

1-1-2016

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Recommended Citation

JIANG, QINHUI and SHAO, CHANGGUO (2016) "Primary and biprimary class sizes implying nilpotency of finite groups," *Turkish Journal of Mathematics*: Vol. 40: No. 2, Article 13. <https://doi.org/10.3906/mat-1504-79>

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Primary and biprimary class sizes implying nilpotency of finite groups

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Received: 26.04.2015

Accepted/Published Online: 24.08.2015

Final Version: 10.02.2016

Abstract: Let G be a finite group. We prove that G is nilpotent if the set of conjugacy class sizes of primary and biprimary elements is $\{1, m, n, mn\}$ with m and n coprime. Moreover, m and n are distinct primes power.

Key words: Finite groups, conjugacy class sizes, primary and biprimary elements

1. Introduction

Throughout this paper all groups considered are finite and G always denotes a group. For an element x of a group G we denote by x^G the conjugacy class containing x , and by $|x^G|$ the conjugacy class size of x . A primary element is an element of prime power order and a biprimary (triprimary) element is an element whose order is divisible by precisely two (three) primes. The rest of the notation and terminology is standard; readers may refer to [7].

In recent years, there has been tremendous interest in studying the structure of a group by some arithmetical conditions imposed on the conjugacy class sizes of G . A classical result due to Itô [8] is that a group G with two conjugacy class sizes is nilpotent and G is solvable if it has three conjugacy class sizes. Beltrán and Felipe [3, 2] studied groups with four conjugacy class sizes and proved that if the set of conjugacy class sizes of G is $\{1, m, n, mn\}$ with integers $m, n > 1$ coprime, then G is nilpotent with m and n distinct primes power.

To investigate the influence of partial conjugacy class sizes on the structure of groups is also an interesting topic. For instance, Li [11] proved that a group G is solvable if its conjugacy class size of every primary element is either 1 or m with m a fixed integer. In [9], Jiang and Shao showed that if the set of conjugacy class sizes of primary, biprimary, and triprimary elements is $\{1, m, n, mn\}$ with m and n coprime, then G is solvable.

In the present paper, we are concerned with the influence of conjugacy class sizes of primary and biprimary elements on the structure of groups. Our main result is the following:

Theorem A Let G be a group. Further let $m, n > 1$ be two coprime integers. If the set of conjugacy class sizes of primary and biprimary elements of G is $\{1, m, n, mn\}$, then G is nilpotent. Furthermore, $m = p^a$ and $n = q^b$ for distinct primes p and q .

The authors proved in [14] that:

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2010 AMS Mathematics Subject Classification: 20D10, 20E45.

Theorem B ([14, Main Theorem]) Let G be a solvable group and let m and n be two coprime integers. Suppose further that the conjugacy class size of every primary or biprimary element is one of $\{1, m, n, mn\}$ and all of these occur. Then G is nilpotent. In particular, $m = p^a$ and $n = q^b$ for distinct primes p and q .

As a result, our main task of this paper is to prove the solvability of G . That is:

Theorem C Let G be a group. Further let $m, n > 1$ be two coprime integers. If the set of conjugacy class sizes of primary and biprimary elements of G is $\{1, m, n, mn\}$, then G is solvable.

In order to show Theorem C, first we prove a special case:

Theorem D Let G be a group and n be an integer coprime to p . If the set of conjugacy class sizes of primary and biprimary elements of G is $\{1, p^a, n, p^a n\}$ with positive integer a , then G is solvable.

2. Preliminaries

Before taking up the problems, we first give some lemmas that will be used in the sequel.

Lemma 2.1 ([12, Theorem 5]) If for some prime p every primary p' -element of a group G has conjugacy class size prime to p , then the Sylow p -subgroup of G is a direct factor of G .

Lemma 2.2 ([10, Theorem 3.2]) Let G be a group such that p^a is the highest power of a prime p that divides the conjugacy class size of a biprimary element of G . Assume that there is a p -element in G whose conjugacy class size is precisely p^a . Then G has a normal p -complement.

Lemma 2.3 ([4, Corollary B]) Let G be a group and suppose that the conjugacy class size of every primary element is 1 or m . Then G is nilpotent. More precisely, $m = p^n$ for some prime p , and $G = P \times A$ with A abelian and P a p -group.

Lemma 2.4 Let G be a group and p a prime. Then every p -element has a p -power conjugacy class size if and only if $G = \mathbf{O}_p(G) \times \mathbf{O}_{p'}(G)$.

