The majorization theorem of connected graphs

Muhuo Liua,b, Bolian Liub,∗, Zhifu Youb

a Department of Applied Mathematics, South China Agricultural University, Guangzhou 510642, PR China
b School of Mathematic Science, South China Normal University, Guangzhou 510631, PR China

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ABSTRACT

Let \( \pi = (d_1, d_2, \ldots, d_n) \) and \( \pi' = (d'_1, d'_2, \ldots, d'_n) \) be two non-increasing degree sequences. We say \( \pi \) is majorized by \( \pi' \), denoted by \( \pi \prec \pi' \), if and only if \( \frac{\pi}{n} = \frac{\pi'}{n}, \sum_{i=1}^{n} d_i = \sum_{i=1}^{n} d'_i, \) and \( \sum_{j=1}^{i} d_j \leq \sum_{j=1}^{i} d'_j \) for all \( j = 1, 2, \ldots, n \). If the degree of vertex \( v \) is (resp. not) equal to 1, then we call \( v \) a pendant (resp. non-pendant) vertex of \( G \). We use \( C_\pi \) to denote the class of connected graphs with degree sequence \( \pi \). Suppose \( \pi \) and \( \pi' \) are two non-increasing cyclic degree sequences. Let \( G \) and \( G' \) be the graphs with greatest spectral radii in \( C_\pi \) and \( C_{\pi'} \), respectively. In this paper, we shall prove that if \( \pi \prec \pi' \), \( G \) and \( G' \) have the same number of pendant vertices, and the degrees of all non-pendant vertices of \( G' \) are greater than \( c \), then \( \rho(G) < \rho(G') \).

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1. Introduction

Throughout the paper, \( G = (V, E) \) is a connected undirected simple graph with \( V = \{v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_n\} \) and \( E = \{e_1, e_2, \ldots, e_m\} \), i.e., \( |V| = n \) and \( |E| = m \). If \( m = n + c - 1 \), then \( G \) is called a c-cyclic graph. Especially, if \( c = 1 \), then \( G \) is called a unicyclic graph. Let \( uv \) be an edge, of which the end vertices are \( u \) and \( v \). The symbol \( N(v) \) denotes the neighbor set of vertex \( v \), then \( d(v) = |N(v)| \) is called the degree of \( v \). If the degree of vertex \( v \) is (resp. not) equal to 1, then we call \( v \) a pendant (resp. non-pendant) vertex of \( G \).
Let $A(G)$ be the adjacency matrix of $G$. The spectral radius of $G$, denoted by $\rho(G)$, is the largest eigenvalue of $A(G)$. When $G$ is connected, $A(G)$ is irreducible and by the Perron-Frobenius Theorem (see, e.g. [1]), $\rho(G)$ is simple and there is a unique positive unit eigenvector corresponding to $\rho(G)$. We refer to such an eigenvector $f$ as the Perron vector of $G$.

If $d_i = d(v_i)$ for $i = 1, 2, \ldots, n$, then we call the sequence $\pi = (d_1, d_2, \ldots, d_n)$ the degree sequence of $G$. Throughout this paper, we enumerate the degrees in non-increasing order, i.e., $d_1 \geq d_2 \geq \cdots \geq d_n$.

A non-increasing sequence $\pi = (d_1, d_2, \ldots, d_n)$ is called graphic if there exists a graph having $\pi$ as its degree sequence. It is called a $c$-cyclic degree sequence, if it is the degree sequence of some connected $c$-cyclic graph. Specially, if there exists a connected unicyclic graph with $\pi$ as its degree sequence, then $\pi$ is called a unicyclic degree sequence.

We use $C_\pi$ to denote the class of connected graphs with degree sequence $\pi$. If $G \in C_\pi$ and $\rho(G) \geq \rho(G')$ for any other $G' \in C_\pi$, then we call $G$ has greatest spectral radius in $C_\pi$.

