

Remarks on the Complexity of Signed k -Domination on Graphs

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Abstract

This paper is motivated by the concept of the *signed k -domination problem* and dedicated to the complexity of the problem on graphs. For any *fixed nonnegative integer k* , we show that the signed k -domination problem is NP-complete for doubly chordal graphs. For strongly chordal graphs and distance-hereditary graphs, we show that the signed k -domination problem can be solved in polynomial time. We also show that the problem is linear-time solvable for trees, interval graphs, and chordal comparability graphs.

Keywords

Graph Algorithm, Signed k -Domination, Strongly Chordal Graph, Tree, Fixed Parameter Tractable

1. Introduction

Let $G = (V, E)$ be a finite, undirected, simple graph. For any vertex $v \in V$, the open neighborhood of v in G is $N_G(v) = \{u \in V \mid (u, v) \in E\}$ and the closed neighborhood of v is $N_G[v] = N_G(v) \cup \{v\}$. The degree of a vertex v in G is $d_G(v) = |N_G(v)|$. We also use $V(G)$ and $E(G)$ to denote vertex set and edge set of G , respectively. If nothing else is stated, it is understood that $|V(G)| = n$ and $|E(G)| = m$. Let Y be a subset of real numbers. Let $f : V \rightarrow Y$ be a function which assigns to each $v \in V$ a value in Y . Let $f(S) = \sum_{u \in S} f(u)$ for any subset S of V and let $f(V)$ be the weight of f . In 2012, Wang [1] studied the notion of *signed k -domination* on graphs as follows. Let k be a fixed nonnegative integer and let $G = (V, E)$ be a graph. A *signed k -dominating function* of G is a function $f : V \rightarrow \{-1, 1\}$ such that $f(N_G[v]) \geq k$ for every vertex $v \in V$. The *signed k -domination number* of G , denoted by $\gamma_{k,S}(G)$, is the minimum weight of a signed k -dominating function of G . The signed k -domination problem is to find a signed k -dominating function of G of minimum weight. Clearly, the signed k -domination problem is the signed domination problem if $k = 1$ [2]. Wang [1] presented several sharp lower bounds of these numbers for general graphs. In this paper, we study the signed k -domination problem for several well-known classes of graphs such as doubly chordal graphs, strongly chordal graphs, distance-hereditary graphs, trees, interval graphs, and chordal comparability graphs.

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2. NP-completeness Results

Before presenting the NP-complete results, we restate the signed k -domination problem as decision problems as follows: Given a graph $G = (V, E)$ and a nonnegative integer k and an integer λ , is $\gamma_{k,S}(G) \leq \lambda$?

Theorem 1 [3] [4] For any integer $k = 0$ or 1 , the signed k -domination problem on doubly chordal graphs and bipartite planar graphs is NP-complete

Theorem 2. For any fixed integer $k \geq 2$, the signed k -domination problem on doubly chordal graphs is NP-complete.

Proof. Clearly, the signed k -domination problem on doubly chordal graphs is in NP. By Theorem 1, the signed 0-domination and 1-domination problems on doubly chordal graphs are NP-complete. In the following, we show the NP-completeness of the signed k -domination problem on doubly chordal graphs by a polynomial-time reduction from the signed $(k-1)$ -domination problem on doubly chordal graphs.

Let $G = (V, E)$ be a doubly chordal graph with $|V| = n$. A *clique* is a subset of pairwise adjacent vertices in a graph. If a clique consists of j vertices, then it is called a j -*clique*. We construct a graph H from G by the following steps.

- 1) We construct a new vertex u and connect u to every vertex of G .
- 2) We construct $(k-1)$ -cliques K_1, K_2, \dots, K_n and connect the vertex u to every vertex of K_i for $1 \leq i \leq n$. Note that $|K_i| = k-1$ for $1 \leq i \leq n$.

