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# Oscillation criteria for third-order neutral dynamic equations with continuously distributed delay

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## Abstract

It is the purpose of this paper to give oscillation criteria for the third-order neutral dynamic equations with continuously distributed delay,

$$\left[ r(t) \left( \left[ x(t) + \int_a^b p(t, \eta) x[\tau(t, \eta)] \Delta \eta \right]^{\Delta \Delta} \right)^\gamma \right]^\Delta + \int_c^d q(t, \xi) f(x[\phi(t, \xi)]) \Delta \xi = 0,$$

on a time scale  $\mathbb{T}$ , where  $\gamma$  is the quotient of odd positive integers. By using a generalized Riccati transformation and an integral averaging technique, we establish some new sufficient conditions which ensure that every solution of this equation oscillates or converges to zero.

**Keywords:** oscillation; time scales; third-order neutral dynamic equation; asymptotic behavior

## 1 Introduction

We are concerned with the oscillatory behavior of third-order neutral dynamic equations with continuously distributed delay,

$$\left[ r(t) \left( \left[ x(t) + \int_a^b p(t, \eta) x[\tau(t, \eta)] \Delta \eta \right]^{\Delta \Delta} \right)^\gamma \right]^\Delta + \int_c^d q(t, \xi) f(x[\phi(t, \xi)]) \Delta \xi = 0, \quad (1)$$

on an arbitrary time scale  $\mathbb{T}$ , where  $\gamma$  is a quotient of odd positive integers. Throughout this paper, we will assume the following hypotheses:

(H1)  $r$  and  $q$  are positive rd-continuous functions on  $\mathbb{T}$  and

$$\int_{t_0}^{\infty} \left( \frac{1}{r(t)} \right)^{\frac{1}{\gamma}} \Delta t = \infty; \quad (2)$$

(H2)  $p(t, \eta) \in C_{rd}([t_0, \infty) \times [a, b], \mathbb{R})$ ,  $0 \leq p(t) \equiv \int_a^b p(t, \eta) \Delta \eta \leq P < 1$ ;

(H3)  $\tau(t, \eta) \in C_{rd}([t_0, \infty) \times [a, b], \mathbb{T})$  is not a decreasing function for  $\eta$  and such that

$$\tau(t, \eta) \leq t \quad \text{and} \quad \lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} \min_{\eta \in [a, b]} \tau(t, \eta) = \infty;$$

(H4)  $\phi(t, \xi) \in C_{rd}([t_0, \infty) \times [c, d], \mathbb{T})$  is not decreasing function for  $\xi$  and such that

$$\phi(t, \xi) \leq t \quad \text{and} \quad \lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} \min_{\xi \in [c, d]} \phi(t, \xi) = \infty;$$

(H5) the function  $f \in C_{rd}(\mathbb{T}, \mathbb{R})$  is assumed to satisfy  $uf(u) > 0$  and there exists a positive rd-continuous function  $\delta(t)$  on  $\mathbb{T}$  such that  $\frac{f(u)}{u^\gamma} \geq \delta$ , for  $u \neq 0$ .

Define the function by

$$z(t) = x(t) + \int_a^b p(t, \eta)x[\tau(t, \eta)]\Delta\eta. \tag{3}$$

Furthermore, (1) is like the following:

$$[r(t)([z(t)]^{\Delta\Delta})^\gamma]^\Delta + \int_c^d q(t, \xi)f(x[\phi(t, \xi)])\Delta\xi = 0. \tag{4}$$

A solution  $x(t)$  of (1) is said to be oscillatory if it is neither eventually positive nor eventually negative, otherwise it is non-oscillatory.

Much recent attention has been given to dynamic equations on time scales, or measure chains, and we refer the reader to the landmark paper of Hilger [1] for a comprehensive treatment of the subject. Since then, several authors have expounded various aspects of this new theory; see the survey paper by Agarwal *et al.* [2]. A book on the subject of time scales by Bohner and Peterson [3] also summarizes and organizes much of the time scale calculus. In the recent years, there has been increasing interest in obtaining sufficient conditions for the oscillation and non-oscillation of solutions of various equations on time scales; we refer the reader to the papers [4–19]. Candan [20] considered oscillation of second-order neutral dynamic equations with distributed deviating arguments of the form

$$(r(t)((y(t) + p(t)y(\tau(t)))^\Delta)^\gamma)^\Delta + \int_c^d f(t, y(\theta(t, \xi)))\Delta\xi = 0,$$

where  $\gamma > 0$  is a ratio of odd positive integers with  $r(t)$  and  $p(t)$  real-valued rd-continuous positive functions defined on  $\mathbb{T}$ . He established some new oscillation criteria and gave sufficient conditions to ensure that all solutions of nonlinear neutral dynamic equation are oscillatory on a time scale  $\mathbb{T}$ .

To the best of our knowledge, there is very little known about the oscillatory behavior of third-order dynamic equations. Erbe *et al.* [21] are concerned with the oscillatory behavior of solutions of the third-order linear dynamic equation

$$x^{\Delta\Delta\Delta}(t) + p(t)x(t) = 0,$$

on an arbitrary time scale  $\mathbb{T}$ , where  $p(t)$  is a positive real-valued rd-continuous function defined on  $\mathbb{T}$ . Li *et al.* [22] considered third-order nonlinear delay dynamic equation

$$x^{\Delta^3} + p(t)x^\gamma(\tau(t)) = 0,$$

on a time scale  $\mathbb{T}$ , where  $\gamma > 0$  is quotient of odd positive integers.

