

ON THE STABILITY OF A THREE-SPHERE

BY HIDEO MUTO

1. Introduction.

Let (M^m, g) be an m -dimensional closed connected Riemannian manifold. The identity mapping id_M of M is a harmonic mapping, that is, a critical point of the first variation of the energy functional. (M^m, g) is said to be stable when the second variation of the energy functional at id_M is non-negative and otherwise, (M, g) is said to be unstable. The m -dimensional ($m \geq 3$) unit spheres are unstable. And unstable, simply connected compact irreducible symmetric spaces were determined (see Smith [6], Nagano [4], Ohnita [5] and Urakawa [11]).

Closed manifolds with negative Ricci curvature and closed Kaehler manifolds are examples of stable manifolds. Since Gao and Yau [1] proved the existence of a metric with negative Ricci curvature on every 3-dimensional closed manifold, there exists a stable metric on every 3-dimensional closed manifold.

Recently Urakawa [12] and Tanno [9] studied some deformation of the standard metric g_0 on S^{2n+1} ($n \geq 1$) with constant sectional curvature one. Let (CP^n, h) be the complex projective space with the Fubini-Study metric with constant holomorphic sectional curvature 4 and $\pi: (S^m, g_0) \rightarrow (CP^n, h)$ ($m=2n+1$) be the Hopf fibration. Let ξ be the unit Killing vector field on S^m which is tangent to each fibre and η be the dual 1-form of ξ with respect to g_0 . We define a one-parameter family $g(t)$, $0 < t < \infty$, of Riemannian metrics on S^m by

$$g(t) = t^{-1}g_0 + t^{-1}(t^m - 1)\eta \otimes \eta.$$

THEOREM (Tanno [9]) For $m=2n+1 \geq 3$ and $t > t_0(m)$, $(S^m, g(t))$ is unstable, where $t_0(m) = \{[(m^2-4)^{1/2} - 1] / (m^2-5)\}^{1/m}$.

In this note, we show:

THEOREM A. $(S^3, g(t))$ is stable if and only if $t \leq t_0(3) = [\sqrt{5} - 1/4]^{1/3} = 0.676 \dots$.

Remark 1. The sectional curvature $K_\sigma(t)$ of $g(t)$ is positive for $0 < t < (4/3)^{1/3}$ (see Tanno [9]). In fact, for $t < 1$, $t^4 \leq K_\sigma(t) \leq t(4-3t^3)$ and for $t \geq 1$, $t(4-3t^3) \leq K_\sigma(t) \leq t^4$.

Received May 16, 1988, Revised September 8, 1988

Remark 2. The volume element of $(S^3, g(t))$ is invariant in $t \in (0, \infty)$.

The author would like to thank Professor Tanno for his helpful suggestions.

2. Preliminaries.

Let $g(t)$, $0 < t < \infty$, be the family of metrics on S^3 defined in the introduction. Let ${}^{(t)}\nabla$ (resp. ${}^{(t)}R_{ij}$) be the Riemannian connection (resp. Ricci tensor field) of $g(t)$. $A^1(S^3)$ denotes the space of 1-forms on S^3 . Let ${}^{(t)}\Delta$ be the Laplacian of $g(t)$ and let \langle, \rangle_t (resp. $\| \cdot \|_t$) be the L^2 -inner product (resp. L^2 -norm) of forms on $(S^3, g(t))$. The Ricci transformation ${}^{(t)}Q: A^1(S^3) \rightarrow A^1(S^3)$ is defined by ${}^{(t)}Q\omega = ({}^{(t)}R^k_j \omega_k)$ for $\omega \in A^1(S^3)$. For convenience, we set $\nabla = {}^{(1)}\nabla$, $\Delta = {}^{(1)}\Delta$, $\langle, \rangle = \langle, \rangle_1$, $\| \cdot \| = \| \cdot \|_1$ and $Q = {}^{(1)}Q$. The Jacobi operator of the identity mapping acts on the space of vector fields. By the natural duality, the Jacobi operator $J(t)$ acting on the space of 1-forms is of the form (see Smith [6]):

$$(2.1) \quad J(t) = -{}^{(t)}\Delta - 2{}^{(t)}Q.$$

Let λ_k be the k -th eigenvalue of the Laplacian Δ acting on the space of functions on S^3 with multiplicity $m(k)$. Then it is known that

$$(2.2) \quad \begin{aligned} \lambda_k &= k(k+2), & k &\geq 0, \\ m(k) &= (k+1)^2, & k &\geq 0. \end{aligned}$$