Proof The sufficiency is obvious; we only prove the necessity. Since every p -element has a p -power conjugacy class size, we see that $\mathbf{O}_p(G) \in \text{Syl}_p(G)$ by [1, Corollary 4]. By the Schur–Zassenhaus theorem, G has a Hall p' -subgroup, say H . On the other hand, for an arbitrary element $y \in G$, we may write $y = y_p \cdot y_{p'}$, where y_p and $y_{p'}$ are the p -part and the p' -part of y , respectively. Since $|y_p^G|$ is a p -power, there is some $g \in G$ such that $y_{p'} \leq H^g \leq \mathbf{C}_G(y_p)$, yielding $y_p \in \mathbf{C}_G(H)^g$. As a result, $y \in \mathbf{C}_G(H)^g H^g$, leading to $G \subseteq \bigcup_{g \in G} (\mathbf{C}_G(H)H)^g$. Consequently, $G = \mathbf{C}_G(H)H$, implying $H \trianglelefteq G$ and thus $G = \mathbf{O}_p(G) \times \mathbf{O}_{p'}(G)$. \square

Lemma 2.5 ([14, Lemma 2.5]) Suppose that the three smallest nontrivial conjugacy class sizes of primary and biprimary elements are $a < b < c$ with $(a, b) = 1$ and $a^2 < c$. Then the set $W := \{g \in G \mid |g^G| = 1 \text{ or } a\}$ is a normal subgroup of G .

Lemma 2.6 ([6, Theorem 5.3.4]) Let $P \times Q$ be the direct product of a p -group P and a p' -group Q . Suppose that G is a p -group such that $\mathbf{C}_G(P) \leq \mathbf{C}_G(Q)$. Then Q acts trivially on G .

Lemma 2.7 ([14, Lemma 2.6]) Let $G = K \rtimes H$ and $g \in H$. Then $\mathbf{C}_G(g) = \mathbf{C}_K(g)\mathbf{C}_H(g)$.

Lemma 2.8 ([13, 9.1.10]) Let the group G possess a nilpotent Hall π -subgroup H . Then every π -subgroup of G is contained in a conjugate of H . In particular, all Hall π -subgroups of G are conjugate.

3. Proof of Theorem D

Proof If there exists a prime $r \in \pi(G) - (\{p\} \cup \pi(n))$, then Lemma 2.1 shows that the Sylow r -subgroup R of G is a direct factor of G , implying that the conjugacy class size of each r -element is an r -number. As a result, $R \leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$ and we may write $G = A \times B$, where $A \leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$ and B is a Hall $\{p\} \cup \pi(n)$ -subgroup of G . As central factors are irrelevant in this context, we conclude that the set of conjugacy class sizes of primary and biprimary elements of B is $\{1, p^a, n, p^a n\}$. Without loss of generality, G can be assumed as a $\{p\} \cup \pi(n)$ -group. Moreover, we may suppose that $|\pi(n)| \geq 2$ since, otherwise, G is a $\{p, q\}$ -group for some prime q distinct from p , and the theorem follows immediately by [5, Theorem 2]. We divide the proof into several steps.

Step 1. There exists no p -element of conjugacy class size p^a .

Assume false. Then G has a normal p -complement K by Lemma 2.2. Further, for every primary element $x \in K$, we have

$$|G : K||K : \mathbf{C}_K(x)| = |G : \mathbf{C}_G(x)||\mathbf{C}_G(x) : \mathbf{C}_K(x)|,$$

yielding to $|x^K| = 1$ or n . As a result, K is nilpotent by Lemma 2.3. Moreover, G is solvable according to [7, Theorem 6.4.3], and we are done.

Step 2. There is no p' -element of conjugacy class size n .

Assume on the contrary that y is a p' -element of conjugacy class size n . By considering its primary decomposition, y can be assumed to be a q -element for some $q \in \pi(n)$. Further, for every primary q' -element $x \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)$, we obtain that $|\mathbf{C}_G(y) : \mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{C}_G(y)}(x)| = |\mathbf{C}_G(y) : \mathbf{C}_G(xy)| = 1$ or p^a , which follows by Lemma 2.1 that $\mathbf{C}_G(y) = \mathbf{C}_G(y)_q \times \mathbf{C}_G(y)_{q'}$, where $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_{q'}$ is the normal Hall q' -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$.

