# Note <br> On restricted edge-connectivity of graphs 

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#### Abstract

This paper considers the concept of restricted edge-connectivity, and relates that to the edgedegree of a connected graph. The author gives some necessary conditions for a graph whose restricted edge-connectivity is smaller than its minimum edge-degree, then uses these conditions to show some large classes of graphs, such as all connected edge-transitive graphs except a star, and all connected vertex-transitive graphs with odd order or without triangles, have equality of the restricted edge-connectivity and the minimun edge-degree. (C) 2002 Elsevier Science B.V. All rights reserved.


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## 1. Introduction

We follow [2] for graph-theoretical terminology and notation not defined here. A graph $G=(V, E)$ always means a simple graph (without loops and multiple edges), where $V=V(G)$ is the vertex-set and $E=E(G)$ is the edge-set. In the present paper, we consider the restricted edge-connectivity, which is a new graph-theoretical concept and introduced by Esfahanian and Hakimi [4].

In this paper, we call a disconnected graph, a triangle, or a star trivial and all other graphs non-trivial. Let $G$ be a non-trivial graph and $S \subseteq E(G)$. If $G-S$ is disconnected and contains no isolated vertices, then $S$ is called a restricted edge-cut of $G$. The restricted edge-connectivity of $G$, denoted by $\lambda^{\prime}(G)$, is defined as the minimum cardinality over all restricted edge-cuts of $G$. The restricted edge-connectivity provides a more accurate measure of fault-tolerance of networks than the classical edge-connectivity (see [3]). Thus, it has received much attention recently (see, for example, [3,4,6-9,11,13-15]).

[^0]Let $G$ be a graph. For $e=x y \in E(G)$, let $\xi_{G}(e)=d_{G}(x)+d_{G}(y)-2$ and $\xi(G)=$ $\min \left\{\xi_{G}(e): e \in E(G)\right\}$. The parameter $\xi(G)$ is called the minimum edge-degree of $G$. It has been shown in [4] that for any non-trivial graph $G, \lambda^{\prime}(G)$ certainly exists and satisfies the following inequality:

$$
\begin{equation*}
\lambda^{\prime}(G) \leqslant \xi(G) . \tag{1}
\end{equation*}
$$

Let $G$ be a non-trivial graph. If $\lambda^{\prime}(G)=\xi(G)$, then $G$ is called optimal; otherwise $G$ is non-optimal. We are interested in finding some classes of optimal graphs. Some of them have been found in $[3,6-9,11,14,15]$. In this paper, we will give some necessary conditions for a non-optimal graph. From these we will obtain some large classes of optimal graphs, such as all non-trivial edge-transitive graphs, and all connected vertex-transitive graphs with odd order or without triangles. Some classes of optimal graphs given in [3,7,9,14] can easily be deduced from our results.

## 2. Notation and preliminary results

Let $G=(V, E)$ be a graph. For two disjoint non-empty subsets $X$ and $Y$ of $V$, let $(X, Y)=\{e=x y \in E: x \in X$ and $y \in Y\}$. For the sake of convenience, we write $x$ for the single vertex set $\{x\}$. If $Y=\bar{X}=V \backslash X$, then we write $\partial(X)$ for $(X, \bar{X})$ and $d(X)$ for $|\partial(X)|$. The following inequality is well known (see [10], Problem 6.48):

$$
\begin{equation*}
d(X \cap Y)+d(X \cup Y) \leqslant d(X)+d(Y) \tag{2}
\end{equation*}
$$