Erbe *et al.* [23, 24] established some sufficient conditions which guarantee that every solution of the third-order nonlinear dynamic equation

$$(c(t)(a(t)x^\Delta(t))^\Delta)^\Delta + q(t)f(x(t)) = 0,$$

and the third-order dynamic equation

$$(c(t)((a(t)x^\Delta(t))^\Delta)^\Delta)^\Delta + f(t, x(t)) = 0$$

oscillate or converge to zero. Li *et al.* [25] considered the third-order delay dynamic equations

$$(a(t)([r(t)x^\Delta(t)]^\Delta)^\Delta)^\Delta + f(t, x(\tau(t))) = 0,$$

on a time scale  $\mathbb{T}$ , where  $\gamma > 0$  is quotient of odd positive integers,  $a$  and  $r$  are positive rd-continuous functions on  $\mathbb{T}$ , and the so-called delay function  $\tau : \mathbb{T} \rightarrow \mathbb{T}$  satisfies  $\tau(t) \leq t$ , and  $\tau(t) \rightarrow \infty$  as  $t \rightarrow \infty$ ,  $f(x) \in C_{rd}(\mathbb{T} \times \mathbb{R}, \mathbb{R})$  is assumed to satisfy  $uf(t, u) > 0$ , for  $u \neq 0$ , and there exists a function  $p$  on  $\mathbb{T}$  such that  $\frac{f(t, u)}{u^\gamma} \geq p(t) > 0$ , for  $u \neq 0$ .

Saker [26] considered the third-order nonlinear functional dynamic equations

$$(p(t)([r(t)x^\Delta(t)]^\Delta)^\Delta)^\Delta + q(t)f(x(\tau(t))) = 0,$$

on a time scale  $\mathbb{T}$ , where  $\gamma > 0$  is quotient of odd positive integers. Recently Han *et al.* [27] and Grace *et al.* [28] considered the third-order neutral delay dynamic equation

$$(r(t)(x(t) - a(t)x(\tau(t)))^{\Delta\Delta})^\Delta + p(t)x^\gamma(\delta(t)) = 0,$$

on a time scale  $\mathbb{T}$ .

In this paper, we consider third-order neutral dynamic equation with continuously distributed delay on time scales which is not in literature. We obtain some conclusions which contribute to oscillation theory of third-order neutral dynamic equations.

## 2 Several lemmas

Before stating our main results, we begin with the following lemmas which play an important role in the proof of the main results. Throughout this paper, we let

$$d_+(t) := \max\{0, d(t)\}, \quad d_-(t) := \max\{0, -d(t)\},$$

and

$$\beta(t) := b(t), \quad 0 < \gamma \leq 1, \quad \beta(t) := b^\gamma(t), \quad \gamma > 1,$$

$$b(t) = \frac{t}{\sigma(t)}, \quad R(t, t_*) := \int_{t_*}^t \left(\frac{1}{r(s)}\right)^{\frac{1}{\gamma}} \Delta s,$$

where we have sufficiently large  $t_* \in [t_0, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ .

In order to prove our main results, we will use the formula

$$(z^\gamma(t))^\Delta = \gamma \int_0^1 [hz^\sigma + (1-h)z]^{\gamma-1} z^\Delta(t) dh,$$

where  $z(t)$  is delta differentiable and eventually positive or eventually negative, which is a simple consequence of Keller's chain rule (see Bohner and Peterson [3]).

**Lemma 2.1** *Let  $x(t)$  be a positive solution of (1),  $z(t)$  is defined as in (3). Then  $z(t)$  has only one of the following two properties:*

(I)  $z(t) > 0, z^\Delta(t) > 0, z^{\Delta\Delta}(t) > 0,$

(II)  $z(t) > 0, z^\Delta(t) < 0, z^{\Delta\Delta}(t) > 0,$

with  $t \geq t_1, t_1$  sufficiently large.

*Proof* Let  $x(t)$  be a positive solution of (1) on  $[t_0, \infty)$ , so that  $z(t) > x(t) > 0$ , and

$$[r(t)(z^{\Delta\Delta}(t))^\gamma]^\Delta = - \int_c^d q(t, \xi) f(x[\phi(t, \xi)]) \Delta\xi < 0.$$

Then  $r(t)([z(t)]^{\Delta\Delta})^\gamma$  is a decreasing function and therefore eventually of one sign, so  $z^{\Delta\Delta}(t)$  is either eventually positive or eventually negative on  $t \geq t_1 \geq t_0$ . We assert that  $z^{\Delta\Delta}(t) > 0$  on  $t \geq t_1 \geq t_0$ . Otherwise, assume that  $z^{\Delta\Delta}(t) < 0$ , then there exists a constant  $M > 0$ , such that

$$r(t)(z^{\Delta\Delta}(t))^\gamma \leq -M < 0.$$

By integrating the last inequality from  $t_1$  to  $t$ , we obtain

$$z^\Delta(t) \leq z^\Delta(t_1) - M^{\frac{1}{\gamma}} \int_{t_1}^t \left(\frac{1}{r(s)}\right)^{\frac{1}{\gamma}} \Delta s.$$

Let  $t \rightarrow \infty$ . Then from (H1), we have  $(z(t))^\Delta \rightarrow -\infty$ , and therefore eventually  $z^\Delta(t) < 0$ .

Since  $z^{\Delta\Delta}(t) < 0$  and  $z^\Delta(t) < 0$ , we have  $z(t) < 0$ , which contradicts our assumption  $z(t) > 0$ . Therefore,  $z(t)$  has only one of the two properties (I) and (II).