On the other hand, for every primary element $z \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)_{q'}$, we see that $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_q \leq \mathbf{C}_G(z)$, indicating that $\mathbf{C}_G(y) \cap \mathbf{C}_G(z) = \mathbf{C}_G(y)_q(\mathbf{C}_G(y)_{q'} \cap \mathbf{C}_G(z))$. This implies that $|\mathbf{C}_G(y)_{q'} : \mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{C}_G(y)_{q'}}(z)| = |\mathbf{C}_G(y)_{q'} : \mathbf{C}_G(y)_{q'} \cap \mathbf{C}_G(z)| = |\mathbf{C}_G(y) : \mathbf{C}_G(yz)| = 1$ or p^a . Then Lemma 2.3 gives that $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_{q'}$ is nilpotent and thus $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_{q'} = P \times B$, where $P \in \text{Syl}_p(G)$ and B is a Hall $\{p, q'\}$ -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$. Moreover, $\mathbf{C}_G(y) = \mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'} \times P$. Let t be a primary p' -element of conjugacy class size p^a in G , which exists by Step 1. Without loss we may assume that $y \in \mathbf{C}_G(t)$, yielding $t \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'}$, against the fact that $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'}$ is centralized by P .

Step 3. If x is a p -element of conjugacy class size $p^a n$, then $\mathbf{C}_G(x) = \mathbf{C}_G(x)_p \times \mathbf{C}_G(x)_{p'}$, where $\mathbf{C}_G(x)_p$ is the Sylow p -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(x)$ and $\mathbf{C}_G(x)_{p'} \not\leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$ is the abelian Hall p' -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(x)$, respectively. On the other hand, if y is an r -element of conjugacy class size $p^a n$ with prime $r \neq p$, then $\mathbf{C}_G(y) = \mathbf{C}_G(y)_p \times \mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'}$, where $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_p \not\leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$ is the abelian Sylow p -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$ and $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'}$ is the Hall π' -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$.

Let x be a p -element of conjugacy class size $p^a n$. Then for every primary p' -element $z \in \mathbf{C}_G(x)$, we obtain that $\mathbf{C}_G(xz) = \mathbf{C}_G(x) \cap \mathbf{C}_G(z) \leq \mathbf{C}_G(x)$. By the maximality of $p^a n$, we see that $\mathbf{C}_G(xz) = \mathbf{C}_G(x) \leq \mathbf{C}_G(z)$ and thus $z \in \mathbf{Z}(\mathbf{C}_G(x))$. This shows that $\mathbf{C}_G(x) = \mathbf{C}_G(x)_p \times \mathbf{C}_G(x)_{p'}$, where $\mathbf{C}_G(x)_p$ is the Sylow p -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(x)$ and $\mathbf{C}_G(x)_{p'}$ is the abelian Hall p' -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(x)$. Assume that $\mathbf{C}_G(x)_{p'} \leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$.

Then $\mathbf{C}_G(x)_{p'} = \mathbf{Z}(G)_{p'}$ and thus $|G : \mathbf{Z}(G)|_{p'} = n$. We prove that $\mathbf{C}_G(t)_p = \mathbf{Z}(G)_p$ for every noncentral primary p' -element t . If not, we may select some element $w \in \mathbf{C}_G(t)_p - \mathbf{Z}(G)$ satisfying $|w^G| = n$ or $p^a n$ by Step 2. Both cases indicate that $\mathbf{Z}(G)_{p'}$ is a Hall p' -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(w)$, yielding that $t \in \mathbf{Z}(G)$, contrary to the choice of t . Hence, $|G : \mathbf{Z}(G)|_p = p^a$ and thus $|G : \mathbf{Z}(G)| = |G : \mathbf{Z}(G)|_p |G : \mathbf{Z}(G)|_{p'} = p^a n$, against the existence of a primary or biprimary element of conjugacy class size $p^a n$.

Let y be an r -element of conjugacy class sizes $p^a n$ with $r \neq p$. The same argument above implies that $\mathbf{C}_G(y) = \mathbf{C}_G(y)_r \times \mathbf{C}_G(y)_{r'} = \mathbf{C}_G(y)_p \times \mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'}$, where $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_p$ is the abelian Sylow p -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$ and $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'}$ is the Hall p' -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$. Suppose that $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_p \leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$. Then $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_p = \mathbf{Z}(G)_p$, yielding that $|G : \mathbf{Z}(G)|_p = p^a$. We prove that $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_{p'} = \mathbf{Z}(G)_{p'}$ for every noncentral p -element w . Otherwise, we select some element $t \in \mathbf{C}_G(w)_{p'} - \mathbf{Z}(G)$, a primary element. Then $|t^G| = p^a$ or $p^a n$ by Step 2. Further, both cases imply that $\mathbf{Z}(G)_p$ is a Sylow p -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(t)$, yielding that $w \in \mathbf{Z}(G)$, contrary to the choice of w . This shows that $|G : \mathbf{Z}(G)|_{p'} = n$ and thus $|G : \mathbf{Z}(G)| = |G : \mathbf{Z}(G)|_p |G : \mathbf{Z}(G)|_{p'} = p^a n$, against our assumption.