A restricted edge-cut $S$ of $G$ is called a $\lambda^{\prime}$-cut if $|S|=\lambda^{\prime}(G)$. It is clear for any $\lambda^{\prime}$-cut $S$ that $G-S$ has just two connected components. Let $X$ be a proper subset of $V$. If $\partial(X)$ is a $\lambda^{\prime}$-cut of $G$, then $X$ is called a fragment of $G$. It is clear that if $X$ is a fragment of $G$, then so is $\bar{X}$. Let

$$
r(G)=\min \{|X|: X \text { is a fragment of } G\} .
$$

Obviously, $2 \leqslant r(G) \leqslant \frac{1}{2}|V|$. A fragment $X$ is called an atom of $G$ if $|X|=r(G)$.
Theorem 1. A non-trivial graph $G$ is optimal if and only if $r(G)=2$.
Proof. Let $r(G)=2$. Then there exists an atom $X=\{x, y\}$ such that $d(X)=\lambda^{\prime}(G)=$ $\xi_{G}(e)$ with $e=x y \in E(G)$. It follows from (1) and the definition of $\xi(G)$ that $\xi(G) \leqslant$ $\xi_{G}(e)=d(X)=\lambda^{\prime}(G) \leqslant \xi(G)$, and hence $G$ is optimal.
Conversely, if $G$ is optimal there exists an edge $e=x y$ of $G$ such that

$$
\lambda^{\prime}(G)=\xi(G)=\xi_{G}(e)=d_{G}(x)+d_{G}(y)-2 .
$$

Now, let $X=\{x, y\}$. Then $r(G)=2$ if $G-\partial(X)$ has no isolated vertices. Suppose on the contrary that $G-\partial(X)$ contains an isolated vertex $u$. Obviously, $1 \leqslant d_{G}(u) \leqslant 2$.

If $d_{G}(u)=1$, then we assume, without loss of generality, that $u$ is adjacent to $y$. Thus

$$
d_{G}(x)+d_{G}(y)-2=\xi(G) \leqslant d_{G}(y)+d_{G}(u)-2=d_{G}(y)-1 .
$$

This implies that $d_{G}(x)=1$. It follows that

$$
\lambda^{\prime}(G) \leqslant\left|\left\{y z: d_{G}(z) \geqslant 2\right\}\right| \leqslant d_{G}(y)-2=\left(d_{G}(x)+d_{G}(y)-2\right)-1=\xi(G)-1,
$$

a contradiction.
In the case $d_{G}(u)=2$, the vertex $u$ is adjacent to $x$ and $y$. Then,

$$
d_{G}(x)+d_{G}(y)-2=\xi(G) \leqslant d_{G}(y)+d_{G}(u)-2=d_{G}(y) .
$$

This yields that $d_{G}(x)=2$, and analogously, we obtain $d_{G}(y)=2$. Therefore, $G$ is a triangle. This contradiction completes the proof.

## 3. Properties of atoms of non-optimal graphs

Lemma 2. Let $G$ be a non-optimal graph, $F$ a fragment of $G, U$ a proper subset of $F$, and I the set of all isolated vertices in $G-\partial(U)$. If $I \subseteq U$ and $|(I, \bar{F})| \geqslant|(I, F \backslash U)|$, then $F \backslash I$ is a fragment of $G$.

Proof. If $I=\emptyset$, then there is nothing to prove. Suppose $I \neq \emptyset$ below. Let $Y=F \backslash I$ and $F^{\prime}=F \backslash U$. Then $Y \neq \emptyset$ and $F^{\prime} \neq \emptyset$, since $I \subseteq U$ and $U$ is a proper subset of $F$. Let $Z$ be the set of all isolated vertices in $G-\partial(Y)$. If $Z=\emptyset$, then $Y$ is a restricted edge-cut of $G$. By the assumption $|(I, \bar{F})| \geqslant\left|\left(I, F^{\prime}\right)\right|$, we have

$$
\lambda^{\prime}(G) \leqslant d(Y)=d(F)-|(I, \bar{F})|+\left|\left(I, F^{\prime}\right)\right| \leqslant d(F)=\lambda^{\prime}(G) .
$$

This implies that $Y$ is a fragment of $G$, and so the conclusion holds if $Z=\emptyset$.
The rest is to show $Z=\emptyset$. Suppose on the contrary that $Z \neq \emptyset$. Our aim is to deduce a contradiction.