Let L_X be the Lie derivation with respect to a vector field X and V_k the space of eigenfunctions corresponding to the k -th eigenvalue. Then V_k has the following orthogonal decomposition with respect to g_0 (see Tanno [7]):

$$(2.3) \quad V_k = \sum_{\mathcal{G}} V_{k, \mathcal{G}}, \quad \mathcal{G} = k, k-2, \dots, k-2[k/2].$$

Here for any $f \in V_{k, \mathcal{G}}$, $L_\xi L_\xi f + \mathcal{G}^2 f = 0$.

Let $\{\xi_{(\alpha)}\}_{\alpha=1}^3$ be an orthonormal frame field of unit Killing vector fields of S^3 satisfying $\xi = \xi_{(1)}$ and $[\xi_{(\alpha)}, \xi_{(\beta)}] = 2\xi_{(\gamma)}$ where (α, β, γ) is a cyclic permutation of $(1, 2, 3)$ and $\{\eta_{(\alpha)}\}_{\alpha=1}^3$ the dual frame field of $\{\xi_{(\alpha)}\}_{\alpha=1}^3$ with respect to g_0 . Set $\Phi_{(\alpha)} = -\nabla \xi_{(\alpha)}$ and $\Phi = \Phi_{(\alpha)}$. Then $\xi_{(\alpha)}$, $\eta_{(\alpha)}$ and $\Phi_{(\alpha)}$ satisfy the following equations: for any vector fields X, Y on $S^3(1)$,

$$\begin{aligned} \Phi_{(\alpha)} \xi_{(\alpha)} &= 0, & \eta_{(\alpha)} \circ \Phi_{(\alpha)} &= 0, & \eta_{(\alpha)}(\xi_{(\alpha)}) &= 1, \\ \Phi_{(\alpha)} \Phi_{(\alpha)} X &= -X + \eta_{(\alpha)}(X) \xi_{(\alpha)}, \\ g_0(X, Y) &= g_0(\Phi_{(\alpha)} X, \Phi_{(\alpha)} Y) + \eta_{(\alpha)}(X) \eta_{(\alpha)}(Y), \\ (\nabla_X \Phi_{(\alpha)})(Y) &= g_0(X, Y) \xi_{(\alpha)} - \eta_{(\alpha)}(Y) X, \\ \Phi_{(\alpha)} \xi_{(\beta)} &= -\Phi_{(\beta)} \xi_{(\alpha)} = \xi_{(\gamma)}, \\ \Phi_{(\alpha)} \Phi_{(\beta)} - \xi_{(\alpha)} \otimes \eta_{(\beta)} &= -\Phi_{(\beta)} \Phi_{(\alpha)} + \xi_{(\beta)} \otimes \eta_{(\alpha)} = \Phi_{(\gamma)}, \end{aligned}$$

where (α, β, γ) is a cyclic permutation of $(1, 2, 3)$. Then we get immediately:

LEMMA 1. $\Phi_{(\alpha)}{}^{rs} = -\Phi_{(\alpha)}{}^{sr} = \nabla^r \xi_{(\alpha)}{}^s.$

LEMMA 2. For any $t \in (0, \infty)$, we have $\langle \eta_{(\alpha)}, \eta_{(\beta)} \rangle_t = 0$ ($\alpha \neq \beta$), $\langle \eta_{(1)}, \eta_{(1)} \rangle_t = t^{-2}$ and $\langle \eta_{(2)}, \eta_{(2)} \rangle_t = \langle \eta_{(3)}, \eta_{(3)} \rangle_t = t.$

LEMMA 3. We get $L_{\xi_{(\alpha)}}(V_k) \subset V_k$, $L_{\xi_{(1)}}(V_{k,9}) \subset V_{k,9}$ and $\langle L_{\xi_{(\alpha)}}f, h \rangle = -\langle f, L_{\xi_{(\alpha)}}f \rangle$ for any smooth functions f and h on S^3 .

