On Terwilliger algebras with respect to subsets in Hamming graphs and Johnson graphs

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In this talk, we determine irreducible modules of the Terwilliger algebra of a $Q$-polynomial distance-regular graph $\Gamma$ with respect to a subset with a special condition. Here we focus on the case where $\Gamma$ is the Johnson graph. We construct irreducible modules of the Terwilliger algebra of $\Gamma$ from those of binary Hamming graphs. This is a joint work with Hajime Tanaka.

1 Width and dual width

Let $\Gamma$ be a $Q$-polynomial distance-regular graph of diameter $D$ with vertex set $X$. We refer the reader to [1], [2] for terminology and background materials on $Q$-polynomial distance-regular graphs. Let $C$ be a nonempty subset of $X$. Let $\chi \in C^X$ be the characteristic vector of $C$, i.e.,

\[(\chi)_x = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } x \in C, \\ 0 & \text{otherwise}. \end{cases} \]

Let $A_0, \ldots, A_D$ be distance matrices of $\Gamma$. We write $A = A_1$. Let $E_0, \ldots, E_D$ be primitive idempotents of $\Gamma$. Brouwer, Godsil, Koolen and Martin [3] introduced two parameters of $C$. The width $w$ of $C$ is defined as

\[ w = \max \{ i \mid \chi^T A_i \chi \neq 0 \} . \]

Dually, the dual width $w^*$ of $C$ is defined as

\[ w^* = \max \{ i \mid \chi^T E_i \chi \neq 0 \} . \]

We can verify that $w = \max \{ \partial(x, y) \mid x, y \in C \}$, i.e., the maximum distance between two vertices in $C$. Obviously, $w = 0$ if and only if $C = \{ x \}$ ($x \in X$). The following fundamental bound holds.

**Theorem 1** [3]

\[ w + w^* \geq D . \]

When the above bound is attained, Brouwer et.al. showed that some good properties hold:

**Theorem 2** [3] Suppose $w + w^* = D$. Then
(i) $C$ is completely regular.

(ii) $C$ induces a $Q$-polynomial distance-regular graph whenever $C$ is connected.

Recently, Tanaka proved the following:

**Theorem 3** [8] Suppose $w + w^* = D$. Then

(i) $C$ induces a $Q$-polynomial distance-regular graph whenever $q \neq -1$.

(ii) $C$ is convex if and only if $\Gamma$ has classical parameters.

The subsets with $w + w^* = D$ were classified for some $Q$-polynomial distance-regular graphs (see [3], [8]). Our current goal is to characterize $Q$-polynomial distance-regular graphs having subsets with $w + w^* = D$ in terms of Terwilliger algebras. We will see the definitions and basic terminology on Terwilliger algebras in the next section.

## 2 Terwilliger algebras and modules

Let $C \subset X$. Let $\Gamma_i(C) = \{x \in X \mid \partial(x, C) = i\}$, i.e., the $i$th subconstituent of $\Gamma$ with respect to $C$. We define the diagonal matrix $E_i^* \in \text{Mat}_X(C)$ so that

$$(E_i^*)_{xx} = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } x \in \Gamma_i(C), \\ 0 & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

The *Terwilliger algebra* $\mathcal{T}(C)$ of $\Gamma$ with respect to $C$ is defined as follows:

$$\mathcal{T}(C) = \langle A, E_0^*, \ldots, E_D^* \rangle \subset \text{Mat}_X(C).$$

It is known that $\mathcal{T}(C)$ is semisimple, and non-commutative in general. If we set $C = \{x\} \ (x \in X)$, then $\mathcal{T}(C)$ is identical to the ordinary Terwilliger algebra $\mathcal{T}(x)$ or the subconstituent algebra introduced by Terwilliger [10]. Suzuki generalized the theory of subconstituent algebras to the case associated with subsets [6].

Let $W \subset C^X$ be an irreducible $\mathcal{T}(C)$-module. There are two types of decompositions of $W$ into subspaces which are invariant under the action of $E_i^*$ and $E_i$ respectively:

$$W = E_0^* W + \cdots + E_D^* W \quad \text{(direct sum)},$$

$$W = E_0 W + \cdots + E_D W \quad \text{(direct sum)}.$$  

We define parameters for $W$ to describe isomorphism classes of irreducible modules; The *endpoint* $\nu$ of $W$ is defined as $\nu = \min\{i \mid E_i^* W \neq 0\}$, and the *dual endpoint* $\mu$ of $W$ is $\mu = \min\{i \mid E_i W \neq 0\}$. The *diameter* of $W$ is defined as $d = |\{i \mid E_i^* W \neq 0\}| - 1$. $W$ is called *thin* if $\dim E_i^* W \leq 1$ for all $i$.

