



# Metric Dimension of $r$ -th power of paths

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**Abstract:** For a simple connected graph  $G = (V, E)$ , an ordered set  $W \subseteq V$ , is called a *resolving set* of  $G$  if for every pair of two distinct vertices  $u$  and  $v$ , there is an element  $w$  in  $W$  such that  $d(u, w) \neq d(v, w)$ . A *metric basis* of  $G$  is a resolving set of  $G$  with minimum cardinality. The *metric dimension* of  $G$  is the cardinality of a metric basis and it is denoted by  $\beta(G)$ . In this article, we determine the metric dimension of any power of finite paths.

**Keywords:** Code, Resolving set, Metric dimension.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The study of Metric dimension or resolving set of a simple connected graph using distance between vertices is so much popular among research scholars as it is applicable to many areas like network, robotic navigation, drug design etc; The concept of the metric dimension of a graph was first introduced by Slater [13]. Their introduction of this invariant was motivated by its application to the placement of a minimum number of sonar/loran detecting devices in a network so that the position of every vertex in the network can be uniquely described in terms of its distances to the devices in the set. They use location set in place of resolving set. Also, Harary and Melter [8] in 1976 introduced the same concept as metric dimension rather than location number.

Throughout this article,  $G = (V, E)$  denotes a simple connected graph with vertex set  $V$  and edge set  $E$ . Distance between two vertices  $u$  and  $v$  in  $G$ , denoted by  $d(u, v)$  is the length of a shortest  $u - v$  path. For an ordered subset  $W = \{w_1, w_2, \dots, w_k\} \subset V$  and a vertex  $v$  of  $G$ , *distance code of  $v$  with respect to  $S$*  is a  $k$ -vector given by

$$code_W(v) = (d(v, w_1), d(v, w_2), \dots, d(v, w_k)).$$

If  $code_w(u) \neq code_w(v)$  for all distinct vertices  $u$  and  $v$ , then  $W$  is called a *resolving set* for the graph  $G$ . Every simple connected graph  $G$  has a resolving set as the vertex set  $V$  forms a resolving set. The *metric dimension* of graph  $G$  is the minimum cardinality of a resolving set for  $G$  and it is denoted by  $\beta(G)$ . A resolving set with cardinality  $\beta(G)$  is called a *metric basis* and elements of it are called *basis elements*. Throughout this article, distance code  $code_w(v)$  is simply denoted by  $code(v)$ .

The  $r$ -th power of a graph  $G$  is the graph  $G^r$  having the vertex set same as that of  $G$  and edges between pair of vertices at distance at most  $r$  in  $G$ . Power graphs are used to increase the connectivity of an existing network so it is necessary to study the metric dimensions of graphs and its power graphs. In [10], Javaid et al. initiated to find the metric dimension for the square of cycles  $C_n^2$ . Imran et al. [9] later bounded the metric dimension of  $C_n^2$  and  $C_n^2$ , and then Borchert and Gossel in [1] extended their results and determined the exact metric dimension of these two families of power of cycles.

**Theorem 1.1 [1]** For an integer  $n > 6$

$$\beta(C_n^2) = \begin{cases} 4, & n \equiv 1 \pmod{4}; \\ 3, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

**Theorem 1.2 [1]** For an integer  $n > 8$

$$\beta(C_n^3) = \begin{cases} 5, & n \equiv 1 \pmod{6}; \\ 4, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

In this article, we determine the metric dimension of power of any paths.



## II. PRELIMINARIES

In this section, we give some basic definitions, lemmas and proposition that will be used in sequel. For a path  $P_n$  with vertex set  $V(P_n) = \{v_1, v_2, \dots, v_{n-1}\}$ ,  $r$ -th power of path  $P_n$ , denoted by  $P_n^r$ , is a simple graph with vertex set  $V(P_n)$  and two vertices  $v_i$  and  $v_j$  are adjacent if  $d_{P_n^r}(v_i, v_j) \leq r$ . It is clear to observe that  $d_{P_n^r}(v_i, v_j) = \left\lceil \frac{d_{P_n}(v_i, v_j)}{r} \right\rceil = \left\lceil \frac{|v_i - v_j|}{r} \right\rceil = \left\lceil \frac{|i - j|}{r} \right\rceil$ . The set  $V(P_n^r)$  (vertex set of  $P_n^r$ ) can be divided into the blocks  $B_0, B_1, \dots, B_{\lfloor \frac{n}{r} \rfloor - 1}$  where the blocks  $B_i$ 's are defined by  $B_i = \{v_{ir+j} \in V(P_n^r) : 0 \leq j \leq (r - 1)\}$ .

