The Gagliardo-Nirenberg inequality on metric measure spaces

Feng Du\textsuperscript{a,b}, Jing Mao\textsuperscript{c,d,*}, Qiaoling Wang\textsuperscript{b}, Chuanxi Wu\textsuperscript{e}

\textit{a.} School of Mathematics and Physics Science, Jingchu University of Technology, Jingmen, 448000, China
\textit{b.} Departamento de Matemática, Universidade de Brasília, 70910-900-Brasília-DF, Brazil
\textit{c.} Department of Mathematics, Harbin Institute of Technology (Weihai), Weihai, 264209, China
\textit{d.} Instituto Nacional de Matemática Pura e Aplicada, 110 Estrada Dona Castorina, Rio de Janeiro, 22460-320, Brazil
\textit{e.} School of Mathematics and Statistics, Hubei University, Wuhan, 430062, China

Abstract

In this paper, we prove that if a metric measure space satisfies the volume doubling condition and the Gagliardo-Nirenberg inequality with the same exponent \(n\) (\(n \geq 2\)), then it has exactly the \(n\)-dimensional volume growth. Besides, two interesting applications have also been given. The one is that we show that if a complete \(n\)-dimensional Finsler manifold of nonnegative \(n\)-Ricci curvature satisfies the Gagliardo-Nirenberg inequality with the sharp constant, then its flag curvature is identically zero. The other one is that we give an alternative proof to Mao’s main result in \([23]\) for smooth metric measure spaces with nonnegative weighted Ricci curvature.

1 Introduction

Let \(M\) be an \(n\)-dimensional complete non-compact Riemannian manifold, and denote by \(\nabla\) the gradient operator on \(M\). Given positive numbers \(p\) and \(q\), denote by \(\mathcal{D}^{p,q}(M)\) the completion of the space of smooth compactly supported functions on \(M\) under the norm \(\| \cdot \|_{p,q}\) defined by \(\|u\|_{p,q} = \|\nabla u\|_p + \|u\|_q\). Let \(1 < p < n\), \(p < q \leq \frac{p(n-1)}{n-p}\), \(\delta = np - (n-p)q\), \(r = p\frac{q-1}{p-1}\), \(\theta = \frac{(q-p)n}{(q-1)(np-(n-p)q)}\). For all \(u \in \mathcal{D}^{p,q}(\mathbb{R}^n)\), Del Pino-Dolbeault \([9, 10]\) proved that

\[
\left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |u|^r dx \right)^{\frac{1}{r}} \leq \Phi \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\nabla u|^p dx \right)^{\frac{\theta}{p}} \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |u|^q dx \right)^{\frac{1-\theta}{q}},
\]

\textsuperscript{*}Corresponding author

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E-mail addresses: defengdu123@163.com(F. Du), jiner120@163.com(J. Mao), wang@mat.unb.br(Q. Wang), cxwu@hubu.edu.cn(C. Wu).
Theorem 1.1. Let $1 < p < n, p < q \leq \frac{np}{n-p}, r = \frac{p(q-1)}{q-p}, \theta = \frac{(q-1)n}{(q-1)(np-(n-p)q)}$, and let $C \geq \Phi$ be a constant. Assume that $M$ is an $n$-dimensional $(n \geq 2)$ complete non-compact Riemannian manifold with non-negative Ricci curvature and assume that for any $u \in C^\infty_0(M)$, we have

$$
\left( \int_M |u|^r \, dv \right)^{\frac{1}{r}} \leq C \left( \int_M |\nabla u|^p \, dv \right)^{\frac{q}{p}} \left( \int_M |u|^q \, dv \right)^{\frac{1-q}{q}}.
$$

Then for any $x \in M$, we have

$$
\text{Vol}[B(x,r)] \geq \left( C^{-1} \Phi \right)^{-1} \left( \frac{q}{r} \right)^{\frac{q}{r}+\frac{1}{q}-\frac{1}{r}} V_0(r), \quad \forall r > 0,
$$

where $V_0(r)$ is the volume of an $r$-ball in $\mathbb{R}^n$.

In 2005, Xia [31] studied complete non-compact Riemannian manifolds with nonnegative Ricci curvature on which some Gagliardo-Nirenberg type inequality is satisfied, and proved the following result.

The inequality (1.1) is usually called the Gagliardo-Nirenberg inequality. Moreover, when $q = p\frac{q-1}{n-p}$, then $\theta = 1, r = \frac{np}{n-p}$, and (1.1) becomes the optimal Sobolev inequality, which is separately found by Aubin [1] and Telenti [29], having many important applications (see, for instance, [2, 3, 13, 14, 19]). Complete manifolds with nonnegative Ricci curvature on which some Sobolev or Caffarelli-Kohn-Nirenberg type inequality is satisfied were studied in [8, 18, 32].