Suppose $C$ satisfies $w + w^* = D$. We have a preceding result on irreducible modules of endpoint 0:
Theorem 4 [5] Suppose $C$ satisfies $w + w^* = D$. Let $W$ be an irreducible $T(C)$-module of endpoint $\nu = 0$. Then $W$ is thin with $d = w^*$.

Our primary goal is to determine irreducible $T(C)$-modules of arbitrary endpoint $\nu$. In this article, we discuss the case of Johnson graphs.

3 Johnson graphs

Definition 3.1 The binary Hamming graph $\tilde{\Gamma} = H(N, 2)$ $(N \geq 2D)$ has vertex set
$$\tilde{X} = \{(x_1 \cdots x_N) | x_i \in \{0, 1\}\},$$
i.e., the set of binary words of length $N$, and two vertices $x, y \in \tilde{X}$ are adjacent if $x$ and $y$ differ in exactly 1 coordinate.

Definition 3.2 The Johnson graph $\Gamma = J(N, D)$ has vertex set
$$X = \tilde{\Gamma}_D(0) = \{(x_1 \cdots x_N) \in \tilde{X} | (\# \text{ of } 1s) = D\},$$
i.e., the set of binary words of length $N$ and weight $D$, and two vertices $x, y \in X$ are adjacent if $x$ and $y$ differ in exactly 2 coordinates.

Theorem 5 [3] Let $\Gamma = J(N, D)$ and $C \subset X$. Suppose $C$ satisfies $w + w^* = D$. Then
$$C \cong \{(1 \cdots 1^* \cdots *) | (\# \text{ of } 1s) = D\},$$
i.e., the induced subgraph on $C$ is isomorphic to the Johnson graph $J(N - w^*, D - w^*)$.

Let $C = \{(1 \cdots 1^* \cdots *) | (\# \text{ of } 1s) = D\}$, and $\Gamma^{(1)} = H(w^*, 2)$, $\Gamma^{(2)} = H(N - w, 2)$. Then
$$C = \Gamma^{(1)}_w(0) \times \Gamma^{(2)}_w(0),$$
and we also have
$$\Gamma_i(C) = \Gamma^{(1)}_{w^*-i}(0) \times \Gamma^{(2)}_{w+i}(0).$$
Let $T_1(0)$ be the Terwilliger algebra of $H(w^*, 2)$ with respect to 0, where 0 denotes the all zero word, and $T_2(0)$ the Terwilliger algebra of $H(N - w^*, 2)$ with respect to 0. Let $T(C)$ be the Terwilliger algebra of $J(N, D)$ with respect to $C$. Let $\tilde{X}$ denote the vertex set of $H(N, 2)$. Recall that the vertex set $X$ of $J(N, D)$ is a subset of $\tilde{X}$. For a subset $A$ of $\text{Mat}_{\tilde{X}}(C)$, let $A|_{X \times X} \subset \text{Mat}_X(C)$ denote the set of principal submatrices of matrices in $A$. The following is the key lemma.
Lemma 6

\[ T(C) \subseteq T_1(0) \otimes T_2(0)|_{X \times X} \ (\subset \text{Mat}_X(C)) \]

Let \( W_i \) be an irreducible \( T_i(0) \)-module \((i = 1, 2)\). Let

\[ W := W_1 \otimes W_2|_X \subset C^X, \]

where the right hand side denotes the set of vectors from \( W_1 \otimes W_2 \) whose indices are restricted on \( X \). Then

**Lemma 7** \( W \) is a \( T(C) \)-module.

Go [4] gave an explicit description of \( W_1, W_2 \). We will make use of results in [4] for the characterization of \( W \).

**Lemma 8** Let \( B_1, B_2 \) be standard bases for \( W_1, W_2 \) (see [4]). Then

(i) \( B := \{ u \otimes u' | u \in B_1, u' \in B_2, u \otimes u'|_X \neq 0 \} \) is a basis for \( W \).

