Some specific solutions to the translation-invariant $N$-body harmonic oscillator Hamiltonian

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Keywords: many-body quantum systems, harmonic oscillator, exact solutions

Abstract

The resolution of the Schrödinger equation for the translation-invariant $N$-body harmonic oscillator Hamiltonian in $D$ dimensions with one-body and two-body interactions is performed by diagonalizing a matrix $J$ of order $N - 1$. It has been previously established that the diagonalization can be analytically performed in specific situations, such as for $N = 5$ or for $N$ identical particles. We show that the matrix $J$ is diagonal, and thus the problem can be analytically solved, for any number of arbitrary masses provided some specific relations exist between the coupling constants and the masses. We present analytical expressions for the energies under those constraints.

1. Introduction

The general translation-invariant $N$-body harmonic oscillator Hamiltonian in $D$ dimensions with one-body and two-body forces is given by [1–3]

$$H_{ho} = \sum_{i=1}^{N} \frac{p_i^2}{2m_i} - \frac{p^2}{2M} + \sum_{i=1}^{N} k_i (r_i - R)^2 + \sum_{i<j}^{N} g_{ij} (r_i - r_j)^2,$$

where in the last term the double sum runs over all pairs $\{i, j\}$ with $i < j$. According to their module and sign, the coupling constants $k_i$ and $g_{ij}$ determine the strength and the attractive or repulsive character of the interactions. The momentum $p_i$ of the $i$th particle of mass $m_i$ is the conjugate variable of its position $r_i$. The center of mass coordinate is noted $R = \sum_{i=1}^{N} m_i r_i / M$ where $M = \sum_{i=1}^{N} m_i$, and the total momentum is noted $P = \sum_{i=1}^{N} p_i$.

This Hamiltonian is particularly interesting since analytical eigensolutions are available for some special values of the parameters $\{m_i, k_i, g_{ij}\}$. Indeed, many approximation methods rely on analytical solutions of simpler Hamiltonians, such as expansions in oscillator basis [4] or in Gaussian states [5]. Furthermore, the existence of analytical solutions for the Hamiltonian $H_{ho}$ is at the heart of the envelope theory [6] used to solve general translation-invariant $N$-body Hamiltonians [7, 8]. So, it is particularly relevant to study and expand the availability of analytical solutions of $H_{ho}$.

The general procedures already existing in the literature to formally compute the eigensolutions of $H_{ho}$ are recalled in section 2. New analytical solutions are given in section 3. Some concluding remarks and perspectives are presented in section 4.

2. General procedures

The Schrödinger equation for $H_{ho}$ can be solved because the Hamiltonian can be rewritten as a sum of $N - 1$ decoupled harmonic oscillators.
where \( m \) is an arbitrary mass scale \((m\) can be one of the masses of the system or \(M\), for instance), \( m_i = m \beta_i \) for \( i = 1, \ldots, \), and \( \omega_i \) are frequencies of the relative oscillations (see below). The \( \xi_i \) and \( \sigma_i \) are new conjugate variables resulting from a change of variables defined in \([3]\) where the center of mass reference frame has been adopted.

All the eigenvalues of the system are then given by \((\ell = 1)\)

\[
E_{\ell m} = \sum_{i=1}^{N-1} \omega_i Q_i
\]

where \( Q_i = n_i + 1/2 \) for \( D = 1 \) and \( Q_i = 2n_i + l_i + D/2 \) for \( D \geq 2 \) \([9]\). The \( n_i, l_i \) are the quantum numbers associated with the coordinates of the harmonic oscillators in equation \((2)\). Let us note that degeneracies can occur if some frequencies \( \omega_i \) are commensurable. These frequencies \( \omega_i \) are given by \( d_i = m \omega_i^2/2 \) where \( d_i \) are the eigenvalues of a symmetrical matrix of order \( N - 1 \), let us say \( \mathbb{J} \). This matrix can be written as \( \mathbb{J} = \mathbb{F} + \mathbb{G} \) where each term corresponds to the contributions from the one-body and two-body interactions respectively. The matrix elements of \( \mathbb{F} \) are given in \([3]\) and those of \( \mathbb{G} \) in \([2, 3]\), and they can be written as follows

\( 1 \leq l, m \leq N - 1 \),

\[
\mathbb{F}_{\ell m}^{\alpha} = \lambda_i \lambda_m \sum_{i=1}^{N} k_i \mathbb{B}_{i \alpha} \mathbb{B}_{i \alpha m}, \quad \mathbb{G}_{\ell m}^{\alpha} = \lambda_i \lambda_m \sum_{i<j=1}^{N} g_{ij} (B_{ii} - B_{jj}) (B_{\ell m} - B_{j m})
\]

where \( \lambda_{i} \equiv \frac{m_{i}}{\sqrt{\omega_{\alpha_{i}, \ldots, \alpha_{j}}}} \) with \( \alpha_{i}, \ldots, \alpha_{j} \) and where \( \mathbb{B} \) is an invertible matrix whose elements can be found on equation \((24)\) of \([3]\). The matrix \( \mathbb{B} \) is built with ratios of the masses of the system and establishes the relation between the individual momenta and the relative ones plus the total momentum. Let us note that some parameters \( k_i \) or \( g_{ij} \) can be null or negative, provided all values found for \( \omega_i^2 \) are strictly positive. In this case only, bound states can exist with well defined eigenvalues \( E_{\ell m} \).

