will increase training in a setup where matches invest in specific capital to reduce the risk of job destruction in a setting where finding new jobs is subject to frictions.

Figure 4 demonstrates the exact intuition in Acemoglu and Pischke (1999) within a given firm's contract. It shows the 90^{th} percentile productivity firm's training choices for $\lambda_1 = 0.3$ and $\lambda_1 = 0.5$. For any given utility promise, the greater competitive pressure from the increased contact rate is associated with a lower training level - both general and specific.

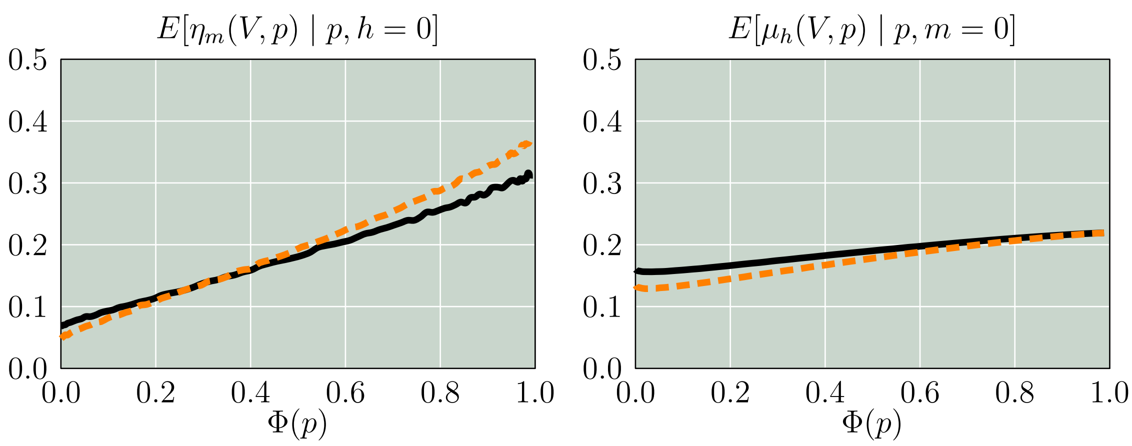
But the utility promise composition within a firm's labor force is itself affected by the change in the level of frictions. Figure 5 shows the average training levels by firm type in steady state for $\lambda_1 = 0.3$ and $\lambda_1 = 0.5$. Except for the lowest percentiles of firms,

Figure 4: Firm type $\Phi(p) = 0.9$ employment contract for $\lambda_1 = 0.3$ and $\lambda_1 = 0.5$.



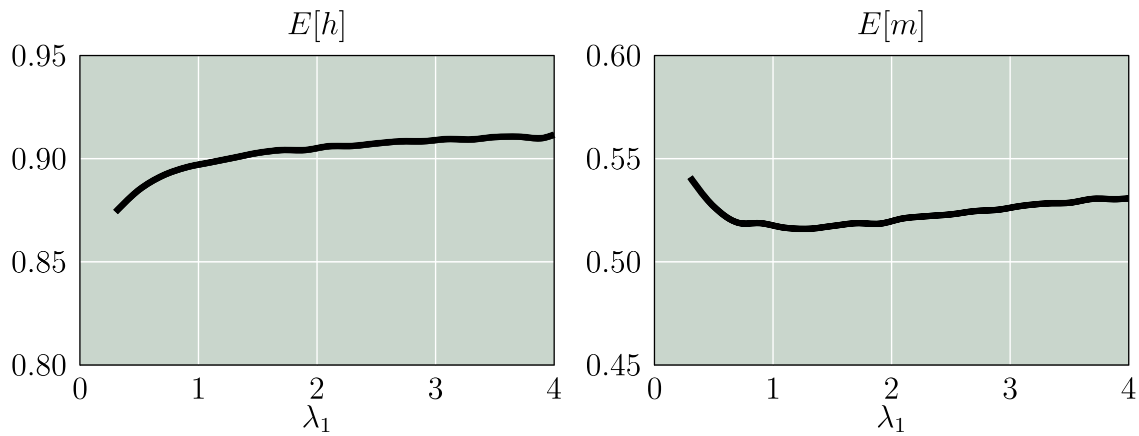
Note: Solid line drawn for $\lambda_1 = 0.3$ and dashed line drawn for $\lambda_1 = 0.5$.

Figure 5: Average steady state firm type conditional training levels for $\lambda_1 = 0.3$ and $\lambda_1 = 0.5$.



Note: Solid line drawn for $\lambda_1 = 0.3$ and dashed line drawn for $\lambda_1 = 0.5$.

Figure 6: Average steady state levels of general and specific human capital by λ_1.