**Proposition 2.1** For  $P_n^r$ , the blocks  $B_i$ 's have the following properties

- Each block  $B_i$  with  $0 \leq i \leq \lfloor \frac{n}{r} \rfloor - 1$ , consists elements, namely,  $v_{ir}, v_{ir+1}, v_{ir+2}, \dots, v_{ir+(r-1)}$  whereas the block  $B_{\lfloor \frac{n}{r} \rfloor - 1}$  contain exactly  $\ell$  elements provided  $n \equiv \ell \pmod{r}$ .
- For each  $i \in \{0, 1, \dots, \lfloor \frac{n}{r} \rfloor - 1\}$ , the induced sub-graph of  $B_i$  forms a clique.

**Lemma 2.1** Any  $r + 1$  consecutive vertices in  $P_n^r$  forms a clique.

**Proof:** Recall that  $V(P_n^r) = \{v_0, v_1, \dots, v_{n-1}\}$  and two vertices  $v_i$  and  $v_j$  are adjacent in  $P_n^r$  if and only if  $|i - j| \leq r$ . Let  $S = \{v_i, v_{i+1}, \dots, v_{i+r}\}$  be a set of  $r + 1$  consecutive vertices in  $P_n^r$ . Also let  $v_p$  and  $v_q$  be any two vertices in  $S$ . Since  $v_p, v_q \in S, p, q \in \{i, i + 1, \dots, r\}$  and hence  $|p - q| \leq r$ , which imply that  $v_p$  and  $v_q$  are adjacent. Therefore, any pair of vertices in  $S$  are adjacent i.e.,  $S$  forms a clique in  $P_n^r$ .

**Definition 2.1** For an integer  $i$  satisfying  $0 \leq i \leq r - 1$ , by a class  $[i]$  we mean the set  $[i] = \{j \equiv i \pmod{r}, 0 \leq j \leq n - 1\}$ . For  $0 \leq t \leq r - 1$ , a vertex  $v_k$  is called  $t$ -class element if  $k \in [t]$ . Also, a vertex  $v_k$  is called the largest  $t$ -class element if  $k$  is the largest element in  $[t]$ . From here to onward, we denote the set of all  $t$ -class elements by  $S[t]$ .

**Lemma 2.2** Let  $r \geq 2$  be an integer and  $\emptyset$  be the empty set. Then following are hold in  $P_n^r$

$$(a) S_{[x]} = S_{[y]} \text{ for } x \equiv y \pmod{r}$$

$$(b) S_{[x]} \cap S_{[y]} = \emptyset \text{ for } x \not\equiv y \pmod{r}.$$

$$(c) V(P_n^r) = \bigcup_{t=0}^{r-1} S[t].$$

**Proof:** (a) From definition, it is clear that  $S_{[x]} = S_{[y]}$  for  $x \equiv y \pmod{r}$ .

(b) If possible, let  $x \not\equiv y \pmod{r}$  and  $v_k \in S_{[x]} \cap S_{[y]}$  for some  $k$ . Then  $k \in [x]$  and  $k \in [y]$  i.e.,  $k \in [x] \cap [y]$ , which is a contradiction as  $x \not\equiv y \pmod{r}$  implies  $[x] \cap [y] = \emptyset$ . Therefore,  $S_{[x]} \cap S_{[y]} = \emptyset$  whenever  $x \not\equiv y \pmod{r}$ .

(c) From definition of  $t$ -class element, we have  $\bigcup_{t=0}^{r-1} S[t] \subseteq V(P_n^r)$ . Now we show the reverse condition  $V(P_n^r) \subseteq \bigcup_{t=0}^{r-1} S[t]$ . Let  $v_k \in V(P_n^r)$  be an arbitrary vertex. Then there exists a unique integer  $t$  such that  $k = t \pmod{r}$  and  $0 \leq t \leq r - 1$ . Then  $v_k \in S_{[t]}$  because an element  $v_k \in S_{[t]}$  if and only if  $k \in [t]$ . Therefore  $v_k \in \bigcup_{t=0}^{r-1} S_{[t]}$ . This completes the proof.