3. Proof of Theorem A.

By (2.1), Tanno [9] gave the Jacobi operator $J(t)$ of $g(t)$.

LEMMA 4 (Tanno [9]). The Jacobi operator $J(t)$ of $(S^m, g(t))$ ($m=2n+1 \geq 3$) is given by the following: For $\omega \in A^1(S^m)$,

$$J(t)\omega = -t\Delta\omega + t(1-t^{-m})L_{\xi}L_{\xi}\omega + 2t(t^m-1)(\Phi^{rs}\nabla_r\omega_s)\eta - 2t(m+1-2t^m)\omega - 2(m+1)t(t^m-1)\omega(\xi)\eta.$$

We prepare some lemmas to prove theorem A.

LEMMA 5. On S^3 , the following equations hold.

- 1) $\Delta(f\eta_{(\alpha)}) = -(\lambda_k + 4)f\eta_{(\alpha)} + 2df \cdot \Phi_{(\alpha)}$, $f \in V_k$.
- 2) $L_{\xi}L_{\xi}(f\eta_{(1)}) = -\varrho^2 f\eta_{(1)}$, $f \in V_{k,9}$.
 $L_{\xi}L_{\xi}(f\eta_{(2)}) = -\varrho^2 f\eta_{(2)} - 4f\eta_{(2)} + 4\xi_{(1)}f\eta_{(3)}$, $f \in V_{k,9}$.
 $L_{\xi}L_{\xi}(f\eta_{(3)}) = -\varrho^2 f\eta_{(3)} - 4f\eta_{(3)} - 4\xi_{(1)}f\eta_{(2)}$, $f \in V_{k,9}$.
- 3) $\Phi^{rs}\nabla_r(\sum_{\alpha} f_{\alpha}\eta_{(\alpha)})_s = 2f_1 + \xi_{(3)}f_2 - \xi_{(2)}f_3$.
- 4) For any $t \in (0, \infty)$, $\alpha=2, 3$, we have $J(t)\eta_{(1)} = 0$ and $J(t)\eta_{(\alpha)} = 4t(t^3 - 2 + t^{-3})\eta_{(\alpha)}$.

Proof. 1) and 4) were proved by Tanno in [8] and [9]. 2) is easily verified by $[\xi_{(\alpha)}, \xi_{(\beta)}] = 2\xi_{(\gamma)}$. Since we have $\Phi^{rs}\nabla_r\eta_{(\alpha)s} = \langle \nabla\xi_{(1)}, \nabla\xi_{(\alpha)} \rangle$ by Lemma 1, we have $\Phi^{rs}\nabla_r\eta_{(1)s} = 2$ and $\Phi^{rs}\nabla_r\eta_{(\alpha)s} = 0$ for $\alpha=2, 3$. By the definition of Φ , we obtain $\Phi^{rs}\nabla_r f_{(\alpha)}\eta_{(\alpha)s} = -g_0(\text{grad } f_{(\alpha)}, \nabla_{\xi_{(\alpha)}}\xi_{(1)})$. Therefore 3) is proved.

q. e. d.

By the orthogonal decomposition (2.3) of V_k , any 1-form ω on S^3 can be represented by $\omega = \sum_{i,k,9} f_{i,k,9} \eta_{(i)}$, $f_{i,k,9} \in V_{k,9}$. By Lemmas 2, 3 and 4, we have the following lemma.

