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On the best constants of Hardy inequality in $\mathbb{R}^{n-k} \times (\mathbb{R}_+)^k$ and related improvements [☆]

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ABSTRACT

We compute the explicit sharp constants of Hardy inequalities in the cone $\mathbb{R}_{k+}^n := \mathbb{R}^{n-k} \times (\mathbb{R}_+)^k = \{(x_1, \dots, x_n) \mid x_{n-k+1} > 0, \dots, x_n > 0\}$ with $1 \leq k \leq n$. Furthermore, the spherical harmonic decomposition is given for a function $u \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}_{k+}^n)$. Using this decomposition and following the idea of Tertikas and Zographopoulos, we obtain the Filippas–Tertikas improvement of the Hardy inequality.

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1. Introduction

Let Σ be a domain in \mathbb{S}^{n-1} , the unit sphere in \mathbb{R}^n , and let $\mathcal{C}_\Sigma \subset \mathbb{R}^n$ be the cone associated with Σ :

$$\mathcal{C}_\Sigma := \{t\sigma \mid t > 0, \sigma \in \Sigma\}.$$

The Hardy inequality in \mathcal{C}_Σ states that, for all $u \in C_0^\infty(\mathcal{C}_\Sigma)$, there holds (cf. [11,10])

$$\int_{\mathcal{C}_\Sigma} |\nabla u(x)|^2 dx \geq \left(\frac{(n-2)^2}{4} + \lambda_1(\Sigma) \right) \int_{\mathcal{C}_\Sigma} \frac{u(x)^2}{|x|^2} dx \tag{1.1}$$

and the constant $(\frac{(n-2)^2}{4} + \lambda_1(\Sigma))$ in (1.1) is sharp, where $\lambda_1(\Sigma)$ is the Dirichlet principal eigenvalue of the spherical Laplacian $-\Delta_{\mathbb{S}^{n-1}}$ on Σ . In some special cases, the exact value of $\lambda_1(\Sigma)$ can be computed. We note the value of $\lambda_1(\Sigma)$ has been full-filled in the case of $n = 2$ (cf. [1]). To the best of our knowledge (cf. [2–4,9–11]), when $n \geq 3$, $\lambda_1(\Sigma)$ is known only in the case of $\Sigma = \mathbb{S}_+^{n-1}$, the semi-sphere mapped in the upper half space $\mathbb{R}_+^n = \{(x_1, \dots, x_n) \mid x_n > 0\}$. In fact, it can be computed via the following sharp Hardy inequality (cf. [6])

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}_+^n} |\nabla u(x)|^2 dx \geq \frac{n^2}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}_+^n} \frac{u(x)^2}{|x|^2} dx. \tag{1.2}$$

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One of the aim of this note is to compute the explicit sharp constants of Hardy inequalities in the cone $\mathbb{R}_{k+}^n = \{(x_1, \dots, x_n) \mid x_{n-k+1} > 0, \dots, x_n > 0\}$, where $1 \leq k \leq n$. To this end, we have:

Theorem 1.1. *Let $n \geq 3$. There holds, for all $u \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}_{k+}^n)$,*

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}_{k+}^n} |\nabla u|^2 dx \geq \frac{(n-2+2k)^2}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}_{k+}^n} \frac{u^2}{|x|^2} dx, \tag{1.3}$$

and the constant $\frac{(n-2+2k)^2}{4}$ in (1.3) is sharp.

We note the proof of Theorem 1.1 above is similar to that of Theorem 1.2 and Corollary 1.3 in [7] and also to that of Theorem 6.1 in [8]. Combing the inequality (1.1) and Theorem 1.1 yields

Corollary 1.2. $\lambda_1(\mathbb{S}^{n-1} \cap \mathbb{R}_{k+}^n) = k(n+k-2)$ for all $n \geq 3$.

Next, we consider the spherical harmonic decomposition of a function $u \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}_{k+}^n)$. We show that for a function $u \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}_{k+}^n)$, it has the expansion in spherical harmonics (for details, see Section 3)

$$u(x) = \sum_{l=k}^{\infty} f_l(r)\phi_l(\sigma),$$

where $r = |x|$ and $\phi_l(\sigma)$ ($l \geq k$) are the orthonormal eigenfunctions of the spherical Laplacian $-\Delta_{\mathbb{S}^{n-1}}$ with responding eigenvalues $l(l+n-2)$. Using this decomposition and following the idea of Tertikas and Zographopoulos [14], one can easily obtain several improvements of inequality (1.3) when u is supported in a bounded domain $\Omega \subset \mathbb{R}_{k+}^n$. For example, we have the following Filippas–Tertikas improvement (cf. [5]):

