

Finitistic Dimension Conjectures for representations of quivers

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Abstract: Let R be a ring and Q be a quiver. We prove the first Finitistic Dimension Conjecture to be true for RQ , the path ring of Q over R , provided that R satisfies the conjecture. In fact, we prove that if the little and the big finitistic dimensions of R coincide and equal $n < \infty$, then this is also true for RQ and, both the little and the big finitistic dimensions of RQ equal $n + 1$ when Q is non-discrete and n when Q is discrete. We also prove that RQ is a quasi-Frobenius ring if and only if R is quasi-Frobenius and Q is discrete.

Key words: Finitistic dimension conjecture, path ring, quasi-Frobenius ring, quiver representation

1. Introduction

In 1960 ([2]), Bass published the so-called *Finitistic Dimension Conjectures*: For a finite dimensional algebra Λ , (I) $\text{findim } \Lambda = \text{Findim } \Lambda$ and (II) $\text{findim } \Lambda < \infty$, where

$$\text{findim } \Lambda = \sup\{\text{pd } M \mid M \text{ is a finitely generated left } \Lambda\text{-module with } \text{pd } M < \infty\}$$

is the (*left*) *little finitistic dimension of* Λ , and

$$\text{Findim } \Lambda = \sup\{\text{pd } M \mid M \text{ is a left } \Lambda\text{-module with } \text{pd } M < \infty\}$$

is the (*left*) *big finitistic dimension of* Λ . The first conjecture was proved to be false in [13]. In fact, it was proved that for any field k and any integer $n \geq 2$, there exist finite dimensional k -algebras Λ such that $\text{findim } \Lambda = n$, while $\text{Findim } \Lambda = n + 1$. Also, it has been proved to be true, for instance, for left perfect rings when the little finitistic dimension is zero ([2]), and for Iwanaga-Gorenstein rings ([8]). However, the second conjecture still remains open. It has been proved to be true, for example, for finite dimensional monomial algebras ([7]), for Artin algebras with vanishing cube radical ([14]), or Artin algebras with representation dimension bounded by 3 ([9]).

Our goal in this paper is to provide a partial positive solution to the first Finitistic Dimension Conjecture. Let R be any ring and Q be any quiver. We prove that the path ring of Q over R , denoted by RQ , does satisfy the first Finitistic Dimension Conjecture provided that R satisfies the conjecture below, Theorem 3.9. In fact, we prove that if $\text{Findim}(R) = \text{findim}(R) = n (< \infty)$, then (i) $\text{Findim}(RQ) = \text{findim}(RQ) = n + 1$ when Q is non-discrete, and (ii) $\text{Findim}(RQ) = \text{findim}(RQ) = n$ when Q is discrete. In particular, we infer from

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Theorem 3.2 in [8] that if R is n -Gorenstein ring, that is a two-sided noetherian ring of finite self-injective dimension n on both sides, then RQ satisfies the first Finitistic Dimension Conjecture. Moreover, we prove that RQ is a quasi-Frobenius ring if and only if R is a quasi-Frobenius ring and Q is a discrete quiver, where R is called *quasi-Frobenius* if a left R -module is projective if and only if it is injective (or, equivalently, R is a 0-Gorenstein ring) (Proposition 3.10).

2. Preliminaries

A *quiver* is a directed graph whose edges are called arrows. As usual we denote a quiver by Q , understanding that $Q = (V, E)$ where V is the set of vertices and E is the set of arrows. An arrow of a quiver from a vertex v_1 to a vertex v_2 is denoted by $a : v_1 \rightarrow v_2$. In this case we write $s(a) = v_1$ as the initial (starting) vertex, and $t(a) = v_2$ as the terminal (ending) vertex. An arrow a in which $s(a) = t(a)$ is called a *loop*. A quiver is said to be *discrete* if it has no arrows. A *path* p of a quiver Q is a sequence of arrows $a_n \cdots a_2 a_1$ with $t(a_i) = s(a_{i+1})$. Thus $s(p) = s(a_1)$ and $t(p) = t(a_n)$. Two paths p and q can be composed, getting another path qp (or pq) whenever $t(p) = s(q)$ ($t(q) = s(p)$).