LEMMA 6. For any $\omega = \sum_{i,k,9} f_{i,k,9} \eta_{(i)} \in A^1(S^3)$ and $t \in (0, \infty)$, we have

$$\langle J(t)\omega, \omega \rangle_t = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} S(\omega, k, t).$$

Here

$$\begin{aligned} S(\omega, k, t) &= \sum_{\mathcal{G}} [\lambda_k + (t^{-3} - 1)\mathcal{G}^2] t^{-1} \|f_{1,k,\mathcal{G}}\|^2 \\ &\quad + \sum_{\mathcal{G}} [\lambda_k + 4(t^{-3} - 2 + t^3) + (t^{-3} - 1)\mathcal{G}^2] t^2 \|f_{2,k,\mathcal{G}}\|^2 \\ &\quad + \sum_{\mathcal{G}} [\lambda_k + 4(t^{-3} - 2 + t^3) + (t^{-3} - 1)\mathcal{G}^2] t^2 \|f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}}\|^2 \\ &\quad + (8t^{-1} - 4t^2) \sum_{\mathcal{G}} \langle \xi_{(1)} f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}}, f_{2,k,\mathcal{G}} \rangle \\ &\quad + 4t^2 \sum_{\mathcal{G}, \alpha} \langle \xi_{(3)} f_{2,k,\mathcal{G}}, f_{1,k,\alpha} \rangle \\ &\quad - 4t^2 \sum_{\mathcal{G}, \alpha} \langle \xi_{(2)} f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}}, f_{1,k,\alpha} \rangle. \end{aligned}$$

Proof. Using $df \circ \Phi_{(\alpha)} = \xi_{(\gamma)} f \eta_{(\beta)} - \xi_{(\beta)} f \eta_{(\gamma)}$ and Lemma 2, we have

$$\begin{aligned} J(t)\omega &= \sum_{k,\mathcal{G}} [\lambda_k + (t^{-3} - 1)\mathcal{G}^2] f_{1,k,\mathcal{G}} \eta_{(1)} \\ &\quad + \sum_{k,\mathcal{G}} [\lambda_k + 4(t^{-3} - 2 + t^3) + (t^{-3} - 1)\mathcal{G}^2] f_{2,k,\mathcal{G}} \eta_{(2)} \\ &\quad + \sum_{k,\mathcal{G}} [\lambda_k + 4(t^{-3} - 2 + t^3) + (t^{-3} - 1)\mathcal{G}^2] f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}} \eta_{(3)} \\ &\quad + 4(t^{-3} - 1) \sum_{k,\mathcal{G}} \xi_{(1)} f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}} \eta_{(2)} \\ &\quad + 4(t^{-3} - 1) \sum_{k,\mathcal{G}} \xi_{(1)} f_{2,k,\mathcal{G}} \eta_{(3)} \\ &\quad - 2 \sum_{k,\mathcal{G}} [\xi_{(3)} f_{1,k,\mathcal{G}} \eta_{(2)} - \xi_{(2)} f_{1,k,\mathcal{G}} \eta_{(3)}] \\ &\quad - 2 \sum_{k,\mathcal{G}} [\xi_{(1)} f_{1,k,\mathcal{G}} \eta_{(3)} - \xi_{(3)} f_{1,k,\mathcal{G}} \eta_{(1)}] \\ &\quad - 2 \sum_{k,\mathcal{G}} [\xi_{(2)} f_{1,k,\mathcal{G}} \eta_{(1)} - \xi_{(1)} f_{1,k,\mathcal{G}} \eta_{(2)}] \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, by Lemmas 2 and 3, we have the above representation of $S(\omega, k, t)$.
q. e. d.

LEMMA 7. For any $\omega = \sum_{i,k,\mathcal{G}} f_{i,k,\mathcal{G}} \eta_{(i)} \in A^1(S^3)$, set $f_{i,k} = \sum_{\mathcal{G}} f_{i,k,\mathcal{G}}$. Then for any $\omega \in A^1(S^3)$, $t \in (0, 1]$ and $k \geq 0$, we have

