

## On essential cohomology of powerful $p$ -groups

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**Abstract:** For an odd prime  $p$ , we prove that a finite powerful  $p$ -group having rank two Frattini quotient has nonzero essential cohomology. We also provide some examples and applications.

**Key words:** Cohomology of groups, essential cohomology, powerful  $p$ -groups

### 1. Introduction

Let  $G$  be a finite group and  $k$  be a field of characteristic  $p$ . A cohomology class  $x$  in the mod  $p$ -cohomology ring  $H^*(G, k)$  is called essential if it is in the intersection of kernels of restrictions to proper subgroups ( $x \in \cap_{H < G} \ker \text{res}_H^G$ ). Essential classes in  $H^*(G, k)$  generate an ideal called the essential cohomology of  $G$  and it is denoted by  $\text{Ess}^*(G)$ . For a finite group, the kernel of the restriction to a Sylow  $p$ -subgroup is trivial, so nonzero essential cohomology only exists in the case of  $p$ -groups. Essential cohomology plays a crucial role for calculation methods in [2, 7]. If  $\text{Ess}^*(G)$  is nonzero, then one cannot use the process in [2]. Finding a group theoretic characterization of finite  $p$ -groups having nonzero essential cohomology will be a valuable step for the methods in [2, 7]. This is an open problem introduced in [1] (see problem 4 on page 438). For groups having Cohen–Macaulay cohomology rings, the characterization is given in [3]. It is rather difficult to find nonzero essential classes, but when possible, it is also involved in determining the depth of the cohomology ring  $H^*(G, k)$  (see [6]).

It is well known that for a finite  $p$ -group  $G$ , the Frattini quotient  $G/\Phi(G)$  (here  $\Phi(G)$  is the Frattini subgroup of  $G$ ) is an elementary abelian  $p$ -group. For elementary abelian  $p$ -groups, a characterization of essential cohomology is given completely in [5]. By using this, we define the inflated essential cohomology of a  $p$ -group as the ideal generated by  $\text{inf}_{G/\Phi(G)}^G(\text{Ess}^*(G/\Phi(G)))$  and denote it by  $\text{InfEss}^*(G)$ . For  $p > 2$ , we consider the inflated essential cohomology of powerful  $p$ -groups: groups satisfying the condition  $[G, G] \leq G^p$  (here  $G = \langle x^p : x \in G \rangle$  the subgroup generated by all  $p$ th powers). For the rest of the paper we assume that  $k = \mathbb{F}_p$ , unless otherwise stated. In this paper, we prove the following:

**Theorem 1.1** *Let  $p > 2$  and  $G$  be a finite  $p$ -group. If  $\text{InfEss}^*(G)$  is nonzero, then  $G$  is a powerful  $p$ -group.*

For a restricted family of powerful  $p$ -groups, we give a characterization as follows.

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**Theorem 1.2** *Let  $p > 2$  and  $G$  be a  $p$ -group such that the Frattini quotient has rank two.  $\text{InfEss}^*(G)$  is nonzero if and only if  $G$  is a powerful  $p$ -group.*

**Theorem 1.3** *If  $G$  is a powerful  $p$ -group with a rank two Frattini quotient, then  $\text{Ess}^*(G)$  is nonzero.*

There is another distinguishable algebraic structure of essential cohomology of  $G$  if  $G$  is not an elementary abelian  $p$ -group. By Quillen [15], if  $G$  is not an elementary abelian  $p$ -group,  $\text{Ess}^*(G)$  is a nilpotent ideal. By Mui (in his unpublished essay: The mod  $p$  cohomology algebra of the extra-special group  $E(p^3)$  1982) and Marx [13], it was conjectured that the nilpotency degree is 2. In [10], Green disproved the conjecture. We consider the nilpotency degree of  $\text{InfEss}^*(G)$  and prove the following theorem.