(ii) \( \text{Span}\{ u \otimes u' \} = E_i^* W \) for some \( i \).

(iii) \( W \) is thin.

We can determine the endpoint of \( W \) by comparing supports of \( W_1 \) and \( W_2 \). For determination of the dual endpoint of \( W \), the following will be useful:

**Proposition 9** [11] Let \( T(0) \) be the Terwilliger algebra of the binary Hamming graph \( H(N, 2) \) with respect to \( 0 \). Let \( U \) be an irreducible \( T(0) \)-module of endpoint \( r \). Then \( v(\neq 0) \in U|_X \) is an eigenvector of \( J(N, D) \) for eigenvalue \( \theta_r \).

Next we will check that \( W \) is irreducible. To see that it is so, we consider a tridiagonal matrix. Let \( [A]_B \) be the matrix representing \( A \) with respect to the basis \( B \). Then \( [A]_B \) is tridiagonal since \( W \) is thin. Moreover, by calculation we can verify that the off-diagonal entries of \( [A]_B \) are nonzero. Hence we have the following:

**Lemma 10** \( W \) is an irreducible \( T(C) \)-module.

### 4 Main results

Let \( \Gamma = J(N, D) \) and \( C \subset X \). Suppose \( C \) satisfies \( w+w^* = D \). Let \( T(C) \) be the Terwilliger algebra of \( \Gamma \) with respect to \( C \). Let \( W \) be an irreducible \( T(C) \)-module of endpoint \( \nu \), dual endpoint \( \mu \), diameter \( d \).
Theorem 11 There exist integers $e, f$ satisfying
\[ 0 \leq e \leq \left\lfloor \frac{w^*}{2} \right\rfloor, \quad 0 \leq f \leq \left\lfloor \frac{N - w^*}{2} \right\rfloor, \]
\[ \nu = \max\{e, f - w\}, \quad \mu = e + f, \]
\[ d = \begin{cases} \ w^* - 2\nu & \text{if } \nu = e, \\ \min\{D - \mu, N - D - 2\nu - w\} & \text{if } \nu = f - w. \end{cases} \]

Remarks. $e, f$ comes from endpoints of $W_1, W_2$.

Remarks. If $N \neq 2D$, then $e, f$ are uniquely determined for given $\nu, \mu, d$. In this case, $T(C) = T_1 \otimes T_2|_{X \times X}$ in Lemma 6.

Theorem 12 $W$ has a basis $B = \{v_0, \ldots, v_d\}$ satisfying
\[ v_i \in E_{i+\nu}^*W \quad (0 \leq i \leq d), \]
and with respect to which the matrix representing $A$ is tridiagonal with entries
\[ c_i(W) = i(i + 2\nu - \mu + w), \]
\[ a_i(W) = D(N - D) + \mu(\mu + d - N - 1) + d(d - N + 2\nu + w) + i(N - 4\nu - 2i - 2w), \]
\[ b_i(W) = (d - i)(N - d - 2\nu - \mu - i - w). \]

Remarks. $c_i(W) + a_i(W) + b_i(W) = \theta_{\mu}$. Remarks. If $w = 0$, the above $c_i(W), a_i(W), b_i(W)$ coincide with the results by Terwilliger [10].

Corollary 13 Isomophism classes are determined by $(\nu, \mu, d)$.

5 Remark

Let $A^* = diag(E_1\chi)$. Then $(A, A^*)$ acts on $W$ as a Leonard pair with parameter array $(h, r, s, s^*, r, d, \theta_0, \theta_0^*)$ (Dual Hahn):
\[ \theta_i = \theta_0 + hi(i + 1 + s), \]
\[ \theta_i^* = \theta_0^* + s^*i, \]
\[ \varphi_i = hs^*i(i - d - 1)(i + r), \]
\[ \phi_i = hs^*i(i - d - 1)(i + r - s - d - 1). \]
Especially, we have
\[ s = -N - 2 + 2\mu, \]
\[ r = -N + d + 2\nu + \mu - 1 + w. \]
See [9] for details on Leonard pairs. If \( w = 0 \), the above parameters coincide with the results by Terwilliger [10].

References

[9] P. Terwilliger, Two linear transformations each tridiagonal with respect to an eigenbasis of the other; an algebraic approach to the Askey scheme of orthogonal polynomials, arXive:math/0408390.