$$\begin{aligned} S(\omega, k, t) &\geq t^{-1}(t^{-3} - 1) \sum_{\mathcal{G}} \mathcal{G}^2 \|f_{1,k,\mathcal{G}}\|^2 + t^{-1} k(k-2) \|f_{1,k}\|^2 \\ &\quad + t^2(k-2) \{k + 2(1-t^3)\} (\|f_{2,k}\|^2 + \|f_{3,k}\|^2) \\ &\quad + 2kt^{-1} \{(\|f_{1,k}\| - t^3 \|f_{2,k}\|)^2 + (\|f_{1,k}\| - t^3 \|f_{3,k}\|)^2\} \\ &\quad + 2t^2 k \sum_{\mathcal{G}} (\|f_{2,k,\mathcal{G}}\| - \|f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}}\|)^2 \\ &\quad + t^2(t^{-3} - 1) \sum_{\mathcal{G}} [(\mathcal{G} - 2)^2 (\|f_{2,k,\mathcal{G}}\|^2 + \|f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}}\|^2) \\ &\quad \quad + 4t(\|f_{2,k,\mathcal{G}}\| - \|f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}}\|)^2]. \end{aligned}$$

Proof. By the definition of $V_{k,\mathcal{G}}$, we have that for any $\phi \in V_{k,\mathcal{G}}$ and $A=2, 3$,

$$(3.1) \quad \langle \xi_{(1)} f_{i,k,\mathcal{G}}, f_{j,k,\mathcal{G}} \rangle \leq \mathcal{G} \|f_{i,k,\mathcal{G}}\| \|f_{j,k,\mathcal{G}}\|,$$

$$(3.2) \quad \sum_{\mathcal{G}, \alpha} \langle \xi_{(A)} f_{i,k,\mathcal{G}}, f_{j,k,\alpha} \rangle \leq k \|f_{i,k}\| \|f_{j,k}\|.$$

By (3.1), (3.2) and Lemma 6, we have

$$\begin{aligned}
S(\omega, k, t) &= t^{-1}(t^{-3}-1)\sum_{\mathcal{G}}\mathcal{G}^2\|f_{1,k,\mathcal{G}}\|^2 \\
&\quad + t^{-1}k(k-2)\|f_{1,k}\|^2 + t^{-1}4k\|f_{1,k}\|^2 \\
&\quad + t^2[\lambda_k - 4(1-t^3)](\|f_{2,k}\|^2 + \|f_{3,k}\|^2) \\
&\quad + t^2(t^{-3}-1)\sum_{\mathcal{G}}(\mathcal{G}^2+4)(\|f_{2,k,\mathcal{G}}\|^2 + \|f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}}\|^2) \\
&\quad + 8t^2(t^{-3}-1)\sum_{\mathcal{G}}\langle\xi_{(1)}f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}}, f_{2,k,\mathcal{G}}\rangle \\
&\quad + 4t^2\sum_{\mathcal{G}}\langle\xi_{(1)}f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}}, f_{2,k,\mathcal{G}}\rangle \\
&\quad - 4t^2\sum_{\mathcal{G},\alpha}\langle\xi_{(3)}f_{1,k,\mathcal{G}}, f_{2,k,\alpha}\rangle + \langle\xi_{(2)}f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}}, f_{1,k,\alpha}\rangle \\
&\geq t^{-1}(t^{-3}-1)\sum_{\mathcal{G}}\mathcal{G}^2\|f_{1,k,\mathcal{G}}\|^2 \\
&\quad + t^{-1}k(k-2)\|f_{1,k}\|^2 + t^{-1}4k\|f_{1,k}\|^2 \\
&\quad + t^2[k^2+2k-4(1-t^3)](\|f_{2,k}\|^2 + \|f_{3,k}\|^2) \\
&\quad + t^2(t^{-3}-1)\sum_{\mathcal{G}}[(\mathcal{G}-2)^2(\|f_{2,k,\mathcal{G}}\|^2 + \|f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}}\|^2) \\
&\quad\quad + 4\mathcal{G}(\|f_{2,k,\mathcal{G}}\| - \|f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}}\|)^2] \\
&\quad - 4t^2k\|f_{2,k}\|\|f_{3,k}\| \\
&\quad - 4t^2k\|f_{1,k}\|(\|f_{2,k}\|^2 + \|f_{3,k}\|^2) \\
&\geq t^{-1}(t^{-3}-1)\sum_{\mathcal{G}}\mathcal{G}^2\|f_{1,k,\mathcal{G}}\|^2 + t^{-1}k(k-2)\|f_{1,k}\|^2 \\
&\quad + 2t^{-1}k[(\|f_{1,k}\| - t^3\|f_{2,k}\|)^2 + (\|f_{1,k}\| - t^3\|f_{2,k}\|)^2] \\
&\quad + t^2[k^2-2k-4(1-t^3)-2kt^3](\|f_{2,k}\|^2 + \|f_{3,k}\|^2) \\
&\quad + 2t^2k(\|f_{2,k}\|^2 + \|f_{3,k}\|^2) \\
&\quad + t^2(t^{-3}-1)\sum_{\mathcal{G}}[(\mathcal{G}-2)^2(\|f_{2,k,\mathcal{G}}\|^2 + \|f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}}\|^2) \\
&\quad\quad + 4\mathcal{G}(\|f_{2,k,\mathcal{G}}\| - \|f_{3,k,\mathcal{G}}\|)^2].
\end{aligned}$$

