

# On the second eigencurve for the p-laplacian operator with weight

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**Abstract.** In this paper we establish the existence of the second eigencurves of the p-laplacian with indefinite weights. we obtain also their asymptotic behavior and variational formulation.

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## 1 Introduction

We consider the nonlinear eigenvalue problem

$$\begin{cases} -\Delta_p u &= \lambda m(x)|u|^{p-2}u & \text{in } \Omega \\ u &= 0 & \text{on } \partial\Omega, \end{cases} \quad (1.1)$$

where  $\Omega$  is a smooth bounded domain in  $\mathbb{R}^N$ ,  $-\Delta_p u = -\text{div}(|\nabla u|^{p-2}\nabla u)$  is the p-laplacian,  $1 < p < +\infty$  and  $m(.) \in M^+(\Omega) = \{u \in L^\infty(\Omega) : \text{meas}\{x \in \Omega : m(x) > 0\} > 0\}$  is a weight function which can change sign.

The spectrum of p-laplacian operator with indefinite weight is defined as the set  $\sigma_p(-\Delta_p, m, \Omega)$  of  $\lambda = \lambda(m, \Omega)$  for which there exists a nontrivial solution  $u \in W_0^{1,p}(\Omega)$  of problem (1.1), this values are called eigenvalues and

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the corresponding solutions are called eigenfunctions.

We will denote  $\sigma_p^+(-\Delta_p, m, \Omega)$  the set of all positive eigenvalues.

For  $p = 2$  ( $\Delta_p = \Delta$  Laplacian Operator) it is well known ( see [11]) that  $\sigma_p^+(-\Delta_p, m, \Omega) = \{\mu_k(m, \Omega), k = 1, 2, \dots\}$ , with  $0 < \mu_1(m, \Omega) < \mu_2(m, \Omega) \leq \mu_3(m, \Omega) \dots \rightarrow +\infty$ ,  $\mu_k(m, \Omega)$  repeated according to its multiplicity.

For  $p \neq 2$  (nonlinear problem), the critical point theory of Ljusternik Schnirelman ( see [12]) provides that  $\sigma_p^+(-\Delta_p, m, \Omega)$  contains an infinite sequence of eigenvalues for these problems given by  $\lambda_1(m, \Omega) < \lambda_2(m, \Omega) \leq \lambda_3(m, \Omega) \dots \lambda_n(m, \Omega) \rightarrow +\infty$  and formulated as follows

$$\frac{1}{\lambda_n(m)} = \sup_{K \in \Gamma_n} \min_{u \in K} \int_{\Omega} m|u|^p \quad (1)$$

where  $\Gamma_n$  is defined by :

$$\Gamma_n = \{K \subset S : K \text{ is symmetrical, compact and } \xi(K) \geq n\},$$

$S$  is the sphere unity of  $W_0^{1,p}(\Omega)$  and  $\xi$  is the genus function.

We may also define the negative spectrum when  $-m \in M^+(\Omega)$  by  $-\sigma^+(-\Delta_p, -m, \Omega)$  which contains an infinite sequence  $\lambda_{-1}(m, \Omega) > \lambda_{-2}(m, \Omega) \geq \lambda_{-3}(m, \Omega) \dots \geq \lambda_{-n}(m, \Omega) \rightarrow -\infty$ , such that  $\lambda_{-n}(m, \Omega) = -\lambda_n(-m, \Omega)$  (See [1], [2], [3], [7]...).

Whether or not this sequence denoted  $\lambda_k(m, \Omega)$  constitutes the set of all eigenvalues is an open question when  $N > 1$ ,  $m \neq 1$  and  $p \neq 2$ .

The purpose of this article is to study the following problem :

*Find the real numbers  $\alpha$ ,  $\beta_2(\alpha)$  such that  $\lambda_2(\alpha m_1 + \beta_2(\alpha) m_2) = 1$  and the asymptotic behavior of the eigencurve  $C_2 = \{(\alpha, \beta_2(\alpha)) : \lambda_2(\alpha m_1 + \beta_2(\alpha) m_2) = 1\}$ , where  $m_1$  and  $m_2$  satisfies only the condition :*

$$(H_0) \quad m_1, m_2 \in M^+(\Omega) \text{ and } m_2 \geq 0 \text{ in } \Omega.$$

Several applications can be found in the bifurcation domain, we refer the reader to [6].