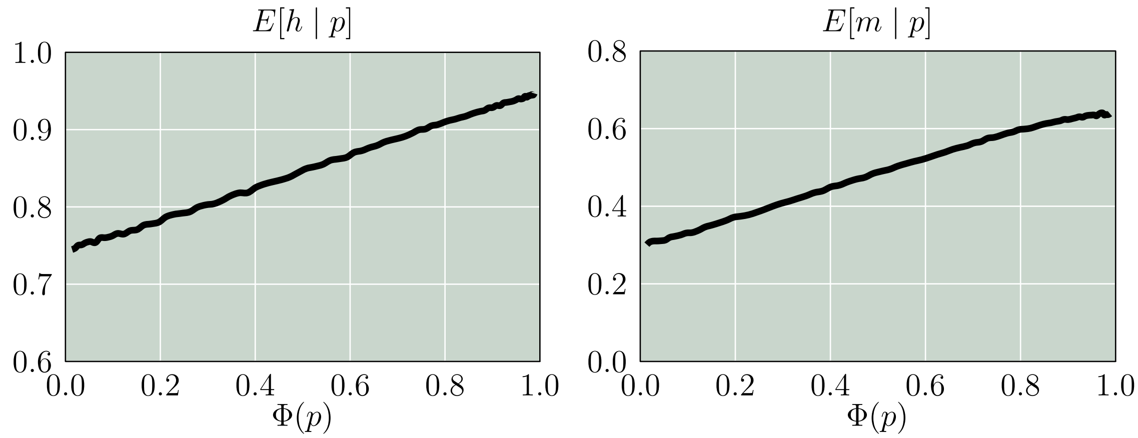


average general training actually increases with an increased contact rate within firm type, which reflects the right shift of the utility promise distribution within firms due to the lower level of frictions. While the higher contact rate increases competitive pressure associated with training for a given mass of potential outside competitors, the higher contact rate also implies that training is taking place at higher utility promises which reduces the set of potential competitors for the worker. In the example in Figure 5, the latter effect dominates for for firms above the 30^{th} percentile.

In addition to the composition of utility promises, overall training and accumulation of skills in the economy also depend on the match distribution which is also affected by changes in frictions. As the contact rate increases, worker mismatch will tend to decline, and since training is generally decreasing in mismatch, one should expect an effect on training from changes in the match distribution as well. The left hand panel in Figure 6 shows the average human capital levels in the steady state economy for different levels of contact rates. As can be seen, general skill is robustly increasing in the contact rate, which is opposite to the intuition developed in Acemoglu and Pischke (1999). The analysis in this paper embodies the central mechanism in their paper, but it is dominated by composition effects from search on the job and the presence of firm heterogeneity that is a natural consequence of a frictional labor market environment.

For the given calibration, match specific capital is non-monotone in the contact rate. Specific training is increasing in firm type and eventually the improved match distribution

Figure 7: Average human capital level by firm type.



will result in more training as mismatch declines. However, for lower contact rates, the lower training levels within firm type dominate and result in less specific training.

3.5 Sorting

Higher rank firms provide more training and consequently their workers tend to have higher human capital, both general and specific. That is, the steady state match distribution exhibits a positive correlation between firm and worker productivity. Figure 7 shows the average levels of human capital by firm type in the steady state. As can be seen the labor force of higher ranked firms is both more skilled and has higher match specific capital as well. This is not a result of positive assortative matching. In addition there are no complementarities in production. It is a reflection of the state dependence in the model that fortunate employment draws contribute not only to a better current wage but also to a faster development of both general and specific skills.

4 Concluding remarks

TBC

A Steady state conditions

Assuming that unemployed workers do not turn down any meetings, the steady state conditions on the employment and unemployment stocks are,

$$(d+\lambda_u)\,u_0 = d+\delta\,(e_{00}+e_{01}) \tag{13}$$

$$(d+\lambda_u)\,u_1 = \delta\,(e_{10}+e_{11}) \tag{14}$$

$$(d+\delta+\bar{\eta}_0+\bar{\mu}_0)\,e_{00} = \lambda_u u_0 + e_{01}\int_0^1\int_{U_0}^{\bar{V}_{01}(p')} \lambda\hat{F}_0\left(\bar{V}_{01}(p')\right) g_{01}(V',p')\,dV'dp' \tag{15}$$

$$(d+\delta+\bar{\mu}_1)\,e_{10} = \lambda_u u_1 + \bar{\eta}_0 e_{00} + e_{11}\int_0^1\int_{U_1}^{\bar{V}_{11}(p')} \lambda\hat{F}_1\left(\bar{V}_{11}(p')\right) g_{11}(V',p')\,dV'dp' \tag{16}$$

$$\bar{\mu}_0 e_{00} = \left(d+\delta+\bar{\eta}_1+\int_0^1\int_{U_0}^{\bar{V}_{01}(p')} \lambda\hat{F}_0\left(\bar{V}_{01}(p')\right) g_{01}(V',p')\,dV'dp'\right) e_{01} \tag{17}$$

$$\bar{\eta}_1 e_{01}+\bar{\mu}_1 e_{10} = \left(d+\delta+\int_0^1\int_{U_1}^{\bar{V}_{11}(p')} \lambda\hat{F}_1\left(\bar{V}_{11}(p')\right) g_{11}(V',p')\,dV'dp'\right) e_{11}, \tag{18}$$

where $\bar{\mu}_h = \int_0^1\int_{U_h}^{\bar{V}_{h0}(p')} \mu_h(V',p')\,dG_{h0}(V,p)$ and $\bar{\eta}_m = \int_0^1\int_{U_0}^{\bar{V}_{0m}(p')} \eta_m(V',p')\,dG_{0m}(V,p)$.