First, we show that $(x, \bar{F}) \neq \emptyset$ for any $x \in I$. At the end, we let $I^{\prime}=\{x \in I:(x, \bar{F})=\emptyset\}$. If $I^{\prime} \neq \emptyset$, then $N_{G}\left(I^{\prime}\right) \subseteq F^{\prime}$, since $(I, U \backslash I)=\emptyset$ by the assumption. Let $Z^{\prime}=\left(Z \cap F^{\prime}\right) \backslash$ $N_{G}\left(I^{\prime}\right)$, and let $W=\left(Y \cup I^{\prime}\right) \backslash Z^{\prime}$. Then it is easy to see that $G-\partial(W)$ has no isolated vertices. Thus, $\partial(W)$ is a restricted edge-cut of $G$. Noticing $\left|\left(\Lambda I^{\prime}, \bar{F}\right)\right|=|(I, \bar{F})| \geqslant\left|\left(I, F^{\prime}\right)\right| \geqslant$ $\left|\left(I^{\prime}, F^{\prime}\right)\right| \geqslant\left|I^{\prime}\right|>0$, we have $I \backslash I^{\prime} \neq \emptyset$, and

$$
\left|\left(I \backslash I^{\prime}, \bar{F}\right)\right| \geqslant\left|\left(I, F^{\prime}\right)\right| \geqslant\left|\left(I^{\prime}, F^{\prime} \backslash Z^{\prime}\right)\right|+\left|\left(I \backslash I^{\prime}, F^{\prime} \backslash Z^{\prime}\right)\right|>\left|\left(I \backslash I^{\prime}, F^{\prime} \backslash Z^{\prime}\right)\right|
$$

Thus we have

$$
\begin{aligned}
\lambda^{\prime}(G) & \leqslant d(W)=d(F)-\left|\left(Z^{\prime}, \bar{F}\right)\right|-\left|\left(I \backslash I^{\prime}, \bar{F}\right)\right|+\left|\left(I \backslash I^{\prime}, F^{\prime} \backslash Z^{\prime}\right)\right| \\
& <d(F)-\left|\left(Z^{\prime}, \bar{F}\right)\right| \leqslant d(F)=\lambda^{\prime}(G) .
\end{aligned}
$$

The contradiction implies $I^{\prime}=\emptyset$, i.e., $(x, \bar{F}) \neq \emptyset$ for any $x \in I$. Thus we have

$$
\begin{equation*}
\left|\left(y, I^{\prime \prime}\right)\right|=\left|N_{G}(y) \cap I^{\prime \prime}\right| \leqslant\left|\left(N_{G}(y) \cap I^{\prime \prime}, \bar{F}\right)\right|, \quad \forall y \in Z, \quad I^{\prime \prime} \subseteq I . \tag{3}
\end{equation*}
$$

Second, we assert that $Z=N_{G}(I) \cap F^{\prime}$. The fact $I^{\prime}=\emptyset$ implies $Z \subseteq Y$. Since $Z$ is the set of all isolated vertices in $G-\partial(F \backslash I)$ and $G-\partial(F)$ has no isolated vertices, $Z \subseteq N_{G}(I)$. But $N_{G}(I) \cap U=\emptyset$ since $I \subseteq U$ is the set of the isolated vertices in
$G-\partial(U)$ by the assumption. Thus we have $Z \subseteq N_{G}(I) \cap F^{\prime}$. On the other hand, if $\left(N_{G}(I) \cap F^{\prime}\right) \backslash Z \neq \emptyset$, then $Y \backslash Z \neq \emptyset$ and $G-\partial(Y \backslash Z)$ contains no isolated vertices, because $F$ is a fragment of $G$. It is clear that $(I, Z) \neq \emptyset$ since $I \neq \emptyset$ and $\emptyset \neq Z \subseteq N_{G}(I) \cap F^{\prime}$. Combining these with the assumption $|(I, \bar{F})| \geqslant\left|\left(I, F^{\prime}\right)\right|$, we have