A quiver Q may be thought as a category in which the objects are the vertices of Q and the morphisms are the paths of Q .

A representation by modules X of a given quiver Q is a functor $X : Q \rightarrow R\text{-Mod}$. Such a representation is determined by giving a module $X(v)$ to each vertex v of Q and a homomorphism $X(a) : X(v_1) \rightarrow X(v_2)$ to each arrow $a : v_1 \rightarrow v_2$ of Q . A morphism η between two representations X and Y is a natural transformation, so it will be a family η_v such that $Y(a) \circ \eta_{v_1} = \eta_{v_2} \circ X(a)$ for any arrow $a : v_1 \rightarrow v_2$ of Q . Thus, the representations of a quiver Q by modules over a ring R is a category, denoted by $(Q, R\text{-Mod})$.

For a given quiver Q and a ring R , the path ring of Q over R , denoted by RQ , is defined as the free left R -module, whose base are the paths p of Q , and where the multiplication is the obvious composition between two paths. This is a ring with enough idempotents, so in fact it is a ring with local units (see [12, Ch.10, §49]). We denote by $RQ\text{-Mod}$ the category of unital RQ -modules (i.e. ${}_{RQ}M$ such that $RQM = M$). It is known that RQ is a projective generator of the category and that the categories $RQ\text{-Mod}$ and $(Q, R\text{-Mod})$ are equivalent categories, and so $(Q, R\text{-Mod})$ is a Grothendieck category with enough projectives.

For a given quiver Q , one can define a family of projective generators from an adjoint situation as it was shown in [10]. For every vertex $v \in V$ and the embedding morphism $\{v\} \subseteq Q$ the family $\{S_v(R) : v \in V\}$ is a family of projective generators of Q where the functor $S_v : R\text{-Mod} \rightarrow (Q, R\text{-Mod})$ is defined in [10, §28] as $S_v(M)(w) = \bigoplus_{Q(v,w)} M$ where $Q(v, w)$ is the set of paths of Q starting at v and ending at w . Then S_v is the left adjoint functor of the evaluation functor $T_v : (Q, R\text{-Mod}) \rightarrow R\text{-Mod}$ given by $T_v(X) = X(v)$ for any representation $X \in (Q, R\text{-Mod})$. There is also an algorithm for providing injective cogenerators in $(Q, R\text{-Mod})$ due to [5].

Throughout the paper, by a representation of a quiver we will mean a representation by modules over a ring R . The letter R will usually denote a nontrivial associative ring with identity and not necessarily commutative. All modules will be unitary left R -modules, unless otherwise specified. The category of left R -modules will be denoted by $R\text{-Mod}$. By pd and id we denote the *projective dimension* and the *injective dimension* respectively. We refer to [6], [5] and [1] for any undefined notion used in the text.

3. Finitistic Dimension Conjectures over path rings

Any non-discrete quiver Q must contain proper or loop arrows. So the main idea of our proof is to consider first that Q has an arrow that is not a loop and then that Q has a loop.

In the proof of Lemma 3.1, we use the following result: Let Q be the quiver consisting of a single vertex v and infinitely many loops $\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \dots$. Then the defining basis of the path ring RQ is the set of all words on $\{\alpha_1, \alpha_2, \dots\}$ with the empty word equal to the trivial path v ; this is the identity of RQ . Thus, $RQ \cong R\{x_1, x_2, \dots\}$ where the elements of $R\{x_1, x_2, \dots\}$ are non-commuting polynomials in indeterminates $\{x_1, x_2, \dots\}$ with coefficients in R . The isomorphism being induced by the R -linear map such that $v \mapsto 1_R$ and $\alpha_k \mapsto x_k$ for all $k = 1, 2, \dots$.