Many results have been obtained on this kind of problems (see; [4], [5], [8], [9]), in [5] the authors proved some properties related to the first eigencurve  $C_1$  such as concavity, differentiability and the asymptotic behavior, this last property can not be adapted to the other eigencurves, in [8] the authors have studied this class of problems under the following assumptions

$$(H') \quad m_1, m_2 \in M^+(\Omega) \text{ and } \text{ess inf}_{\Omega} m_2 > 0.$$

In [9], the authors proved some results under the assumptions :

$$(H'') \quad m_1, m_2 \in M^+(\Omega) \text{ and } \operatorname{ess\,inf}_{\Omega_{m_1}^*} m_2 > 0,$$

where  $\Omega_{m_1}^* = \{x \in \Omega : m_1(x) \neq 0\}$ .

This article is organized as follows, in section 2 we recall some basic result, in section 3 we study the existence of the eigencurve  $C_2$  and in section 4 we study the asymptotic behavior of  $C_2$ .

## 2 Preliminary results

Firstly we recall the following results which will be used later.

**Proposition 2.1** ([3], [8])

1. Let  $m, m' \in M^+(\Omega)$ . If  $m \leq m'$  (resp  $m < m'$ ), then  $\lambda_n(m) \geq \lambda_n(m')$  (resp  $\lambda_n(m) > \lambda_n(m')$ ).
2.  $\lambda_n : m \rightarrow \lambda_n(m)$  is continuous in  $(M^+(\Omega), \|\cdot\|_\infty)$ .

**Proposition 2.2** Let  $(m_k)$  be a sequence in  $M^+(\Omega)$  such that  $m_k \rightarrow m$  in  $L^\infty(\Omega)$ , then we have :

$$\lim_{k \rightarrow +\infty} \lambda_n(m_k) = +\infty \text{ if and only if } m \leq 0 \text{ almost everywhere in } \Omega.$$

Proof.

Let  $(m_k)$  be a sequence in  $M^+(\Omega)$  such that  $m_k \rightarrow m$  in  $L^\infty(\Omega)$ .

Assume first that  $\lim_{k \rightarrow +\infty} \lambda_n(m_k) = +\infty$ , we claim that  $m \leq 0$  almost everywhere in  $\Omega$ , indeed, if  $\operatorname{meas}\{x \in \Omega : m(x) > 0\} \neq 0$ , we get

$$\lim_{k \rightarrow +\infty} \lambda_n(m_k) = \lambda_n(m)$$

is a finite, which gives a contradiction.

Inversely, if  $m \leq 0$  almost everywhere in  $\Omega$ , suppose by contradiction that there exists  $\lambda > 0$  such that

$$\lambda_n(m_k) \leq \lambda \quad \forall k \in \mathbb{N}^*$$

Let  $r = \frac{2\lambda}{\lambda_n(2)}$ , Since  $m_k \rightarrow m$  in  $L^\infty(\Omega)$ , there exists  $N \in \mathbb{N}$ , such that  $\forall k \geq N$ , we have :

$$\|m_k - m\|_\infty \leq \frac{2}{r},$$

hence

$$m_k \leq m + \frac{2}{r} \quad p.p.x \in \Omega.$$

So, using the fact that  $m \leq 0 \quad p.p.x \in \Omega$ , we conclude that

$$m_k \leq \frac{2}{r} \quad p.p.x \in \Omega.$$

It follows that

$$\lambda_n(m_k) \geq \lambda_n\left(\frac{2}{r}\right) = r\lambda_n(2) = 2\lambda.$$

Which is a contradiction. The proof is complete. ■

### 3 Existence of the eigencurve $C_2$

For  $m \in M^+(\Omega)$ , we denote by  $\Omega_m^- = \{x \in \Omega : m(x) < 0\}$  and  $\Omega_m^+ = \{x \in \Omega : m(x) > 0\}$ .