$$
\begin{aligned}
\lambda^{\prime}(G) & \leqslant d(Y \backslash Z)=d(F)-|(I, \bar{F})|-|(Z, \bar{F})|+\left|\left(I, F^{\prime} \backslash Z\right)\right| \\
& <d(F)-\left(|(I, \bar{F})|-\left|\left(I, F^{\prime}\right)\right|\right) \leqslant d(F)=\lambda^{\prime}(G) .
\end{aligned}
$$

The contradiction implies $\left(N_{G}(I) \cap F^{\prime}\right) \backslash Z=\emptyset$. Thus $Z=N_{G}(I) \cap F^{\prime}$.
Third, we have that $(z, \bar{F}) \neq \emptyset$ for any $z \in Z$. Otherwise $z$ is an isolated vertex in $G-\partial(U)$, which implies $z \in I$, a contradiction. Thus we have

$$
\begin{equation*}
\left|\left(x, Z^{\prime \prime}\right)\right|=\left|N_{G}(x) \cap Z^{\prime \prime}\right| \leqslant\left|\left(N_{G}(x) \cap Z^{\prime \prime}, \bar{F}\right)\right|, \quad \forall x \in I, \quad Z^{\prime \prime} \subseteq Z . \tag{4}
\end{equation*}
$$

Lastly, let $y \in Z$ and let $x \in N_{G}(y) \cap I$. A contradiction can be deduced as follows:

$$
\begin{aligned}
\xi(G) \leqslant & d_{G}(x)+d_{G}(y)-2=|(x, \bar{F})|+|(x, Z \backslash\{y\})|+|(y, \bar{F})|+|(y, I \backslash\{x\})| \\
\leqslant & |(x, \bar{F})|+\left|\left(N_{G}(x) \cap(Z \backslash\{y\}), \bar{F}\right)\right|+|(y, \bar{F})|+\left|\left(N_{G}(y) \cap(I \backslash\{x\}), \bar{F}\right)\right| \\
= & \left(|(x, \bar{F})|+\left|\left(N_{G}(y) \cap(I \backslash\{x\}), \bar{F}\right)\right|\right) \\
& +\left(|(y, \bar{F})|+\left|\left(N_{G}(x) \cap(Z \backslash\{y\}), \bar{F}\right)\right|\right) \\
= & \left|\left(N_{G}(y) \cap I\right), \bar{F}\right|+\left|\left(N_{G}(x) \cap Z, \bar{F}\right)\right| \\
\leqslant & |(I, \bar{F})|+|(Z, \bar{F})| \leqslant|(F, \bar{F})|=d(F)=\lambda^{\prime}(G)<\xi(G),
\end{aligned}
$$

where the first equality holds because of the fact $Z=N_{G}(I) \cap F^{\prime}$ and $(Z, Y \backslash Z)=\emptyset$, and the second inequality holds from (3) and (4). The proof is complete.

Theorem 3. Let $G$ be a non-optimal graph. Then any two distinct atoms of $G$ are disjoint.

Proof. Let $X$ and $X^{\prime}$ be two distinct atoms of $G$. Then $d(X)=d\left(X^{\prime}\right)=\lambda^{\prime}(G)<\xi(G)$ and $|X|=\left|X^{\prime}\right|=r(G) \geqslant 3$ by Theorem 1. Let

$$
A=X \cap X^{\prime}, \quad B=X \cap \overline{X^{\prime}}, \quad C=\bar{X} \cap X^{\prime}, \quad \text { and } D=\bar{X} \cap \overline{X^{\prime}} .
$$

Then $|B|=|C|=r(G)-|A| \geqslant 1$ and $|D| \geqslant|A|$. Suppose on the contrary that $A \neq \emptyset$. We will derive contradictions by considering two cases, separately.