In the following, we divide the proof into two cases: $p^a > n$ and $p^a < n$.

Case 1. $p^a > n$.

Step 4. $L_p := \{x \in G \mid x \text{ is a } p\text{-element such that } |x^G| = 1 \text{ or } n\}$ is an abelian normal Sylow p -subgroup of G .

Since $p^a > n$, by Lemma 2.5 we see that $W := \{x \in G \mid |x^G| = 1 \text{ or } n\}$ is a normal subgroup of G . Moreover, $W = L_p \times \mathbf{Z}(G)_{p'}$ since there is no p' -element of conjugacy class size n by Step 2. As a result, $L_p \trianglelefteq G$. Moreover, L_p is abelian since $|u^{L_p}|$ divides $(|L_p|, n) = 1$ for each element $u \in L_p$.

If L_p is not a Sylow p -subgroup of G , then there exists a p -element y such that $|y^G| = p^a n$ by Step 1, which leads to $\mathbf{C}_G(y) = \mathbf{C}_G(y)_p \times \mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'}$ with the abelian Hall p' -subgroup $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'}$ such that $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'} \not\leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$ by Step 3. Taking an arbitrary primary element $z \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'} - \mathbf{Z}(G)$, we see that $\mathbf{C}_G(y) \leq \mathbf{C}_G(z)$ and thus $\mathbf{C}_{L_p}(y) \leq \mathbf{C}_{L_p}(z)$, which follows by Lemma 2.6 that $z \in \mathbf{C}_G(L_p) =: M$. Consequently, $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'} \leq M$. On the other hand, because z has conjugacy class size p^a or $p^a n$, we see that $|\mathbf{C}_G(z) : \mathbf{C}_G(y)| = 1$ or n . Note that $L_p \leq \mathbf{C}_G(z)$. This indicates $L_p \leq \mathbf{C}_G(y)$ and thus $y \in M$. We conclude that M contains all p -elements of G as L_p is abelian. As a result, $\mathbf{C}_G(y) \leq M$ and $|G : M|$ is a p' -number. Note that $M \leq \mathbf{C}_G(k)$ for every $k \in L_p - \mathbf{Z}(G)$ because L_p is abelian. This yields that n divides $|G : M|$.

Along with the equality

$$|G : M| |M : \mathbf{C}_G(y)| = |G : \mathbf{C}_G(y)| = p^a n,$$

we see clearly that $|G : M| = n$ and $|M : \mathbf{C}_G(y)| = p^a$, indicating that $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'}$ is a Hall p' -subgroup of M . Further, every p -element of M has conjugacy class size 1 or p^a in M . By Lemma 2.4, we see that $M = M_p \times \mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'}$, where $M_p \in \text{Syl}_p(G)$ and $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'} \not\leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$ by Step 3. If we choose a noncentral primary element $w \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)_{p'}$, we get $|w^G| = n$, against Step 2.

Step 5. Conclusion in Case 1.

Since G has an abelian normal Sylow p -subgroup L_p , we obtain that G has a p -complement H by the Schur–Zassenhaus theorem. If H is abelian, then G is solvable by [7, Theorem 6.4.3], which follows by Theorem B that G is nilpotent. Write $G = P \times H$, where $P \in \text{Syl}_p(G)$. Consequently, $H \leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$, a contradiction to our

assumption. As a result, H is nonabelian. Lemma 2.7 implies that the set of conjugacy class sizes of primary elements of H is $\{1, n\}$. Hence, H is nilpotent by Lemma 2.3, yielding that G is solvable, and the theorem is proved.

Case 2. $p^a < n$.

Step 6. Let q be a prime dividing n . Denote that $L_q := \{x \in G \mid x \text{ is a } q\text{-element such that } |x^G| = 1 \text{ or } p^a\}$. If L_q is not central, then L_q is the normal Sylow q -subgroup of G .

Since $p^a < n$, we obtain that $L_{p'} := \{x \in G \mid x \text{ is a } p'\text{-element such that } |x^G| = 1 \text{ or } p^a\}$ is an abelian normal p' -subgroup of G if we apply a similar argument as in Step 4. Further, L_q is abelian.