This completes the proof. □

**Lemma 2.2** *Let  $x(t)$  be an eventually positive solution of (1), correspondingly  $z(t)$  has the property (II). Assume that (2) and*

$$\int_{t_0}^\infty \int_\nu^\infty \left[ \frac{1}{r(u)} \int_u^\infty q_1(s) \Delta s \right]^{\frac{1}{\gamma}} \Delta u \Delta \nu = \infty \tag{5}$$

*hold. Then  $\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} x(t) = 0$ .*

*Proof* Let  $x(t)$  be an eventually positive solution of (1). Since  $z(t)$  has the property (II), then there exists finite  $\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} z(t) = I$ . We assert that  $I = 0$ . Assume that  $I > 0$ , then we have

$I + \epsilon > z(t) > I$  for all  $\epsilon > 0$ . Choosing  $\epsilon < \frac{I(1-P)}{P}$  and using (3) and (H2), we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} x(t) &= z(t) - \int_a^b p(t, \eta)[x(\tau(t, \eta))] \Delta \eta \\ &> I - \int_a^b p(t, \eta)[x(\tau(t, \eta))] \Delta \eta \\ &\geq I - p(t)[z(\tau(t, a))] \\ &\geq I - P(I + \epsilon) > Kz(t), \end{aligned} \tag{6}$$

where  $K = \frac{I-P(1+\epsilon)}{I+\epsilon} > 0$ . Using (H5) and (6), we find from (1) that

$$\begin{aligned} [r(t)(z^{\Delta\Delta}(t))^\gamma]^\Delta &= - \int_c^d q(t, \xi) f(x[\phi(t, \xi)]) \Delta \xi \\ &\leq - \int_c^d q(t, \xi) (x[\phi(t, \xi)])^\gamma \delta \Delta \xi \\ &\leq -K^\gamma \delta \int_c^d q(t, \xi) (z[\phi(t, \xi)])^\gamma \Delta \xi. \end{aligned}$$

Note that  $z(t)$  has property (II) and (H4), and we have

$$[r(t)(z^{\Delta\Delta}(t))^\gamma]^\Delta \leq -K^\gamma \cdot \delta \cdot (z[\phi(t, d)])^\gamma \int_c^d q(t, \xi) \Delta \xi = -q_1(t)(z(\phi_1(t)))^\gamma, \tag{7}$$

where  $q_1(t) = K^\gamma \delta \int_c^d q(t, \xi) \Delta \xi$ ,  $\phi_1(t) = \phi(t, d)$ . Integrating inequality (7) from  $t$  to  $\infty$ , we obtain

$$r(t)(z^{\Delta\Delta}(t))^\gamma \geq \int_t^\infty q_1(s)(z(\phi_1(s)))^\gamma \Delta s.$$

Using  $(z(\phi_1(s)))^\gamma \geq I^\gamma$ , we obtain

$$z^{\Delta\Delta}(t) \geq \frac{I}{r^{\frac{1}{\gamma}}(t)} \left[ \int_t^\infty q_1(s) \right]^{\frac{1}{\gamma}} \Delta(s). \tag{8}$$

Integrating inequality (8) from  $t$  to  $\infty$ , we have

$$-z^\Delta(t) \geq I \int_t^\infty \left[ \frac{1}{r(u)} \int_u^\infty q_1(s) \Delta(s) \right]^{\frac{1}{\gamma}} \Delta u.$$

Integrating the last inequality from  $t_1$  to  $\infty$ , we obtain

$$z(t_1) \geq I \int_{t_1}^\infty \int_v^\infty \left[ \frac{1}{r(u)} \int_u^\infty q_1(s) \Delta(s) \right]^{\frac{1}{\gamma}} \Delta u \Delta v.$$

Because (7) and the last inequality contradict (5), we have  $I = 0$ . Since  $0 \leq x(t) \leq z(t)$ ,  $\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} x(t) = 0$ . This completes the proof.  $\square$

**Lemma 2.3** Assume that  $x(t)$  is a positive solution of (1),  $z(t)$  is defined as in (3) such that  $z^{\Delta\Delta}(t) > 0$ ,  $z^\Delta(t) > 0$ , on  $[t_*, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ ,  $t_* \geq 0$ . Then

$$z^\Delta(t) \geq R(t, t_*)r^{\frac{1}{\gamma}}(t)z^{\Delta\Delta}(t). \tag{9}$$

*Proof* Since  $r(t)(z^{\Delta\Delta}(t))^\gamma$  is strictly decreasing on  $[t_*, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ , we get for  $t \in [t_*, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$

$$\begin{aligned} z^\Delta(t) &> z^\Delta(t) - z^\Delta(t_*) \\ &= \int_{t_*}^t \frac{(r(s)(z^{\Delta\Delta}(s))^\gamma)^{\frac{1}{\gamma}}}{r^{\frac{1}{\gamma}}(s)} \Delta s \\ &\geq (r(t)(z^{\Delta\Delta}(t))^\gamma)^{\frac{1}{\gamma}} \int_{t_*}^t \left(\frac{1}{r(s)}\right)^{\frac{1}{\gamma}} \Delta s. \end{aligned}$$

Using the definition of  $R(t, t_*)$ , we obtain

$$z^\Delta(t) > R(t, t_*)r^{\frac{1}{\gamma}}(t)z^{\Delta\Delta}(t) \quad \text{on } [t_*, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}. \quad \square$$

**Lemma 2.4** Assume that  $x(t)$  is a positive solution of (1), correspondingly  $z(t)$  has the property (I). Such that  $z^\Delta(t) > 0$ ,  $z^{\Delta\Delta}(t) > 0$ , on  $[t_*, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ ,  $t_* \geq t_0$ . Furthermore,

$$\int_{t_2}^t q_2(s)\phi_2^\gamma(s)\Delta s = \infty. \tag{10}$$

Then there exists a  $T \in [t_*, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ , sufficiently large, so that

$$z(t) > tz^\Delta(t),$$

$z(t)/t$  is strictly decreasing,  $t \in [T, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ .

*Proof* Let  $U(t) = z(t) - tz^\Delta(t)$ . Hence  $U^\Delta(t) = -\sigma(t)z^{\Delta\Delta}(t) < 0$ . We claim there exists a  $t_1 \in [t_*, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$  such that  $U(t) > 0$ ,  $z(\phi(t, \xi)) > 0$  on  $[t_1, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ . Assume not. Then  $U(t) < 0$  on  $[t_1, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ . Therefore,

$$\left(\frac{z(t)}{t}\right)^\Delta = \frac{tz^\Delta(t) - z(t)}{t\sigma(t)} = -\frac{U(t)}{t\sigma(t)} > 0, \quad t \in [t_1, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}},$$

which implies that  $z(t)/t$  is strictly increasing on  $[t_1, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ . Pick  $t_2 \in [t_1, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$  so that  $\phi(t, \xi) \geq \phi(t_1, \xi)$ , for  $t \geq t_2$ . Then

$$\frac{z(\phi(t, \xi))}{\phi(t, \xi)} \geq \frac{z(\phi(t_1, \xi))}{\phi(t_1, \xi)} = d > 0,$$

so that  $z(\phi(t, \xi)) > d\phi(t, \xi)$ , for  $t \geq t_2$ . By (1), (3), and (H2), we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} x(t) &= z(t) - \int_a^b p(t, \eta)x[\tau(t, \eta)]\Delta\eta \\ &\geq z(t) - \int_a^b p(t, \eta)z[\tau(t, \eta)]\Delta\eta \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\geq z(t) - z[\tau(t, b)] \int_a^b p(t, \eta) \Delta \eta \\
 &\geq \left(1 - \int_a^b p(t, \eta) \Delta \eta\right) z(t) \\
 &\geq (1 - P)z(t).
 \end{aligned} \tag{11}$$

Using (11), (H4), and (H5), we have

$$\begin{aligned}
 [r(t)([z(t)]^{\Delta\Delta})^\gamma]^\Delta &= - \int_c^d q(t, \xi) f(x[\phi(t, \xi)]) \Delta \xi \\
 &\leq -\delta(1 - P)^\gamma \int_c^d q(t, \xi) z^\gamma(\phi(t, \xi)) \Delta \xi \\
 &\leq -\delta(1 - P)^\gamma z^\gamma(\phi(t, c)) \int_c^d q(t, \xi) \Delta \xi \\
 &\leq -q_2(t) z^\gamma(\phi_2(t)),
 \end{aligned} \tag{12}$$

where  $q_2(t) = \delta(1 - P)^\gamma \int_c^d q(t, \xi) \Delta \xi$ ,  $\phi_2(t) = \phi(t, c)$ .

Now by integrating both sides of last equation from  $t_2$  to  $t$ , we have

$$r(t)(z^{\Delta\Delta}(t))^\gamma - r(t_2)(z^{\Delta\Delta}(t_2))^\gamma + \int_{t_2}^t q_2(s) z^\gamma(\phi_2(s)) \Delta s \leq 0.$$

This implies that

$$r(t_2)(z^{\Delta\Delta}(t_2))^\gamma \geq \int_{t_2}^t q_2(s) (z(\phi_2(s)))^\gamma \Delta s \geq d^\gamma \int_{t_2}^t q_2(s) \phi_2^\gamma(s) \Delta s,$$

which contradicts (10). So  $U(t) > 0$  on  $t \in [t_1, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$  and consequently,

$$\left(\frac{z(t)}{t}\right)^\Delta = \frac{tz^\Delta(t) - z(t)}{t\sigma(t)} = -\frac{U(t)}{t\sigma(t)} < 0, \quad t \in [t_1, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}},$$

and we find that  $z(t)/t$  is strictly decreasing on  $t \in [t_1, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ . The proof is now complete.  $\square$

### 3 Main results

In this section we give some new oscillation criteria for (1).

**Theorem 3.1** *Assume that (2), (5), and (10) hold. Furthermore, assume that there exists a positive function  $\rho \in C_{rd}^1([t_0, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}, \mathbb{R})$ , for all sufficiently large  $T_1 \in [t_0, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ , there is a  $T > T_1$  such that*

$$\limsup_{t \rightarrow \infty} \int_T^t \left[ \rho^\sigma(s) q_2(s) \left(\frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)}\right)^\gamma - \frac{((\rho^\Delta(s))_+)^{\gamma+1}}{(\gamma + 1)^{\gamma+1} (\beta(s) \rho^\sigma(s) R(s, t_*))^\gamma} \right] \Delta s = \infty. \tag{13}$$

Then every solution of (1) is either oscillatory or tends to zero.

*Proof* Assume (1) has a non-oscillatory solution  $x(t)$  on  $[t_0, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ . We may assume without loss of generality that  $x(t) > 0$ ,  $t \geq t_1$ ;  $x(\tau(t, \eta)) > 0$ ,  $(t, \eta) \in [t_1, \infty) \times [a, b]$  and  $x(\phi(t, \xi)) > 0$ ,  $(t, \xi) \in [t_1, \infty) \times [c, d]$  for all  $t_1 \in [t_0, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ .  $z(t)$  is defined as in (3). We suppose that  $z(t) > 0$ . We shall consider only this case, since the proof when  $z(t)$  is eventually negative is similar. Therefore Lemma 2.1 and Lemma 2.2, we get

$$[r(t)([z(t)]^{\Delta\Delta})^\gamma]^\Delta < 0, \quad z^{\Delta\Delta}(t) > 0, t \in [t_1, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}},$$

and either  $z^\Delta(t) > 0$  for  $t \geq t_2 \geq t_1$  or  $\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} x(t) = 0$ . Let  $z^\Delta(t) > 0$  on  $[t_2, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ .

By (11) and (12), we have

$$[r(t)([z(t)]^{\Delta\Delta})^\gamma]^\Delta \leq -q_2(t)z^\gamma(\phi_2(t)),$$

where  $q_2(t) = \delta(1 - P)^\gamma \int_c^d q(t, \xi) \Delta\xi$ ,  $\phi_2(t) = \phi(t, c)$ .