Lemma 3.1 *Let Q be any non-discrete quiver. If Q contains an arrow (respectively, a loop), then any projective representation over Q is also projective when it is restricted to the quiver $Q_1 \equiv v_1 \xrightarrow{a} v_2$ (respectively, Q_2 , a quiver with one vertex and one loop).*

Proof Let P be a projective representation over Q . Then $\oplus_{t(a)=v} P(s(a)) \rightarrow P(v)$ is always a splitting monomorphism and $P(v)$ is a projective R -module for all $v \in V$ (for any quiver Q). So, in particular, for the quiver Q_1 , $P(v_1) \xrightarrow{P(a)} P(v_2)$ will be a splitting monomorphism. Thus it is a projective representation over Q_1 (since Q_1 is left rooted) (see [3]). Now for the quiver Q_2 , we may assume that Q contains a vertex with infinitely many loops, and that Q_2 is one of these loops. Then we have that

$$(Q, R\text{-Mod}) \cong R\{x_1, x_2, \dots\} - \text{Mod},$$

where the elements of $R\{x_1, x_2, \dots\}$ are non-commuting polynomials in indeterminates $\{x_1, x_2, \dots\}$ with coefficients in R . Without loss of generality we may assume that $(Q_2, R\text{-Mod}) \cong R[x_1] - \text{Mod}$. Now if P is a projective representation over Q , that is, a projective $R\{x_1, x_2, \dots\}$ -module, then $P \oplus L = R\{x_1, x_2, \dots\}^{(I)}$ for some representation L over Q and an index set I . But,

$$R\{x_1, x_2, \dots\} \cong \bigoplus_{p \in x_1 < X >} R[x_1] \cdot p$$

as $R[x_1]$ -modules, where $X = \{x_1, x_2, \dots\}$, $< X >$ is the free monoid of words on X , and $x_1 < X >$ is the submonoid of $< X >$ of words which does not start by x_1 (notice that if p is the empty word, then we set $R[x_1] \cdot p = R[x_1]$). Since $R[x_1] \cdot p \cong R[x_1]$ as $R[x_1]$ -modules, then $\oplus_{p \in x_1 < X >} R[x_1] \cdot p$ is $R[x_1]$ -projective. So P is $R[x_1]$ -projective as a direct summand, or equivalently P is a projective representation in $(Q_2, R\text{-Mod})$. \square

Lemma 3.2 *Let $Q_1 = (V_1, E_1)$ be a subquiver of $Q = (V, E)$. Assume that every projective representation over Q is also projective when it is restricted to Q_1 . Let M be any representation of Q_1 . If $\text{pd}_{Q_1}(M) = n$, then $\text{pd}_Q(\widetilde{M}) \geq n$, where \widetilde{M} is the following representation of Q : $\widetilde{M}(v) = M(v) \ \forall v \in V_1, \ \widetilde{M}(v) = 0 \ \forall v \in V - V_1$, and $\widetilde{M}(a) = M(a) \ \forall a \in E_1, \ \widetilde{M}(a) = 0 \ \forall a \in E - E_1$.*

Proof Suppose for the contrary that $r = \text{pd}_Q(\widetilde{M}) < n$. Then there exists an exact sequence in $(Q, R\text{-Mod})$

$$0 \rightarrow P_r \rightarrow \dots \rightarrow P_1 \rightarrow P_0 \rightarrow \widetilde{M} \rightarrow 0,$$

with P_i , $0 \leq i \leq r$ being projective representations over Q . Now by the assumption,

$$0 \rightarrow P_r|_{Q_1} \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow P_1|_{Q_1} \rightarrow P_0|_{Q_1} \rightarrow \widetilde{M}|_{Q_1} = M \rightarrow 0$$

is a projective resolution of M in $(Q, R\text{-Mod})$ with $r < n$. This contradicts with $\text{pd}_{Q_1}(M) = n$. \square

Lemma 3.3 *Let M be a module such that $\text{pd}_R(M) = n$. Then:*

1. $\text{pd}_Q(\overline{M}) = n + 1$, where $\overline{M} \equiv M \rightarrow 0$ is a representation of the quiver $Q \equiv \bullet \rightarrow \bullet$.
2. $\text{pd}_{R[x]}(M) = n + 1$, where $R[x]$ is a polynomial ring and M is considered as an $R[x]$ -module (via $xM = 0$).