Assume that $L_q \not\leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$. If L_q is not a Sylow q -subgroup of G , then there exists a q -element w satisfying $|w^G| = p^a n$ according to Step 2. Step 3 implies that $\mathbf{C}_G(w) = \mathbf{C}_G(w)_p \times \mathbf{C}_G(w)_{p'}$, where $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p \not\leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$ is the abelian Sylow p -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(w)$ and $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_{p'}$ is the Hall p' -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(w)$. For each element $u \in \mathbf{C}_G(w)_p - \mathbf{Z}(G)$, we have $\mathbf{C}_G(w) \leq \mathbf{C}_G(u)$, yielding $\mathbf{C}_{L_q}(w) \leq \mathbf{C}_{L_q}(u)$. By Lemma 2.6, we obtain that $u \in \mathbf{C}_G(L_q) =: N$ and thus $\mathbf{C}_G(x)_p \leq N$. On the other hand, we see that $|\mathbf{C}_G(u) : \mathbf{C}_G(w)| = 1$ or p^a . Since $L_q \leq \mathbf{C}_G(u)$, it follows that $L_q \leq \mathbf{C}_G(w)$, leading to $w \in N$. Consequently, every q -element of G lies in N . Fix $y \in L_q$ a noncentral q -element. We see that $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p \leq N \leq \mathbf{C}_G(y)$ as L_q is abelian. Moreover, $|\mathbf{C}_G(y) : N| |N : \mathbf{C}_G(w)_p| = |\mathbf{C}_G(y) : \mathbf{C}_G(w)_p|$ is a p' -number, which implies that $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p \in \text{Syl}_p(N)$ and $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p \in \text{Syl}_p(\mathbf{C}_G(y))$.

We claim that there exists some $g \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)$ such that $v \in \mathbf{C}_G(\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p^g)$ for an arbitrary element $v \in \mathbf{C}_G(y) - \mathbf{Z}(G)$. If there exists some component v_i of v with conjugacy class size $p^a n$, say v_1 , then we see easily that $\mathbf{C}_G(v) = \mathbf{C}_G(v_1)$. Moreover, $|\mathbf{C}_G(y) : \mathbf{C}_G(yv_1)| = n$. By Sylow's theorem, we see that there exists some $g \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)$ such that $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p^g \leq \mathbf{C}_G(yv_1) \leq \mathbf{C}_G(v_1) = \mathbf{C}_G(v)$, leading to $v \in \mathbf{C}_G(\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p^g)$. Hence, we assume that every component has no conjugacy class size $p^a n$. Let v_1 be the p -component of v and v_2, \dots, v_t be all the p' -components of v . We show that $\mathbf{C}_G(v_2 \cdots v_t) = \mathbf{C}_G(v_2)$. If $t = 2$, there is nothing to prove. Assume then that $t > 2$ and $j \in \{3, \dots, t\}$. Then $|v_2^G| = p^a$ and $|v_j^G| = p^a$ by Step 2. Moreover, it follows that $p^a = |v_2^G| \mid |(v_2 v_j)^G| \leq |v_2^G| |v_j^G| = p^{2a} < p^a n$ by [13, 1.3.11], yielding $\mathbf{C}_G(v_2 v_j) = \mathbf{C}_G(v_2)$. Further, $\mathbf{C}_G(v_2 \cdots v_t) = \mathbf{C}_G(v_2)$, as required. This gives that $\mathbf{C}_G(v) = \mathbf{C}_G(v_1 v_2)$. In particular, $\mathbf{C}_G(v) = \mathbf{C}_G(v_1) = \mathbf{C}_G(v_2)$ if we apply a similar argument above. Recall that $|\mathbf{C}_G(y) : \mathbf{C}_G(yv_1)| = n$. By Sylow's theorem, there exists some $g \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)$ such that $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p^g \leq \mathbf{C}_G(yv_1) \leq \mathbf{C}_G(v_1)$, leading to $v_1 \in \mathbf{C}_G(\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p^g)$. If v_2 is a q -element, then $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p \leq N \leq \mathbf{C}_G(v_2)$ is also a Sylow p -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(v_2)$ by the second argument of this step, leading to $v_2 \in \mathbf{C}_G(\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p)$; if v_2 is a q' -component, then $\mathbf{C}_G(yv_2) = \mathbf{C}_G(v_2) = \mathbf{C}_G(y)$, which also implies that $v_2 \in \mathbf{C}_G(\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p^g)$. Consequently, $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p^g \leq \mathbf{C}_G(v_1 v_2) = \mathbf{C}_G(v)$, yielding $v \in \mathbf{C}_G(\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p^g)$, as claimed.

Therefore, $\mathbf{C}_G(y) = \bigcup_{g \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)} \mathbf{C}_G(\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p^g)$, which forces that $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p$ must be central in $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$. However, $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_p$ is not central in G by Step 3. Thus, if we choose some noncentral element $u_1 \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)_p$, we have $\mathbf{C}_G(y) \leq \mathbf{C}_G(u_1)$, leading to $|u_1^G| = p^a$, against Step 1.

Step 7. Conclusion in Case 2.

Let $t \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)$ be an arbitrary element. Write $t = t_q \cdot t_{q'}$ as before. If we apply a similar argument in

Step 6, we obtain that

$$\mathbf{C}_G(y) = \bigcup_{g \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)} \mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{C}_G(y)}(\mathbf{C}_G(y)_p)^g L_q = \bigcup_{g \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)} (\mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{C}_G(y)}(\mathbf{C}_G(y)_p L_q))^g,$$

which yields $\mathbf{C}_G(y) = \mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{C}_G(y)}(\mathbf{C}_G(y)_p) L_q$. Hence, $|G : \mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{C}_G(y)}(\mathbf{C}_G(y)_p)|$ is a $\{p, q\}$ -number. Now, if there exists some noncentral element $u \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)_p$ that has conjugacy class size n or $p^a n$, we see that n is a q -power, against $|\pi(n)| \geq 2$. □

4. Proof of Theorem C

Proof If we reason similarly as to the proof of Theorem D, we may assume that G is a $(\pi(m) \cup \pi(n))$ -group with $|\pi(m)| \geq 2$ and $|\pi(n)| \geq 2$. Write $\pi := \pi(m)$. The proof will be completed in several following steps.

Step 1. If x is a primary π -element of conjugacy class size mn , then $\mathbf{C}_G(x) = \mathbf{C}_G(x)_\pi \times \mathbf{C}_G(x)_{\pi'}$, where $\mathbf{C}_G(x)_{\pi'} \not\leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$ is an abelian Hall π' -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(x)$. Analogously, if y is a primary π' -element of conjugacy class size mn , then $\mathbf{C}_G(y) = \mathbf{C}_G(y)_\pi \times \mathbf{C}_G(y)_{\pi'}$, where $\mathbf{C}_G(y)_\pi \not\leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$ is an abelian Hall π -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$.

This follows exactly by a similar argument as in Step 3 of Theorem D.

Step 2. G has no primary π -element of conjugacy class size m . Analogously, there exists no π' -element of conjugacy class size n .

By the symmetry of m and n , we only prove the first statement. Let x be a primary π -element of conjugacy class size m . We may consider x as a p -element with $p \in \pi$. Then for every primary p' -element $y \in \mathbf{C}_G(x)$, we have $|\mathbf{C}_G(x) : \mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{C}_G(x)}(y)| = |\mathbf{C}_G(x) : \mathbf{C}_G(xy)| = 1$ or n , which follows by Lemma 2.1 that $\mathbf{C}_G(x) = \mathbf{C}_G(x)_p \times \mathbf{C}_G(x)_{p'}$, where $\mathbf{C}_G(x)_{p'}$ is the Hall p' -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(x)$.

For each primary element $y \in \mathbf{C}_G(x)_{p'}$, we have $\mathbf{C}_G(x)_p \leq \mathbf{C}_G(y)$, implying $\mathbf{C}_G(x) \cap \mathbf{C}_G(y) = \mathbf{C}_G(x)_p(\mathbf{C}_G(x)_{p'} \cap \mathbf{C}_G(y))$. As a result, $|\mathbf{C}_G(x)_{p'} : \mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{C}_G(x)_{p'}}(y)| = |\mathbf{C}_G(x)_{p'} : \mathbf{C}_G(x)_{p'} \cap \mathbf{C}_G(y)| = |\mathbf{C}_G(x) : \mathbf{C}_G(xy)| = 1$ or n . If n occurs, then n is a prime power according to Lemma 2.3, against our assumption. Hence, $\mathbf{C}_G(x)_{p'}$ is abelian, implying that G has an abelian Hall π' -subgroup H . Let $y \in G$ be a primary or biprimary element of conjugacy class sizes n . We may assume without loss that y is a q -element with prime $q \in \pi$ if we consider the primary decomposition of y . As a result, there is some $g \in G$ such that $x^g \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)$, yielding that $y \in \mathbf{C}_G(x^g) = \mathbf{C}_G(x)_\pi^g \times H^g$. Moreover, $H^g \leq \mathbf{C}_G(y)$, against $|y^G| = n$.

Without loss of generality, we will assume that $n < m$ in the following.

Step 3. Write $L_\pi := \{x \in G \mid x \text{ is a } \pi\text{-element with } |x^G| = 1 \text{ or } n\}$. Then L_π is a nontrivial abelian normal π -subgroup of G .

By Lemma 2.5, the set $W := \{x \in G \mid |x^G| = 1 \text{ or } n\}$ is a normal subgroup of G . Moreover, it follows by Step 2 that $W = L_\pi \times \mathbf{Z}(G)_{\pi'}$ and, consequently, L_π is a nontrivial normal π -subgroup of G . Further, for each primary element $y \in L_\pi$, we have that $|y^{L_\pi}|$ divides $(|L_\pi|, n) = 1$, indicating that L_π is abelian.