**Theorem 1.4** *Let  $G$  be a finite  $p$ -group such that  $\text{InfEss}^*(G)$  is nonzero. Then the nilpotency degree of  $\text{InfEss}^*(G)$  is 2.*

The structure of the paper is as follows. In Section 2, we introduce the inflated essential cohomology of a finite  $p$ -group and then we give some properties and examples. We briefly explain the characterization of 2-groups with nonzero inflated essential classes and investigate the case  $p > 2$ . In Section 3, we give the proofs of Theorem 1.1, Theorem 1.2, and Theorem 1.3. In the last section, we prove Theorem 1.4.

## 2. Inflated essential cohomology

For a finite  $p$ -group, the Frattini quotient  $G/\Phi(G)$  is an elementary abelian  $p$ -group and the essential cohomology of it is completely determined in [5]. We define the inflated essential cohomology of  $G$  as follows. Consider the ring homomorphism

$$\text{inf}_{G/\Phi(G)}^G : H^*(G/\Phi(G), k) \rightarrow H^*(G, k).$$

**Definition 2.1** *The inflated essential cohomology of a finite  $p$ -group is the ideal generated by the image  $\text{inf}_{G/\Phi(G)}^G(\text{Ess}^*(G/\Phi(G)))$ .*

We denote this ideal by  $\text{InfEss}^*(G)$ . The relation between restriction and inflation explain the reason why we call this ideal inflated essential cohomology.

**Lemma 2.2** *Let  $G$  be a  $p$ -group and  $N$  be a normal subgroup of  $G$ , which is contained in all maximal subgroups. Then*

$$\text{inf}_{G/N}^G(\text{Ess}^*(G/N)) \subseteq \text{Ess}(G).$$

**Proof** Let  $x \in \text{Ess}^*(G/N)$  and  $H$  be a maximal subgroup of  $G$ . We have

$$\text{res}_H^G(\text{inf}_{G/N}^G(x)) = \text{inf}_{H/N}^H(\text{res}_{H/N}^{G/N}(x))$$

and  $\text{res}_{H/N}^{G/N}(x) = 0$  as  $x$  is essential. (For the commutativity of restriction and inflation, see page 70 in [18].)

□

Thus, for a  $p$ -group  $G$ , we have  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) \subseteq \text{Ess}^*(G)$ .

We consider a particular form of the open problem in [1]. Our main interest is to make a classification of  $p$ -groups with nonzero inflated essential classes.

The classification has different results for odd primes and prime 2. For  $p = 2$  the classification is determined completely. For odd primes, the classification is much more difficult. For completeness we include the case  $p = 2$ , which mainly follows from the results in [19].

**2.1. The case  $p = 2$**

Let  $V$  be an elementary abelian 2-group. The cohomology ring of  $V$  is  $H^*(V, k) = k[x_1, \dots, x_n]$  where  $x_i \in H^1(V, k)$ . The essential cohomology of  $V$  is given in [5].

**Lemma 2.3 ([5], Lemma 2.2)** *The essential cohomology of  $V$  is the principal ideal generated by  $L_n(V) = \lambda \prod_{[x] \in \mathbb{P}H^1(V, k)} x$ , where  $\lambda$  is a nonzero scalar in  $k$ .*

For  $p = 2$ , the classification of 2-groups with nonzero inflated essential cohomology follows from a result in [19].

**Theorem 2.4 ([19])** *If  $G$  is a non-Abelian 2-group,  $\sigma_G = \prod_{x \in H^1(G, k) - \{0\}} x = 0$ .*

**Corollary 2.5** *If  $G$  is a non-Abelian 2-group, then  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) = 0$ .*

**Proof** Let  $V$  denote the elementary Abelian quotient  $G/\Phi(G)$ . By Lemma 2.3  $\text{Ess}^*(V)$  is generated by  $L_n(V)$ . We have  $\text{inf}_{G/\Phi(G)}^G(L_n(V)) = \sigma_G$ , as  $\text{inf}_{G/\Phi(G)}^G : H^1(G/\Phi(G), k) \rightarrow H^1(G, k)$  is bijective. Then  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) = 0$  by Theorem 2.4. □

For some Abelian 2-groups, we have  $\sigma_G = 0$ . For example,  $G = \mathbb{Z}/4\mathbb{Z} \times \mathbb{Z}/8\mathbb{Z}$ . The following theorem is a characterization of 2-groups with nonzero  $\sigma_G$ .