Case 1: If $G-\partial(A)$ contains some isolated vertices, then let $I$ be the set of all isolated vertices in $G-\partial(A)$. Then obviously, $I \subseteq A,(I, B) \neq \emptyset$ and $(I, C) \neq \emptyset$, because $\partial(X)$ and $\partial\left(X^{\prime}\right)$ are $\lambda^{\prime}$-cuts of $G$. We can assume, without loss of generality, that $|(I, C)| \geqslant|(I, B)|$. Let $F=X, U=A \subset F$. Then $X \backslash I(=F \backslash I)$ is a fragment of $G$ by Lemma 2. However, $X \backslash I$ is a proper subset of $X$. This contradicts the assumption that $X$ is an atom of $G$.

Case 2: If $G-\partial(A)$ contains no isolated vertices, then $A$ is a restricted edge-cut of $G$. This implies that $|A| \geqslant 2$ and $d(A)>\lambda^{\prime}(G)$. By (2) we have

$$
\begin{equation*}
d(D)=d\left(X \cup X^{\prime}\right) \leqslant d(X)+d\left(X^{\prime}\right)-d\left(X \cap X^{\prime}\right)<\lambda^{\prime}(G) \tag{5}
\end{equation*}
$$

This implies that $G-\partial(D)$ certainly contains some isolated vertices, so let $I$ be the set of all isolated vertices in $G-\partial(D)$. Obviously, $I \subseteq D$. If $D^{\prime}=D \backslash I \neq \emptyset$, then $\partial\left(D^{\prime}\right)$ is a restricted edge-cut of $G$ since $G-\partial\left(D^{\prime}\right)$ has no isolated vertices, and so from (5) we have

$$
\lambda^{\prime}(G) \leqslant d\left(D^{\prime}\right)=d(D)-\sum_{u \in I} d_{G}(u)<d(D)<\lambda^{\prime}(G)
$$

This contradiction implies $I=D$. Without loss of generality, we assume that $|(D, B)| \geqslant$ $|(D, C)|$. Let $F=\bar{X}, I=U=D \subset F$. Thus, $C(=\bar{X} \backslash D=F \backslash I)$ is a fragment of $G$ that is properly contained in $X^{\prime}$ by Lemma 2 . This contradicts the assumption that $X^{\prime}$ is an atom of $G$. The proof is complete.

Remark. Any cycle of length greater than three shows that Theorem 3 is not valid if $G$ is optimal.

Theorem 4. Let $G$ be a non-optimal graph. If $G$ is $k$-regular, then $r(G) \geqslant k \geqslant 3$.
Proof. By Theorem $1, r(G) \geqslant 3$, and obviously $k \geqslant 3$. Let $X$ be an atom of $G$. Then $r=r(G)=|X|$ and $d(X)=\lambda^{\prime}(G)<\xi(G)=2 k-2$. Considering the sum of degrees of all vertices in $X$, we have

$$
k r=\sum_{x \in X} d_{G}(x) \leqslant r(r-1)+d(X)<r^{2}-r+2 k-2=k r-(k-r-1)(r-2) .
$$

This implies $r(G) \geqslant k$ since $k \geqslant 3$.
Theorem 5. Let $G$ be a connected vertex-transitive graph with degree $k(\geqslant 3)$, and let $X$ be an atom of $G$. If $G$ is non-optimal, then,
(i) $G[X]$ is a vertex-transitive subgraph of $G$ with degree of $k-1$ containing a triangle;
(ii) $G$ has even order and there is a partition $\left\{X_{1}, X_{2}, \ldots, X_{m}\right\}$ of $V$ such that $G\left[X_{i}\right] \cong$ $G[X]$ for each $i=1,2, \ldots, m, m \geqslant 2$.