Clearly, the graph H is a doubly chordal graph [5]-[8] and can be constructed in polynomial time. In the following, we show that $\gamma_{k,S}(H) = \gamma_{k-1,S}(G) + n \cdot k - n + 1$.

Suppose that g is a *minimum* signed $(k-1)$ -dominating function of G . Then, $g(V) = \gamma_{k-1,S}(G)$. Let $h: V(H) \rightarrow \{-1, 1\}$ be a function of H defined by $h(v) = g(v)$ for every vertex $v \in V$ and $h(v) = 1$ for every vertex $v \in V(H) \setminus V$. It can be easily verified that h is a signed k -dominating function of H . We have

$$\gamma_{k,S}(H) \leq h(V) + h(V(H) \setminus V) = \gamma_{k-1,S}(G) + h(u) + n \cdot (k-1) = \gamma_{k-1,S}(G) + n \cdot k - n + 1.$$

Conversely, let $i \in \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ and let f be a *minimum* signed k -dominating function of H . Since $K_i \cup \{u\}$ is a k -clique, $|N_H[v]| = k$ for every vertex $v \in K_i$ and thus $f(u) = f(v) = 1$. By the construction of H , the vertex u is adjacent to every vertex v of G . We know that $f(N_H[v]) = f(N_G[v] \cup \{u\}) = f(N_G[v]) + f(u) \geq k$. Then, $f(N_G[v]) \geq k-1$. Let $g: V \rightarrow \{-1, 1\}$ be a function of G defined by $g(v) = f(v)$ for every vertex $v \in V$. The function g is a signed $(k-1)$ -dominating function of G . We have

$$\gamma_{k-1,S}(G) \leq g(V) = f(V(H)) - f(u) - n \cdot (k-1) = \gamma_{k,S}(H) - n \cdot k + n - 1.$$

Therefore, $\gamma_{k-1,S}(G) + n \cdot k - n + 1 \leq \gamma_{k,S}(H)$. Following the discussion above, we know that $\gamma_{k,S}(H) = \gamma_{k-1,S}(G) + n \cdot k - n + 1$. It implies that for any integer λ , $\gamma_{k-1,S}(G) \leq \lambda$ if and only if $\gamma_{k,S}(H) \leq \lambda + n \cdot k - n + 1$.

3. Polynomial-Time Solvable Results

In this section, we show that the signed k -domination problem is polynomial-time solvable for strongly chordal graphs and distance-hereditary graphs and linear-time solvable for trees, interval graphs, and chordal comparability graphs.

3.1. Strongly Chordal Graphs

Let $G = (V, E)$ be a graph. A *clique* is a subset of pairwise adjacent vertices of V . A vertex v is *simplicial* if and only if all vertices of $N_G[v]$ form a clique. The ordering v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n of the vertices of V is a *perfect elimination ordering* of G if for all $i \in \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$, v_i is a simplicial vertex of the subgraph G_i of G induced by $\{v_i, v_{i+1}, \dots, v_n\}$ [9]. Let $N_i[v]$ denote the closed neighborhood of v in G_i . A perfect elimination ordering is called a *strong elimination ordering* if it satisfies the following condition:

For $i < j < k$ if v_j and v_k belong to $N_i[v_i]$ in G_i , then $N_i[v_j] \subseteq N_i[v_k]$.

Farer [10] showed that a graph is *strongly chordal* if and only if it has a strong elimination ordering. Currently, the fastest algorithm to recognize a strongly chordal graph and give a strong elimination ordering takes $O(m \log n)$ [11] or $O(n^2)$ time [12]. Strongly chordal graphs include many interesting classes of graphs such as trees, block graphs, interval graphs, and directed path graphs [13]. In the paper [3], Lee and Chang introduced the concept of *L-domination*. The definition of *L-domination* is as follows.