**Theorem 2.6 ([19])** *Let  $G$  be a 2-group. Then  $\sigma_G \neq 0$  if and only if  $G \cong \mathbb{Z}/2^s \times (\mathbb{Z}/2)^n$  for some  $n \geq 0$  and  $s \geq 1$ .*

The characterization of 2-groups having nonzero inflated essential cohomology easily follows.

**Corollary 2.7** *Let  $G$  be a 2-group. Then  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) \neq 0$  if and only if  $G \cong \mathbb{Z}/2^s \times (\mathbb{Z}/2)^n$  for some  $n \geq 0$  and  $s \geq 1$ .*

For  $p = 2$ , the characterization is complete.

**2.2. The case  $p > 2$**

The classification of  $p$ -groups with nonzero inflated essential cohomology is much more complicated for  $p > 2$ . Let  $V$  be an elementary Abelian  $p$ -group of rank  $n$ . The cohomology ring of  $V$  is

$$H^*(V, k) = k[x_1, \dots, x_n] \otimes \wedge(a_1, \dots, a_n),$$

where  $a_i \in H^1(V, k)$ ,  $x_i = \beta(a_i)$ , and here  $\beta$  is Bockstein homomorphism. In [5], the essential ideal of  $V$  is characterized by the action of Steenrod algebra.

**Theorem 2.8** ([5], **Theorem 1.1**) *The essential cohomology  $\text{Ess}^*(V)$  is the Steenrod closure of the product  $a_1 \cdots a_n$ .*

We can easily conclude the following corollary.

**Corollary 2.9** *Let  $G$  be a  $p$ -group. The inflated essential cohomology  $\text{InfEss}^*(G)$  is zero if and only if  $\text{inf}_{G/\Phi(G)}^G(a_1 \cdots a_n) = 0$ .*

**Proof** This follows from the fact that the essential cohomology of the elementary Abelian  $p$ -group is the Steenrod closure of  $a_1 \cdots a_n$  and Steenrod operations commute with inflation by naturality.  $\square$

The problem of finding  $p$ -groups with nonzero inflated essential classes (i.e. nonzero essential classes) is reduced to the problem of finding finite  $p$ -groups such that  $\text{inf}_{G/\Phi(G)}^G(a_1 \cdots a_n) \neq 0$ .

First of all we consider extraspecial  $p$ -groups. We will explain later the background motivation for this.

**Definition 2.10** *A finite  $p$ -group  $G$  is called extraspecial if the center  $Z(G)$  is cyclic of order  $p$  and  $Z(G) = G' = \Phi(G)$ . A finite  $p$ -group  $G$  is called almost extraspecial if the center is cyclic of order  $p^2$  and  $G' = \Phi(G)$  is cyclic of order  $p$ .*

There are two types of extraspecial  $p$ -groups of order  $p^3$ :

$$\mathbb{M} \cong \langle x, y \mid x^p = y^{p^2} = 1, xyx^{-1} = y^{p+1} \rangle,$$

$$\mathbb{E} \cong \langle x, y, z \mid x^p = y^p = z^p = [x, z] = [y, z] = 1, [x, y] = z \rangle.$$

An extraspecial  $p$ -group of order  $p^{2n+1}$  is isomorphic to one of the following central products:

$$\mathbb{E}_n = \mathbb{E} * \cdots * \mathbb{E} \text{ (} n \text{ times)}, \quad \mathbb{M}_n = \mathbb{M} * \mathbb{E}_{n-1}.$$

If we consider the central product  $C_{p^2} * \mathbb{M}_n$  or  $C_{p^2} * \mathbb{E}_n$ , we get almost extraspecial  $p$ -group of order  $p^{2n+1}$ . In fact, these groups fit into an extension of the form

$$1 \rightarrow C_p \rightarrow G \rightarrow V \rightarrow 1,$$

where  $V$  is an elementary Abelian  $p$ -group that is isomorphic to  $G/\Phi(G)$  and this extension corresponds to a cohomology class  $\alpha \in H^2(V, \mathbb{F}_p)$ .