Write $L_q := \{x \in G \mid x \text{ to be a } q\text{-element such that } |x^G| = 1 \text{ or } n\}$ with $q \in \pi$. Then L_π is the direct product of the subgroups L_q for all primes $q \in \pi$. As a sequence, L_q is an abelian normal subgroup of G .

Step 4. If L_q is not central in G , then L_q is a Sylow q -subgroup of G .

Assume that $L_q \not\leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$. If L_q is not a Sylow q -subgroup of G , then there exists some q -element w of conjugacy class size mn by Step 2. Moreover, Step 1 gives that $\mathbf{C}_G(w) = \mathbf{C}_G(w)_\pi \times \mathbf{C}_G(w)_{\pi'}$ with $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_{\pi'} \not\leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$ abelian. For every $u \in \mathbf{C}_G(w)_{\pi'}$, we have $\mathbf{C}_G(w) \leq \mathbf{C}_G(u)$ and, in particular, $\mathbf{C}_{L_q}(w) \leq \mathbf{C}_{L_q}(u)$. By applying Lemma 2.6, we get $u \in \mathbf{C}_G(L_q) =: N$ and, therefore, $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_{\pi'} \leq N$. On the other hand, $|\mathbf{C}_G(u) : \mathbf{C}_G(w)| = 1$ or n since u has conjugacy class size m or mn . Note that $L_q \leq \mathbf{C}_G(u)$. This implies that $L_q \leq \mathbf{C}_G(w)$ and thus $w \in N$. We conclude that N contains all q -elements of G .

Fix $y \in L_q - \mathbf{Z}(G)$. Then $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_{\pi'} \leq N \leq \mathbf{C}_G(y)$. Moreover, $|\mathbf{C}_G(y) : N||N : \mathbf{C}_G(w)_{\pi'}| = |\mathbf{C}_G(y) : \mathbf{C}_G(w)_{\pi'}|$ is a π -number, indicating that both $|\mathbf{C}_G(y) : N|$ and $|N : \mathbf{C}_G(w)_{\pi'}|$ are π -numbers. Therefore, $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_{\pi'} \not\leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$ is an abelian Hall π' -subgroup of N and $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$. Let $R \leq \mathbf{C}_G(w)_{\pi'} \leq N$ be a noncentral Sylow r -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$ with $r \in \pi'$. We prove that for every noncentral element $v \in \mathbf{C}_G(y) - \mathbf{Z}(G)$, there exists some $g \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)$ such that $v \in \mathbf{C}_G(R^g)$.

If there is some component v_i of conjugacy class size mn , say v_1 , then $\mathbf{C}_G(v) = \mathbf{C}_G(v_1)$. Moreover, if v_1 is a q -component, then $R \leq N \leq \mathbf{C}_G(v_1)$, yielding $v \in \mathbf{C}_G(R)$; if v_1 is a q' -component, then $\mathbf{C}_G(yv_1) = \mathbf{C}_G(v_1) \leq \mathbf{C}_G(y)$ and $|\mathbf{C}_G(y) : \mathbf{C}_G(yv_1)| = n$. By Sylow's theorem, there exists some $g \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)$ such that $R^g \leq \mathbf{C}_G(yv_1) = \mathbf{C}_G(v_1) = \mathbf{C}_G(v)$, leading to $v \in \mathbf{C}_G(R^g)$. As a consequence, we assume that v has no component of conjugacy class size mn . Write $v = (v_1 \cdots v_r) \cdot (v_{r+1} \cdots v_t)$, where v_1, \dots, v_r are all the π -components of v and v_{r+1}, \dots, v_t are all the π' -components of v , respectively. Note that $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_{\pi'}$ is an abelian Hall π' -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$. Then every π' -element of $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$ is contained in a conjugate of $\mathbf{C}_G(w)_{\pi'}$ by applying Lemma 2.8. As a result, there exists some $g \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)$ such that $v_{r+1} \cdots v_t \in \mathbf{C}_G(w)_{\pi'}^g$, leading to $v_{r+1} \cdots v_t \in \mathbf{C}_G(R^g)$. Hence, $R^g \leq \mathbf{C}_G(v_{r+1} \cdots v_t)$. On the other hand, by Step 2, we see that each v_i has conjugacy class size n with $i \in \{1, \dots, r\}$. For every $j \in \{2, \dots, r\}$, we see that $n = |v_1^G| \mid |(v_1 v_j)^G| \leq |v_1^G| |v_j^G| = n^2$ by [13, 1.3.11], and this implies that $\mathbf{C}_G(v_1) = \mathbf{C}_G(v_1 v_j)$, implying $\mathbf{C}_G(v_1 \cdots v_r) = \mathbf{C}_G(v_1)$. Analogously, $\mathbf{C}_G(y) = \mathbf{C}_G(yv_1) = \mathbf{C}_G(v_1)$. If v_1 is a q' -element, then by Sylow's theorem, there exists some $g \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)$ such that $R^g \leq \mathbf{C}_G(v_1)$ and thus $v_1 \in \mathbf{C}_G(R^g)$; if v_1 is a q -element, then by a similar argument above we obtain that $R \leq N \leq \mathbf{C}_G(v_1)$. This shows that $R^g \leq \mathbf{C}_G(v_1 \cdot v_{r+1} \cdots v_t) = \mathbf{C}_G(v)$, yielding $v \in \mathbf{C}_G(R^g)$.