**Theorem 3.1** *Assume  $(H_0)$  holds, then we have :*

1. *For all  $\alpha \in [0, \lambda_2(m_1)]$ , there exists  $\beta_2(\alpha) \in \mathbb{R}^+$  such that  $\lambda_2(\alpha m_1 + \beta_2(\alpha)m_2) = 1$ .*
2. *If  $\alpha > \lambda_2(m_1)$ , we have,*

$$\lambda_2(\alpha m_1 + \beta m_2) = 1 \Rightarrow \beta < 0.$$

3. *for all  $\beta < 0$  there exists  $\alpha_2^+(\beta) > 0$  such that :*
  - (i)  $\lambda_2(\alpha_2^+(\beta)m_1 + \beta m_2) = 1$ .
  - (ii) *if  $\gamma > 0$  and  $\lambda_2(\gamma m_1 + \beta m_2) = 1$  then  $\gamma = \alpha_2^+(\beta)$ .*
4. *Assume meas  $(\Omega_{m_1}^-) > 0$ , we have :*
  - (i) *if  $\alpha < \lambda_{-2}(m_1)$  then,  $\lambda_2(\alpha m_1 + \beta m_2) = 1 \Rightarrow \beta < 0$ .*
  - (ii) *For all  $\beta < 0$  there exists  $\alpha_2^-(\beta)$  such that :*
    - (a)  $\lambda_2(\alpha_2^-(\beta)m_1 + \beta m_2) = 1$ .
    - (b) *if  $\gamma < 0$  and  $\lambda_2(\gamma m_1 + \beta m_2) = 1$  then  $\gamma = \alpha_2^-(\beta)$ .*
5. *Assume meas  $(\Omega_{m_1}^-) = 0$ , then for all  $\alpha < 0$  there exists  $\beta^+(\alpha)$  such that*

$$\lambda_2(\alpha m_1 + \beta m_2) = 1 \Leftrightarrow \beta = \beta^+(\alpha).$$

**Proof.**

1. We consider the real function  $h_\alpha(\cdot)$  defined by  $h_\alpha(t) = \lambda_2(\alpha m_1 + t m_2)$ ,  $h_\alpha$

is decreasing and continuous in  $[0, +\infty[$  (see proposition 2.1), in other hand :  
If  $\alpha \in ]0, \lambda_2(m_1)]$ , we have :

$$\begin{aligned} h_\alpha(0) &= \lambda_2(\alpha m_1) \\ &= \frac{\lambda_2(m_1)}{\alpha} \\ &\geq 1. \end{aligned}$$

and for  $t > 0$ , we have :

$$\begin{aligned} h_\alpha(t) &= \lambda_2(\alpha m_1 + t m_2) \\ &= \frac{1}{t} \lambda_2\left(\frac{\alpha m_1}{t} + m_2\right), \end{aligned}$$

hence

$$\lim_{t \rightarrow +\infty} h_\alpha(t) = 0.$$

Thus, since  $h_\alpha$  is continuous, we deduce that there exists a real  $\beta_2(\alpha) \in [0, +\infty[$  such that  $h_\alpha(\beta_2(\alpha)) = 1$ .

If  $\alpha = 0$ , we take  $\beta_2(\alpha) = \lambda_2(m_2)$ .

**2.** Assume that  $\alpha > \lambda_2(m_1)$ .

For  $\beta \geq 0$ , we have :

$$\alpha m_1 \leq \alpha m_1 + \beta m_2,$$

so

$$\lambda_2(\alpha m_1 + \beta m_2) \leq \lambda_2(\alpha m_1) = \frac{\lambda_2(m_1)}{\alpha} < 1,$$

hence, if  $\lambda_2(\alpha m_1 + \beta m_2) = 1$  necessarily we have  $\beta < 0$ .

**3. (i).** We denote by  $\Gamma_2 = \{K \in S, \quad K \text{ is compact, symmetric and } \xi(K) \geq 2\}$ , where  $\xi$  is the genus function and  $S = \{u \in W_0^{1,p}(\Omega) : \int_\Omega |\nabla u|^p = 1\}$ .