For details about extraspecial  $p$ -groups, see [8].

We consider the inflated essential classes of extraspecial  $p$ -groups. For notation, let  $H^*(V, \mathbb{F}_p) = \mathbb{F}_p[x_1, \dots, x_s] \otimes \wedge(a_1, \dots, a_s)$  where  $s = 2n$  if  $G$  is extraspecial and  $s = 2n + 1$  if  $G$  is almost extraspecial.

**Lemma 2.11** (**Lemma 7.6.1** in [8]) *The cohomology class of the extension of  $V$  by  $C_p$  is the class*

$$\alpha = \begin{cases} a_1 a_2 + \dots + a_{2n-1} a_{2n}, & \text{if } G = \mathbb{E}_n \\ a_1 a_2 + \dots + a_{2n-1} a_{2n} + x_{2n}, & \text{if } G = \mathbb{M}_n \\ a_1 a_2 + \dots + a_{2n-1} a_{2n} + x_{2n+1}, & \text{if } G \text{ is almost extraspecial} \end{cases}$$

in  $H^2(V, \mathbb{F}_p)$ . For each case,  $\alpha$  is in the kernel of inflation  $\text{inf}_V^G$ .

**Lemma 2.12** *Let  $G$  be an extraspecial  $p$ -group of exponent  $p$ . Then  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) = 0$ .*

**Proof** The product  $\alpha a_3 \cdot a_4 \cdots a_{2n} = a_1 \cdots a_{2n}$  is in the kernel of  $\text{inf}_{G/\Phi(G)}^G$  as  $\alpha = a_1 a_2 + \dots + a_{2n-1} a_{2n}$ , in the kernel of  $\text{inf}_{G/\Phi(G)}^G$  by Lemma 2.11. Thus,  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) = 0$ .  $\square$

**Remark 2.13** By Proposition 4 and Proposition 5 in [14], we can conclude  $\text{InfEss}^*(\mathbb{M}_n) \neq 0$  and  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) \neq 0$  where  $G$  is an almost extraspecial  $p$ -group. In [14], there is a question (see question on page 1945) about extraspecial  $p$ -groups that are not isomorphic to  $\mathbb{E}$ . For  $G \not\cong \mathbb{E}$ , is it true that  $\text{Ess}^*(G) \cap \text{Im inf}_V^G \neq \{0\}$ ? We do not have a complete answer but we can say that  $\text{Ess}^*(G) \cap \text{inf}_V^G(\text{Ess}^*(V)) = \{0\}$  when  $G$  is an extraspecial  $p$ -group of exponent  $p$  by Lemma 2.12.

The motivation for considering extraspecial  $p$ -groups comes from the following. Many of the theorems such as Serre’s theorem [16] can be proved by reducing them to the extraspecial case and then by using induction. In fact, this is because of the following lemma.

**Lemma 2.14** *Let  $G$  be a non-Abelian  $p$ -group and let  $H$  be a maximal element in the collection of normal subgroups of  $G$  that do not contain the Frattini subgroup of  $G$ . Then the quotient  $Q = G/H$  is an extraspecial or almost extraspecial  $p$ -group.*

**Proof** For details see [8], page 154 .  $\square$

**Lemma 2.15** *Let  $G$  be a  $p$ -group. If  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) \neq 0$ , then  $\text{InfEss}^*(G/N) \neq 0$  for any proper quotient  $G/N$ .*

**Proof** We prove that  $\text{InfEss}^*(G/N) = 0$ , and then  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) = 0$ . By transitivity of inflation, we have a commutative diagram:

$$\begin{CD} H^1(G/N/\Phi(G/N), k) @>\text{inf}>> H^1(G/\Phi(G), k) \\ @V\text{inf}VV @VV\text{inf}V \\ H^1(G/N, k) @>\text{inf}>> H^1(G, k) \end{CD}$$

$\text{InfEss}^*(G/N) = 0$  if and only if  $\text{inf}_{G/N/\Phi(G/N)}^{G/N}(a_1 \cdots a_t) = 0$  where  $a_1, \dots, a_t$  are the generators of  $H^1(G/N/\Phi(G/N), k)$ . Thus,  $\text{inf}_{G/N}^G \text{inf}_{G/N/\Phi(G/N)}^{G/N}(a_1 \cdots a_t) = 0$ . On the other hand, let  $e_1, \dots, e_n$  be the generators of  $H^1(G/\Phi(G), k)$ . It is clear that  $t \leq n$ , so we can view  $e_i = \text{inf}_{G/N/\Phi(G/N)}^{G/\Phi(G)}(a_i)$  for  $1 \leq i \leq k$ . By commutativity of the diagram  $\text{inf}_{G/\Phi(G)}^G(e_1 \cdots e_k) = 0$ . Then  $\text{inf}_{G/\Phi(G)}^G(e_1 \cdots e_n) = 0$ , which means  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) = 0$ .  $\square$

With the same notation as in Lemma 2.14, we have the following proposition.

**Proposition 2.16** *Let  $G$  be a non-Abelian  $p$ -group such that the quotient  $Q = G/H$  is extraspecial of exponent  $p$ . Then  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) = 0$ .*

**Proof** By Lemma 2.12  $\text{InfEss}^*(Q) = 0$ . Since  $Q$  is a proper quotient of  $G$ , by Lemma 2.15  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) = 0$ .  $\square$

For non-Abelian  $p$ -groups having an extraspecial  $p$ -group of exponent  $p$  as a quotient, inflated essential classes are zero.

Contrary to 2-groups, if  $G$  is an Abelian  $p$ -group, then  $\text{InfEss}^*(G)$  is nonzero. This follows from the fact that the cohomology ring of an Abelian  $p$ -group is the tensor product of the cohomology rings of the cyclic  $p$ -groups, and the cohomology ring of a cyclic  $p$ -group is  $k[a, x]/(a^2)$  where  $\deg a = 1$  and  $\deg x = 2$ .

**Proposition 2.17** *Let  $G$  and  $H$  be  $p$ -groups such that  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) \neq 0$  and  $\text{InfEss}^*(H) \neq 0$ . Then  $\text{InfEss}^*(G \times H)$  is nonzero.*

**Proof** Since  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) \neq 0$  and  $\text{InfEss}^*(H) \neq 0$  we have  $\text{inf}_{G/\Phi(G)}^G(a_1 \cdots a_k) \neq 0$  where  $a_i \in H^1(G/\Phi(G), k)$  and  $\text{inf}_{H/\Phi(H)}^H(e_1 \cdots e_l) \neq 0$  where  $e_i \in H^1(H/\Phi(H), k)$ . Consider  $\tilde{a}_i = \text{inf}_{G/\Phi(G)}^G(a_i)$  and  $\tilde{e}_i = \text{inf}_{H/\Phi(H)}^H(e_i)$ .  $\text{InfEss}^*(G \times H)$  is nonzero, because  $\tilde{a}_1 \cdots \tilde{a}_k \cdot \tilde{e}_1 \cdots \tilde{e}_l \neq 0$  in  $H^*(G \times H, k) \cong H^*(G, k) \otimes H^*(H, k)$ .  $\square$

There is no information on  $\text{Ess}^*(G \times H)$  in general. For a restricted family we have the following result.

**Corollary 2.18** *Let  $G$  be a  $p$ -group such that  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) \neq 0$ . If  $H$  is an Abelian  $p$ -group, then  $\text{Ess}^*(G \times H)$  is nonzero.*

If  $G$  is an extraspecial of exponent  $p^2$  or an almost extraspecial  $p$ -group, then  $\text{InfEss}^*(G)$  is nonzero (see [14], Proposition 4 and Proposition 5). Thus, any direct product of  $G$  with an Abelian  $p$ -group has nonzero essential classes.