Define the function  $w(t)$  by the Riccati substitution

$$w(t) = \rho(t) \frac{r(t)([z(t)]^{\Delta\Delta})^\gamma}{z^\gamma(t)}. \tag{14}$$

Then

$$\begin{aligned} w^\Delta(t) &= \rho^\Delta(t) \frac{r(t)([z(t)]^{\Delta\Delta})^\gamma}{z^\gamma(t)} + \rho^\sigma(t) \left[ \frac{r(t)([z(t)]^{\Delta\Delta})^\gamma}{z^\gamma(t)} \right]^\Delta \\ &= \rho^\Delta(t) \frac{r(t)([z(t)]^{\Delta\Delta})^\gamma}{z^\gamma(t)} + \rho^\sigma(t) \frac{[r(t)([z(t)]^{\Delta\Delta})^\gamma]^\Delta}{z^{\gamma\sigma}(t)} \\ &\quad - \rho^\sigma(t) \frac{r(t)([z(t)]^{\Delta\Delta})^\gamma (z^\gamma(t))^\Delta}{z^\gamma(t)z^{\gamma\sigma}(t)}. \end{aligned}$$

From (1), the definition of  $w(t)$  and using the fact  $z(t)/t$  is strictly decreasing for  $t \in [t_3, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ ,  $t_3 \geq t_2$ , it follows that

$$\begin{aligned} w^\Delta(t) &\leq \frac{\rho^\Delta(t)}{\rho(t)} w(t) - \rho^\sigma(t) q_2(t) \frac{z^\gamma(\phi_2(t))}{z^{\gamma\sigma}(t)} - \rho^\sigma(t) \frac{r(t)([z(t)]^{\Delta\Delta})^\gamma (z^\gamma(t))^\Delta}{z^\gamma(t)z^{\gamma\sigma}(t)}, \\ w^\Delta(t) &\leq \frac{\rho^\Delta(t)}{\rho(t)} w(t) - \rho^\sigma(t) q_2(t) \left( \frac{\phi_2(t)}{\sigma(t)} \right)^\gamma - \rho^\sigma(t) \frac{r(t)([z(t)]^{\Delta\Delta})^\gamma (z^\gamma(t))^\Delta}{z^\gamma(t)z^{\gamma\sigma}(t)}. \end{aligned} \tag{15}$$

Now we consider the following two cases:  $0 < \gamma \leq 1$  and  $\gamma > 1$ . In the first case  $0 < \gamma \leq 1$ . Using the Keller chain rule (see [3]), we have

$$(z^\gamma(t))^\Delta = \gamma \int_0^1 [hz^\sigma + (1-h)z]^{y-1} z^\Delta(t) dh \geq \gamma (z^\sigma(t))^{y-1} z^\Delta(t), \tag{16}$$

in view of (16), Lemma 2.2, Lemma 2.3, and (9), we have

$$\begin{aligned} w^\Delta(t) &\leq -\rho^\sigma(t) q_2(t) \left( \frac{\phi_2(t)}{\sigma(t)} \right)^\gamma + \frac{(\rho^\Delta(t))_+}{\rho(t)} w(t) - \gamma \rho^\sigma(t) \frac{r(t)(z^{\Delta\Delta}(t))^\gamma z^\Delta(t)z(t)}{z^{\gamma+1}(t)z^{\gamma\sigma}(t)} \\ &\leq -\rho^\sigma(t) q_2(t) \left( \frac{\phi_2(t)}{\sigma(t)} \right)^\gamma + \frac{(\rho^\Delta(t))_+}{\rho(t)} w(t) \end{aligned}$$



$$\begin{aligned}
 & -\gamma\rho^\sigma(t)R(t, t_*)\frac{r^{\frac{\gamma+1}{\gamma}}(t)(z^{\Delta\Delta}(t))^{\gamma+1}z(t)}{z^{\gamma+1}(t)z(\sigma(t))} \\
 & \leq -\rho^\sigma(t)q_2(t)\left(\frac{\phi_2(t)}{\sigma(t)}\right)^\gamma + \frac{(\rho^\Delta(t))_+}{\rho(t)}w(t) - \gamma\rho^\sigma(t)R(t, t_*)\frac{t}{\sigma(t)}\frac{w^{\frac{\gamma+1}{\gamma}}(t)}{\rho^{\frac{\gamma+1}{\gamma}}(t)}. \tag{17}
 \end{aligned}$$

In the second case  $\gamma > 1$ . Applying the Keller chain rule, we have

$$(z^\gamma(t))^\Delta = \gamma \int_0^1 [hz^\sigma + (1-h)z]^{\gamma-1} z^\Delta(t) dh \geq \gamma(z(t))^{\gamma-1} z^\Delta(t), \tag{18}$$

in the view of (18), Lemma 2.2, Lemma 2.3, and (9), we have

$$\begin{aligned}
 w^\Delta(t) & \leq -\rho^\sigma(t)q_2(t)\left(\frac{\phi_2(t)}{\sigma(t)}\right)^\gamma + \frac{(\rho^\Delta(t))_+}{\rho(t)}w(t) \\
 & \quad - \gamma\rho^\sigma(t)\frac{r(t)([z(t)]^{\Delta\Delta})^\gamma z^\Delta(t)z^\gamma(t)}{z^{\gamma+1}(t)z^{\gamma\sigma}(t)}, \\
 w^\Delta(t) & \leq -\rho^\sigma(t)q_2(t)\left(\frac{\phi_2(t)}{\sigma(t)}\right)^\gamma + \frac{(\rho^\Delta(t))_+}{\rho(t)}w(t) \\
 & \quad - \gamma\rho^\sigma(t)\left(\frac{t}{\sigma(t)}\right)^\gamma R(t, t_*)\frac{w^{\frac{\gamma+1}{\gamma}}(t)}{\rho^{\frac{\gamma+1}{\gamma}}(t)}. \tag{19}
 \end{aligned}$$

