

Research Article

Periodic Solutions of Second-Order Difference Problem with Potential Indefinite in Sign

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We investigate the periodic solutions of second-order difference problem with potential indefinite in sign. We consider the compactness condition of variational functional and local linking at 0 by introducing new number λ_* . By using Morse theory, we obtain some new results concerning the existence of nontrivial periodic solution.

1. Introduction

We consider the second-order discrete Hamiltonian systems

$$\Delta^2 x_{n-1} + W'(n, x_n) = 0, \quad x_{n+T} = x_n, \quad (1)$$

where $T \geq 2$ is a given integer, $n \in \mathbb{Z}$, $x_n \in \mathbb{R}^N$, $\Delta x_n = x_{n+1} - x_n$, $\Delta^2 x_n = \Delta(\Delta x_n)$, W' stands for the gradient of W with respect to the second variable. $W \in C^2(\mathbb{Z} \times \mathbb{R}^N, \mathbb{R})$ is T -periodic in the first variable and has the form $W(n, x) = (1/2)a|x|^2 + H(n, x)$, where $a = 4 \sin^2(m\pi/T)$ for some $m \in \mathbb{Z}[0, r]$, $r = [T/2]$, $[\cdot]$ stands for the greatest-integer function. For integers $a \leq b$, the discrete interval $\{a, a + 1, \dots, b\}$ is denoted by $\mathbb{Z}[a, b]$.

In this paper we consider that H is sign changing, that is,

$$\begin{aligned} H(n, x) &= b(n) \left(\frac{1}{s} |x|^s + \bar{G}_s(n, x) \right) \\ &\triangleq \frac{1}{s} b(n) |x|^s + G_s(n, x), \end{aligned} \quad (2)$$

$\Omega_+ = \{n \in \mathbb{Z}[1, T] | b(n) > 0\}$, $\Omega_- = \{n \in \mathbb{Z}[1, T] | b(n) < 0\}$ are two nonempty subsets of $\mathbb{Z}[1, T]$, where $s > 1$, $b(\cdot)$ is a T -periodic real function, $G_s \in C^1(\mathbb{Z} \times \mathbb{R}^N, \mathbb{R})$, and $G_s(n, 0) = 0$.

Consider the second-order Hamiltonian system

$$\begin{aligned} \ddot{x}(t) + W'(t, x) &= 0, \quad x(0) = x(T), \\ \dot{x}(0) &= \dot{x}(T), \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

where $W \in C^2(\mathbb{R} \times \mathbb{R}^N, \mathbb{R})$ is T -periodic in t , $W(t, x) = (1/2)A(t)x, x + H(t, x)$. Here $A(\cdot)$ is a continuous, T -periodic matrix-value function.

Systems (1) and (3) have been investigated by many authors using various methods, see [1–5]. The dynamical behavior of differential and difference equations was studied by using various methods, and many interesting results have obtained, see [6–10] and references therein. The critical point theory [11–14] is a useful tool to investigate differential equations. Morse theory [15–19] has also been used to solve the asymptotically linear problem. By minimax methods in critical point theory, Tang and Wu [4], Antonacci [20, 21] considered the problem (3) with potential indefinite in sign, where H is superquadratic at zero and infinity. By using Morse theory, Zou and Li [10] study the existence of T -periodic solution of (3), where H is asymptotically superquadratic and sign changing. Moroz [19] studies system (3) where H is asymptotically subquadratic and sign changing. Motivated by [5, 10, 19], we investigate periodic solutions for asymptotically superquadratic or subquadratic discrete system (1).

By expression of $H(n, x)$, system (1) possesses a trivial solution $x = 0$. Here we are interested in finding the nonzero T -periodic solution of (1), and we divide the problem into two cases: $s > 2$ and $1 < s < 2$. For $s = 2$, one can refer to [22].

Case 1 (asymptotically superquadratic case: $s > 2$). In this case, we replace p with s in (2). Letting $g_p(n, x) = G_p^l(n, x)$, we rewrite (1) as

$$\Delta^2 x_{n-1} + ax_n + b(n) |x_n|^{p-2} x_n + g_p(n, x_n) = 0, \tag{4}$$

$$x_{n+T} = x_n.$$

Furthermore, for all $(n, x) \in \mathbb{Z} \times \mathbb{R}^N$, we assume that g_p satisfies

(A1) $g_p(n, x) = o(|x|)$ as $|x| \rightarrow \infty$ uniformly in n ,

(A2) $g_p(n, x) = o(|x|^{p-1})$ as $|x| \rightarrow 0$ uniformly in n .

Case 2 (asymptotically subquadratic case: $1 < s < 2$). Here we replace q with s in (2). Letting $g_q(n, x) = G_q^l(n, x)$, we rewrite (1) as

$$\Delta^2 x_{n-1} + ax_n + b(n) |x_n|^{q-2} x_n + g_q(n, x_n) = 0, \tag{5}$$

$$x_{n+T} = x_n.$$

For all $(n, x) \in \mathbb{Z} \times \mathbb{R}^N$, we assume that g_q satisfies

(B1) $g_q(n, x) = o(|x|^{q-1})$ as $|x| \rightarrow \infty$ uniformly in n ,

(B2) $g_q(n, x) = o(|x|)$ as $|x| \rightarrow 0$ uniformly in n .