Therefore, $\mathbf{C}_G(y) = \bigcup_{g \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)} \mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{C}_G(y)}(R)^g$, which implies that R must be central in $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$. However, we know that R is not central in G , and so if we take some noncentral $u_1 \in R$, we have $\mathbf{C}_G(y) \leq \mathbf{C}_G(R) \leq \mathbf{C}_G(u_1)$. This provides an r -element u_1 of conjugacy class size n , against Step 2.

Step 5. Final contradiction.

We will complete this theorem in the following two cases:

Case 1. L_π is a Hall π -subgroup of G .

By the Schur–Zassenhaus theorem, G has a π -complement H . If H is abelian, then G is solvable, and we are done. Assume then that H is nonabelian. Then it follows by Lemma 2.7 that the conjugacy class sizes of primary elements of H are $\{1, n\}$. Then Lemma 2.3 implies that H is nilpotent, yielding that G is also solvable, and the theorem is proved.

Case 2. L_π is not a Hall π -subgroup of G .

In this case, there must be some prime $p \in \pi$ such that $L_p \leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$. Further, by Step 2 there exists some $q \in \pi$ such that L_q is not central in G , and thus L_q is a Sylow q -subgroup of G by Step 4. Fix y a q -element

of conjugacy class size n . Let t be a p -element of conjugacy class size mn in G . Without loss, we assume that $t \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)$. It follows by Step 1 that $\mathbf{C}_G(t) = \mathbf{C}_G(t)_\pi \times \mathbf{C}_G(t)_{\pi'}$ with $\mathbf{C}_G(t)_{\pi'} \not\leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$ abelian. Notice that $|\mathbf{C}_G(y) : \mathbf{C}_G(y) \cap \mathbf{C}_G(t)| = m$. Then $\mathbf{C}_G(t)_{\pi'}$ is also a Hall π' -subgroup of $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$. According to Lemma 2.8, all the Hall π' -subgroups of $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$ are conjugate.

Since $\mathbf{C}_G(t)_{\pi'} \not\leq \mathbf{Z}(G)$, there exists a noncentral Sylow r -subgroup R of $\mathbf{C}_G(y)$ for some prime $r \in \pi'$. The same arguments in Step 4 give that $v_{p'} \leq \mathbf{C}_G(R^g)$ for every element $v \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)$. Thus, if we take into account that L_q is a normal Sylow q -subgroup of G , we have

$$\mathbf{C}_G(y) = \bigcup_{g \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)} \mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{C}_G(y)}(R)^g L_q = \bigcup_{g \in \mathbf{C}_G(y)} (\mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{C}_G(y)}(R)L_q)^g.$$

This implies that $\mathbf{C}_G(y) = \mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{C}_G(y)}(R)L_q$, and accordingly, $|\mathbf{C}_G(y) : \mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{C}_G(y)}(R)|$ is a q -number. Now we take some noncentral $u_1 \in R$, which has conjugacy class size m or mn . Observe that $\mathbf{C}_{\mathbf{C}_G(y)}(R) \leq \mathbf{C}_G(u_1) \cap \mathbf{C}_G(y) = \mathbf{C}_G(u_1y) \leq \mathbf{C}_G(y)$, so that u_1y has conjugacy class size n or mn . The first case leads to $\mathbf{C}_G(y) \leq \mathbf{C}_G(u)$, which is a contradiction, and so u_1y has conjugacy class size mn and it follows that m is a q -power. By Theorem D, we obtain that G is solvable and the theorem is established. \square

Acknowledgment

The research of the authors was supported by Project NNSF of China (Grant No. 11301218), the Nature Science Fund of Shandong Province (No. ZR2014AM020), and the University of Jinan Research Funds for Doctors (XBS1335 and XBS1336). The authors dedicate this work to Professor Xiuyun Guo in honor of his 60th birthday.

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