When \( N \leq 5 \), finding the eigenvalues \( d_i \) comes down to solving a polynomial of order \( O \leq 4 \), thus analytical expressions for the \( \omega_j \) can be obtained. For instance, the complete solution for 3 different particles is given in \([3]\). Analytical expressions for the \( \omega_j \) can also be found when all particles are identical \((m_i = m, k_i = k, g_{ij} = g, \forall i, j)\), and the eigenvalues are given by \([3]\)

\[
E_{\ell m} = \sqrt{\frac{2}{m}(k + N g)} \sum_{i=1}^{N-1} Q_i
\]

In this case, the degeneracy is maximal. When the system contains \( N_i \) sets of identical particles which interact via two-body forces, another very elegant way to compute the \( N \)-body problem is presented in \([1]\). In that case, \( H_{\ell m} \) can be expressed as a sum of Hamiltonians, a term \( H_s \) for each set \( s \) of identical particles and one term \( H_{cm} \) which describes the motion of the centers of mass of the sets of identical particles. All Hamiltonians \( H_s \) are completely solvable, and the solutions of \( H_{cm} \) are given by equation \((3)\), meaning that analytical solutions can be found in specific cases such as when \( N_i \leq 5 \) or when the total mass of every set is equal. This procedure is generalized in \([8]\) for one-body and two-body forces, where an explicit example is calculated for \( N_i = 2 \).

### 3. New analytical solutions

In the following, we show that the matrix \( \mathbb{J} \) is diagonal, and thus \( H_{\ell m} \), completely solved, for any number of arbitrary masses provided some specific relations exist between the coupling constants and the masses.

After some tedious calculations, from equation \((4)\) one can deduce the matrix elements of the symmetrical matrices \( \mathbb{F} \) and \( \mathbb{G} \),

\[
\mathbb{F}_{\ell m}^{\alpha} = \sum_{i=1}^{N} k_i \mathbb{B}_{i \alpha} \mathbb{B}_{i \alpha m}
\]

\[
\mathbb{G}_{\ell m}^{\alpha} = \sum_{i<j=1}^{N} g_{ij} (B_{ii} - B_{jj}) (B_{\ell m} - B_{j m})
\]

\[
\mathbb{F}_{\ell m}^{\alpha} = \frac{(k + \sum_{i=1}^{N} k_i \mathbb{B}_{i \alpha} \mathbb{B}_{i \alpha m})}{\mathbb{B}_{\ell m} - \mathbb{B}_{j m}}
\]

\[
\mathbb{G}_{\ell m}^{\alpha} = \frac{(k + \sum_{i<j=1}^{N} g_{ij} (B_{ii} - B_{jj}) (B_{\ell m} - B_{j m}))}{\mathbb{B}_{\ell m} - \mathbb{B}_{j m}}
\]

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\mathbb{F}_{\ell m}^{\alpha} = \frac{(k + \sum_{i=1}^{N} k_i \mathbb{B}_{i \alpha} \mathbb{B}_{i \alpha m})}{\mathbb{B}_{\ell m} - \mathbb{B}_{j m}}
\]

\[
\mathbb{G}_{\ell m}^{\alpha} = \frac{(k + \sum_{i<j=1}^{N} g_{ij} (B_{ii} - B_{jj}) (B_{\ell m} - B_{j m}))}{\mathbb{B}_{\ell m} - \mathbb{B}_{j m}}
\]
$G_{ij;i} = \Gamma_{i}(\alpha)\left[\alpha_{j+1}\alpha_{1},...,\left(\sum_{l=1}^{j}g_{l+1}\right) = \alpha_{i+1}\alpha_{1},...,\left(\sum_{l=i+2}^{N}g_{l+1}\right)\right]$ 

\[+ \alpha_{i+1}(\alpha_{j+1} + \sum_{m=i+1}^{j}g_{m}) = \alpha_{i+1} + \alpha_{1},...,i+1,\ldots,j,\ldots,g_{j+1} + 1] \right\} \tag{9}

where $\Gamma_{i}(\alpha) = \frac{\alpha_{i+1} + \alpha_{1} + \alpha_{i+1} + \alpha_{i+1}}{\alpha_{i+1} + \alpha_{i+1} + \alpha_{i+1} + \alpha_{i+1}}$. Notice that $\Gamma_{i}(\alpha)$ and $\Gamma_{j}(\alpha)$ are strictly positive numbers. We must note at this point that $g_{ij}$ with $i > N$ or $j > N$ are in principle not defined, however in these equations and later in this paper they should be considered as zero.