For  $\beta < 0$  we define  $\alpha_2^+(\beta)$  as follows :

$$\frac{1}{\alpha_2^+(\beta)} = \sup_{K \in \Gamma_2} \inf_{u \in K} \frac{\int_\Omega m_1 |u|^p}{1 - \beta \int_\Omega m_2 |u|^p}.$$

By definition of  $\alpha_2^+(\beta)$  and the property of  $\lambda_2(m)$  (see [3]), we deduce that there exists eigenfunction  $u$  which change sign in  $\Omega$  such that :

$$\int_\Omega |\nabla u|^{p-2} \nabla u \nabla w - \beta m_2 |u|^{p-2} u w = \int_\Omega \alpha_2^+(\beta) m_1 |u|^{p-2} u w \quad \forall w \in W_0^{1,p}(\Omega), \quad (2)$$

we deduce also that, if  $\varphi \in W_0^{1,p}(\Omega)$  is eigenfunction of  $-\Delta_p - \beta m_2$ , change singe in  $\Omega$  with the corresponding eigenvalue  $\lambda > 0$  that is :

$$\int_\Omega |\nabla \varphi|^{p-2} \nabla \varphi \nabla w - \beta m_2 |\varphi|^{p-2} \varphi w = \lambda \int_\Omega m_1 |\varphi|^{p-2} \varphi w \quad \forall w \in W_0^{1,p}(\Omega), \quad (3)$$

then  $\lambda \geq \alpha_2^+(\beta)$ .

From (2), we get

$$\int_{\Omega} |\nabla u|^{p-2} \nabla u \nabla w = \int_{\Omega} (\alpha_2^+(\beta) m_1 + \beta m_2) |u|^{p-2} u w \quad \forall w \in W_0^{1,p}(\Omega), \quad (4)$$

hence the real 1 is eigenvalue of  $-\Delta_p$  with weight  $(\alpha_2^+(\beta) m_1 + \beta m_2)$ , since the corresponding eigenfunction  $u$  change sign in  $\Omega$ , we conclude that :

$$\lambda_2(\alpha_2^+(\beta) m_1 + \beta m_2) \leq 1. \quad (5)$$

In other hand, let  $K \in \Gamma_2$ , we have

$$\min_{v \in K} \frac{\int_{\Omega} m_1 |v|^p}{1 - \beta \int_{\Omega} m_2 |v|^p} \leq \frac{1}{\alpha_2^+(\beta)},$$

and

$$\min_{v \in K} \frac{\int_{\Omega} m_1 |v|^p}{1 - \beta \int_{\Omega} m_2 |v|^p} = \frac{\int_{\Omega} m_1 |v_k|^p}{1 - \beta \int_{\Omega} m_2 |v_k|^p} \quad \text{for some } v_k \in K,$$

so we deduce :

$$\min_{v \in K} \int_{\Omega} (\alpha_2^+(\beta) m_1 |v|^p + \beta m_2 |v|^p) \leq 1,$$

taking cont that  $K \in \Gamma_2$  is arbitrary, we get

$$\frac{1}{\lambda_2(\alpha_2^+(\beta) m_1 + \beta m_2)} = \sup_{K \in \Gamma_2} \min_{v \in K} \int_{\Omega} (\alpha_2^+(\beta) m_1 + \beta m_2) |v|^p \leq 1,$$

so

$$\lambda_2(\alpha_2^+(\beta) m_1 + \beta m_2) \geq 1 \quad (6)$$

(5) and (6) gives

$$\lambda_2(\alpha_2^+(\beta) m_1 + \beta m_2) = 1.$$

**3. (ii).** Let  $\gamma > 0$  such that  $\lambda_2(\gamma m_1 + \beta m_2) = 1$ , there exists eigenfunction  $\theta$  change sign in  $\Omega$  and

$$\int_{\Omega} |\nabla \theta|^{p-2} \nabla \theta \nabla w = \int_{\Omega} (\gamma m_1 + \beta m_2) |\theta|^{p-2} \theta w \quad \forall w \in W_0^{1,p}(\Omega),$$