And this is the required inequality.

q. e. d.

Set $W_1 = \{\sum_{i=1}^3 f_i \eta_{(i)} : f_i \in V_1\}$. To decompose W_1 into three linear subspaces, we define four forms in W_1 . Let (x, y, z, w) be the canonical coordinate system in R^4 such that ξ is the restriction of $y\partial/\partial x - x\partial/\partial y + w\partial/\partial z - z\partial/\partial w$. Set

$$\begin{aligned}
\phi_1 &= x\eta_{(2)} - y\eta_{(3)}, & \phi_2 &= y\eta_{(2)} + x\eta_{(3)}, \\
\phi_3 &= z\eta_{(2)} - w\eta_{(3)}, & \phi_4 &= w\eta_{(2)} + z\eta_{(3)}.
\end{aligned}$$

LEMMA 8. W_1 has the following orthogonal decomposition with respect to $g(t)$:

$$W_1 = W_{1,1} + W_{1,2} + W_{1,3}.$$

Here

$$\begin{aligned}
 J(t)\omega_i &= u_i(t)\omega_i, \quad \omega_i \in W_{1,i} \quad (i=1, 2, 3), \\
 u_1(t) &= t(2t^3+t^{-3}-1-\sqrt{(2t^3-1)^2+8}), \\
 u_2(t) &= t(2t^3+t^{-3}-1+\sqrt{(2t^3-1)^2+8}), \\
 u_3(t) &= t(9t^{-3}-8+4t^3), \\
 W_{1,1} &= \{f\eta + a_1(t)df \circ \Phi : f \in V_1\}, \\
 W_{1,2} &= \{f\eta + a_2(t)df \circ \Phi : f \in V_1\}, \\
 W_{1,3} &= \text{Span}\{\phi_1, \phi_2, \phi_3, \phi_4\}, \\
 a_1(t) &= 4t^{-3}(3-2t^3-\sqrt{(2t^3-1)^2+8}), \\
 a_2(t) &= 4t^{-3}(3-2t^3+\sqrt{(2t^3-1)^2+8}).
 \end{aligned}$$

Proof. Tanno [9] proved that $W_{1,1}$ and $W_{1,2}$ are eigenspaces of $J(t)$ corresponding to $u_1(t)$ and $u_2(t)$. By Lemma 5, we obtain that $\Delta\omega = -9\omega$, $L_\xi^2\omega = -9\omega$ and $\Phi^{rs}\nabla_r\omega_s = 0$. So, using Lemma 4, we see that $W_{1,3}$ is an eigenspace of $J(t)$ corresponding to $u_3(t)$. q. e. d.

Proof of Theorem A. When $t > t_0(3)$, by showing $u_1(t) < 0$, Tanno proved that $(S^3, g(t))$ is unstable. From Lemma 7, we have $S(\omega, k, t) \geq 0$ for any $\omega \in A^1(S^3)$, any $t \in (0, 1]$ and $k \neq 1$. And by Lemma 8, when $t \leq t_0(3)$, $J(t)$ have no negative eigenvalue, that is, $(S^3, g(t))$ is stable. q. e. d.