Proof. (i) Since a vertex-transitive graph is regular, we have $|X| \geqslant k \geqslant 3$ by Theorem 4. Let $x$ and $y$ be two distinct vertices in $X$. Then there exists $\pi \in \Gamma(G)$, the automorphism group of $G$, such that $\pi(x)=y$ because $G$ is vertex-transitive. Hence $\pi(X)$ is also an atom of $G$. Let $X^{\prime}=\pi(X)$. Then $X \cap X^{\prime} \neq \emptyset$ since $y \in X \cap X^{\prime}$. This implies $X^{\prime}=X$ by Theorem 3. Let

$$
\Pi=\{\pi \in \Gamma(G): \pi(X)=X\}, \quad \Psi=\{\pi \in \Pi: x \in X \Rightarrow \pi(x)=x\} .
$$

Clearly $\Pi$ is a subgroup of $\Gamma(G)$, and the constituent of $\Pi$ on $X$ acts transitively and $\Psi$ is a normal subgroup of $\Pi$. Thus there is an injective homomorphism from the quotient group $\Pi / \Psi$ to $\Gamma(G[X])$ whereby each coset of $\Psi$ is associated with the restriction to $X$ of any representative. This shows that $G[X]$ is vertex-transitive.

Let $G[X]$ have degree $t$. Then $t \leqslant k-1$; from this and Theorem 4 we have

$$
2(k-1) \geqslant d(X)+1=(k-t) r(G)+1 \geqslant(k-t) k+1 .
$$

This implies that

$$
t \geqslant\left\lceil\frac{k^{2}-2 k+3}{k}\right\rceil=k-1 .
$$

Namely $G[X]$ has degree $(k-1)$. Note that $G[X]$ certainly contains cycles since $G[X]$ is $(k-1)$-regular and $k \geqslant 3$, and has at least $2 k-2$ vertices if it contains no triangles (see Exercise 1.7.4(a) in [2]). In this case, however, we see that $2 k-$ $2 \leqslant|X|=\lambda^{\prime}(G) \leqslant 2 k-3$, a contradiction. It follows that $G[X]$ contains a triangle.
(ii) Let $y$ be any element in $\bar{X}$. Since $G$ is vertex-transitive, there exists $\sigma \in \Gamma(G)$ such that $\sigma(x)=y$ for a fixed $x$ in $X . \sigma(X)$ is an atom of $G$. Let $X_{y}=\sigma(X)$. Then $X \cap X_{y}=\emptyset$ by Theorem 3 since $y \notin X$, and $G[X] \cong G\left[X_{y}\right]$ since there exists an isomorphism $\sigma$ between $G[X]$ and $G\left[X_{y}\right]$. Thus there are at least two atoms of $G$. It follows that for each vertex $y$ in $G$ there is an atom $X_{y}$ that contains $y$ such that $G\left[X_{y}\right] \cong G[X]$, and either $X_{y}=X_{z}$ or $X_{y} \cap X_{z}=\emptyset$ for any two distinct vertices $y$ and $z$ of $G$. These atoms $X_{1}, X_{2}, \ldots, X_{m}$ of $G$ form a partition of $V(G)$, and $G\left[X_{i}\right] \cong G[X]$ for each $i=1,2, \ldots, m, m \geqslant 2$. So

$$
|V|=m|X|=|V| k-m|X|(k-1)=2|E(G)|-2 m|E(G[X])| .
$$

This implies that $G$ has even order. The proof is complete.

## 4. Some classes of optimal graphs

Theorem 6 ( $\mathrm{Xu},[14])$. Let $G$ be a connected vertex-transitive graph. If it either contains no triangles or has odd order, then $G$ is optimal.

This is a direct consequence of Theorem 5 .
A well-known class of vertex-transitive graphs, very frequently employed in the construction of distributed-memory parallel computing systems, is the $k$-cube $Q_{k}(k \geqslant 2)$. It is $k$-regular bipartite, and so contains no triangles. Thus from Theorem 6 we have the following result immediately.