Suppose $\pi = (d_1, d_2, \ldots, d_n)$ and $\pi' = (d'_1, d'_2, \ldots, d'_n)$ are two non-increasing graphic degree sequences, we write $\pi \prec \pi'$ if and only if $\pi \neq \pi'$, $\sum_{i=1}^{n} d_i = \sum_{i=1}^{n} d'_i$, and $\sum_{i=1}^{j} d_i \leq \sum_{i=1}^{j} d'_i$ for all $j = 1, 2, \ldots, n$. Such an ordering is sometimes called majorization.

The work on determining the graph which has greatest spectral radius among some class of graphs, can be traced back to 1985 when Brualdi and Hoffman [2] investigated the maximum spectral radius of the adjacency matrix of a (not necessarily connected) graph in the set of all graphs with a given number of vertices and edges. Their work was followed by other people, in the connected graph case as well as in the general case, and a number of literatures have been written. Recently, Bıyıkoglu and Leydold had firstly considered the majorization theorem for the graphs, which have greatest spectral radii, between two degree sequences, and they once obtained.

**Theorem A** [3]. Let $\pi$ and $\pi'$ be two different non-increasing graphic degree sequences with $\pi \prec \pi'$. Let $G$ and $G'$ be the graphs with greatest spectral radii in $C_\pi$ and $C_{\pi'}$, respectively. Then, $\rho(G) < \rho(G')$.

Unfortunately, the following example shows that Theorem A is not correct.

**Example 1.1.** Let $\pi = (4, 3, 3, 2, 2, 1)$ and $\pi' = (4, 4, 3, 2, 2, 1)$. Let $G_1$ and $G_2$ be the graphs as shown in Fig. 1. It is easy to see that (see the data of the spectra of connected graphs with seven vertices [4, pp. 163–220]) $G_1$ and $G_2$ are the graphs with greatest spectral radii in $C_\pi$ and $C_{\pi'}$, respectively. Clearly, $\pi \prec \pi'$, but $\rho(G_1) = 3.09787 > 3.05401 = \rho(G_2)$.

Very recently, Bıyıkoglu and Leydold had changed Theorem A from the general graphs to the class of trees, i.e.,

**Theorem B** [5]. Let $\pi$ and $\pi'$ be two different non-increasing degree sequences of trees with $\pi \prec \pi'$. Let $T$ and $T'$ be the trees with greatest spectral radii in $C_\pi$ and $C_{\pi'}$, respectively. Then, $\rho(T) < \rho(T')$.

In this note, we consider the similar problem to the general graphs with additional restrictions, and we shall prove that

**Theorem 1.1.** Suppose $\pi = (d_1, d_2, \ldots, d_n)$ and $\pi' = (d'_1, d'_2, \ldots, d'_n)$ are two different non-increasing $c$-cyclic degree sequences. Let $G$ and $G'$ be the graphs with greatest spectral radii in $C_\pi$ and $C_{\pi'}$, respectively.

![Fig. 1. The graphs $G_1$ and $G_2$.](image-url)
If \( \pi < \pi' \), \( G \) and \( G' \) have the same number of pendant vertices, and the degrees of all non-pendant vertices of \( G' \) are greater than \( c \), then \( \rho(G) < \rho(G') \).

By Theorem 1.1, it is easy to follow that

**Corollary 1.1.** Suppose \( \pi = (d_1, d_2, \ldots, d_n) \) and \( \pi' = (d'_1, d'_2, \ldots, d'_n) \) are two different non-increasing unicyclic degree sequences. Let \( G \) and \( G' \) be the unicyclic graphs with greatest spectral radii in \( C_\pi \) and \( C_{\pi'} \), respectively. If \( \pi < \pi' \), \( G \) and \( G' \) have the same number of pendant vertices, then \( \rho(G) < \rho(G') \).