Before stating the main results, we introduce space $E_T = \{x = \{x_n\} \in S \mid x_{n+T} = x_n, n \in \mathbb{Z}\}$, where $S = \{x = \{x_n\} \mid x_n \in \mathbb{R}^N, n \in \mathbb{Z}\}$. For any $x, y \in S, a, b \in \mathbb{R}$, we define $ax + by = \{ax_n + by_n\}_{n \in \mathbb{Z}}$. Then S is a linear space. Let $\langle x, y \rangle_{E_T} = \sum_{n=1}^T \langle x_n, y_n \rangle$, $\|x\|_{E_T} = (\sum_{n=1}^T |x_n|^2)^{1/2}$, for all $x, y \in E_T$, where $\langle \cdot, \cdot \rangle$ and $|\cdot|$ are the usual inner product and norm in \mathbb{R}^N , respectively. Obviously, E_T is a Hilbert space with dimension NT and homeomorphism to \mathbb{R}^{NT} . For $r > 1$, let $\|x\|_r = (\sum_{n=1}^T |x_n|^r)^{1/r}$, $x \in E_T$. Moreover, for simplicity, we write $\langle x, y \rangle$ and $\|x\|$ instead of $\langle x, y \rangle_{E_T}$ and $\|x\|_{E_T}$, respectively.

Lemma 1. *There exist positive numbers a_1, a_2 , such that $a_1 \|x\|_r \leq \|x\| \leq a_2 \|x\|_r$.*

Inspired by [10, 19], one introduces two numbers as follows:

$$\lambda_*(p) = \inf_{\|x\|=1} \left\{ \|\Delta x\|^2 \mid \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^p = 0 \right\}, \tag{6}$$

$$\lambda_*(q) = \inf_{\|x\|=1} \left\{ \|\Delta x\|^2 \mid \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^q = 0 \right\}.$$

Theorem 2. *If $a < \lambda_*(p)$, then (4) has a nonzero T -periodic solution.*

Theorem 3. *If $a < \lambda_*(q)$, then (5) has a nonzero T -periodic solution.*

This paper is divided into four sections. Section 2 contains some preliminaries, and the proofs of Theorems 2 and 3 are given in Sections 3 and 4, respectively.

2. Preliminaries

2.1. Variational Functional and (PS) Condition. For seeking T -periodic solution of (1), we consider variational functional J_p associated with (4) as $J_p(x) = (1/2) \sum_{n=1}^T |\Delta x_n|^2 - (1/2)a \sum_{n=1}^T |x_n|^2 - 1/p \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^p - \sum_{n=1}^T G_p(n, x_n)$, that is

$$J_p(x) = \frac{1}{2} \|\Delta x\|^2 - \frac{1}{2} a \|x\|^2 - \frac{1}{p} \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^p - \sum_{n=1}^T G_p(n, x_n), \quad x \in E_T. \tag{7}$$

Moreover, T -periodic solution of (5) is associated with the critical point of functional

$$J_q(x) = \frac{1}{2} \|\Delta x\|^2 - \frac{1}{2} a \|x\|^2 - \frac{1}{q} \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^q - \sum_{n=1}^T G_q(n, x_n), \quad x \in E_T. \tag{8}$$

We say that a C^1 -functional φ on Hilbert space X satisfies the Palais-Smale (PS) condition if every sequence $\{x^{(j)}\}$ in X , such that $\{\varphi(x^{(j)})\}$, is bounded and $\varphi'(x^{(j)}) \rightarrow 0$ as $j \rightarrow \infty$ contains a convergent subsequence.

Lemma 4. *Functional J_p satisfies (PS) condition if $a < \lambda_*(p)$.*

Proof. Let $\{x^{(j)}\} \subset E_T$ be the (PS) sequence for functional J_p , such that $J_p(x^{(j)})$ is bounded, and $J_p'(x^{(j)}) \rightarrow 0$ as $j \rightarrow \infty$. Hence, for any $\varepsilon > 0$, there exist $N_\varepsilon > 0$ and constant $c_1 > 0$, such that

$$\begin{aligned} \left| \langle J_p'(x^{(j)}), x^{(j)} \rangle \right| &\leq \varepsilon \|x^{(j)}\| \quad \text{for } j \geq N_\varepsilon, \\ \left| J_p(x^{(j)}) \right| &\leq c_1. \end{aligned} \tag{9}$$

To prove that J_p satisfies (PS) condition, it suffices to show that $\|x^{(j)}\|$ is bounded in E_T . Suppose not that there exists a subsequence $\{x^{(j_k)}\}$, $\|x^{(j_k)}\| \rightarrow \infty$ as $k \rightarrow \infty$. For simplicity, we write as $\{x^{(j)}\}$ instead of $\{x^{(j_k)}\}$. Without loss of generality, we assume that there exists $k \in \mathbb{Z}[1, T]$, such that

$$\begin{aligned} |x_n^{(j)}| &\rightarrow \infty \quad \text{as } j \rightarrow \infty \quad \text{for } n \in \mathbb{Z}[1, k], \\ x_n^{(j)} &\text{ are bounded for } n \in \mathbb{Z}[k+1, T]. \end{aligned} \tag{10}$$

Therefore for all $n \in [1, T]$, by assumption (A1), there exists $c_2 > 0$ such that

$$\begin{aligned} |G_p(n, x_n^{(j)})| &\leq \varepsilon |x_n^{(j)}|^2 + c_2, \\ |g_p(n, x_n^{(j)})| &\leq \varepsilon |x_n^{(j)}| + c_2 \end{aligned} \tag{11}$$

for large j . By the previous argument, it follows that

$$\left| \sum_{n=1}^T (g_p(n, x_n^{(j)}), x_n^{(j)}) \right| \leq \sum_{n=1}^T |g_p(n, x_n^{(j)})| |x_n^{(j)}| \leq \varepsilon \|x^{(j)}\|^2 + c_2 T \|x^{(j)}\|. \tag{12}$$

By (7), we have

$$\begin{aligned} & pJ_p(x^{(j)}) - \langle J'_p(x^{(j)}), x^{(j)} \rangle \\ &= \left(\frac{p}{2} - 1\right) (\|\Delta x^{(j)}\|^2 - a \|x^{(j)}\|^2) - p \sum_{n=1}^T G_p(n, x_n^{(j)}) \\ &+ \sum_{n=1}^T (g_p(n, x_n^{(j)}), x_n^{(j)}). \end{aligned} \tag{13}$$

In terms of (9) and (11), for large j , it follows that

$$\begin{aligned} & \left(\frac{p}{2} - 1\right) (\|\Delta x^{(j)}\|^2 - a \|x^{(j)}\|^2) \\ & \leq pc_1 + \varepsilon \|x^{(j)}\| + (p+1)\varepsilon \|x^{(j)}\|^2 + pc_2 T + c_2 T \|x^{(j)}\|. \end{aligned} \tag{14}$$

Set $y_n^{(j)} = x_n^{(j)} / \|x^{(j)}\|$. Dividing by $\|x^{(j)}\|^2$ in the previous formula, it follows that

$$\|\Delta y^{(j)}\|^2 \leq a + \frac{2}{p-2} \left((p+1)\varepsilon + \frac{c_2 T + \varepsilon}{\|x^{(j)}\|} + \frac{pc_2 T + pc_1}{\|x^{(j)}\|^2} \right) \tag{15}$$

for large j . Therefore, by ε being chosen arbitrarily, there is a subsequence that converges to $y^0 \in E_T$ such that

$$\|\Delta y^0\|^2 \leq a, \quad \|y^0\| = 1. \tag{16}$$

On the other hand, we have

$$\begin{aligned} & J_p(x^{(j)}) - \frac{1}{2} \langle J'_p(x^{(j)}), x^{(j)} \rangle \\ &= \left(\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{p}\right) \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n^{(j)}|^p - \sum_{n=1}^T G_p(n, x_n^{(j)}) \\ &+ \frac{1}{2} \sum_{n=1}^T (g_p(n, x_n^{(j)}), x_n^{(j)}). \end{aligned} \tag{17}$$

Then, by (9) and (11), for large j , we get

$$\begin{aligned} & \left| \left(\frac{1}{2} - \frac{1}{p}\right) \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n^{(j)}|^p \right| \\ &= \left| J_p(x^{(j)}) - \frac{1}{2} \langle J'_p(x^{(j)}), x^{(j)} \rangle + \sum_{n=1}^T G_p(n, x_n^{(j)}) \right. \\ &\quad \left. - \frac{1}{2} \sum_{n=1}^T (g_p(n, x_n^{(j)}), x_n^{(j)}) \right| \\ &\leq c_1 + \frac{\varepsilon}{2} \|x^{(j)}\| + \varepsilon \|x^{(j)}\|^2 + c_2 T + \frac{1}{2} (\varepsilon \|x^{(j)}\|^2 + c_2 T \|x^{(j)}\|). \end{aligned} \tag{18}$$

By dividing by $\|x^{(j)}\|^p$ in the previous formula, then by $p > 2$, we have $\sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |y_n^{(j)}|^p \rightarrow 0$ as $j \rightarrow \infty$, that is, $\sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |y_n^{(j)}|^p = \lim_{j \rightarrow \infty} \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |y_n^{(j)}|^p = 0$. By the definition of $\lambda_*(p)$, see (6), we have $\|\Delta y^0\|^2 \geq \lambda_*(p)$. This contradicts with (16) and assumption $a < \lambda_*(p)$. The proof is completed. \square

Lemma 5. Functional J_q satisfies (PS) condition if $a < \lambda_*(q)$.

The proof is similar to that of Lemma 4 and is omitted.

2.2. Eigenvalue Problem. Consider eigenvalue problem:

$$-\Delta^2 x_{n-1} = \lambda x_n, \quad x_{n+T} = x_n, \quad x_n \in \mathbb{R}^N, \tag{19}$$

that is, $x_{n+1} + (\lambda - 2)x_n + x_{n-1} = 0$, $x_{n+T} = x_n$. By the periodicity, the difference system has complex solution $x_n = e^{in\theta} c$ for $c \in \mathbb{C}^N$, where $\theta = 2k\pi/T$, $k \in \mathbb{Z}$. Moreover, $\lambda = 2 - e^{-i\theta} - e^{i\theta} = 2(1 - \cos \theta) = 4 \sin^2(k\pi/T)$. Let η_k denote the real eigenvector corresponding to the eigenvalues $\lambda_k = 4 \sin^2(k\pi/T)$, where $k \in \mathbb{Z}[0, r]$ and $r = [T/2]$. Since $a = 4 \sin^2(m\pi/T)$ for some $m \in \mathbb{Z}[0, r]$, we can split space E_T as follows:

$$E_T = W^- \oplus W^0 \oplus W^+, \tag{20}$$

where

$$W^- = \text{span} \{ \eta_k \mid k \in \mathbb{Z}[0, m-1] \}, \quad W^0 = \text{span} \{ \eta_m \},$$

$$W^+ = \text{span} \{ \eta_k \mid k \in \mathbb{Z}[m+1, r] \}. \tag{21}$$

By means of eigenvalue problem, we have $|\Delta x_n|^2 - a|x_n|^2 = (\Delta x_n, \Delta x_n) - a(x_n, x_n) = (-\Delta^2 x_{n-1}, x_n) - a(x_n, x_n) = (\lambda - a)(x_n, x_n) = (\lambda - a)|x_n|^2$. Let

$$\delta = \begin{cases} \min \left\{ 4 \sin^2 \frac{(m+1)\pi}{T} - 4 \sin^2 \frac{m\pi}{T}, \right. \\ \left. 4 \sin^2 \frac{m\pi}{T} - 4 \sin^2 \frac{(m-1)\pi}{T} \right\}, & m \in \mathbb{Z}[1, r], \\ 4 \sin^2 \frac{\pi}{T}, & m = 0. \end{cases} \tag{22}$$

Then $\pm(\|\Delta x\|^2 - a \|x\|^2) \geq \delta \|x\|^2$ for $x \in W^\pm$.