Theorem 1.3. *Let $n \geq 3$. There holds, for all $u \in C_0^\infty(B_R \cap \mathbb{R}_{k+}^n)$,*

$$\int_{B_R \cap \mathbb{R}_{k+}^n} |\nabla u|^2 \geq \frac{(n-2+2k)^2}{4} \int_{B_R \cap \mathbb{R}_{k+}^n} \frac{u^2}{|x|^2} + \frac{1}{4} \sum_{i=1}^{\infty} \int_{B_R \cap \mathbb{R}_{k+}^n} \frac{u^2}{|x|^2} X_1^2\left(\frac{|x|}{R}\right) \cdots X_i^2\left(\frac{|x|}{R}\right),$$

where

$$X_1(s) = (1 - \ln s)^{-1}, \quad X_i(s) = X_1(X_{i-1}(t))$$

for $i \geq 2$ and $B_R = \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : |x| < R\}$.

2. Proof of Theorem 1.1

Let $l > 0$. A simple calculation shows, for $x_n > 0$,

$$(x_n)^{-l} \left(-\Delta + \frac{l(l-1)}{x_n^2} \right) (x_n^l g(x)) = - \left(\sum_{j=1}^n \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x_j^2} + \frac{2l}{x_n} \frac{\partial}{\partial x_n} \right) g(x). \tag{2.1}$$

Notice that $\frac{\partial^2}{\partial x_n^2} + \frac{2l}{x_n} \frac{\partial}{\partial x_n}$ is nothing but the $(2l+1)$ -dimensional Laplacian of a radial function if $2l$ is a positive integer. So following the proof of Theorem 1.2 in [7] or Theorem 6.1 in [8], we have:

Lemma 2.1. *There holds, for $l \in \{1/2, 1, 3/2, 2, \dots, n/2, \dots\}$ and $u \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}_+^n)$,*

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}_+^n} |\nabla u|^2 dx + l(l-1) \int_{\mathbb{R}_+^n} \frac{u^2}{x_n^2} dx \geq \frac{(n+2l-2)^2}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}_+^n} \frac{u^2}{|x|^2} dx \tag{2.2}$$

and the constant $\frac{(n+2l-2)^2}{4}$ in (2.2) is sharp.

Proof. Recall the sharp Hardy inequality on $\mathbb{R}_x^{n-1} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{2l+1}$:

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}_x^{n-1} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{2l+1}} |\nabla v|^2 \geq \frac{(n+2l-2)^2}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}_x^{n-1} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{2l+1}} \frac{v^2}{x_1^2 + \dots + x_{n-1}^2 + |y|^2}, \tag{2.3}$$

where $v \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}_x^{n-1} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{2l+1})$. The constant that appear in (2.3) is also sharp if one consider only the functions like $\tilde{v}(x, |y|) \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}_x^{n-1} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{2l+1})$. Set $x_n = |y|$ and $\varphi(x_1, \dots, x_n) = \tilde{v}(x, |y|)$, we can deduce, by (2.3) and (2.1),

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{\mathbb{R}_x^{n-1} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{2l+1}} |\nabla \tilde{v}|^2 &= - \int_{\mathbb{R}_x^{n-1} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{2l+1}} \tilde{v}(x, |y|) \left(\sum_{j=1}^{n-1} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x_j^2} + \sum_{k=1}^{2l+1} \frac{\partial^2}{\partial y_k^2} \right) \tilde{v}(x, |y|) \\ &= - \int_{\mathbb{R}_x^{n-1} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{2l+1}} \varphi(x) \left(\sum_{j=1}^n \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x_j^2} + \frac{2l}{x_n} \frac{\partial}{\partial x_n} \right) \varphi(x) \\ &= - \int_{\mathbb{R}_x^{n-1} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{2l+1}} x^{-l} \varphi(x) \left(\sum_{j=1}^n \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x_j^2} + \frac{l(l-1)}{x_n^2} \right) (x^l \varphi(x)) \\ &= - |\mathbb{S}^{2l+1}| \int_{\mathbb{R}_+^n} x^l \varphi(x) \left(\sum_{j=1}^n \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x_j^2} + \frac{l(l-1)}{x_n^2} \right) (x^l \varphi(x)) \\ &\geq \frac{(n+2l-2)^2}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}_x^{n-1} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{2l+1}} \frac{\tilde{v}^2}{x_1^2 + \dots + x_{n-1}^2 + |y|^2} \\ &= \frac{(n+2l-2)^2 |\mathbb{S}^{2l+1}|}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}_+^n} \frac{\varphi^2 x_n^{2l}}{|x|^2}, \end{aligned}$$

where $|\mathbb{S}^{2l+1}|$ is the volume of \mathbb{S}^{2l+1} . It remains to set $u = x_n^l \varphi$. \square

Remark 2.2. If we let $l(l-1) = 0$ in Lemma 2.1, then $l = 1$ and we obtain the sharp Hardy inequality on the half space \mathbb{R}_+^n (see [6] for a different proof)

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}_+^n} |\nabla u(x)|^2 dx \geq \frac{n^2}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}_+^n} \frac{u(x)^2}{|x|^2} dx.$$

Notice that this inequality is one of the objects in Theorem 1.1 and the dimension $2l+1 = 3$ play an important role. So, in order to prove Theorem 1.1, we can repeat the same argument of Corollary 1.3 in [7] by choosing such dimension 3.

Proof of Theorem 1.1. Notice that

$$- \prod_{i=n-k+1}^n x_i^{-1} \sum_{j=1}^n \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x_j^2} \left(\prod_{i=n-k+1}^n x_i g(x) \right) = - \sum_{j=1}^{n-k} \frac{\partial^2 g(x)}{\partial x_j^2} - \sum_{j=n-k+1}^n \left(\frac{\partial^2}{\partial x_j^2} + \frac{2}{x_j} \frac{\partial}{\partial x_j} \right) g(x). \tag{2.4}$$

We consider the sharp Hardy inequality on $\mathbb{R}_x^{n-k} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{3k}$:

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}_x^{n-k} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{3k}} (|\nabla_x v|^2 + |\nabla_y v|^2) \geq \frac{(n+2k-2)^2}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}_x^{n-k} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{3k}} \frac{v^2}{\sum_{i=1}^{n-k} x_i^2 + \sum_{j=1}^{3k} y_j^2},$$

where $v \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}_x^{n-k} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{3k})$. Set

$$x_{n-k+1} = \sqrt{y_1^2 + y_2^2 + y_3^2}, \quad x_{n-k+2} = \sqrt{y_4^2 + y_5^2 + y_6^2}, \quad \dots, \quad x_n = \sqrt{y_{3k-2}^2 + y_{3k-1}^2 + y_{3k}^2}$$

and consider all the functions like

$$v(x_1, \dots, x_{n-k}, y_1, \dots, y_{3k}) = \tilde{v}(x_1, \dots, x_n).$$

The constant $\frac{(n+2k-2)^2}{4}$ is also sharp for such functions (see e.g. [12]). Following the proof of Lemma 2.1, we have, using (2.4),

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{\mathbb{R}_x^{n-1} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{3k}} |\nabla \tilde{v}|^2 &= -|\mathbb{S}^3|^k \int_{\mathbb{R}_{k_+}^n} \prod_{i=n-k+1}^n x_i \tilde{v}(x) \sum_{j=1}^n \frac{\partial^2}{\partial x_j^2} \left(\prod_{i=n-k+1}^n x_i \tilde{v}(x) \right) \\ &\geq \frac{(n+2k-2)^2}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}_x^{n-k} \times \mathbb{R}_y^{3k}} \frac{\tilde{v}^2}{\sum_{i=1}^{n-k} x_i^2 + \sum_{j=1}^{3k} y_j^2} \\ &= \frac{(n+2k-2)^2 |\mathbb{S}^3|^k}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}_{k_+}^n} \frac{\tilde{v}^2 \prod_{i=n-k+1}^n x_i^2}{|x|^2}. \end{aligned}$$

It remains to set $u = \tilde{v} \prod_{i=n-k+1}^n x_i$ and the desired result follows. \square

3. Spherical harmonic decomposition

For a function $u \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}_{k_+}^n)$, we denote by \tilde{u} the odd extension of variables $\{x_{n-k+1}, \dots, x_n\}$ of u , i.e. $\tilde{u}(x)$ satisfies

$$\tilde{u}(x_1, \dots, x_n) = u(x_1, \dots, x_n), \quad \forall (x_1, \dots, x_n) \in \mathbb{R}_{k_+}^n$$

and

$$\tilde{u}(x_1, \dots, x_{j-1}, -x_j, x_{j+1}, \dots, x_n) = -\tilde{u}(x_1, \dots, x_{j-1}, x_j, x_{j+1}, \dots, x_n)$$

for all $n-k+1 \leq j \leq n$. Then $\tilde{u} \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^n)$ and moreover,

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\nabla \tilde{u}|^2 = 2^k \int_{\mathbb{R}_{k_+}^n} |\nabla u|^2, \quad \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \frac{\tilde{u}^2}{|x|^2} = 2^k \int_{\mathbb{R}_{k_+}^n} \frac{u^2}{|x|^2}. \tag{3.1}$$

Decomposing \tilde{u} into spherical harmonics we get (see e.g. [14])

$$\tilde{u} = \sum_{l=0}^\infty \tilde{u}_l := \sum_{l=0}^\infty f_l(r) \phi_l(\sigma), \tag{3.2}$$

where $\phi_l(\sigma)$ are the orthonormal eigenfunctions of the Laplace–Beltrami operator with responding eigenvalues

$$c_l = l(n+l-2), \quad l \geq 0.$$

The functions $f_l(r)$ belong to $C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^n)$, satisfying $f_l(r) = O(r^l)$ and $f_l'(r) = O(r^{l-1})$ as $r \rightarrow 0$. Without loss of generality, we assume

$$\int_{\mathbb{S}^{n-1}} |\phi_l(\sigma)|^2 d\sigma = 1, \quad \forall l \geq 0.$$

By (3.2),

$$f_l(r) = \int_{\mathbb{S}^{n-1}} \tilde{u}(x) \phi_l(\sigma) d\sigma$$

and

$$\int_0^\infty f_l^2(r) r^{n+l-1} dr = \int_0^\infty \int_{\mathbb{S}^{n-1}} \tilde{u}(x) f_l(r) \phi_l(\sigma) r^{n+l-1} d\sigma dr = \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \tilde{u}(x) f_l(|x|) \phi_l(\sigma) |x|^l dx. \tag{3.3}$$

Lemma 3.1. $f_l = 0$ for all $0 \leq l \leq k-1$.

Before the proof of Lemma 3.1, we need some multi-index notation. We denote by \mathbb{N}_0 the set of nonnegative integer. A multi-index is denoted by $\alpha = (\alpha_1, \dots, \alpha_n) \in \mathbb{N}_0^n$. For $\alpha \in \mathbb{N}_0^n$ and $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$ a monomial in variables x_1, \dots, x_n of index α is defined by

$$x^\alpha = x_1^{\alpha_1} \cdots x_n^{\alpha_n}.$$

The number $|\alpha| = \alpha_1 + \dots + \alpha_n$ is called the total degree of x^α . Notice that $\phi_l(\sigma)$ is nothing but the spherical harmonic of degree l (see e.g. [13], Chapter IV), it has the expansion

$$\phi_l(\sigma) = \frac{1}{|\mathbb{S}^n|} \sum_{|\alpha|=l} C_\alpha x^\alpha \tag{3.4}$$

for some constants $C_\alpha \in \mathbb{R}$.

Proof of Lemma 3.1. By (3.3) and (3.4),

$$\int_0^\infty f_l^2(r) r^{n+l-1} dr = \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \tilde{u}(x) f_l(|x|) \phi_l(\sigma) |x|^l dx = \sum_{|\alpha|=l} C_\alpha \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \tilde{u}(x) f_l(|x|) x^\alpha dx.$$

So to finish the proof, it is enough to show

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \tilde{u}(x) f_l(|x|) x^\alpha dx = 0$$

for all $|\alpha| = l$ with $0 \leq l \leq k - 1$.

For $|\alpha| = \alpha_1 + \dots + \alpha_n = l \leq k - 1$, there must exist j , $n - k + 1 \leq j \leq n$, such that $\alpha_j = 0$ (we note if $\alpha_j > 0$ for all $n - k + 1 \leq j \leq n$, then $\alpha_{n-k+1} + \dots + \alpha_n \geq k$ and this is a contradiction to $|\alpha| \leq k - 1$). Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \tilde{u}(x) f_l(|x|) x^\alpha dx &= \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \tilde{u}(x) f_l(|x|) x_1^{\alpha_1} \dots x_{j-1}^{\alpha_{j-1}} \cdot x_{j+1}^{\alpha_{j+1}} \dots x_n^{\alpha_n} dx \\ &= \int_{\mathbb{R}^{n-1}} x_1^{\alpha_1} \dots x_{j-1}^{\alpha_{j-1}} \left(\int_{\mathbb{R}} \tilde{u}(x) f_l(|x|) dx_j \right) x_{j+1}^{\alpha_{j+1}} \dots x_n^{\alpha_n} dx_1 \dots dx_{j-1} dx_{j+1} \dots dx_n. \end{aligned}$$

Since $\tilde{u}(x)$ is an odd function of variable x_j , so does $\tilde{u}(x) f_l(|x|)$. Therefore,

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}} \tilde{u}(x) f_l(|x|) dx_j = 0$$

and hence

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \tilde{u}(x) f_l(|x|) x^\alpha dx = 0.$$

The proof of Lemma 3.1 is now completed. \square

Remark 3.2. By Lemma 3.1, the function \tilde{u} , the odd extension of variables $\{x_{n-k+1}, \dots, x_n\}$ of u , has the expansion in spherical harmonics

$$u(x) = \sum_{l=k}^\infty f_l(r) \phi_l(\sigma),$$

so does the function u itself in \mathbb{R}_{k+}^n .

Proof of Theorem 1.3. If we extend u as zero in $\mathbb{R}_{k+}^n \setminus B_R$, we may consider $u \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}_{k+}^n)$. By (3.1), it is enough to show that

$$\int_{B_R} |\nabla \tilde{u}|^2 \geq \frac{(n-2+2k)^2}{4} \int_{B_R} \frac{\tilde{u}^2}{|x|^2} + \frac{1}{4} \sum_{i=1}^\infty \int_{B_R} \frac{\tilde{u}^2}{|x|^2} X_1^2 \left(\frac{|x|}{R} \right) \dots X_i^2 \left(\frac{|x|}{R} \right)$$

holds for all $\tilde{u} \in C_0^\infty(B_R)$. Since \tilde{u} has the expansion in spherical harmonics

$$u(x) = \sum_{l=k}^\infty f_l(r) \phi_l(\sigma),$$

where $f_l(r) \in C_0^\infty(B_R)$, satisfying $f_l(r) = O(r^l)$ and $f_l'(r) = O(r^{l-1})$ as $r \rightarrow 0$, we have,

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{B_R} |\nabla \tilde{u}|^2 - \frac{(n-2+2k)^2}{4} \int_{B_R} \frac{\tilde{u}^2}{|x|^2} &= \sum_{l=k}^{\infty} \left[\int_{B_R} |f'_l(r)|^2 dx + l(n+l-2) \int_{B_R} \frac{f_l^2(r)}{|x|^2} dx - \frac{(n-2+2k)^2}{4} \int_{B_R} \frac{f_l^2(r)}{|x|^2} dx \right] \\ &= \sum_{l=k}^{\infty} \left[\int_{B_R} |f'_l(r)|^2 dx + (l-k)(n+l+k-2) \int_{B_R} \frac{f_l^2(r)}{|x|^2} dx - \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} \int_{B_R} \frac{f_l^2(r)}{|x|^2} dx \right] \\ &\geq \sum_{l=k}^{\infty} \left[\int_{B_R} |f'_l(r)|^2 dx - \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} \int_{B_R} \frac{f_l^2(r)}{|x|^2} dx \right]. \end{aligned}$$

To get the last inequality above, we use the fact $(l-k)(n+l+k-2) \geq 0$ since $l \geq k \geq 1$. Recalling the Filippas–Tertikas improvement of Hardy inequality (cf. [5,14])

$$\int_{B_R} |f'_l(r)|^2 dx - \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} \int_{B_R} \frac{f_l^2(r)}{|x|^2} dx \geq \frac{1}{4} \sum_{i=1}^{\infty} \int_{B_R} \frac{f_l^2(r)}{|x|^2} X_1^2\left(\frac{|x|}{R}\right) \cdots X_i^2\left(\frac{|x|}{R}\right),$$

we have

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{B_R} |\nabla \tilde{u}|^2 - \frac{(n-2+2k)^2}{4} \int_{B_R} \frac{\tilde{u}^2}{|x|^2} &\geq \sum_{l=k}^{\infty} \left[\int_{B_R} |f'_l(r)|^2 dx - \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} \int_{B_R} \frac{f_l^2(r)}{|x|^2} dx \right] \\ &\geq \frac{1}{4} \sum_{l=k}^{\infty} \int_{B_R} \frac{f_l^2(r)}{|x|^2} X_1^2\left(\frac{|x|}{R}\right) \cdots X_i^2\left(\frac{|x|}{R}\right) \\ &= \frac{1}{4} \int_{B_R} \frac{\tilde{u}^2(r)}{|x|^2} X_1^2\left(\frac{|x|}{R}\right) \cdots X_i^2\left(\frac{|x|}{R}\right). \end{aligned}$$

The desired result follows. \square

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