**Lemma 2.3** For any two vertices  $u = v_{ir+r_1}$  and  $w = v_{jr+r_2}$  of  $P_n^r$ ,

$$d_{P_n^r}(u, v) = \begin{cases} |i - j|, & \text{if } r_2 \leq r_1; \\ |i - j| + 1, & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

**Proof:** Without loss of generality, we may assume  $u$  is left to  $w$  i.e.,  $ir + r_1 < jr + r_2$ . If  $r_2 \leq r_1$ , then

$$d(u, v) = \left\lceil \frac{jr + j_1 - ir - i_1}{r} \right\rceil$$



$$= \left\lfloor \frac{(j-i)r + j_1 - i_1}{r} \right\rfloor$$

$$= \left\lfloor \frac{(j-i-1)r + \{r - (i_1 - j_1)\}}{r} \right\rfloor = j - i$$

Again if  $r_2 > r_1$ , then  $d(u, v) = \left\lfloor \frac{(j-i)r + (j_1 - i_1)}{r} \right\rfloor = j - i + 1$ .

**Remark 2.1** For  $0 \leq s \leq r - 1$ ,  $d(v_s, u) = d(v_s, w)$  implies  $d(v_{ir+s}, u) = d(v_{ir+s}, w)$ .

### III. METRIC DIMENSION OF $P_n^r$

In this section, first we present a lower bound for the metric dimension of  $P_n^r$  and then we build up a resolving set with cardinality same as that lower bound. It is noted that  $\{v_i, v_{i+1}, \dots, v_{i+r}\}$  forms a clique in  $P_n^r$  for every  $i \in \{0, 1, \dots, n - r - 1\}$ . The lemma below [4] represents an effective result to determine a lower bound for the metric dimension of  $P_n^r$ .

**Lemma 3.1** Let  $A \subset \{v_i, v_{i+1}, \dots, v_{i+r}\}$  with  $|A| = \ell$ , for  $2 \leq \ell \leq r + 1$ . If  $X$  resolves  $A$  then  $|X| \geq \ell - 1$ .

**Proof.** We prove this lemma by induction on  $\ell$ . The result obviously is true for  $\ell = 2$ . Now we show that it is true for  $\ell = k$  with an assumption that it holds for  $\ell = k - 1$ . Let the elements of  $A$  in order are  $v_{i+a_1}, v_{i+a_2}, \dots, v_{i+a_k}$ , where  $0 \leq a_1 < a_2 < \dots < a_k \leq r$ . As  $X$  resolves  $A$ , there is an element  $x \in X$  such that  $d(x, v_{i+a_1}) \neq d(x, v_{i+a_2})$ . If  $x = v_{i+a_2}$ , then  $d(x, v_{i+a_s}) = 1$  for all  $s \in \{1, 3, \dots, k\}$  and  $X \setminus \{x\}$  resolves  $A \setminus \{v_{i+a_2}\}$ . If  $x \neq v_{i+a_2}$ , then  $d(x, v_{i+a_2}) = d(x, v_{i+a_s})$  for all  $s \in \{2, 3, \dots, k\}$  and  $X \setminus \{x\}$  resolves  $A \setminus \{v_{i+a_1}\}$ . Thus in both cases  $X \setminus \{x\}$  resolves a subset of  $\{v_i, v_{i+1}, \dots, v_{i+r}\}$  with cardinality  $k - 1$ . Therefore, by assumption,  $|X \setminus \{x\}| \geq k - 2$  and hence  $|X| \geq k - 1$ .

With the help of Lemma 3.1, the following result represents a lower bound for  $\beta(P_n^r)$  for all values of  $n$  and  $r < \frac{n}{2}$ .

**Lemma 3.2** For two integers  $n$  and  $r$  with  $r < \frac{n}{2}$ ,  $\beta(P_n^r) \geq r$ .

**Proof.** Let  $B$  be a resolving set of  $P_n^r$  and  $v_i \in B$ . Then  $A = \{v_i, v_{i+1}, \dots, v_{i+r}\}$  is not resolved by  $v_i$  as  $d(v_i, v_{i+s}) = 1$  for all  $s \in \{1, 2, \dots, r\}$ . Applying Lemma 3.1, we have  $|B \setminus \{v_i\}| \geq r - 1$  and so  $|B| \geq r$ .