hence

$$\int_{\Omega} |\nabla \theta|^{p-2} \nabla \theta \nabla w - \beta m_2 |\theta|^{p-2} \theta w = \gamma \int_{\Omega} m_1 |\theta|^{p-2} \theta w \quad \forall w \in W_0^{1,p}(\Omega), \quad (7)$$

from (7), we conclude that  $\gamma$  is eigenfunction of the operator  $(-\Delta_p - \beta m_2)$  with weight  $m_1$ , since the eigenfunction  $\theta$  change sign, we conclude that :

$$\gamma \geq \alpha_2^+(\beta).$$

Assume by contradiction that  $\gamma > \alpha_2^+(\beta)$ .

So

$$\frac{1}{\gamma} < \frac{1}{\alpha_2^+(\beta)} = \sup_{K \in \Gamma_2} \min_{v \in K} \frac{\int_{\Omega} m_1 |v|^p}{1 - \beta \int_{\Omega} m_2 |v|^p},$$

by the inequality above we deduce that there exists  $K_0 \in \Gamma_2$  such that

$$\frac{1}{\gamma} < \min_{v \in K_0} \frac{\int_{\Omega} m_1 |v|^p}{1 - \beta \int_{\Omega} m_2 |v|^p},$$

since  $K_0$  is compact, we conclude that

$$\frac{1}{\gamma} < \frac{\int_{\Omega} m_1 |v_0|^p}{1 - \beta \int_{\Omega} m_2 |v_0|^p}, \quad \text{for some } v_0 \in K_0,$$

hence

$$1 < \min_{K_0} \int_{\Omega} (\gamma m_1 + \beta m_2) |v|^p,$$

it follows that

$$1 < \sup_{K \in \Gamma_2} \min_{v \in K} \int_{\Omega} (\gamma m_1 + \beta m_2) |v|^p = \frac{1}{\lambda_2(\gamma m_1 + \beta m_2)} = 1,$$

which is a contradiction, hence we have  $\gamma = \alpha_2^+(\beta)$ .

**4 (i)**  $\alpha < \lambda_{-2}(\mathbf{m}_1)$ . We consider the real function  $h_{\alpha}(\cdot)$  defined by  $h_{\alpha}(t) = \lambda_2(\alpha m_1 + t m_2)$ , since  $h_{\alpha}(0) = \frac{\lambda_{-2}(m_1)}{\alpha} < 1$ , then necessarily we have

$$h_{\alpha}(\beta) = 1 \Rightarrow \beta < 0,$$

that is

$$\lambda_2(\alpha m_1 + \beta m_2) = 1 \Rightarrow \beta < 0.$$

**4 (ii).** We define  $\alpha_2^-(\beta)$  as follows

$$\frac{1}{\alpha_2^-(\beta)} = \inf_{K \in \Gamma_2} \max_{u \in K} \frac{\int_{\Omega} m_1 |u|^p}{1 - \beta \int_{\Omega} m_2 |u|^p},$$

the proof is similar to that of 3.

**5.** In this case we consider the coercive operator  $-\Delta_p - \alpha m_1$ , we define  $\beta^+(\alpha)$  as follows

$$\beta^+(\alpha) = \sup_{K \in \Gamma_2} \inf_{u \in K} \frac{\int_{\Omega} m_2 |u|^p}{1 - \alpha \int_{\Omega} m_1 |u|^p},$$

taking cont that, for  $\beta < 0$ ,  $\alpha m_1 + \beta m_2 \notin M^+(\Omega)$ , by the same proof as 3 of theorem , we deduce the result.