We also have the nullities $\text{Null}_t(id)$ and the indices $\text{Index}_t(id)$ of the identity mapping on $(S^3, g(t))$ for $0 < t \leq 1$.

COROLLARY B. *We have*

$$\text{Null}_t(id) = \begin{cases} 4 & (0 < t < t_0(3)) \\ 8 & (t = t_0(3)) \\ 4 & (t_0(3) < t < 1) \\ 6 & (t = 1) \end{cases} \quad \text{Index}_t(id) = \begin{cases} 0 & (0 < t \leq t_0(3)) \\ 4 & (t_0(3) < t \leq 1). \end{cases}$$

Proof. Since indices are obtained by Lemmas 7 and 8, we give nullities of the identity mapping. From Lemma 7, we have that for any $t \in (0, 1]$, $k \neq 1$, $S(\omega, k, t) \geq 0$ and moreover that if $f_{i,k} \neq 0$ for some i and $k \neq 0, 1, 2$, then $S(\omega, k, t) > 0$. For $k=2$, set $S(\omega, k, t) = 0$. Then we have that $f_{1,2,2} = f_{2,2,0} = f_{3,2,0} = 0$ and $\|f_{2,2}\| = \|f_{3,2}\| = t^{-3}\|f_{1,2}\|$. Since we have $\xi_{(1)}f_{2,2} = 2f_{3,2}$ by (3.1) and (3.2), we obtain that $\xi_{(3)}f_{1,2} = 2t^3f_{2,2}$ and $\xi_{(2)}f_{1,2} = -2t^3f_{3,2}$. Therefore we have $f_{1,2}\eta_{(1)} + f_{2,2}\eta_{(2)} + f_{3,2}\eta_{(3)} = f_{1,2,0}\eta_{(1)} + 2^{-1}t^{-3}d(f_{1,2,0}) \circ \Phi$. By $\dim V_{2,0} = 3$ and Lemma 8, we have nullities of the identity mapping of $(S^3, g(t))$ for $t \in (0, 1]$. q. e. d.

REFERENCES

- [1] L. Z. GAO AND S. T. YAU, The existence of negatively Ricci curved metrics on three manifolds, *Invent. math.*, **85** (1986), 637-652.
- [2] H. MUTO, The first eigenvalue of the Laplacian on even dimensional spheres, *Tôhoku Math. Journ.*, **32** (1980), 427-432.
- [3] H. MUTO AND H. URAKAWA, On the least positive eigenvalue of the Laplacian for compact homogeneous spaces, *Osaka Journ. Math.*, **17** (1980), 471-484.
- [4] T. NAGANO, Stability of harmonic maps between symmetric spaces, *Lect. Notes Math.*, **949**, Springer-Verlag, 1982, 130-137.
- [5] Y. OHNITA, Stability of harmonic maps and standard minimal immersions, *Tôhoku Math. Journ.*, **38** (1986), 259-267.
- [6] R. T. SMITH, The second variation formula for harmonic mappings, *Proc. Amer. Math. Soc.*, **47** (1975), 229-236.
- [7] S. TANNO, The first eigenvalue of the Laplacian on spheres, *Tôhoku Math. Journ.*, **31** (1979), 179-185.
- [8] S. TANNO, Geometric expressions of eigen 1-forms of the Laplacian on spheres. *Spectra of Riemannian manifolds* (Kaigai Pub.), Tokyo, 1983, 115-128.
- [9] S. TANNO, Instability of spheres with deformed Riemannian metrics, *Kodai Math Journ.*, **10** (1987), 250-257.
- [10] H. URAKAWA, On the least positive eigenvalue of the Laplacian for compact group manifolds, *Journ. Math. Soc. Japan*, **31** (1979), 209-226.
- [11] H. URAKAWA, The first eigenvalue of the Laplacian for positively curved homogeneous Riemannian manifold, *Comp. Math.*, **59** (1986), 57-71.
- [12] H. URAKAWA, Stability of harmonic maps and eigenvalues of the Laplacian, *Trans. Amer. Math. Soc.*, **301** (1987), 557-589.

DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS
TOKYO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY