## Research Article

# Positive Solutions for Third-Order $p$-Laplacian Functional Dynamic Equations on Time Scales 

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We study the following third-order $p$-Laplacian functional dynamic equation on time scales: $\left[\Phi_{p}\left(u^{\Delta \nabla}(t)\right)\right]^{\nabla}+a(t) f(u(t), u(\mu(t)))=$ $0, t \in(0, T)_{T}, u(t)=\varphi(t), t \in[-r, 0]_{\mathrm{T}}, u^{\Delta}(0)=u^{\Delta \nabla}(T)=0$, and $u(T)+B_{0}\left(u^{\Delta}(\eta)\right)=0$. By applying the Five-Functional Fixed Point Theorem, the existence criteria of three positive solutions are established.

## 1. Introduction

Recently, much attention has been paid to the existence of positive solutions for the boundary value problems with $p$ Laplacian operator on time scales; for example, see [1-22] and the references therein. But, to the best of our knowledge, there is not much concerning $p$-Laplacian functional dynamic equations on time scales [6,12-14, 19, 21, 22], especially for the third-order $p$-Laplacian functional dynamic equations on time scales [14, 22].

In [14], Song and Gao were concerned with the existence of positive solutions for the $p$-Laplacian functional dynamic equation on time scales:

$$
\begin{gather*}
{\left[\Phi_{p}\left(u^{\Delta \nabla}(t)\right)\right]^{\nabla}+a(t) f(u(t), u(\mu(t)))=0, \quad t \in(0, T)_{\mathrm{T}}} \\
u(t)=\varphi(t), \quad t \in[-r, 0]_{\mathrm{T}}, \\
u^{\Delta}(0)=u^{\Delta \nabla}(T)=0, \quad u(T)+B_{0}\left(u^{\Delta}(\eta)\right)=0, \tag{1}
\end{gather*}
$$

where $\eta \in(0, \rho(T))_{T}$ and $\Phi_{p}(s)$ is $p$-Laplacian operator; that is, $\Phi_{p}(s)=|s|^{p-2} s, p>1,\left(\Phi_{p}\right)^{-1}=\Phi_{q}, 1 / p+1 / q=1$, and
$\left(\mathrm{C}_{1}\right) f:\left(\mathbb{R}^{+}\right)^{2} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^{+}$is continuous;
$\left(\mathrm{C}_{2}\right) a: \mathrm{T} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^{+}$is left dense continuous (i.e., $a \in$ $\left.C_{\mathbf{l d}}\left(\mathbf{T}, \mathbb{R}^{+}\right)\right)$and does not vanish identically on any
closed subinterval of $[0, T]$, where $C_{\mathbf{l d}}\left(\mathbf{T}, \mathbb{R}^{+}\right)$denotes the set of all left dense continuous functions from $\mathbf{T}$ to $\mathbb{R}^{+}$;
$\left(\mathrm{C}_{3}\right) \varphi:[-r, 0]_{\mathrm{T}} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}^{+}$is continuous and $r>0$;
$\left(\mathrm{C}_{4}\right) \mu:[0, T]_{\mathrm{T}} \rightarrow[-r, T]_{\mathrm{T}}$ is continuous, $\mu(t) \leq 0$ for all $t$;
$\left(\mathrm{C}_{5}\right) B_{0}: \mathbb{R} \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ is continuous and satisfies the condition that there are $A \geq B \geq 0$ such that

$$
\begin{equation*}
B v \leq B_{0}(v) \leq A v, \quad \forall \mathbb{R} \tag{2}
\end{equation*}
$$

The existence of two positive solutions to problem (1) was obtained by using a double fixed point theorem due to Avery et al. [23] in a cone.

In [22], Wang and Guan considered the existence of positive solutions to problem (1) by applying the well-known Leggett-Williams Fixed Point Theorem.

Motivated by [14, 22], we will show that problem (1) has at least three positive solutions by means of the Five-Functional Fixed Point Theorem [24] (which is a generalization of the Leggett-Williams Fixed Point Theorem [25]). It is worth noting that the Five-Functional Fixed Point Theorem is used extensively in yielding three solutions for BVPs of differential equations, difference equations, and/or dynamic equations on time scales; see $[6,26,27]$ and references therein.

Throughout this work we assume knowledge of time scales and time-scale notation, first introduced by Hilger [28].

For more on time scales, please see the texts by Bohner and Peterson [29, 30].

In the remainder of this section, we state the following theorem, which is crucial to our proof.

Let $\gamma, \beta, \theta$ be nonnegative, continuous, and convex functionals on $P$ and let $\alpha, \psi$ be nonnegative, continuous, and concave functionals on $P$. Then, for nonnegative real numbers $h, a, b, d$, and $c$, we define the convex sets

$$
\begin{gather*}
P(\gamma, c)=\{x \in P: \gamma(x)<c\}, \\
P(\gamma, \alpha, a, c)=\{x \in P: a \leq \alpha(x), \gamma(x) \leq c\}, \\
Q(\gamma, \beta, d, c)=\{x \in P: \beta(x) \leq d, \gamma(x) \leq c\}, \\
P(\gamma, \theta, \alpha, a, b, c)=\{x \in P: a \leq \alpha(x), \theta(x) \leq b, \gamma(x) \leq c\}, \\
Q(\gamma, \beta, \psi, h, d, c) \\
=\{x \in P: h \leq \psi(x), \beta(x) \leq d, \gamma(x) \leq c\} . \tag{3}
\end{gather*}
$$

Theorem 1 (see [24]). Let P be a cone in a real Banach space $E$. Suppose there exist positive numbers $c$ and $M$; nonnegative, continuous, and concave functionals $\alpha$ and $\psi$ on $P$; and nonnegative, continuous, and convex functionals $\gamma, \beta$, and $\theta$ on $P$, with

$$
\begin{equation*}
\alpha(x) \leq \beta(x), \quad\|x\| \leq M \gamma(x) \tag{4}
\end{equation*}
$$

for all $x \in \overline{P(\gamma, c)}$. Suppose

$$
\begin{equation*}
F: \overline{P(\gamma, c)} \longrightarrow \overline{P(\gamma, c)} \tag{5}
\end{equation*}
$$

is completely continuous and there exist nonnegative numbers $h, a, k, b$, with $0<a<b$ such that
(i) $\{x \in P(\gamma, \theta, \alpha, b, k, c): \alpha(x)>b\} \neq \varnothing$ and $\alpha(F x)>b$ for $x \in P(\gamma, \theta, \alpha, b, k, c)$;
(ii) $\{x \in Q(\gamma, \beta, \psi, h, a, c): \beta(x)<a\} \neq \varnothing$ and $\beta(F x)<a$ for $x \in Q(\gamma, \beta, \psi, h, a, c)$;
(iii) $\alpha(F x)>b$ for $x \in P(\gamma, \alpha, b, c)$ with $\theta(F x)>k$;
(iv) $\beta(F x)<a$ for $x \in Q(\gamma, \beta, a, c)$ with $\psi(F x)<h$.

Then $F$ has at least three fixed points $x_{1}, x_{2}, x_{3} \in \overline{P(\gamma, c)}$ such that

$$
\begin{gather*}
\beta\left(x_{1}\right)<a, \quad b<\alpha\left(x_{2}\right), \\
a<\beta\left(x_{3}\right) \quad \text { with } \alpha\left(x_{3}\right)<b . \tag{6}
\end{gather*}
$$

## 2. Existence of Three Positive Solutions

We note that $u(t)$ is a solution of BVP (1) if and only if $u(t)$

$$
=\left\{\begin{array}{l}
\int_{0}^{T}(T-s) \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s} a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s  \tag{7}\\
-B_{0}\left(\int_{0}^{\eta} \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s}-a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s\right) \\
+\int_{0}^{t}(t-s) \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s}-a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
\varphi(t), \\
t \in[0, T]_{\mathrm{T}} \\
\\
\end{array}\right.
$$

Let $E=C_{\mathbf{l d}}\left([0, T]_{\mathbf{T}}, \mathbb{R}\right)$ be endowed with $\|u\|=$ $\sup _{t \in[0, T]_{\mathrm{T}}}|u(t)|$, so $E$ is a Banach space. Define cone $P \subset E$ by

$$
\begin{align*}
P=\{ & u \in E: u \text { is concave and } \\
& \text { nonnegative valued on } \left.[0, T]_{\mathrm{T}}, u^{\Delta}(0)=0\right\} . \tag{8}
\end{align*}
$$

For each $u \in E$, extend $u(t)$ to $[-r, T]_{T}$ with $u(t)=\varphi(t)$ for $t \in[-r, 0]_{\mathrm{T}}$.

Define $F: P \rightarrow E$ by
(Fu) ( $t$ )

$$
=\int_{0}^{T}(T-s) \Phi_{q}
$$

$$
\times\left(\int_{0}^{s} a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s
$$

$$
-B_{0}\left(\int_{0}^{\eta} \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s}-a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s\right)
$$

$$
+\int_{0}^{t}(t-s) \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s}-a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s
$$

$$
\begin{equation*}
t \in[0, T]_{\mathrm{T}} \tag{9}
\end{equation*}
$$

We seek a point, $u_{1}$, of $F$ in the cone $P$. Define

$$
u(t)= \begin{cases}u_{1}(t), & t \in[0, T]_{\mathrm{T}}  \tag{10}\\ \varphi(t), & t \in[-r, 0]_{\mathrm{T}}\end{cases}
$$

Then $u(t)$ denotes a positive solution of BVP (1).
We have the following results.
Lemma 2. Let $u \in P$, and then
(1) $F: P \rightarrow P$ is completely continuous;
(2) $u(t) \geq((T-t) / T)\|u\|$ for $t \in[0, T]_{T}$;
(3) $u(t)$ is decreasing $[0, T]_{T}$;
(4) $(T-\varsigma) u(\tau) \leq(T-\tau) u(\varsigma)$ for $0<\tau<\varsigma<T$ and $\tau, \varsigma \in \mathbf{T}$.

Proof. (1)-(3) are Lemma 3.1 of [14]. It is easy to conclude that (4) is satisfied by the concavity of $u$.

Let $l \in \mathrm{~T}$ be fixed such that $0<l<\eta<T$, and set

$$
\begin{align*}
& Y_{1}=\left\{t \in[0, T]_{\mathrm{T}}: \mu(t)<0\right\} \\
& Y_{2}=\left\{t \in[0, T]_{\mathrm{T}}: \mu(t) \geq 0\right\}  \tag{11}\\
& Y_{3}=Y_{1} \cap[0, l]_{\mathrm{T}}
\end{align*}
$$

Throughout this paper, we assume $Y_{3} \neq \varnothing$ and $\int_{Y_{3}} a(r) \nabla r>0$.

We define the nonnegative, continuous, and concave functionals $\alpha, \psi$ and the nonnegative, continuous, and convex functionals $\beta, \theta, \gamma$ on the cone $P$, respectively, as

$$
\begin{gather*}
\gamma(u)=\theta(u)=\max _{t \in[\eta, T]_{\mathrm{T}}} u(t)=u(\eta), \\
\alpha(u)=\min _{t \in[0, l]_{\mathrm{T}}} u(t)=u(l), \\
\beta(u)=\max _{t \in[l, T]_{\mathrm{T}}} u(t)=u(l),  \tag{12}\\
\psi(u)=\min _{t \in[0, \eta]_{\mathrm{T}}} u(t)=u(\eta) .
\end{gather*}
$$

We observe that $\alpha(u)=\beta(u)$ for each $u \in P$.
In addition, by Lemma 2, we have $\gamma(u)=u(\eta) \geq((T-$ $\eta) / T)\|u\|$. Hence $\|u\| \leq(T /(T-\eta)) \gamma(u)$ for all $u \in P$.

For convenience, we define

$$
\begin{gather*}
\mu=T(T+\eta+B) \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{T} a(r) \nabla r\right) \\
\delta=A \int_{Y_{3}} \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s} a(r) \nabla r\right) \nabla s  \tag{13}\\
\lambda=T(T+l+B) \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{T} a(r) \nabla r\right)
\end{gather*}
$$

We now state growth conditions on $f$ so that BVP (1) has at least three positive solutions.

Theorem 3. Let $0<a<((T-l) / T) b<\left((T-\eta)(T-l) / T^{2}\right) c$, $\mu b<\delta c$, and suppose that $f$ satisfies the following conditions:
$\left(\mathrm{H}_{1}\right) f(u, \varphi(s))<\Phi_{p}(c / \mu)$, if $0 \leq u \leq(T /(T-\eta)) c$, uniformly in $s \in[-r, 0]_{T}$, and $f\left(u_{1}, u_{2}\right)<\Phi_{p}(c / \mu)$, if $0 \leq u_{i} \leq(T /(T-\eta)) c, i=1,2$;
$\left(\mathrm{H}_{2}\right) f(u, \varphi(s))>\Phi_{p}(b / \delta)$, if $b \leq u \leq(T /(T-\eta))^{2} b$, uniformly in $s \in[-r, 0]_{T}$;
$\left(\mathrm{H}_{3}\right) f(u, \varphi(s))<\Phi_{p}(a / \lambda)$, if $0 \leq u \leq(T /(T-l)) a$, uniformly in $s \in[-r, 0]_{\mathrm{T}}$, and $f\left(u_{1}, u_{2}\right)<\Phi_{p}(a / \lambda)$, if $0 \leq u_{i} \leq(T /(T-l)) a, i=1,2$.

Then BVP (1) has at least three positive solutions of the form

$$
u(t)= \begin{cases}u_{i}(t), & t \in[0, T]_{\mathrm{T}}, i=1,2,3  \tag{14}\\ \varphi(t), & t \in[-r, 0]_{\mathrm{T}}\end{cases}
$$

where $\max _{t \in[l, T]_{\mathrm{T}}} u_{1}(t)<a, \min _{t \in[0, l]_{\mathrm{T}}} u_{2}(t)>b$, and $a<$ $\max _{t \in[l, T]_{\mathrm{T}}} u_{3}(t)$ with $\min _{t \in[0, l]_{\mathrm{T}}} u_{3}(t)<b$.

Proof. Let $u \in \overline{P(\gamma, c)}$, and then $\gamma(u)=\max _{t \in[\eta, T]_{\mathrm{T}}} u(t)=$ $u(\eta) \leq c$, and consequently, $0 \leq u(t) \leq c$ for $t \in[\eta, T]_{\mathrm{T}}$. Since $u(\eta) \geq((T-\eta) / T) u(0)$, so $\|u\|=u(0) \leq(T /(T-\eta)) u(\eta) \leq$ $(T /(T-\eta)) c$, and this implies

$$
\begin{equation*}
0 \leq u(t) \leq \frac{T}{T-\eta} c, \quad \text { for } t \in[0, T]_{\mathrm{T}} \tag{15}
\end{equation*}
$$

From $\left(\mathrm{H}_{1}\right)$, we have

$$
\begin{align*}
& \gamma(F u) \\
&=(F u)(\eta) \\
&= \int_{0}^{T}(T-s) \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s} a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
&-B_{0}\left(\int_{0}^{\eta} \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s}-a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s\right) \\
&+\int_{0}^{\eta}(\eta-s) \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s}-a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
& \leq \int_{0}^{T} T \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s} a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
&+B \int_{0}^{T} \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s} a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
&+\int_{0}^{\eta} T \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{T} a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
&= T(T+\eta+B) \Phi_{q}\left[\int_{Y_{1}} a(r) f(u(r), \varphi(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right. \\
&< T(T+\eta+B) \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{T} a(r) \nabla r\right) \frac{c}{\mu}=c .
\end{align*}
$$

Therefore

$$
\begin{equation*}
F u \in \overline{P(\gamma, c)} \tag{17}
\end{equation*}
$$

We now turn to property (i) of Theorem 1. Choosing $u \equiv$ $(T /(T-\eta)) b, k=(T /(T-\eta)) b$, it follows that

$$
\begin{align*}
& \alpha(u)=u(l)=\frac{T}{T-\eta} b>b, \\
& \theta(u)=u(\eta)=\frac{T}{T-\eta} b=k  \tag{18}\\
& \gamma(u)=u(\eta)=\frac{T}{T-\eta} b<c
\end{align*}
$$

which shows that $\{u \in P(\gamma, \theta, \alpha, b, k, c): \alpha(u)>b\} \neq \varnothing$, and, for $u \in P(\gamma, \theta, \alpha, b,(T /(T-\eta)) b, c)$, we have

$$
\begin{equation*}
b \leq u(t) \leq\left(\frac{T}{T-\eta}\right)^{2} b, \quad \text { for } t \in[0, l]_{\mathrm{T}} \tag{19}
\end{equation*}
$$