## 4 Asymptotic behavior of $C_2$

**Theorem 4.1** *Assume  $(H_0)$  holds, then we have :*

1.  $\lim_{\beta \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{\alpha_2^+(\beta)}{\beta} = -\inf_{\Omega_{m_1}^+} \frac{m_2}{m_1}.$
2. *If  $\text{mes}(\Omega_{m_1}^-) > 0$ , then*  
 $\lim_{\beta \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{\alpha_2^-(\beta)}{\beta} = -\sup_{\Omega_{m_1}^-} \frac{m_2}{m_1}.$

**Proof.**

1. For each  $\beta < 0$  there exists  $\alpha_2^+(\beta) > 0$  such that :

$$\lambda_2(\alpha_2^+(\beta)m_1 + \beta m_2) = 1,$$

so we have

$$\alpha_2^+(\beta)m_1 + \beta m_2 > 0 \text{ in } \Omega_\alpha \subset \Omega \text{ with } \text{meas}(\Omega_\alpha) > 0,$$

hence necessarily  $\Omega_\alpha \subset \Omega_{m_1}^+$ , it follows that :

$$\frac{-\alpha_2^+(\beta)}{\beta} > \frac{m_2}{m_1} \quad \text{in } \Omega_\alpha \subset \Omega_{m_1}^+,$$

thus

$$\liminf_{\beta \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{-\alpha_2^+(\beta)}{\beta} \geq \inf_{\Omega_{m_1}^+} \frac{m_2}{m_1}. \quad (8)$$

Let  $k = \limsup_{\beta \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{-\alpha_2^+(\beta)}{\beta}$ , for a subsequence  $(\beta_n)$  ( $\beta_n \rightarrow -\infty$ ), we have :

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow +\infty} \frac{-\alpha_2^+(\beta_n)}{\beta_n} = k,$$

and

$$\lambda_2(\alpha_2^+(\beta_n)m_1 + \beta_n m_2) = 1,$$

then

$$\lambda_2\left(\frac{-\alpha_2^+(\beta_n)m_1}{\beta_n} - m_2\right) = -\beta_n,$$

since  $\frac{-\alpha_2^+(\beta_n)m_1}{\beta_n} - m_2 \rightarrow km_1 - m_2$  in  $L^\infty(\Omega)$ , and  $-\beta_n \rightarrow +\infty$ , from proposition 2.2 we conclude that :

$$km_1 - m_2 \leq 0 \quad \text{almost every where in } \Omega,$$

hence

$$k \leq \inf_{\Omega_{m_1}^+} \frac{m_2}{m_1} \quad (9)$$



By (8) and (9), we deduce that

$$\lim_{\beta \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{\alpha_2^+(\beta)}{\beta} = -\inf \operatorname{ess}_{\Omega_{m_1}^+} \frac{m_2}{m_1}.$$

The proof of 2) is similar to that of the previous. ■

**Theorem 4.2** *Assume  $(H_0)$  and  $m_1 \geq 0$  in  $\Omega$ , then we have :*

$$\lim_{\alpha \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{\beta_2^+(\alpha)}{\alpha} = -\inf \operatorname{ess}_{\Omega_{m_2}^*} \frac{m_1}{m_2}.$$

Proof.

For each  $\alpha < 0$  there exists  $\beta_2^+(\alpha) > 0$  such that  $\lambda_2(\alpha m_1 + \beta_2^+(\alpha) m_2) = 1$  (see theorem 3.1), thus we have

$$\alpha m_1 + \beta_2^+(\alpha) m_2 > 0 \text{ in } \Omega_\alpha \text{ with } \operatorname{meas}(\Omega_\alpha) > 0,$$

so necessarily  $\Omega_\alpha \subset \Omega_{m_2}^*$ , hence we deduce that :

$$\liminf_{\alpha \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{-\beta_2^+(\alpha)}{\alpha} \geq \inf \operatorname{ess}_{\Omega_{m_2}^*} \frac{m_1}{m_2}. \quad (10)$$

Let  $k = \limsup_{\alpha \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{-\beta_2^+(\alpha)}{\alpha}$ .

Using the same argument as in the proof of theorem 4.2, we get

$$k \leq \inf \operatorname{ess}_{\Omega_{m_2}^*} \frac{m_1}{m_2}.$$

So by (10), we conclude that :

$$\lim_{\alpha \rightarrow -\infty} \frac{-\beta_2^+(\alpha)}{\alpha} = \inf \operatorname{ess}_{\Omega_{m_2}^*} \frac{m_1}{m_2}.$$

■

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