**Remark.** By Example 1.1, the condition of “the degrees of all non-pendant vertices of \( G' \) are greater than \( c \)” in Theorem 1.1 cannot be deleted.

2. The proof of Theorem 1.1

Suppose \( uv \in E \), the notion \( G - uv \) denotes the new graph yielded from \( G \) by deleting the edge \( uv \). Similarly, if \( uv \notin E \), then \( G + uv \) denotes the new graph obtained from \( G \) by adding the edge \( uv \).

**Lemma 2.1** [6,7]. Let \( u, v \) be two vertices of the connected graph \( G \), and \( w_1, w_2, \ldots, w_k \) \((1 \leq k \leq d(v))\) be some vertices of \( N(v) \setminus N(u) \). Let \( G' = G + w_1u + w_2u + \cdots + w_ku - w_1v - w_2v - \cdots - w_kv \). Suppose \( f \) is a Perron vector of \( G \), if \( f(u) > f(v) \), then \( \rho(G') > \rho(G) \).

Given a graphic degree sequence \( \pi = (d_1, d_2, \ldots, d_n) \), let \( \pi(1) \) denote the cardinality of 1 in \( \pi \), and \( d(\pi) = \min \{d_i : d_i \neq 1 \text{ and } d_i \text{ is a component of } \pi \} \). We use \( \min(\pi) \) to denote the minimum component of \( \pi \), i.e., \( \min(\pi) = d_n \).

By the Theorem 1 of [5], the next result follows immediately.

**Lemma 2.2.** Suppose \( \pi = (d_1, d_2, \ldots, d_n) \) is a non-increasing \( c \)-cyclic degree sequence. If \( G \) has greatest spectral radius in \( C_\pi \) with the Perron vector \( f \), then there exists an ordering of \( V(G) = \{v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_n\} \) such that \( d(v_1) = d_i \) for \( 1 \leq i \leq n \), and \( f(v_1) > f(v_2) > \cdots > f(v_n) \).

**Lemma 2.3.** If \( \pi < \pi' \), then \( \min(\pi) \geq \min(\pi') \).

**Proof.** Suppose \( \pi = (d_1, d_2, \ldots, d_n) \) and \( \pi' = (d'_1, d'_2, \ldots, d'_n) \). Assume that the contrary holds, i.e., \( d_n < d'_n \). Since \( \pi < \pi' \), then \( \sum_{i=1}^{n} d_i = \sum_{i=1}^{n} d'_i \). Combining with \( d_n < d'_n \), we have \( \sum_{i=1}^{n-1} d_i > \sum_{i=1}^{n-1} d'_i \), a contradiction to the definition of \( \pi < \pi' \). Thus, \( d_n \geq d'_n \) follows. 

**Lemma 2.4.** Let \( \pi = (d_1, d_2, \ldots, d_n) \) and \( \pi' = (d'_1, d'_2, \ldots, d'_n) \) be two non-increasing degree sequences with \( \min(\pi') \geq 1 \). If \( \pi < \pi' \) and only two components of \( \pi \) and \( \pi' \) are different from 1, then \( \pi'(1) \geq \pi(1) \).

**Proof.** Without loss of generality, we may assume that \( d_i = d'_i \) for \( i \neq p, q \), and \( d_p + 1 = d'_p, d_q - 1 = d'_q \). Since \( \pi < \pi' \), then \( 1 \leq p < q \leq n \). Thus, \( d_p > d_q = d'_q + 1 \geq \min(\pi') + 1 > 2 \). This implies that \( \pi'(1) \geq \pi(1) \). 

**Lemma 2.5** [8]. Let \( \pi \) and \( \pi' \) be two different non-increasing graphic degree sequences. If \( \pi < \pi' \), then there exists a series non-increasing graphic degree sequences \( \pi_1, \ldots, \pi_k \) such that \( \pi(=)\pi_0 < \pi_1 < \cdots < \pi_k < \pi_{k+1}(= \pi') \), and only two components of \( \pi_i \) and \( \pi_{i+1} \) are different from 1, where 0 \leq i \leq k.