By (17), (19), and the definition of  $b(t)$  and  $\beta(t)$ , we have, for  $\gamma > 0$ ,

$$w^\Delta(t) \leq -\rho^\sigma(t)q_2(t)\left(\frac{\phi_2(t)}{\sigma(t)}\right)^\gamma + \frac{(\rho^\Delta(t))_+}{\rho(t)}w(t) - \gamma\rho^\sigma(t)\beta(t)R(t, t_*)\frac{w^\lambda(t)}{\rho^\lambda(t)}, \tag{20}$$

where  $\lambda := \frac{\gamma+1}{\gamma}$ . Define  $A \geq 0$  and  $B \geq 0$  by

$$\begin{aligned}
 A^\lambda & := \gamma\rho^\sigma(t)\beta(t)R(t, t_*)\frac{w^\lambda(t)}{\rho^\lambda(t)}, \\
 B^{\lambda-1} & := \frac{\rho^\Delta(t)}{\lambda(\gamma\rho^\sigma(t)\beta(t)R(t, t_*))^\frac{1}{\lambda}}.
 \end{aligned}$$

Then using the inequality [15]

$$\lambda AB^{\lambda-1} - A^\lambda \leq (\lambda - 1)B^\lambda, \tag{21}$$

which yields

$$\frac{(\rho^\Delta(t))_+}{\rho(t)}w(t) - \gamma\rho^\sigma(t)\beta(t)R(t, t_*)\frac{w^\lambda(t)}{\rho^\lambda(t)} \leq \frac{((\rho^\Delta(t))_+)^{\gamma+1}}{(\gamma + 1)^{\gamma+1}(\beta(t)\rho^\sigma(t)R(t, t_*))^\gamma}.$$

From this last inequality and (20), we find

$$w^\Delta(t) \leq -\rho^\sigma(t)q_2(t)\left(\frac{\phi_2(t)}{\sigma(t)}\right)^\gamma + \frac{((\rho^\Delta(t))_+)^{\gamma+1}}{(\gamma + 1)^{\gamma+1}(\beta(t)\rho^\sigma(t)R(t, t_*))^\gamma}.$$

Integrating both sides from  $T$  to  $t$ , we get

$$\int_T^t \left[ \rho^\sigma(s) q_2(s) \left( \frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)} \right)^\gamma - \frac{((\rho^\Delta(s))_+)^{\gamma+1}}{(\gamma+1)^{\gamma+1} (\beta(s) \rho^\sigma(s) R(s, t_*))^\gamma} \right] \Delta s \leq w(T) - w(t) \leq w(T),$$

which contradicts assumption (13). This completes the proof of Theorem 3.1.  $\square$

**Remark 3.1** From Theorem 3.1, we can obtain different conditions for oscillation of (1) with different choices of  $\rho(t)$ .

**Remark 3.2** The conclusion of Theorem 3.1 remains intact if assumption (13) is replaced by the two conditions

$$\begin{aligned} \limsup_{t \rightarrow \infty} \int_T^t \rho^\sigma(s) q_2(s) \left( \frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)} \right)^\gamma \Delta s &= \infty, \\ \limsup_{t \rightarrow \infty} \int_T^t \frac{((\rho^\Delta(s))_+)^{\gamma+1}}{(\gamma+1)^{\gamma+1} (\beta(s) \rho^\sigma(s) \psi(s, t_*))^\gamma} \Delta s &< \infty. \end{aligned}$$

For example, let  $\rho(t) = t$ . Now Theorem 3.1 yields the following results.

**Corollary 3.1** Assume that (H1)-(H5), (5), and (10) hold. If

$$\limsup_{t \rightarrow \infty} \int_T^t \left[ \sigma(s) q_2(s) \left( \frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)} \right)^\gamma - \frac{1}{(\gamma+1)^{\gamma+1} (\beta(s) \sigma(s) R(s, t_*))^\gamma} \right] \Delta s = \infty \tag{22}$$

holds, then every solution (1) is either oscillatory or  $\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} x(t) = 0$ .

For example, let  $\rho(t) = 1$ . Now Theorem 3.1 yields the following results.

**Corollary 3.2** Assume that (H1)-(H5), (5), and (10) hold. If

$$\limsup_{t \rightarrow \infty} \int_T^t q_2(s) \left( \frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)} \right)^\gamma \Delta s = \infty, \tag{23}$$

then every solution (1) is either oscillatory or  $\lim_{t \rightarrow \infty} x(t) = 0$ .

**Theorem 3.2** Assume that (2), (5), and (10) hold. Furthermore, suppose that there exist functions  $H, h \in C_{rd}(\mathbb{D}, \mathbb{R})$ , where  $\mathbb{D} \equiv (t, s) : t \geq s \geq t_0$  such that

$$\begin{aligned} H(t, t) &= 0, \quad t \geq 0, \\ H(t, s) &> 0, \quad t > s \geq t_0, \end{aligned}$$

and  $H$  has a nonpositive continuous  $\Delta$ -partial derivative  $H^{\Delta s}(t, s)$  with respect to the second variable and satisfies

$$H^{\Delta s}(\sigma(t), s) + H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \frac{\rho^\Delta(s)}{\rho(s)} = -\frac{h(t, s)}{\rho(s)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s))^{\frac{\gamma}{\gamma+1}}, \tag{24}$$

and for all sufficiently large  $T_1 \in [t_0, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ , there is a  $T > T_1$  such that

$$\limsup_{t \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{H(\sigma(t), T)} \int_T^{\sigma(t)} K(t, s) = \infty, \tag{25}$$

where  $\rho$  is a positive  $\Delta$ -differentiable function and

$$K(t, s) = H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \rho^\sigma(s) q_2(s) \left( \frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)} \right)^\gamma - \frac{(h_-(t, s))^{\gamma+1}}{(\gamma + 1)^{\gamma+1} (\beta(s) \rho^\sigma(s) R(s, T_1))^\gamma} \Delta s = \infty.$$

Then every solution of (1) is either oscillatory or tends to zero.