From $\left(\mathrm{H}_{2}\right)$, we have

$$
\begin{align*}
& \alpha(F u) \\
&=(F u)(l) \\
&= \int_{0}^{T}(T-s) \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s} a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
&-B_{0}\left(\int_{0}^{\eta} \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s}-a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s\right) \\
&+\int_{0}^{l}(t-s) \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s}-a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
& \geq-B_{0}\left(\int_{0}^{\eta} \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s}-a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s\right) \\
& \geq A \int_{0}^{\eta} \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s} a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
& \geq A \int_{0}^{l} \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s} a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
& \geq A \int_{Y_{3}} \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s} a(r) f(u(r), \varphi(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
&> A \int_{Y_{3}} \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s} a(r) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \frac{b}{\delta}=b . \tag{20}
\end{align*}
$$

We conclude that (i) of Theorem 1 is satisfied.
We next address (ii) of Theorem 1. If we take $u \equiv((T-$ $\eta) / T) a, h=((T-\eta) / T) a$, then

$$
\begin{align*}
& \gamma(u)=u(\eta)=\frac{T-\eta}{T} a<c \\
& \psi(u)=u(\eta)=\frac{T-\eta}{T} a=h,  \tag{21}\\
& \beta(u)=u(l)=\frac{T-\eta}{T} a<a .
\end{align*}
$$

From this we know that $\{u \in Q(\gamma, \beta, \psi, h, a, c): \beta(u)<$ $a\} \neq \varnothing$. If $u \in Q(\gamma, \beta, \psi,((T-\eta) / T) a, a, c)$, then

$$
\begin{equation*}
0 \leq u(t) \leq \frac{T}{T-l} a, \quad \text { for } t \in[0, T]_{\mathrm{T}} \tag{22}
\end{equation*}
$$

From $\left(\mathrm{H}_{3}\right)$, we have

$$
\begin{align*}
& \beta(F u) \\
&=(F u)(l) \\
&= \int_{0}^{T}(T-s) \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s} a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
&-B_{0}\left(\int_{0}^{\eta} \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s}-a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s\right) \\
&+\int_{0}^{l}(t-s) \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s}-a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
& \leq \int_{0}^{T} T \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s} a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
&+B \int_{0}^{T} \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{s} a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
&+\int_{0}^{l} T \Phi_{q}\left(\int_{0}^{T} a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right) \nabla s \\
&= T(T+l+B) \Phi_{q}\left[\int_{Y_{1}} a(r) f(u(r), \varphi(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right. \\
& \quad\left.+\int_{Y_{2}} a(r) f(u(r), u(\mu(r))) \nabla r\right]
\end{align*}
$$

Now we show that (iii) of Theorem 1 is satisfied. If $u \in$ $P(\gamma, \alpha, b, c)$ and $\theta(F u)=F u(\eta)>(T /(T-\eta)) b$, then

$$
\begin{align*}
\alpha(F u) & \geq(F u)(l)=\frac{T-l}{T} F u(l) \geq \frac{T-l}{T} F u(\eta) \\
& >\frac{T-l}{T-\eta} b>b . \tag{24}
\end{align*}
$$

Finally, if $u \in Q(\gamma, \beta, a, c)$ and $\psi(F u)=F u(\eta)<((T-$ $\eta) / T) a$, then from (4) of Lemma 2 we have

$$
\begin{equation*}
\beta(F u)=F u(l) \leq \frac{T}{T-l} F u(l) \leq \frac{T}{T-\eta} F u(\eta)<a \tag{25}
\end{equation*}
$$

which shows that condition (iv) of Theorem 1 is fulfilled.
Thus, all the conditions of Theorem 1 are satisfied. Hence, $F$ has at least three fixed points $u_{1}, u_{2}, u_{3}$ satisfying

$$
\begin{gather*}
\beta\left(u_{1}\right)<a, \quad b<\alpha\left(u_{2}\right),  \tag{26}\\
a<\beta\left(u_{3}\right) \quad \text { with } \alpha\left(u_{3}\right)<b .
\end{gather*}
$$

Let

$$
u(t)= \begin{cases}u_{i}(t), & t \in[0, T]_{\mathrm{T}}, \quad i=1,2,3  \tag{27}\\ \varphi(t), & t \in[-r, 0]_{\mathrm{T}},\end{cases}
$$

which are three positive solutions of BVP (1).

## Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

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