Let ℓ, d, I_1, F_r be fixed integer such that $\ell, d > 0$ and $F_r = I_1 + \ell \cdot d$. Let Y be the set $\{I_1, I_1 + d, I_1 + 2d, \dots, I_1 + (\ell - 1) \cdot d\}$. Suppose that $G = (V, E)$ is a graph. Let L be a labeling function which assigns to each $v \in V$ a label $L(v) = (t(v), k(v))$, where $t(v) \in Y \cup \{F_r\}$ and $k(v)$ is a fixed integer. An L -dominating function of a graph $G = (V, E)$ is a function $f : V \rightarrow Y$ satisfying the following two conditions:

- 1) If $t(v) \neq F_r$, then $f(v) = t(v)$.
- 2) $f(N_G[v]) \geq k(v)$ for every vertex $v \in V$.

The L -domination number of G , denoted by $\gamma_L(G)$, is the minimum weight of an L -dominating function of G . The L -domination domination problem is to find an L -dominating function of G of minimum weight. Lee and Chang obtained the following result.

Theorem 4 [3] For any strongly chordal graph G , the L -domination problem can be solved in $O(n + m)$ time if a strong elimination ordering of G is given.

We show a connection between the signed k -domination problem and a special case of the L -domination problem in Theorem 3.

Theorem 5. Suppose that $\ell = 2$, $d = 1$, $I_1 = -1$, $F_r = I_1 + \ell \cdot d$, and $Y = \{I_1, I_1 + d, \dots, I_1 + (\ell - 1) \cdot d\}$. Let k be a nonnegative integer and let $G = (V, E)$ be a graph in which each $v \in V$ is associated with a label $L(v) = (F_r, k)$. Then, a minimum L -dominating function of G is equivalent to a minimum signed k -dominating function of G .

Proof. Clearly, $Y = \{-1, 1\}$. We assume that f is a minimum L -dominating function of G and each $v \in V$ is associated with a label $L(v) = (F_r, k)$. Then, $f(N_G[v]) \geq k$ and f is a signed k -dominating function of G . We have $\gamma_{k,S}(G) \leq \gamma_L(G)$. Conversely, we assume that g is a minimum signed k -dominating set of G . Then, $g(N_G[v]) \geq k$ for every vertex $v \in V$. It can be easily verified that g is an L -dominating function of G . We have $\gamma_L(G) \leq \gamma_{k,S}(G)$. Following the discussion above, we know that $\gamma_{k,S}(G) \leq \gamma_L(G)$ and $\gamma_L(G) \leq \gamma_{k,S}(G)$. Hence, $\gamma_L(G) = \gamma_{k,S}(G)$ and the theorem holds.

Theorem 6. For any nonnegative integer k , the signed k -domination problem on a strongly chordal graph G can be solved in $O(n + m)$ time if a strong elimination ordering of G is given.

Proof. The theorem follows from Theorems 4 and 5.

Theorem 7. For any nonnegative integer k , the signed k -domination problem is linear-time solvable for trees.

Proof. Trees are both chordal and strongly chordal [13]. Let G be a tree. A perfect elimination ordering v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n of the vertices in G can be obtained in linear time [14]. Since G is a tree, v_i has at most one neighbor in G_i for any $i \in \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$. Otherwise, $N_i[v_i]$ forms a clique with at least three vertices and it contradicts the assumption that G is a tree. Therefore, the ordering v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n is also a strong elimination ordering of G . Following Theorem 6, we know that the signed k -domination problem is linear-time solvable for trees.

Theorem 8. For any nonnegative integer k , the signed k -domination problem is linear-time solvable for interval graphs.

Proof. An interval graph G is the intersection graph of a set of intervals on a line. That is, each interval corresponds to a vertex of G and two vertices are adjacent if and only if the corresponding intervals intersect. The set of intervals constitutes an *interval model* of the graph. Booth and Lueker [15] gave the first linear-time algorithm for recognizing interval graphs and constructing interval models for the interval graphs.