**Lemma 2.6.** Let \( \pi \) and \( \pi' \) be two different non-increasing c-cyclic degree sequences with \( \pi(1) = \pi'(1) \) and \( d(\pi') \geq c + 1 \). If \( \pi < \pi' \), then there exists a series non-increasing c-cyclic degree sequences \( \pi_1, \ldots, \pi_k \) such that \( \pi(=)\pi_0 < \pi_1 < \cdots < \pi_k < \pi_{k+1}(= \pi') \) with \( \pi(1) = \pi_1(1) = \cdots = \pi_k(1) = \pi'(1), d(\pi) \geq d(\pi_1) > \cdots > d(\pi_k) \geq d(\pi') \), and only two components of \( \pi_i \) and \( \pi_{i+1} \) are different from 1, where 0 \leq i \leq k.
Proof. Since $\pi < \pi'$, by Lemma 2.5 there exists a series non-increasing graphic degree sequences $\pi_1, \ldots, \pi_k$ such that $(\pi =) \pi_0 < \pi_1 < \cdots < \pi_k < \pi_k+1 (= \pi')$, and only two components of $\pi_1$ and $\pi_{i+1}$ are different from 1, where $0 \leq i \leq k$. By Lemma 2.3, we can conclude that $\min(\pi) \geq \min(\pi_1) \geq \cdots \geq \min(\pi_k) > 1$. Thus, $\pi(1) < \pi_1(1) < \cdots < \pi_k(1) < \pi(1)$ follows from Lemma 2.4. Moreover, since $\pi(1) = \pi'(1)$, then $\pi(1) = \pi_1(1) = \cdots = \pi_k(1) = \pi'(1)$ follows.

In the following, let $\pi_i = (d_1, d_2, \ldots, d_n)$ and $\pi_{i+1} = (d'_1, d'_2, \ldots, d'_n)$. Since only two components of $\pi_i$ and $\pi_{i+1}$ are different from 1, we may assume that $d_j = d'_j$ for $j \neq p, q$, and $d_p + 1 = d'_p, d_q - 1 = d'_q$. We only need to show the following facts:

Fact 1. $d(\pi) \geq d(\pi_1) \geq \cdots \geq d(\pi_k) \geq d(\pi')$.

Proof of Fact 1. It is sufficient to show that $d(\pi_i) > d(\pi_{i+1})$ for $0 \leq i \leq k$. Since $\pi_i < \pi_{i+1}$, then $1 \leq p < q \leq n$. Thus, $d_p \geq d_q = d'_q + 1 \geq \min(\pi_{i+1}) + 1 \geq 2$. Combining with $\pi(i) = \pi_{i+1}(1)$, then $d'_q \neq 1$ (Otherwise, $\pi_1(1) < \pi_{i+1}(1)$). Thus, $d(\pi_i) \geq d(\pi_{i+1})$.

Fact 2. Each $\pi_i$ is a c-cyclic degree sequence for all $1 \leq i \leq k$.

Proof of Fact 2. It is sufficient to show that: For each $i \in \{0, 1, \ldots, k\}$, if there exists a connected c-cyclic graph $G$ with $\pi_i$ as its degree sequence, then there must exist a connected c-cyclic graph $G'$ with $\pi_{i+1}$ as its degree sequence. Once this is proved, we are done.

Since $\pi_i < \pi_{i+1}$, then $d_p \geq d_q \geq 2$. Recall that $\pi(i) = \pi_{i+1}(1)$, and $d_j = d'_j$ for $j \neq p, q$, then $d'_q \neq 1$. By Fact 1, $d_q = d'_q + 1 \geq d(\pi') + 1 \geq c + 2$. Let $P_{v_pv_q}$ be a shortest path from $v_p$ to $v_q$ in $G$. Note that $G$ is a connected c-cyclic graph and $d_q \geq c + 2$, then there must exist some $w \in N(v_q) \setminus N(v_p)$, but $w \notin P_{v_pv_q}$ (Otherwise, $G$ is not a c-cyclic graph). Let $G' = G + v_pw - v_qw$, then $G'$ is also a connected c-cyclic graph with $\pi_{i+1}$ as its degree sequence.

This completes the proof of this lemma. ∎

Lemma 2.7. Let $\pi = (d_1, d_2, \ldots, d_n)$ and $\pi' = (d'_1, d'_2, \ldots, d'_n)$ be two non-increasing c-cyclic degree sequences with $\pi(1) = \pi'(1)$ and $d(\pi') > c + 1$. Let $G_1$ and $G_2$ be the connected c-cyclic graphs with greatest spectral radii in $C_{\pi}$ and $C_{\pi'}$, respectively. If $\pi < \pi'$ and only two components of $\pi$ and $\pi'$ are different from 1, then $\rho(G_1) < \rho(G_2)$.

Proof. Notice that $G_1$ has greatest spectral radius in $C_{\pi}$, by Lemma 2.2 there exists an ordering of $V(G_1) = \{v_1, v_2, \ldots, v_n\}$ such that $d(v_i) = d_i$ for $1 \leq i \leq n$, and $f(v_1) > f(v_2) > \cdots > f(v_n)$. Recall that only two components of $\pi$ and $\pi'$ are different from 1, we may assume that $d_i = d'_i$ for $i \neq p, q$, and $d_p + 1 = d'_p, d_q - 1 = d'_q$. Since $\pi < \pi'$, then $1 \leq p < q \leq n$. This implies that $d_p \geq d_q \geq 2$ and $f(v_p) > f(v_q)$.

Let $P_{v_pv_q}$ be a shortest path from $v_p$ to $v_q$ in $G_1$. Since $\pi(1) = \pi'(1)$, $d_p \geq d_q \geq 2$, then $d'_q \neq 1$. Thus, $d_q = d'_q + 1 \geq d(\pi') + 1 \geq c + 2$. This guarantees that there must exist some $w \in N(v_q) \setminus N(v_p)$, but $w \notin P_{v_pv_q}$. Let $G' = G_1 + v_pw - v_qw$, then $G' \in C_{\pi'}$. Moreover, since $f(v_p) > f(v_q)$, then $\rho(G_1) < \rho(G')$ by Lemma 2.1. This implies that $\rho(G_1) < \rho(G_2)$ because $G_2$ has greatest spectral radius in $C_{\pi'}$. ∎

The Proof of Theorem 1.1. Since $G \in C_{\pi}, G' \in C_{\pi'}$, $G$ and $G'$ have the same number of pendant vertices, and the degrees of all non-pendant vertices of $G'$ are greater than $c$, then $\pi(1) = \pi'(1)$ and $d(\pi') > c + 1$. Combining with $\pi < \pi'$, by Lemma 2.6 there exists a series non-increasing c-cyclic degree sequences $\pi_1, \ldots, \pi_k$ such that $(\pi =) \pi_0 < \pi_1 < \cdots < \pi_k < \pi_{k+1} (= \pi')$ with $\pi(1) = \pi_1(1) = \cdots = \pi_k(1) = \pi'(1), d(\pi) \geq d(\pi_1) \geq \cdots \geq d(\pi_k) \geq d(\pi') \geq c + 1$, and only two components of $\pi_i$ and $\pi_{i+1}$ are different from 1, where $0 \leq i \leq k$.

Let $G_i$ be the connected c-cyclic graph with greatest spectral radius in $C_{\pi_i}$ for $1 \leq i \leq k$. By Lemma 2.7, we can conclude that $\rho(G) < \rho(G_1) < \cdots < \rho(G_k) < \rho(G')$. Thus, Theorem 1.1 follows. ∎
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