Proof

1. Let us fix the notation $\overline{X} \equiv X \rightarrow 0$ for any module X in this proof. We show that $\text{pd}_Q(\overline{M}) = n + 1$ by induction on n . For $n = 0$, M will be projective. So from the commutative diagram

$$\begin{array}{ccccccccc} 0 & \longrightarrow & 0 & \longrightarrow & M & \xrightarrow{id} & M & \longrightarrow & 0 \\ & & \downarrow & & \downarrow id & & \downarrow 0 & & \\ 0 & \longrightarrow & M & \xrightarrow{id} & M & \longrightarrow & 0 & \longrightarrow & 0 \end{array}$$

it follows that $\text{pd}_Q(\overline{M}) = 1$. (Indeed, \overline{M} cannot be projective since $M \xrightarrow{0} 0$ cannot be a splitting epimorphism.) Now suppose that $\text{pd}_R(M) = n$. Then there exist sequences of modules $0 \rightarrow P_n \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow P_1 \rightarrow K \rightarrow 0$ and $0 \rightarrow K \rightarrow P_0 \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$, where P_i is a projective module for every $0 \leq i \leq n$ and $K = \text{Ker}(P_0 \rightarrow M)$. Since $\text{pd}_R(K) = n - 1$, then by induction hypothesis $\text{pd}_Q(\overline{K}) = n$. Since P_0 is a projective module, we know that $\text{pd}_Q(\overline{P_0}) = 1$. Therefore from the short exact sequence of representations $0 \rightarrow \overline{K} \rightarrow \overline{P_0} \rightarrow \overline{M} \rightarrow 0$ we get the long exact sequence of homology

$$\begin{aligned} \cdots \rightarrow 0 &= \text{Ext}_Q^n(\overline{P_0}, X) \rightarrow \text{Ext}_Q^n(\overline{K}, X) \rightarrow \text{Ext}_Q^{n+1}(\overline{M}, X) \rightarrow \\ &\rightarrow \text{Ext}_Q^{n+1}(\overline{P_0}, X) = 0 \rightarrow \text{Ext}_Q^{n+1}(\overline{K}, X) = 0 \rightarrow \text{Ext}_Q^{n+2}(\overline{M}, X) \rightarrow \\ &\rightarrow \text{Ext}_Q^{n+2}(\overline{P_0}, X) = 0 \rightarrow \cdots \end{aligned}$$

So, we have $\text{Ext}_Q^{n+j}(\overline{M}, X) = 0$, $\forall j \geq 2$ and for any representation X . Since $\text{pd}_Q(\overline{K}) = n$, then $0 \neq \text{Ext}_Q^n(\overline{K}, X) \cong \text{Ext}_Q^{n+1}(\overline{M}, X)$, and this implies that $\text{pd}_Q(\overline{M}) = n + 1$.

2. We show that $\text{pd}_{R[x]}(M) = n + 1$ by induction on n . If $n = 0$, then by [11, Lemma 9.27] $\text{pd}_{R[x]}(M[x]) = \text{pd}_R(M) = 0$, that is, $M[x]$ is $R[x]$ -projective, where $M[x] = R[x] \otimes_R M$. Moreover, we have a short exact sequence of $R[x]$ -modules $0 \rightarrow M[x] \rightarrow M[x] \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$ (see [11, Lemma 9.29]). So, $\text{pd}_{R[x]}(M) = 1$ since M cannot be $R[x]$ -projective (otherwise the sequence would split, but it is impossible). Now suppose that $\text{pd}_R(M) = n$ where $n \geq 2$. Then we have a short exact sequence of R -modules $0 \rightarrow K \rightarrow P \rightarrow M \rightarrow 0$

where P is projective and $\text{pd}_R(K) = n - 1$. So by induction hypothesis, we know that $\text{pd}_{R[x]}(K) = n$ and $\text{pd}_{R[x]}(P) = 1$ (via $xK = 0$ and $xP = 0$). In fact, we can consider this short exact sequence over $R[x]$ -modules, and from this sequence we get the long exact sequence of $R[x]$ -modules:

$$\begin{aligned} \cdots \rightarrow 0 = \text{Ext}^n(P, Y) \rightarrow \text{Ext}^n(K, Y) \rightarrow \text{Ext}^{n+1}(M, Y) \rightarrow \text{Ext}^{n+1}(P, Y) = 0 \\ \rightarrow \text{Ext}^{n+1}(K, Y) = 0 \rightarrow \text{Ext}^{n+2}(M, Y) \rightarrow \text{Ext}^{n+2}(P, Y) = 0 \rightarrow \cdots . \end{aligned}$$

Then we obtain that $\text{Ext}^{n+j}(M, Y) = 0 \ \forall j \geq 2$ and for any $R[x]$ -module Y . Since $\text{pd}_{R[x]}(K) = n$, then $0 \neq \text{Ext}^n(K, Y) \cong \text{Ext}^{n+1}(M, Y)$. Hence $\text{pd}_{R[x]}(M) = n + 1$. □

Lemma 3.4 *Let Q be any quiver. If $\text{Findim}(R) = n$, then $\text{Findim}(RQ) \leq n + 1$.*

Proof Let X be any representation in $(Q, R\text{-Mod})$ such that $\text{pd}_Q(X) < \infty$. Then it is clear that $\text{pd}_R(X(v)) < \infty$, and so $\text{pd}_R(X(v)) \leq n$ for any vertex v of Q . Now from the exact sequence

$$0 \rightarrow K \rightarrow P_{n-1} \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow P_1 \rightarrow P_0 \rightarrow X \rightarrow 0$$

of representations of Q where P_i is a projective representation $\forall 0 \leq i \leq n - 1$ and $K = \text{Ker}(P_{n-1} \rightarrow P_{n-2})$, we obtain an exact sequence of modules

$$0 \rightarrow K(v) \rightarrow P_{n-1}(v) \rightarrow \cdots \rightarrow P_1(v) \rightarrow P_0(v) \rightarrow X(v) \rightarrow 0$$

for any vertex v of Q . Then $K(v)$ must be a projective module since $\text{pd}_R(X(v)) \leq n$. Moreover, by the argument given in the proof of [10, Corollary 28.3], we have the short exact sequence

$$0 \rightarrow \oplus_{a \in E} S_{t(a)}(K(s(a))) \rightarrow \oplus_{v \in V} S_v(K(v)) \rightarrow K \rightarrow 0$$

for the representation K (in fact, it exists for every representation in $(Q, R\text{-Mod})$). Since the functor S preserves projectives, it follows that $\text{pd}_Q(X) \leq n + 1$, and this implies that $\text{Findim}(RQ) \leq n + 1$. □

Proposition 3.5 *Let Q be a non-discrete quiver. If $\text{Findim}(R) = n$, then $\text{Findim}(RQ) = n + 1$.*

Proof By Lemma 3.4, $\text{Findim}(RQ) \leq n + 1$. Now let M be an R -module such that $\text{pd}_R(M) = n$. Since Q is a non-discrete quiver, we can assume that it contains an arrow, say Q_1 or a loop, say Q_2 . So in this case, by Lemma 3.3, there exists a representation M_1 of Q_1 (resp., M_2 of Q_2) such that $\text{pd}_{Q_1}(M_1) = n + 1$ (resp., $\text{pd}_{Q_2}(M_2) = n + 1$). (Notice that $(Q_2, R\text{-Mod}) \cong R[x]\text{-Mod}$.) Thus by Lemmas 3.1 and 3.2, it follows that $\text{pd}_Q(\widetilde{M}_1) \geq n + 1$ (resp. $\text{pd}_Q(\widetilde{M}_2) \geq n + 1$), where $\widetilde{M}_1, \widetilde{M}_2$ are the representations given in Lemma 3.2. Hence $\text{Findim}(RQ) \geq n + 1$. □