Let I be an interval model of an interval graph G . Each interval in the interval model has a right endpoint and a left endpoint. Without loss of generality, we may assume that all endpoints of the intervals in I are pairwise distinct, since, when they are not, it is easy to make this true without altering the represented graph. Let $l(v)$ and $r(v)$ denote the left and right endpoints of the interval corresponding to v . We order the vertices of G by the increasing order of right endpoints of the intervals in I , and let the ordering be v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n . For any $i, j \in \{1, 2, \dots, n\}$ with $i < j$, we know that $r(v_i) < r(v_j)$ and $l(v_j) < r(v_i)$ if v_i is adjacent to v_j in G . Therefore, the vertices of $N_i[v_i]$ form a clique and v_i is a simplicial vertex of G_i . The ordering v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n is a perfect elimination ordering and can be obtained in linear time.

For $i < j < k$, we assume v_j and v_k belong to $N_i[v_i]$ in G_i . Since v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n is a perfect elimination ordering, v_j is adjacent to v_k and $r(v_j) < r(v_k)$ and $l(v_k) < r(v_i) < r(v_j)$. Then, every v_p in $N_i[v_j]$ is adjacent to v_k . We have $N_i[v_j] \subseteq N_i[v_k]$. The ordering v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n is also a strong elimination ordering of G . By Theorem 6, we know that the signed k -domination problem is linear-time solvable for interval graphs.

Theorem 9. For any nonnegative integer k , the signed k -domination problem is linear-time solvable for chordal comparability graphs.

Proof. Let $G = (V, E)$ be a graph. A vertex v in G is a *simple vertex* if for any two neighbors x and y of v , either the closed neighborhood of y is a subset of the closed neighborhood of x or the closed neighborhood of x is a subset of the closed neighborhood of y . An ordering v_1, v_2, \dots, v_n is a *simple elimination ordering* if for each $1 \leq t \leq n$, the vertex v_t is a simple vertex of the subgraph G_t induced by the vertices v_t, v_{t+1}, \dots, v_n .

A simple elimination ordering of a chordal comparability graph can be obtained in linear time [16]. Sawada and Spinrad [17] presented a linear-time algorithm to transform a simple elimination ordering of a strongly chordal graph to a strong elimination ordering. Therefore, the theorem is true.

3.2. Distance-Hereditary Graphs

The *distance* between two vertices u and v of a graph G is the number of edges of a shortest path from u to v . If any two distinct vertices have the same distance in every connected induced subgraph containing them, then G is a *distance-hereditary* graph. In 1997, Chang, Hsieh, and Chen [18] showed that distance-hereditary graphs can be defined recursively.

Theorem 10 [18] Distance-hereditary graphs can be defined as follows.

- 1) A graph consisting of only one vertex is distance-hereditary, and the twin set is the vertex itself.
- 2) If G_1 and G_2 are disjoint distance-hereditary graphs with the twin sets $TS(G_1)$ and $TS(G_2)$, respectively, then the graph $G = G_1 \cup G_2$ is a distance-hereditary graph and the twin set of G is $TS(G_1) \cup TS(G_2)$. G is said to be obtained from G_1 and G_2 by a *false twin operation*.
- 3) If G_1 and G_2 are disjoint distance-hereditary graphs with the twin sets $TS(G_1)$ and $TS(G_2)$, respectively, then the graph G obtained by connecting every vertex of $TS(G_1)$ to all vertices of $TS(G_2)$ is a distance-hereditary graph and the twin set of G is $TS(G_1) \cup TS(G_2)$. G is said to be obtained from G_1 and G_2 by a *true twin operation*.
- 4) If G_1 and G_2 are disjoint distance-hereditary graphs with the twin sets $TS(G_1)$ and $TS(G_2)$, respectively, then the graph G obtained by connecting every vertex of $TS(G_1)$ to all vertices of $TS(G_2)$ is a distance-hereditary graph and the twin set of G is $TS(G_1)$. G is said to be obtained from G_1 and G_2 by a *pendant vertex operation*.