On the other hand, associating to numbers $\lambda_*(p)$ and $\lambda_*(q)$ (see (6)), we set

$$\begin{aligned}\Lambda_*(p) &= \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |e_n|^p, \\ \Lambda_*(q) &= \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |e_n|^q,\end{aligned}\tag{23}$$

where $e_n = u \in \mathbb{R}^N$ ($n \in [1, T]$) is the real eigenvector corresponding to eigenvalue $\lambda_0 = 0$. $e = (e_1^T, e_2^T, \dots, e_N^T)^T = (u^T, u^T, \dots, u^T)^T \in E_T$, where \bullet^T denotes the transpose of a vector or a matrix. Moreover, letting $|u| = T^{-1/2}$, we have $\|e\| = 1$, $\|\Delta e\| = 0$. Therefore, by definition of $\lambda_*(p)$, if $\Lambda_*(p) = 0$ then $\lambda_*(p) = 0$.

However, by assumption $\lambda_*(p) > a = 4\sin^2(m\pi/T)$ for some $m \in \mathbb{Z}[0, r]$, thus $\lambda_*(p) > 0$. That is to say the equality $\Lambda_*(p) = 0$ cannot hold. Therefore our discussion will be distinguished in two cases: $\Lambda_*(p) > 0$ and $\Lambda_*(p) < 0$.

2.3. Preliminaries. Let X be a Hilbert space, and let $\varphi \in C^1(X, \mathbb{R})$ be a functional satisfying the (PS) condition. Write $\text{crit}(\varphi) = \{x \in X \mid \varphi'(x) = 0\}$ for the set of critical points of functional φ and $\varphi^c = \{x \in X \mid \varphi(x) \leq c\}$ for the level set. Denote by $H_k(A, B)$ the k th singular relative homology group with integer coefficients. Let $x_0 \in \text{crit}(\varphi)$ be an isolated critical point with value $c = \varphi(x_0)$, $c \in \mathbb{R}$, the group $C_k(\varphi, x_0) = H_k(\varphi^c \cap U, (\varphi^c \cap U) \setminus \{x_0\})$, and $k \in \mathbb{Z}$ is called the k th critical group of φ at x_0 , where U is a closed neighbourhood of u . Due to the excision of homology [13], $C_k(\varphi, x_0)$ is dependent on U .

Suppose that $\varphi(\text{crit}(\varphi))$ is strictly bounded from below by $a \in \mathbb{R}$, then the critical groups of φ at infinity are formally defined [11] as $C_k(\varphi, \infty) = H_k(X, \varphi^a)$, $k \in \mathbb{Z}$.

Proposition 6 (Proposition 2.3, [11]). *Assume that C^2 -functional φ satisfying (PS) condition has a local linking at 0 with respect to $X = X_0^+ \oplus X_0^-$; that is, there exists $\rho > 0$ such that*

$$\begin{aligned}\varphi(x) &\leq \varphi(0) \quad \text{for } x \in X_0^- \text{ and } \|x\| \leq \rho, \\ \varphi(x) &> \varphi(0) \quad \text{for } x \in X_0^+ \text{ and } 0 < \|x\| \leq \rho.\end{aligned}\tag{24}$$

Then $C_k(\varphi, 0) \neq 0$, $k = \dim X_0^-$.

By Propostion 6, one proves the following lemmas with respect to $E_T = X^+ \oplus X^-$.

Lemma 7. *If $a < \lambda_*(p)$, then $C_k(J_p, 0) \neq 0$, $k = \dim X^-$, where $X^- = W^- \oplus W^0$ as $\Lambda_*(p) > 0$, $X^- = W^-$ as $\Lambda_*(p) < 0$. $\Lambda_*(p)$ is defined by (23).*

Proof. We first consider the following.

Case 1 ($\Lambda_*(p) > 0$ and $X^+ = W^+$, $X^- = W^- \oplus W^0$). By $p > 2$, $|x|^p = o(|x|^2)$ as $|x| \rightarrow 0$, then there exists $\theta \in (0, 1)$ suitably small, such that $|x|^p \leq \delta/3(b/p + \varepsilon)|x|^2$ as $|x| < \theta$,

where $\delta > 0$ see (22) and $b = \max\{|b(1)|, \dots, |b(T)|\} > 0$. By assumption (A2) and $G_p(n, 0) = 0$, for any given $\varepsilon > 0$, there exists $\rho_n \in (0, \theta)$, such that $|G_p(n, x_n)| \leq \varepsilon|x_n|^p$ as $|x_n| \leq \rho_n$, $n \in \mathbb{Z}[1, T]$. Thus

$$\begin{aligned}\frac{1}{p} \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^p + \sum_{n=1}^T G_p(n, x_n) \\ \leq \left(\frac{b}{p} + \varepsilon\right) \sum_{n=1}^T |x_n|^p \leq \frac{1}{3} \delta \|x\|^2.\end{aligned}\tag{25}$$