Corollary 3.6 *Let Q be a non-discrete quiver. If R is ring such that $\text{Findim}(R) = \text{findim}(R) = n (< \infty)$, then $\text{Findim}(RQ) = \text{findim}(RQ) = n + 1$.*

Corollary 3.7 *Let Q be a non-discrete quiver. If R is n -Gorenstein ring, then $\text{Findim}(RQ) = \text{findim}(RQ) = n + 1$.*

Proof Since R is an n -Gorenstein ring, $\text{Findim}(R) = \text{findim}(R) = n$ by [8, Theorem 3.2]. So the result follows by Corollary 3.6. \square

Remark 3.8 *If the quiver Q is discrete, then a representation X of Q is projective if and only if $X(v)$ is a projective module for all $v \in V$. So, if $\text{Findim}(R) = \text{findim}(R) = n$, then it is immediate that $\text{Findim}(RQ) = \text{findim}(RQ) = n$.*

Theorem 3.9 *Let Q be any quiver. If R is a ring such that $\text{Findim}(R) = \text{findim}(R) = n (< \infty)$, then $\text{Findim}(RQ) = \text{findim}(RQ) (< \infty)$.*

Proof By Corollary 3.6 and Remark 3.8. \square

Recall that a ring R is called *quasi-Frobenius* (briefly, a *QF-ring*) if a left R -module is projective if and only if it is injective. This notion can be extended to the path ring of any quiver Q . So we call RQ a quasi-Frobenius ring if a representation of $(Q, R\text{-Mod})$ is projective if and only if it is injective.

Proposition 3.10 *Let Q be a quiver. Then RQ is a QF-ring if and only if R is a QF-ring and Q is discrete.*

Proof (\Rightarrow) Suppose on the contrary that Q is not discrete. Then we have two cases:

1. Let Q contain an arrow $v_1 \xrightarrow{a} v_2$. We know that $\bigoplus_{v \in V} S_v(R)$ is a projective generator of $(Q, R\text{-Mod})$. So, the induced representation

$$S_v(R)(v_1) \xrightarrow{S_v(R)(a)} S_v(R)(v_2) \cong \bigoplus_{Q(v,v_1)} R \longrightarrow \bigoplus_{Q(v,v_2)} R$$

of the quiver $v_1 \xrightarrow{a} v_2$ is projective (see [3, Theorem 3.1]). But since $Q(v, v_1) \subsetneq Q(v, v_2)$, $S_v(R)(a)$ cannot be a splitting epimorphism, and so the representation cannot be injective (see [4, Theorem 4.2]).

2. Let Q contain loops with one vertex. Then $(Q, R\text{-Mod}) \cong R\{x_1, x_2, \dots\}\text{-Mod}$, where the elements of $R\{x_1, x_2, \dots\}$ are non-commuting polynomials in indeterminates $\{x_1, x_2, \dots\}$ with coefficients in R . So $R\{x_1, x_2, \dots\}$ is a projective module over itself, but not injective since it is not divisible (for instance, x_1 doesn't have an inverse).

So in each case we have a contradiction with RQ to be a QF-ring. Hence Q must be a discrete quiver. Now it is easy to notice that a representation P of $(Q, R\text{-Mod})$ is projective (resp., injective) if and only if $P(v)$ is a projective left R -module, for each $v \in V$ (resp., an injective left R -module, for each $v \in V$). For instance this can be derived from the fact that a discrete quiver is, in particular, left rooted and right rooted, so we can use the characterization of projective (resp., injective) representations given in [3, Theorem 3.1] (resp., [4, Theorem 4.2]). Hence, if M is a projective (resp., an injective) R -module then we can easily construct a projective (resp., injective) representation X in $(Q, R\text{-Mod})$ by the assignment $X(v) = M$ and $X(w) = 0$, $\forall w \in V, w \neq v$ (where v is any fixed vertex of Q). Then by the hypothesis X will be an injective (resp., a projective) representation in $(Q, R\text{-Mod})$, that is, M will be an injective (resp., a projective) left R -module. So R is a QF-ring.

(\Leftarrow) It follows from the previous observation on projective (resp., injective) representations of discrete quivers. \square

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