Following Theorem 10, a distance-hereditary graph G can be represented as a binary ordered decomposition tree and the decomposition tree can be obtained in linear-time [18]. In this decomposition tree, each leaf is a single vertex graph, and each internal node represents one of the three operations: pendant vertex operation (labeled by P), true twin operation (labeled by T), and false twin operation (labeled by F). Therefore, the decomposition tree is called a PTF-tree.

Definition 1. Suppose that $G = (V, E)$ is a distance-hereditary graph. Let $TS(G)$ be the twin set of G . Let a and b be integers such that $0 \leq a, b \leq |V|$ and $-|V| \leq t \leq |V|$. A (t, a, b) -function $f : V \rightarrow \{-1, 1\}$ of G is a function satisfying the following three conditions.

- 1) $a + b = |TS(G)|$.
- 2) The function f assigns the value 1 to a vertices in $TS(G)$ and the value -1 to b vertices in $TS(G)$.
- 3) For a vertex $v \in V$, $f(N_G[v]) + t \geq k$ if $v \in TS(G)$; Otherwise, $f(N_G[v]) \geq k$.

We define $\gamma(G, t, a, b) = \max\{f(V(G)) \mid f \text{ is a } (t, a, b)\text{-function of } G\}$. If there does not exist a (t, a, b) -function of G , then $\gamma(G, t, a, b) = \infty$. It is clear that

$$\gamma_{k,s}(G) = \min\{\gamma(G, 0, a, b) \mid 0 \leq a, b \leq |TS(G)|\}.$$

We give the following lemmas to compute $\gamma(G, t, a, b)$ for a distance-hereditary graph G . The correctness of Lemmas 2 - 5 can be proved by the arguments similar to those for proving Lemmas 1 - 4 in Section III. B of the paper [4].

Lemma 2. Suppose that $G = (V, E)$ is a graph of only one vertex v . Then,

$$\gamma(G, t, a, b) = \begin{cases} 1 & \text{if } a = 1, b = 0, t \geq k - 1; \\ 0 & \text{if } a = 0, b = 1, t \geq k + 1; \\ \infty & \text{otherwise.} \end{cases}$$

Lemma 3. Suppose that $G = (V, E)$ is formed from two disjoint distance-hereditary graphs $G_1 = (V_1, E_1)$ and $G_2 = (V_2, E_2)$ by a false twin operation. Then,

$$\gamma(G, t, a, b) = \min\{\gamma(G_1, t, a_1, b_1) + \gamma(G_2, t, a_2, b_2)\},$$

where $a_1 + a_2 = a$ and $b_1 + b_2 = b$.

Lemma 4. Suppose that $G = (V, E)$ is formed from two disjoint distance-hereditary graphs $G_1 = (V_1, E_1)$ and $G_2 = (V_2, E_2)$ by a true twin operation. Then,

$$\gamma(G, t, a, b) = \min\{\gamma(G_1, t + a_2 - b_2, a_1, b_1) + \gamma(G_2, t + a_1 - b_1, a_2, b_2)\},$$

where $a_1 + a_2 = a$ and $b_1 + b_2 = b$.

Lemma 5. Suppose that $G = (V, E)$ is formed from two disjoint distance-hereditary graphs $G_1 = (V_1, E_1)$ and $G_2 = (V_2, E_2)$ by a pendant vertex operation. Then,

$$\gamma(G, t, a, b) = \max\{\gamma(G_1, t + a_2 - b_2, a, b) + \gamma(G_2, a - b, a_2, b_2)\},$$

where $a_2 + b_2 = |TS(G_2)|$.

Theorem 11. For any nonnegative integer k , the signed k -domination problem can be solved in polynomial time for distance-hereditary graphs.

Proof. Following Lemmas 2 - 5 and the recursive definition of distance-hereditary graphs in Theorem 10, we can design a dynamic programming algorithm to compute the signed k -domination number of a distance-hereditary graph G in polynomial time. Moreover, it is not difficult to see that a minimum signed k -dominating function of a distance-hereditary graph G can be obtained in polynomial time, too.

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