Corollary 7 (Esfahanian, [3]). The $k$-cube $Q_{k}$ is optimal.
Let $C_{d}$ be a cycle of length $d$. The $k$-dimensional toroidal mesh $C\left(d_{1}, d_{2}, \ldots, d_{k}\right)$, studied by Ishigami [5], can be represented as the cartesian product $C_{d_{1}} \times C_{d_{2}} \times \cdots \times C_{d_{k}}$.

It is vertex-transitive, and contains no triangles if $d_{i} \geqslant 4$ (see, for example, [12]). Hence, from Theorem 6 we deduce the following result immediately.

Corollary 8. The $k$-dimensional toroidal mesh $C\left(d_{1}, d_{2}, \ldots, d_{k}\right)$ is optimal if $d_{i} \geqslant 4$ for each $i=1,2, \ldots, k$.

Another important class of vertex-transitive graphs used in the design of networks are the circulant graphs. A circulant graph, denoted by $G\left(n ; a_{1}, a_{2}, \ldots, a_{k}\right)$, where $0<a_{1}<$ $\cdots<a_{k} \leqslant n / 2$, has vertices $0,1,2, \ldots, n-1$ and edge $i j$ if and only if $|j-i| \equiv a_{t}(\bmod n)$ for some $t, 1 \leqslant t \leqslant k$ (see, for example, [1]). If $a_{k} \neq n / 2$, it is $2 k$-regular. Otherwise, it is $(2 k-1)$-regular.

Corollary 9 (Li and Li, [7]). Any connected circulant graph $G\left(n ; a_{1}, a_{2}, \ldots, a_{k}\right), n \geqslant 4$, is optimal if either it contains no triangles or $a_{k} \neq n / 2$.

Proof. Let $G=G\left(n ; a_{1}, a_{2}, \ldots, a_{k}\right)$. By Theorem 6 , we need to only prove that $G$ is optimal if $a_{k} \neq n / 2$. Suppose on the contrary that $G$ is non-optimal. Then, by Theorem 5, there is an integer $m \geqslant 2$ such that for any atom $X$ of $G, n=m|X|$ and $G[X]$ is $(2 k-1)$-regular. Thus there is a subset $\left\{b_{1}, b_{2}, \ldots, b_{t}\right\}$ of the set $\left\{a_{1}, a_{2}, \ldots, a_{k}\right\}$ such that g.c.d. $\left(n, b_{1}, b_{2}, \ldots, b_{t}\right)=m$ and $G[X] \cong G\left(n / m ; b_{1} / m, b_{2} / m, \ldots, b_{t} / m\right)$, where $b_{1}<b_{2}<\cdots<b_{t}$. Since $a_{k} \neq \frac{n}{2}$ we have $b_{t} / m \neq n / 2 m$. Thus $G[X]$ is even regular, which contradicts the fact that $G[X]$ is $(2 k-1)$-regular.

Theorem 10 (Li and Li, [10]). All non-trivial edge-transitive graphs are optimal.
Proof. Let $G$ be a non-trivial edge-transitive graph. Suppose on the contrary that $G$ is non-optimal. Let $X$ be an atom of $G$. Then $|X|=r(G) \geqslant 3$ by Theorem 1. Let $e=x y$ be an edge in $G[X]$ and $e^{\prime}=y z$ be an edge in $\partial(X), z \in \bar{X}$. Since $G$ is edge-transitive, there is $\sigma \in \Gamma(G)$ such that $\sigma(\{x, y\})=\{y, z\}$. Hence $\sigma(X)$ is also an atom of $G$. Let $X^{\prime}=\sigma(X)$. Then $X \neq X^{\prime}$ since $z \in X^{\prime}$ and $z \notin X$. But since $y \in X \cap X^{\prime}$, we have $X=X^{\prime}$ by Theorem 3. This is a contradiction and so $G$ is optimal. This completes the proof.

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