Let $\rho = \min\{\rho_1, \dots, \rho_T\}$. For $0 < \|x\| \leq \rho < 1$, it follows that

$$J_p(x) \geq \frac{1}{2} \delta \|x\|^2 - \frac{1}{3} \delta \|x\|^2 > 0, \quad x \in W^+ = X^+.\tag{26}$$

We need to prove that $J_p(x) \leq 0$ for $x \in X^- = W^- \oplus W^0$, $\|x\| \leq \rho$. We first claim that

$$\sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^p > 0, \quad \forall x \in W^- \oplus W^0, x \neq 0.\tag{27}$$

Indeed, by contradiction, assume that $\sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^p \leq 0$, for some $x \in W^- \oplus W^0$, $x \neq 0$. Since $\Lambda_*(p) = \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |e_n|^p > 0$, where $e = (e_1^T, e_2^T, \dots, e_N^T)^T = (u^T, u^T, \dots, u^T)^T \in W^- \oplus W^0$, and $(W^- \oplus W^0) \setminus \{0\}$ is arcwise connected, then there exists a $x^0 \in (W^- \oplus W^0) \setminus \{0\}$, such that $\sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n^0|^p = 0$. Thus $\|\Delta x^0\|^2 \geq \lambda_*(p) \|x^0\|^2$ by the definition of $\lambda_*(p)$. On the other hand, by the definition of $W^- \oplus W^0$, we have $\|\Delta x^0\|^2 \leq a \|x^0\|^2$. This is a contradiction with assumption $a < \lambda_*(p)$. So the claim (27) holds.

There exists $c_4 > 0$ by (27), such that $\sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^p \geq c_4 \|x\|_p^p$ for all $x \in W^- \oplus W^0 \setminus \{0\}$, where $\|x\|_p = (\sum_{n=1}^T |x_n|^p)^{1/p}$. For $x \in W^- \oplus W^0$, $\|x\| \leq \rho$, ε sufficiently small, we have

$$\begin{aligned}J_p(x) &\leq -\frac{1}{p} \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^p - \sum_{n=1}^T G_p(n, x_n) \\ &\leq -\frac{c_4}{p} \|x\|_p^p + \varepsilon \|x\|_p^p \leq 0.\end{aligned}\tag{28}$$

Since $J_p(0) = 0$ and J_p satisfies (PS) condition by Lemma 4, so by Proposition 6, we obtain that $C_k(J_p, 0) \neq 0$ for $k = \dim(W^- \oplus W^0)$.

Case 2 ($\Lambda_*(p) < 0$, $X^+ = W^+ \oplus W^0$, $X^- = W^-$). It is easy to see that $J_p(x) \leq 0$ by $\|\Delta x\|^2 - a \|x\|^2 \leq -\delta \|x\|^2$ and $p > 2$, where $x \in W^-$ and $\|x\| \leq \rho$. We need to claim that $J_p(x) > 0$, for $x \in W^+ \oplus W^0$, $0 < \|x\| \leq \rho$.

Suppose not that there exists a sequence $\{x^{(j)}\} \subset E_T$ such that

$$\begin{aligned}\{x^{(j)}\} &\subset W^+ \oplus W^0 \setminus \{0\}, \quad 0 < \|x^{(j)}\| \leq \rho, \\ J_p(x^{(j)}) &\leq 0,\end{aligned}\tag{29}$$

for large j . For $\|x^{(j)}\| \leq \rho$, by Lemma 1, we get

$$\begin{aligned} & \left| \sum_{n=1}^T \left[\frac{1}{p} b(n) |x_n^{(j)}|^p + G_p(n, x_n^{(j)}) \right] \right| \\ & \leq \sum_{n=1}^T \left[\frac{b}{p} |x_n^{(j)}|^p + \varepsilon |x_n^{(j)}|^p \right] \leq \left(\frac{b}{p} + \varepsilon \right) \left(\frac{1}{a_1} \right)^p \|x^{(j)}\|^p. \end{aligned} \tag{30}$$

Set $y_n^{(j)} = x_n^{(j)} / \|x^{(j)}\|$. Then by (29) and the previous formula, we have

$$\begin{aligned} 0 & \geq \frac{J_p(x^{(j)})}{\|x^{(j)}\|^2} \geq \frac{1}{2} \left(\|\Delta y^{(j)}\|^2 - a \right) \\ & \quad - \left(\frac{b}{p} + \varepsilon \right) \left(\frac{1}{a_1} \right)^p \|x^{(j)}\|^{p-2}. \end{aligned} \tag{31}$$

On the other hand, $\|\Delta y^{(j)}\|^2 \geq a$ by the definition of $W^+ \oplus W^0$. Hence by $p > 2$, there exists a subsequence converges to $y^0 \in E_T$, such that $\|\Delta y^0\|^2 = a$, that is $y^0 \in W^0$ and $\|y^0\| = 1$. Since $\|\Delta x^{(j)}\|^2 \geq a \|x^{(j)}\|^2$ for $\{x^{(j)}\} \subset W^+ \oplus W^0$, it follows from $J_p(x^{(j)}) \leq 0$ that

$$\begin{aligned} 0 & \leq \frac{1}{p} \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n^{(j)}|^p + \sum_{n=1}^T G_p(n, x_n^{(j)}) \\ & \leq \frac{1}{p} \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n^{(j)}|^p + \varepsilon \left(\frac{1}{a_1} \right)^p \|x^{(j)}\|^p. \end{aligned} \tag{32}$$

Dividing by $\|x^{(j)}\|^p$ in the previous inequality, then $\sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |y_n^0|^p = \lim_{j \rightarrow \infty} \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |y_n^{(j)}|^p \geq 0$.

Since $e, y^0 \in W^- \oplus W^0$, $\Lambda_*(p) = \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |e_n|^p < 0$ and $(W^- \oplus W^0) \setminus \{0\}$ is arcwise connected, then there exists a $\bar{y} \in (W^- \oplus W^0) \setminus \{0\}$ such that $\sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |\bar{y}_n|^p = 0$. Thus $\|\Delta \bar{x}\|^2 \geq \lambda_*(p) \|\bar{x}\|^2$ by the definition of $\lambda_*(p)$. On the other hand, $\|\Delta \bar{x}\|^2 \leq a \|\bar{x}\|^2$ by the definition of $W^- \oplus W^0$. This is a contradiction with assumption $a < \lambda_*(p)$. That is to say, the claim is valid.

By Proposition 6, we obtain $C_k(J_p, 0) \neq 0, k = \dim W^-$. The proof is completed. \square

Lemma 8. *If $a < \lambda_*(q)$, then $C_k(J_q, \infty) \neq 0$ for $k = \dim X^-$, where $X^- = W^- \oplus W^0$ as $\Lambda_*(q) > 0, X^- = W^-$ as $\Lambda_*(q) < 0$. The proof is similar to that of Lemma 7 and is omitted.*

3. Proof of Theorem 2

Lemma 9. *Let $a < \lambda_*(p)$. If there exists $K_1 > 0$ such that for any $K > K_1, J_p(x) \leq -K$, then one has $\sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^p > 0$, and $(d/dt)J_p(tx)|_{t=1} < 0$.*

Proof. We first claim that $\|x\|$ is sufficiently large, if x satisfies condition of Lemma 9. Suppose not there exists $M > 0$ such that $\|x\| \leq M$. So there exists $\{x^{(j)}\} \subset E_T, x^0 \in E_T$,

such that $x^{(j)} \rightarrow x^0$ as $j \rightarrow \infty$. Since for any $j > K_1$, we have $J_p(x^{(j)}) \leq -j$, thus $J_p(x^0) = \lim_{j \rightarrow \infty} J_p(x^{(j)}) = -\infty$. It is a contradiction with $J_p(x^0) = c$.

If $\|x\|$ is large enough, then we can assume that $|x_n|$ is large enough for $n \in Z[1, k]$ and $|x_n|$ are bounded for $n \in Z[k + 1, T]$. Therefore, by assumption (A1), for any given $\varepsilon > 0$, there exists $M_1 > 0$ such that

$$\begin{aligned} |g_p(n, x_n)| & \leq \varepsilon |x_n| + \frac{M_1}{T}, \quad |G_p(n, x_n)| \leq \varepsilon |x_n|^2 + \frac{M_1}{T}, \\ \forall (n, x_n) & \in Z[1, T] \times \mathbb{R}^N. \end{aligned} \tag{33}$$

We claim that $\sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^p > 0$. Suppose not that, for $j > K_1$, there exists $\{x^{(j)}\} \subset E_T$ such that

$$\sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n^{(j)}|^p \leq 0. \tag{34}$$

By $J_p(x^{(j)}) \leq -j \leq 0$, (33) and (34), we have

$$\begin{aligned} \frac{1}{2} \|\Delta x^{(j)}\|^2 & \leq \frac{a}{2} \|x^{(j)}\|^2 + \sum_{n=1}^T G_p(n, x_n^{(j)}) \\ & \leq \frac{a}{2} \|x^{(j)}\|^2 + \varepsilon \|x^{(j)}\|^2 + M_1. \end{aligned} \tag{35}$$

Set $y_n^{(j)} = x_n^{(j)} / \|x^{(j)}\|$ and divided by $\|x^{(j)}\|^2$ in the previous inequality. Since ε can be small enough, then there exists a subsequence that converges to $y^0 \in E_T$, such that $\|\Delta y^0\|^2 \leq a, \|y^0\| = 1$. Moreover, by (33) and (34), we get

$$\begin{aligned} 0 & \geq \frac{1}{p} \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n^{(j)}|^p \geq j + \frac{1}{2} \|\Delta x^{(j)}\|^2 - \frac{a}{2} \|x^{(j)}\|^2 \\ & \quad - \sum_{n=1}^T G_p(n, x_n^{(j)}) \geq - \left(\frac{a}{2} + \varepsilon \right) \|x^{(j)}\|^2 - M_1. \end{aligned} \tag{36}$$

Since $p > 2$ and $\lim_{j \rightarrow \infty} \|x^{(j)}\| = \infty$, divided by $\|x^{(j)}\|^p$ in the previous inequality, we have $\sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |y_n^0|^p = \lim_{j \rightarrow \infty} \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |y_n^{(j)}|^p = 0$, that is, $\|\Delta y^0\| \geq \lambda_*(q)$, which deduce a contradiction. So the claim $\sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^p > 0$ holds.

Next we prove that $(d/dt)J_p(tx)|_{t=1} < 0$ holds. By contradiction, there exists a sequence $\{x^{(j)}\} \subset E_T$ such that, for $j > K_1$,

$$\left. \frac{d}{dt} J_p(tx^{(j)}) \right|_{t=1} \geq 0. \tag{37}$$

Then, by (7), we get

$$\begin{aligned} \left. \frac{d}{dt} J_p(tx^{(j)}) \right|_{t=1} & = \|\Delta x^{(j)}\|^2 - a \|x^{(j)}\|^2 \\ & \quad - \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n^{(j)}|^p - \sum_{n=1}^T (g_p(n, x_n^{(j)}), x_n^{(j)}), \end{aligned} \tag{38}$$

and by (37) and $J_p(x^{(j)}) \leq -j < 0$, it follows that

$$\begin{aligned} & \left(1 - \frac{p}{2}\right) \left(\|\Delta x^{(j)}\|^2 - a\|x^{(j)}\|^2\right) \\ & - \sum_{n=1}^T (g_p(n, x_n^{(j)}, x_n^{(j)})) + p \sum_{n=1}^T G_p(n, x_n^{(j)}) \quad (39) \\ & = \frac{d}{dt} J_p(tx^{(j)}) \Big|_{t=1} - pJ_p(x^{(j)}) \geq 0. \end{aligned}$$

Set $y_n^{(j)} = x_n^{(j)} / \|x^{(j)}\|$ and divided by $\|x^{(j)}\|^2$ in the previous formula; since $p > 2$ and ε can be small enough, then there exists a subsequence converges to $y^0 \in E_T$ such that $\|\Delta y^0\|^2 \leq a, \|y^0\| = 1$. Moreover, by (37) and the first claim, we get

$$\begin{aligned} 0 < \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n^{(j)}|^p & \leq \|\Delta x^{(j)}\|^2 - a\|x^{(j)}\|^2 \\ & - \sum_{n=1}^T (g_p(n, x_n^{(j)}, x_n^{(j)})). \quad (40) \end{aligned}$$

Divided by $\|x^{(j)}\|^p$ in the previous formula, and by $p > 2$, it follows that $\sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |y_n^0|^p = 0$. This is a contradiction with the definition of $\lambda_*(p)$ and condition $a < \lambda_*(p)$. So the second claim holds. The proof is completed. \square

Based on Lemma 9, we introduce the following notations:

$$\begin{aligned} J_p^{-K} &= \{x \in E_T : J_p(x) \leq -K\}, \\ E_p^+ &= \left\{x \in E_T : \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^p > 0\right\}, \end{aligned}$$

$$E(\Omega_+) = \{x \in E_T : x_n = 0 \text{ for } n \in Z[1, T] \setminus \Omega_+\} \cup \{0\}. \quad (41)$$

Clearly, $E(\Omega_+) \subset E_p^+$. And by Lemma 9, we have $J_p^{-K} \subset E_p^+$. In order to describe the $H_q(E_T, J_p^{-K})$, we need to show the following lemma.

Lemma 10. *If $a < \lambda_*(p)$, then there exists $K_1 > 0$, such that for any $K > K_1$, J_p^{-K} is a strong deformation retraction of E_p^+ . Moreover, $E(\Omega_+)$ and E_p^+ are homotopy equivalent.*

Proof. Now we prove that J_p^{-K} is a strong deformation retraction of E_p^+ .

By Lemma 9, we have $J_p^{-K} \subset E_p^+$. Let $x \in E_p^+$. By Lemma 9, there exists a unique $t_p = t_p(x) > 0$ such that $J_p(t_p x) = -K$. By applying Implicit Function Theorem, $t_p(x)$ is a continuous function in E_p^+ . Let $T_p(x) = \max\{t_p(x), 1\}$ and define $f_p(s, x) = (1-s)x + sT_p(x)x$, then $f_p : [0, 1] \times E_p^+ \rightarrow J_p^{-K}$ is a strong deformation retraction. Thus J_p^{-K} is a strong deformation retraction of E_p^+ .

We next claim that $E(\Omega_+)$ is a strong deformation retraction of E_p^+ . Clearly, in terms of the notations, we have $E(\Omega_+) \subset E_p^+$. Let $\xi_p : Z[1, T] \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ be a function such that

$$\begin{aligned} \xi_p(n) &= 1 \quad \text{if } n \in \Omega_+, \quad \xi_p(n) = 0 \quad \text{if } n \in \Omega_-, \\ \xi_p(n) &\in [0, 1] \quad \text{if } n \in Z[1, T] \setminus (\Omega_+ \cup \Omega_-). \end{aligned} \quad (42)$$

Define

$$\zeta_p(s, x_n) = \begin{cases} (1-2s)x_n + 2s\xi_p(n)x_n & \text{if } 0 \leq s \leq \frac{1}{2}, \\ 2(1-s)\xi_p(n)x_n + 2\left(s - \frac{1}{2}\right)P(\xi_p(n)x_n) & \text{if } \frac{1}{2} \leq s \leq 1, \end{cases} \quad (43)$$

where $P : E_T \rightarrow E(\Omega_+)$ is a projection operator. Then $\zeta_p : [0, 1] \times E_p^+ \rightarrow E(\Omega_+)$ is a deformation retraction. Indeed,

$$\begin{aligned} \zeta_p(0, x) &= x, \quad \zeta_p(1, x) \in E(\Omega_+), \quad \text{for } x \in E_p^+, \\ \zeta_p(s, x) &= x, \quad \text{for } x \in E(\Omega_+) \text{ and } s \in [0, 1]. \end{aligned} \quad (44)$$

For $x \in E_p^+$, if $s \in [0, 1/2]$, then

$$\begin{aligned} & \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |\zeta_p(s, x_n)|^p \\ &= \sum_{n \in \Omega_+} b(n) |x_n|^p + \sum_{n \in \Omega_-} b(n) (1-2s)^p |x_n|^p \\ &\geq \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^p > 0, \end{aligned} \quad (45)$$

where $0 \leq (1-2s)^p \leq 1$, that is, $\zeta_p(s, x) \in E_p^+$. If $s \in (1/2, 1]$, it follows that

$$\begin{aligned} & \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |\zeta_p(s, x_n)|^p \\ &= \sum_{n \in \Omega_+} b(n) \left| 2(1-s)\xi_p(n)x_n + 2\left(s - \frac{1}{2}\right)P(\xi_p(n)x_n) \right|^p \\ &\geq 0. \end{aligned} \quad (46)$$

We claim that the equality of the previous formula cannot hold. Otherwise, $Px_n = -((1-s)/(s-(1/2)))x_n$, for $n \in \Omega_+$, which implies that $Px_n = 0$. Hence $x_n = 0$ in Ω_+ , which contradicts with the fact $x \in E_p^+$. So $\sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |\zeta_p(s, x_n)|^p > 0$, that is, $\zeta_p(s, x) \in E_p^+$ as $s \in (1/2, 1]$. Therefore, ζ_p is a deformation retraction from E_p^+ onto $E(\Omega_+)$, and this completes the proof. \square

Proof of Theorem 2. Since $E(\Omega_+)$ is well known to be contractile in itself, and by Lemma 10, it follows that J_p^{-K} is

homotopically equivalent to $E(\Omega_+)$ for K large enough, then the Betti numbers (cf. [11, 13]) are

$$\begin{aligned} \beta_k &= \dim C_k(J_p, \infty) = \dim H_k(E_T, J_p^{-K}) \\ &= \dim H_k(E_T, E(\Omega_+)) = 0, \quad k \in Z[0, NT]. \end{aligned} \tag{47}$$

Now we suppose that system (4) has only trivial solution; that is, J_p has only critical point $x = 0$, then we have the Morse-type numbers $M_k = \dim C_k(J_p, 0)$ for $k \in Z[0, NT]$ (cf. [13]). Moreover, by Lemma 7, $C_k(J_p, 0) \neq 0$ for $k = \dim W^-$ or $k = \dim(W^- \oplus W^0)$. Since J_p satisfies (PS) condition by Lemma 4, then using Morse Relation, we have the following.

$$0 = \sum_{k=0}^{NT} (-1)^k \beta_k = \sum_{k=0}^{NT} (-1)^k M_k \neq 0, \tag{48}$$

which is a contradiction. Therefore, J_p has at least one critical point $x^* \neq 0$ and system (4) has at least a nonzero T -periodic solution. \square

4. Proof of Theorem 3

For convenience, we introduce the following notations:

$$\begin{aligned} J_q^c &= \{x \in E_T : J_q(x) \leq c\}, \quad c \in \mathbb{R}, \\ E_q^+ &= \left\{x \in E_T : \sum_{n=1}^T b(n) |x_n|^q > 0\right\}. \end{aligned} \tag{49}$$

Clearly, $E_q^+ \cup \{0\}$ is star-shaped with respect to the origin and $E(\Omega_+) \subset E_q^+$, where $E(\Omega_+)$ is given in Section 3. Similarly with the proof of Lemmas 9 and 10, we have the following.

Lemma 11. *Let $a < \lambda_*(q)$. Then there exists $\rho > 0$ such that $(d/dt)J_q(tx)|_{t=1} > 0$ for any $x \in M_\rho = \{x \in B_\rho \cap E_q^+ : J_q(x) \geq 0\}$, where B_ρ stands for the closed ball in E_T of radius $\rho > 0$ with the center at zero.*

Lemma 12. *Let $a < \lambda_*(q)$. Then there exists $\rho > 0$ such that $(J_q^0 \cap B_\rho) \setminus \{0\}$ is a retract of $E_q^+ \cap B_\rho$, and $E(\Omega^+)$ is a strong deformation retraction of E_q^+ .*

Proof of Theorem 3. We first prove that $J_q^0 \cap B_\rho$ is contractible in itself. In fact, it is sufficient to show that $J_q^0 \cap B_\rho$ is starshaped with respect to the origin; that is, $x \in J_q^0 \cap B_\rho$ implies that $tx \in J_q^0 \cap B_\rho$ for all $t \in [0, 1]$.

Assume, by a contradiction, that there exists $x_0 \in J_q^0 \cap B_\rho$ and $t_0 \in (0, 1)$, such that $J_q(t_0 x_0) > 0$. It follows from Lemma 11 that $(d/dt)J_q(t_0 x_0) > 0$. By the monotonicity arguments, this implies that

$$J_q(tx_0) > 0 \quad \forall t \in [t_0, 1]. \tag{50}$$

This contradicts the assumption $x_0 \in J_q^0$, which implies $J_q(x_0) \leq 0$.

On the other hand, since $E(\Omega_+)$ is contractible in itself, and $E_q^+ \cup \{0\}$ is starshaped with respect to the origin, then $E_q^+ \cap B_\rho$ is contractible in itself. The retract of the set which is contractible in itself is also contractible (cf. [19]); it follows that the set $(J_q^0 \cap B_\rho) \setminus \{0\}$ is contractible by Lemma 12.

Combining the previous argument, $J_q^0 \cap B_\rho$ and $(J_q^0 \cap B_\rho) \setminus \{0\}$ are contractible in themselves.

$$\begin{aligned} \dim C_k(J_q, 0) &= \dim H_k(J_q^0 \cap B_\rho, (J_q^0 \cap B_\rho) \setminus \{0\}) = 0, \\ &k \in Z[0, NT]. \end{aligned} \tag{51}$$

By Lemma 8, $C_k(J_q, \infty) \neq 0$ for $k = \dim(W^- \oplus W^0)$ or $k = \dim W^-$. Therefore, by Morse Relation and the same methods in proof of Theorem 2, it follows that J_q has at least one critical point $x^* \neq 0$ and system (5) has at least a nonzero T -periodic solution. \square

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