*Proof* Suppose that  $x(t)$  is a non-oscillatory solution of (1) and  $z(t)$  is defined as in (3). Without loss of generality, we may assume that there is a  $t_1 \in [t_0, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$  sufficiently large so that the conclusions of Lemma 2.1 hold and (24) holds for  $t_2 > t_1$ . If case (1) of Lemma 2.1 holds then proceeding as in the proof of Theorem 3.1, we see that (20) holds for  $t > t_2$ . Multiplying both sides of (20) by  $H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s))$  and integrating from  $T$  to  $\sigma(t)$ , we get

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \rho^\sigma(s) q_2(s) \left( \frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)} \right)^\gamma \Delta s \\ & \leq - \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) w^\Delta(s) \Delta s + \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \frac{\rho^\Delta(s)}{\rho(s)} w(s) \Delta s \\ & \quad - \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \gamma \rho^\sigma(s) \beta(s) R(s, T_1) \frac{w^\lambda(s)}{\rho^\lambda(s)} \Delta s \quad \left( \lambda = \frac{\gamma + 1}{\gamma} \right). \end{aligned} \tag{26}$$

Integrating by parts and using  $H(t, t) = 0$ , we obtain

$$\int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) w^\Delta(s) \Delta s = -H(\sigma(t), T) w(T) - \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H^{\Delta s}(\sigma(t), s) w(s) \Delta s.$$

It then follows from (26) that

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \rho^\sigma(s) q_2(s) \left( \frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)} \right)^\gamma \Delta s \\ & \leq H(\sigma(t), T) w(T) + \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H^{\Delta s}(\sigma(t), s) w(s) \Delta s \\ & \quad + \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \frac{\rho^\Delta(s)}{\rho(s)} w(s) \Delta s \\ & \quad - \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \gamma \rho^\sigma(s) \beta(s) R(s, T_1) \frac{w^\lambda(s)}{\rho^\lambda(s)} \Delta s, \\ & \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \rho^\sigma(s) q_2(s) \left( \frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)} \right)^\gamma \Delta s \\ & \leq H(\sigma(t), T) w(T) \\ & \quad + \left[ \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H^{\Delta s}(\sigma(t), s) + H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \frac{\rho^\Delta(s)}{\rho(s)} \right] w(s) \Delta s \\ & \quad - \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \gamma \rho^\sigma(s) \beta(s) R(s, T_1) \frac{w^\lambda(s)}{\rho^\lambda(s)} \Delta s. \end{aligned}$$

It then follows from (24) that

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \rho^\sigma(s) q_2(s) \left( \frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)} \right)^\gamma \Delta s \\ & \leq H(\sigma(t), T) w(T) \\ & \quad + \int_T^{\sigma(t)} \left[ -\frac{h(t, s)}{\rho(s)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s))^{\frac{\gamma}{\gamma+1}} \right] w(s) \Delta s \\ & \quad - \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \gamma \rho^\sigma(s) \beta(s) R(s, T_1) \frac{w^\lambda(s)}{\rho^\lambda(s)} \Delta s \\ & \leq H(\sigma(t), T) w(T) + \int_T^{\sigma(t)} \left[ \frac{h(t, s)}{\rho(s)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s))^{\frac{\gamma}{\gamma+1}} \right] w(s) \Delta s \\ & \quad - \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \gamma \rho^\sigma(s) \beta(s) R(s, T_1) \frac{w^\lambda(s)}{\rho^\lambda(s)} \Delta s. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, as in Theorem 3.1, by letting

$$\begin{aligned} A^\lambda & := H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \gamma \rho^\sigma(t) \beta(t) R(t, T_1) \frac{w^\lambda(t)}{\rho^\lambda(t)}, \\ B^{\lambda-1} & := \frac{h_-(t, s)}{\lambda (\gamma \rho^\sigma(t) \beta(t) R(t, T_1))^{\frac{1}{\lambda}}}. \end{aligned}$$

Then using the inequality [15]

$$\lambda A B^{\lambda-1} - A^\lambda \leq (\lambda - 1) B^\lambda.$$

We have

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_T^{\sigma(t)} \left[ \frac{h_-(t, s)}{\rho(s)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s))^{\frac{\gamma}{\gamma+1}} \right] w(s) \Delta s \\ & \quad - \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \gamma \rho^\sigma(s) \beta(s) R(s, T_1) \frac{w^\lambda(s)}{\rho^\lambda(s)} \Delta s \\ & = \int_T^{\sigma(t)} \frac{(h_-(t, s))^{\gamma+1}}{(\gamma + 1)^{\gamma+1} (\beta(s) \rho^\sigma(s) R(s, T_1))^\gamma} \Delta s, \\ & \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \rho^\sigma(s) q_2(s) \left( \frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)} \right)^\gamma \Delta s \\ & \leq H(\sigma(t), T) w(T) + \int_T^{\sigma(t)} \frac{(h_-(t, s))^{\gamma+1}}{(\gamma + 1)^{\gamma+1} (\beta(s) \rho^\sigma(s) R(s, T_1))^\gamma} \Delta s. \end{aligned}$$