With the same notation as in Lemma 2.14, we have a question:

**Question 2.19** *If  $Q = G/H$  is an extraspecial  $p$ -group of exponent  $p^2$  or almost extraspecial  $p$ -group, then is it true that  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) \neq \{0\}$ ?*

This is not true in general.

**Example 2.20** *By definition of the central product, we can consider  $\mathbb{M}_n$  in the extension*

$$0 \rightarrow C_p \rightarrow \mathbb{E}_{n-1} \times \mathbb{M} \rightarrow \mathbb{M}_n \rightarrow 0.$$

$Q = \mathbb{M}_n$  and we know that  $\text{InfEss}^*(\mathbb{M}_n) \neq 0$ , but  $\text{InfEss}^*(\mathbb{E}_{n-1} \times \mathbb{M}) = 0$  as  $\text{InfEss}^*(\mathbb{E}_{n-1}) = 0$ .

**Example 2.21** *Since an almost extraspecial  $p$ -group  $\Gamma_n$  of order  $p^{2n+2}$  is the central product  $C_{p^2} * \mathbb{E}_n$ , we can consider the extension*

$$0 \rightarrow C_p \rightarrow \mathbb{E}_n \times C_{p^2} \rightarrow \Gamma_n \rightarrow 0.$$

We know that  $\text{InfEss}^*(\Gamma_n) \neq 0$ , but  $\text{InfEss}^*(\mathbb{E}_n \times C_{p^2}) = 0$  as  $\text{InfEss}^*(\mathbb{E}_n) = 0$ .

**Proposition 2.22** *Let  $G$  be a non-Abelian  $p$ -group of exponent  $p$ . Then  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) = 0$ .*

**Proof** If  $G$  is of exponent  $p$ , then any proper quotient is also of exponent  $p$ . Thus, the extraspecial quotient  $Q$  is also of exponent  $p$ , so by Lemma 2.16,  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) = 0$  as  $\text{InfEss}^*(Q) = 0$ .  $\square$

### 3. Powerful $p$ -groups

Proposition 2.22 leads us to consider powerful  $p$ -groups, which are introduced in [11] and are used to study the structure of the Schur multiplier of a  $p$ -group. They are also used for the study of analytic pro- $p$ -groups [9]. These groups are also important because every finite  $p$ -group can be expressed as a section of a powerful  $p$ -group (see [12]). We consider powerful  $p$ -groups in the case of odd primes.

**Definition 3.1** *Let  $p > 2$ . A finite  $p$ -group  $G$  is said to be powerful if  $[G, G] \leq G^p$ .*

**Proof** [Proof of Theorem 1.1] If  $G$  is an Abelian  $p$ -group then there is nothing to do. Assume  $G$  is a non-Abelian  $p$ -group.  $[G, G] \leq G^p$  if and only if  $\Phi(G) = G^p$ . Now assume that  $G^p < \Phi(G)$ . Then the quotient  $G/G^p$  is a non-Abelian  $p$ -group of exponent  $p$ . By Proposition 2.22  $\text{InfEss}^*(G/G^p) = 0$  and by Lemma 2.15  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) = 0$ . □

**Proof** [Proof of Theorem 1.2] If  $\text{InfEss}^*(G) \neq 0$  then by Theorem 1.1  $G$  is powerful. Assume  $G$  is powerful. As we have  $\dim(G/\Phi(G)) = 2$ , the cohomology group  $H^1(G/\Phi(G), k)$  has two generators  $a_1, a_2$ , so we need to show that  $\text{inf}_{G/\Phi(G)}^G(a_1 \cdot a_2) \neq 0$ . This follows from the following theorem as every  $p$ -group is a pro- $p$  group. □

**Theorem 3.2** ([17], Theorem 5.1.6) *Let  $p$  be odd prime and let  $P$  be a finitely generated pro- $p$  group. The canonical mapping  $H^1(P, \mathbb{F}_p) \wedge H^1(P, \mathbb{F}_p) \rightarrow H^2(P, \mathbb{F}_p)$  is injective if and only if  $P$  is powerful.*

Theorem 1.3 easily follows as a corollary.