Now our aim is to construct a resolving set for  $P_n^r$  with cardinality  $r$ .

**Lemma 3.3** Let  $i$  and  $\ell$  be two integers such that  $0 \leq i < i + \ell \leq r - 1$ . Then  $A = \{v_i, v_{i+1}, \dots, v_{i+\ell}\} \subset V(P_n^r)$  resolves the set  $\bigcup_{j=1}^{\lfloor \frac{n}{r} \rfloor - 1} \{v_{jr+i}, \dots, v_{jr+i+\ell+1}\} \subseteq V(P_n^r)$ , i.e.,  $A$  resolves the set  $\bigcup_{j=1}^{i+\ell+1} S[j]$

**Proof.** To prove this lemma, it is sufficient to show that for any pair of vertices  $u, w \in \bigcup_{j=1}^{\lfloor \frac{n}{r} \rfloor - 1} \{v_{jr+i}, \dots, v_{jr+i+\ell+1}\}$  there exists at least one vertex  $x \in A$  such that  $d(u, x) \neq d(w, x)$ . Let  $u, w \in \bigcup_{j=1}^{\lfloor \frac{n}{r} \rfloor - 1} \{v_{jr+i}, \dots, v_{jr+i+\ell+1}\}$  be two distinct vertices. Then we may write  $u = v_{ar+r_1}$  and  $w = v_{br+r_2}$  for some  $0 \leq a, b \leq \lfloor \frac{n}{r} \rfloor - 1$  and  $i \leq r_1, r_2 \leq i + \ell + 1$ . Without loss of generality, we may assume  $u$  is in left side of  $w$ , i.e.,  $ar + r_1 < br + r_2$ . Now if we take  $x = v_{r_1} \in A$ , then  $d(v_{r_1}, u) = a$  and  $d(v_{r_1}, w) = b$  or  $b + 1$  according as  $r_2 \leq r_1$  or  $r_2 > r_1$ . Therefore if  $r_2 > r_1$ , then  $d(u, v_{r_1}) \neq d(w, v_{r_1})$ . Again if  $r_2 \leq r_1$ , then also  $d(u, v_{r_1}) \neq d(w, v_{r_1})$  as  $ar + r_1 < br + r_2$ . So  $v_{r_1} \in A$  resolves  $u$  and  $w$ ; and hence  $A$  resolves  $\bigcup_{j=1}^{\lfloor \frac{n}{r} \rfloor - 1} \{v_{jr+i}, \dots, v_{jr+i+\ell+1}\}$ .

By similar argument as in Lemma 3.3, we have the following result.



**Lemma 3.4** Let  $i$  and  $\ell$  be two integers such that  $0 \leq i < i + \ell \leq r - 1$ . Then  $B = \{v_{n-r+i}, v_{n-r+i+1}, \dots, v_{n-r+i+\ell}\} \subset V(P_n^r)$  resolves the set  $\bigcup_{j=1}^{\lfloor \frac{n}{r} \rfloor - 1} \{v_{n-jr+i-1}, \dots, v_{n-jr+i+\ell}\} \subseteq V(P_n^r)$ , i.e.,  $B$  resolves the set  $\bigcup_{j=i-1}^{i+\ell} S[j]$ .

The following theorem gives the exact value of metric dimension of  $P_n^r$  for all values of  $n$  and  $r$ .

**Theorem 1.** For two integers  $n$  and  $r$  with  $r < \frac{n}{2}$ ,  $\beta(P_n^r) = r$ .

**Proof.** From Lemma 3.2, we have  $\beta(P_n^r) \geq r$ . Thus, to prove the theorem it is sufficient to construct a resolving set  $A$  with cardinality  $r$ . Consider  $A = \{v_0, v_1, \dots, v_{r-1}\}$  be the set of first  $r$  consecutive vertices of  $P_n^r$ . Now if we apply Lemma 3.3 to  $A$  then  $A$  resolve  $\bigcup_{t=0}^{r-1} S_{[t]} = V(P_n^r)$ . Therefore  $A$  is resolving set for  $P_n^r$  with cardinality  $r$  and consequently  $\beta(P_n^r) \leq r$ . Hence the theorem.

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