Then for  $T > T_1$  we have

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_T^{\sigma(t)} \left[ H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \rho^\sigma(s) q_2(s) \left( \frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)} \right)^\gamma - \frac{(h_-(t, s))^{\gamma+1}}{(\gamma + 1)^{\gamma+1} (\beta(s) \rho^\sigma(s) R(s, T_1))^\gamma} \right] \Delta s \\ & \leq H(\sigma(t), T) w(T), \end{aligned}$$

and this implies that

$$\frac{1}{H(\sigma(t), T)} \int_T^{\sigma(t)} \left[ H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \rho^\sigma(s) q_2(s) \left( \frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)} \right)^\gamma - \frac{(h_-(t, s))^{\gamma+1}}{(\gamma + 1)^{\gamma+1} (\beta(s) \rho^\sigma(s) R(s, T_1))^\gamma} \right] \Delta s < w(T),$$

for all large  $T$ , which contradicts (25). This completes the proof of Theorem 3.2.  $\square$

**Remark 3.3** The conclusion of Theorem 3.2 remains intact if assumption (25) is replaced by the two conditions

$$\begin{aligned} \limsup_{t \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{H(\sigma(t), T)} \int_T^{\sigma(t)} H(\sigma(t), \sigma(s)) \rho^\sigma(s) q_2(s) \left( \frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)} \right)^\gamma \Delta s &= \infty, \\ \liminf_{t \rightarrow \infty} \frac{1}{H(\sigma(t), T)} \int_T^{\sigma(t)} \frac{(h_-(t, s))^{\gamma+1}}{(\gamma + 1)^{\gamma+1} (\beta(s) \rho^\sigma(s) R(s, T_1))^\gamma} \Delta s &< \infty. \end{aligned}$$

**Remark 3.4** Define  $w$  as (14), we also get

$$w^\Delta(t) = r^\sigma(t) (z^{\Delta\Delta}(t))^{\gamma\sigma} \left[ \frac{\rho(t)}{z^\gamma(t)} \right]^\Delta + \frac{\rho(t)}{z^\gamma} [r(t) (z^{\Delta\Delta}(t))^\gamma]^\Delta,$$

similar to the proofs of Theorem 3.1, we can obtain different results. We leave the details to the reader.

**Example 3.1** Consider the following third-order neutral dynamic equation  $t \in [t_0, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ :

$$\left( x(t) + \int_a^b e^{-t} x(t - \eta) \Delta \eta \right)^{\Delta\Delta\Delta} + \int_c^d \frac{\beta \cdot t}{(t^2 - t\xi)(t^2 - t\xi)^\sigma} x(t - \xi) \Delta \xi = 0, \quad (27)$$

where  $\gamma = 1$ ,  $r(t) = 1$ ,  $\tau(t, \eta) = t - \eta$ ,  $\phi(t, \xi) = t - \xi$ ,  $\delta = 1$ ,  $q_2(t) = \frac{\beta}{t\phi_2(t)}$ ,  $p(t, \eta) = e^{-t}$ ,  $q(t, \xi) = \beta \cdot t / (t^2 - t\xi)(t^2 - t\xi)^\sigma$ .

It is clear that condition (2), (5), and (10) hold. Therefore, by Theorem 3.1, picking  $\rho(t) = t$ , we have

$$\begin{aligned} \limsup_{t \rightarrow \infty} \int_T^t \left[ \rho^\sigma(s) q_2(s) \left( \frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)} \right)^\gamma - \frac{((\rho^\Delta(s))_+)^{\gamma+1}}{(\gamma + 1)^{\gamma+1} (\beta(s) \rho^\sigma(s) R(s, t_*))^\gamma} \right] \Delta s \\ = \limsup_{t \rightarrow \infty} \int_T^t \left[ \frac{\beta}{s} - \frac{1}{(\gamma + 1)^{(\gamma+1)} s(s - t_*)} \right] \Delta s = \infty. \end{aligned}$$

Hence, by Theorem 3.1 every solution of (27) is oscillatory or tends to zero if  $\beta > 0$ .

**Example 3.2** Consider the following third-order neutral dynamic equation  $t \in [t_0, \infty)_{\mathbb{T}}$ :

$$\left[ \frac{1}{t} \left( \left[ x(t) + \int_a^b \frac{1}{2} x \left[ \tau \left( \frac{t}{2} \right) \right] \Delta \eta \right]^{\Delta\Delta} \right)^3 \right]^\Delta + \int_c^d q(t, \xi) f \left( x \left[ \phi \left( \frac{t}{2} \right) \right] \right) \Delta \xi = 0, \quad (28)$$

where  $\gamma = 3$ ,  $r(t) = \frac{1}{t}$ ,  $\tau(t, \eta) = \frac{t}{2}$ ,  $\phi(t, \xi) = \frac{t}{2}$ ,  $\delta = 1$ ,  $q_2(t) = \frac{\beta}{t} \frac{\sigma^3(s)}{\phi_2^3(t)}$ ,  $p(t, \eta) = \frac{1}{2}$ .

It is clear that condition (2), (5), and (10) hold. Therefore, by Theorem 3.1, picking  $\rho(t) = 1$ , we have

$$\limsup_{t \rightarrow \infty} \int_T^t q_2(s) \left( \frac{\phi_2(s)}{\sigma(s)} \right)^3 \Delta s = \limsup_{t \rightarrow \infty} \int_T^t \frac{\beta}{s} \Delta s = \infty.$$

Hence, by Theorem 3.1 every solution of (28) is oscillatory or tends to zero if  $\beta > 0$ .

#### Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

#### Authors' contributions

All authors contributed equally to the writing of this paper. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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Received: 17 January 2014 Accepted: 19 July 2014 Published: 05 Aug 2014

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10.1186/1687-1847-2014-220

**Cite this article as:** Şenel and Utku: Oscillation criteria for third-order neutral dynamic equations with continuously distributed delay. *Advances in Difference Equations* 2014, **2014**:220