**Corollary 3.3** *If  $G$  is a powerful  $p$ -group such that the Frattini quotient has rank 2, then  $\text{Ess}^*(G) \neq 0$ .*

**Corollary 3.4** *Let  $P$  be a powerful  $p$ -group such that the Frattini quotient has rank 2 and  $H$  be an Abelian  $p$ -group. Then, for  $G = P \times H$ ,  $\text{Ess}^*(G) \neq 0$*

**Remark 3.5** All Abelian  $p$ -groups are powerful and those for which the minimal number of generators is 2 are the powerful  $p$ -groups having rank two Frattini quotient. For the non-Abelian case, the modular  $p$ -groups

$$\text{Mod}_n(p) = \langle x, y : x^{p^{n-1}} = y^p = 1, x^y = x^{1+p^{n-2}} \rangle$$

for  $n \geq 4$  are the example of powerful  $p$ -groups having rank 2 Frattini quotient. Note that the family  $\text{Mod}_n(p)$  does not satisfy the pc condition mentioned in [3].

### 4. Nilpotency degree

In [15], it was proved that  $\text{Ess}^*(G)$  is nilpotent whenever  $G$  is not elementary Abelian. Marx [13] and Mùì (in his unpublished essay: The mod  $p$  cohomology algebra of the extra-special group  $E(p^3)$ , 1982) conjectured that the nilpotency degree of  $\text{Ess}^*(G)$  is two and it was proved that it is not two in [10]. Contrary to essential cohomology, we prove that the nilpotency degree of inflated essential cohomology is 2.

**Theorem 4.1** *Let  $G$  be a finite  $p$ -group such that  $\text{InfEss}^*(G)$  is nonzero. Then the nilpotency degree of  $\text{InfEss}^*(G)$  is 2.*

**Proof** Let  $V$  be the Frattini quotient of  $G$  of rank  $n$ . By definition  $\text{InfEss}^*(G)$  is generated by  $\text{inf}_V^G(\text{Ess}^*(V))$ , so it is enough to show  $\text{inf}_V^G(\text{Ess}^*(V))^2 = 0$ .

We know that the essential cohomology of  $V$  satisfies  $\text{Ess}^*(V)^2 = L_n(V) \cdot \text{Ess}^*(V)$  by Lemma 3.2. in [5]. Applying inflation to the equality we get  $\text{inf}_V^G(\text{Ess}^*(V))^2 = \text{inf}_V^G(L_n(V)) \cdot \text{inf}_V^G(\text{Ess}^*(V))$ . By Lemma 2.1 in [5], we have

$$L_n(V) = \lambda \prod_{[x] \in \mathbb{P}H^1(V,k)} \beta(x).$$

Inflation commutes with Bockstein homomorphism, so we have

$$\text{inf}_V^G(L_n(V)) = \lambda \prod_{[x] \in \mathbb{P}H^1(V,k)} \beta(\text{inf}_V^G(x)) = \lambda \prod_{[\bar{x}] \in \mathbb{P}H^1(G,k)} \beta(\bar{x}),$$

where  $\bar{x} = \text{inf}_V^G(x)$ . By the following celebrated theorem of Serre, we get  $\text{inf}_V^G(L_n(V)) = 0$ . □

**Theorem 4.2 (Theorem 1.3 in [16])** *Let  $S$  be a subset of  $H^1(G, k)$ , which does not contain 0 and contains exactly one point from each line in  $H^1(G, k)$ . If  $G$  is not elementary Abelian then*

$$\prod_{x \in \mathbb{P}H^1(G,k)} \beta(x) = 0 \text{ in } H^{\text{even}}(G, k).$$

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