From equations (7) and (9) one can notice that the off-diagonal matrix elements of both F and G will vanish under certain conditions. In particular, it is easy to see that if $k_{i} = \rho m_{i}$, $\forall i$, where $\rho$ is a real constant, then F becomes diagonal, and its eigenvalues are all given by $\rho \alpha_{i+1}$. For G, if $g_{ij} = g_{i}^\alpha_{j}$ then G becomes diagonal, and its eigenvalues are given by $\frac{g_{i+2} + g_{i+3} + \ldots + g_{N}}{\alpha_{i+1}} + \frac{g_{i+1} + 1}{\alpha_{i+1}} + \ldots + \frac{1}{\alpha_{i+1}}$ with $i = 1,\ldots,N - 1$. The condition $g_{ij} = g_{i}^\alpha_{j}$ should not be mistaken for a special requirement on a given particle as the choice of the assignment of particle 1 is completely free. With this choice of numbering $j (> i)$ can take any value from 2 to $N$.

Under these very specific conditions over the nature of the one-body and two-body forces and the masses of the system, we find analytical solutions to $H_{ho}$ given by

$$E_{ho} |_{k_{i} = \rho m_{i}} = \sqrt{2} \sum_{i=1}^{N-1} \rho + \frac{\frac{g_{i+2} + g_{i+3} + \ldots + g_{N}}{m_{i}} + g_{i+1} + \frac{g_{i+1}}{m_{i}} + \ldots + \frac{1}{m_{i}}}{\alpha_{i+1}}$$. \tag{10}

One can check that formula (5) is recovered when all particles are identical. The parameters $\rho$ and $g_{ij}$ can be positive, null or negative numbers provided all expressions under the square roots are strictly positive. When $N = 3$, we have $k_{i} = \rho m_{i}$, $g_{23} = g_{3} m_{2}/m_{3}$, and $g_{12}$ and $g_{13}$ arbitrary. Formula (10) reduces then to

$$E_{ho} |_{k_{i} = \rho m_{i}} = \sqrt{2} \rho + \frac{g_{3} m_{2} + g_{3} (m_{1} + m_{2})}{m_{1} m_{2}}$$. \tag{11}

When only one-body or two-body forces are present, equation (10) gives eigenvalues of

$$E_{ho}^{1B} |_{k_{i} = \rho m_{i}} = \sqrt{2} \rho \sum_{i=1}^{N-1} q_{i}$$, \tag{12}

$$E_{ho}^{2B} |_{g_{ij} = g_{i}^\alpha_{j}} = \sqrt{2} \rho \sum_{i=1}^{N-1} \frac{2(g_{i+2} + g_{i+3} + \ldots + g_{N}) + g_{i+1} + 1 + \ldots + 1}{m_{i} \alpha_{i+1}} \tag{13}

When only one-body forces are present, $\rho$ must be strictly positive. Since $k_{i} = \rho m_{i}$, this implies that all relative oscillations associated with $E_{ho}^{1B}$ are characterized by the same frequency $\omega = \sqrt{2}\rho$.

A simpler expression for $E_{ho}^{2B}$ can be found under more restrictive conditions: if $g_{ij} = \beta m_{i} m_{j}$ where $\beta$ is a strictly positive constant, then

$$E_{ho}^{2B} |_{g_{ij} = \beta m_{i} m_{j}} = \sqrt{2} \beta \sum_{i=1}^{N-1} q_{i}$$, \tag{14}

4. Concluding remarks

As mentioned in the introduction, finding analytical solutions to specific Hamiltonians can be crucial to some approximation methods. In particular, the envelope theory [6] is a simple and powerful method to obtain approximate but reliable eigensolutions of quite general N-body Hamiltonians [7, 8]. As this method relies on the existence of analytical solutions of the translation-invariant N-body harmonic oscillator Hamiltonian, it is particularly relevant to study and expand the availability of these analytical solutions. For instance, relation (14) has been used to study the possible existence of a quasi Kepler’s third law for quantum many-body systems [10].

The results presented here are obtained by imposing that matrices F and G are both diagonal. However, it is possible that off-diagonal elements of these two matrices cancel out each other in particular situations resulting in a diagonal matrix $\tilde{J}$. This is an interesting study case that might be considered in a future work.
Acknowledgments

This work was supported by the Fonds de la Recherche Scientifique—FNRS under Grant Number 4.45.10.08. The authors would thank the anonymous referees for useful suggestions.

Data availability statement

No new data were created or analysed in this study.

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