The steady state conditions on $e_{01}G_{01}(V,p)$, $e_{10}G_{10}(V,p)$, and $e_{11}G_{11}(V,p)$ are respectively,

$$e_{00}\int_0^p\int_{U_0}^{\bar{V}_{00}(p')} 1\left[M_0(V',p')\le V\right]\mu_0(V',p')\,g_{00}(V',p')\,dV'dp' =$$
$$e_{01}\int_0^p\int_{U_0}^{\bar{V}_{01}(p)} \left[m+\delta+\eta_1(V',p')+\lambda\hat{F}_0\left(\bar{V}_{01}(p')\right)\right] g_{01}(V',p')\,dV'dp'.$$

The steady state condition on $e_{10}G_{10}(V,p)$ is,

$$\lambda_u u_1\Phi(p)+\lambda e_{11}\int_0^{p_{11}(V)}\int_{U_1}^{\bar{V}_{11}(p')} \left[F_1\left(\bar{V}_{10}(p)\right)-F_1\left(\bar{V}_{11}(p')\right)\right] g_{11}(V',p')\,dV'dp'$$
$$+\,e_{00}\int_0^p\int_{U_0}^{\bar{V}_{00}(p')} 1\left[H_0(V',p')\le V\right]\eta_0(V',p')\,g_{00}(V',p')\,dV'dp' =$$
$$e_{10}\left\{\int_0^{p_{10}(V)}\int_U^{\bar{V}_{10}(p')} \left[d+\delta+\mu_1(V',p')+\lambda\hat{F}_1\left(\bar{V}_{10}(p)\right)\right] g_{10}(V',p')\,dV'dp' + \right.$$
$$\left.\int_{\bar{p}_{10}(V)}^p\int_U^V \left[d+\delta+\mu_1(V',p')+\lambda\hat{F}_1(V)\right] g_{10}(V',p')\,dV'dp'\right\}.$$

And finally, the steady state condition on $e_{11}G_{11}(V,p)$ is,

$$e_{10}\int_0^p\int_{U_0}^{\bar{V}_{10}(p')} 1\left[M_1(V',p')\leq V\right]\mu_1(V',p')\,g_{10}(V',p')\,dV'dp' =$$
$$e_{11}\int_0^p\int_{U_0}^{\bar{V}_{11}(p)}\left[d+\delta+\lambda\hat{F}_1\left(\bar{V}_{11}(p')\right)\right]g_{11}(V',p')\,dV'dp'.$$

B Social planner, general human capital

Consider the case where human capital is only general. Assume a modular production function and risk neutral workers. Without loss of generality assume $f_h(p)=f(p)+h$, and $b_h=f_h(0)$. Consider a utilitarian social planner problem of maximizing the contribution of a worker in a low skill match. Denote the contribution by,

$$\begin{aligned}(r+\delta)\mathcal{V}_0(p) &= \max_{\mu}\left[f(p)-c_h(\eta)+\delta\mathcal{U}_0+\eta\left(\mathcal{V}_1(p)-\mathcal{V}_0(p)\right)+\lambda_e\int_p^1\left[\mathcal{V}_0(p')-\mathcal{V}_0(p)\right]d\Phi(p)\right]\\ &= f(p)+\delta\mathcal{U}_0+\mathcal{H}(p)+\lambda_e\int_p^1\frac{\left[f'(p')+\mathcal{H}'(p')\right]\hat{\Phi}(p')}{r+\delta+\lambda_1\hat{\Phi}(p')}dp',\end{aligned}$$

where the value of a high match specific capital match is,

$$\begin{aligned}(r+\delta)\mathcal{V}_1(p) &= f(p)+1+\delta\mathcal{U}_1+\lambda_e\int_p^1\left[\mathcal{V}_1(p')-\mathcal{V}_1(p)\right]d\Phi(p)\\ &= f(p)+1+\delta\mathcal{U}_1+\lambda_e\int_p^1\frac{f'(p')\hat{\Phi}(p')}{r+\delta+\lambda_1\hat{\Phi}(p')}dp'.\end{aligned}$$

The value of the investment option is,

$$\mathcal{H}(p)=\max_{\eta}\left[-c_h(\eta)+\eta\left(\mathcal{V}_1(p)-\mathcal{V}_0(p)\right)\right].$$

And the socially optimal specific investment choice solves,

$$c_h'(\eta(p))=\mathcal{V}_1(p)-\mathcal{V}_0(p).$$

Some algebra yields,

$$\mathcal{V}_1(p)-\mathcal{V}_0(p)=\frac{r+\delta+rc_h(\eta)}{r(r+\delta+\eta)}$$

which implies,

$$\mathcal{V}_1'(p)-\mathcal{V}_0'(p)=0$$

Therefore, the social planner's choice of specific investment is constant in p, $\eta'(p)=0$.

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