The inequality (1.1) if and only if for some $\alpha \in \mathbb{R}, \beta > 0, \pi \in \mathbb{R}^n$,

$$u(x) = \alpha \left( 1 + \beta |x-x|^{\frac{p}{p-1}} \right)^{-\frac{p-1}{q-p}}, \quad \forall x \in \mathbb{R}^n.
$$

The inequality (1.1) is usually called the Gagliardo-Nirenberg inequality.
In particular, exponent doubling condition mentioned therein and the Caffarelli-Kohn-Nirenberg inequality with the same growth. Inspired by Xia’s and Kristály-Ohta’s works mentioned above, here we investigate a metric measure space satisfying a volume doubling condition and the Gagliardo-Nirenberg inequality, and successfully prove the following result.

**Theorem 1.2.** Let $p, q, r, \theta, n$ be as in Theorem [7], $x_0 \in X, C \geq \Phi$, and $C_0 \geq 1$. Assume that for any $u \in \text{Lip}_0(X)$, the Gagliardo-Nirenberg inequality

$$\left( \int_X |u(x)|^r d\mu(x) \right)^{\frac{1}{r}} \leq C \left( \int_X |\nabla u|^p d\mu(x) \right)^{\frac{\theta}{p}} \left( \int_X |u(x)|^q d\mu(x) \right)^{\frac{1-\theta}{q}} \tag{1.4}$$

and the volume conditions

$$\frac{\mu(B(x,R))}{\mu(B(x,r))} \leq C_0 \left( \frac{R}{r} \right)^n, \quad \text{for all } x \in X, \text{ and } 0 < r < R, \tag{1.5}$$

$$\liminf_{r \to 0} \frac{\mu(B(x_0,r))}{\mu(B(x_0,R))} = 1 \tag{1.6}$$

hold on a proper metric measure space $(X,d,\mu)$ of dimension $n$, where $B(x,r) := \{ y \in X : d(x,y) < r \}, \mathbb{B}(r) := \{ x \in \mathbb{R}^n : |x| < r \}$, and $\mu_E$ is the $n$-dimensional Lebesgue measure. Then, for any $x \in X$ and $\rho > 0$, we have

$$\mu(B(x,\rho)) \geq C_0^{-1} \left( C^{-1} \Phi \left( \frac{p}{p+1-\frac{\theta}{n}} \right) \right)^{-1} \mu_E(\mathbb{B}(\rho)). \tag{1.7}$$

In particular, $(X,d,\mu)$ has the $n$-dimensional volume growth

$$C_0^{-1} \left( C^{-1} \Phi \left( \frac{p}{p+1-\frac{\theta}{n}} \right) \right)^{-1} w_n \rho^n \leq \mu(B(x_0,\rho)) \leq C_0 w_n \rho^n,$$

for all $\rho > 0$, where $w_n$ is the volume of the unit ball in $\mathbb{R}^n$.

**Remark 1.3.** (1). When $q = \frac{(n-1)p}{n-p}$, then $\theta = 1$, $r = \frac{np}{n-p}$, and correspondingly, the Gagliardo-Nirenberg inequality (1.4) degenerates into the following Sobolev inequality

$$\left( \int_X |u(x)|^{\frac{np}{n-p}} d\mu(x) \right)^{\frac{n-p}{np}} \leq C \left( \int_X |\nabla u|^p d\mu(x) \right)^{\frac{1}{p}}$$

for $u \in \text{Lip}_0(X)$.

(2). The non-compactness of $(X,d)$ can be assured by the validity of (1.4). In fact, if $(X,d)$ is bounded, then one can choose $q = \frac{(n-1)p}{n-p}$, then $\theta = 1$ and $r = \frac{np}{n-p}$, which lets (1.4) become the Sobolev inequality mentioned above, and in this setting, $u + \ell$ with $\ell \to \infty$ clearly violates the
validity of \((1.4)\).

(3). By (1.5), we have

\[
\frac{\mu(B(x_0, R))}{w_n R^n} \leq C_0 \frac{\mu(B(x_0, r))}{w_n r^n} = C_0 \frac{\mu(B(x_0, r))}{\mu(E(B_n(r)))}
\]

for \(x_0 \in X\) and \(0 < r < R\). Fixing \(R\) and letting \(r\) tends to zero, by the volume condition (1.6) which describes the volume behavior near \(x_0\), we can obtain

\[
\frac{\mu(B(x_0, R))}{w_n R^n} \leq C_0 \cdot \liminf_{r \to 0} \frac{\mu(B(x_0, r))}{\mu(E(B_n(r)))} = 1,
\]

which implies that \(\mu(B(x_0, R)) \leq C_0 w_n R^n\) for any \(R > 0\). So, one can get the \(n\)-dimensional volume growth, i.e., the last assertion of Theorem 1.1, directly provided (1.7) is proven.

(4). As pointed out in [17, Remark 1.2 (b)], if \((X, d, \mu)\) satisfies the volume doubling condition

\[
\mu(B(x, 2r)) \leq \Lambda \mu(B(x, r)), \quad \text{for some } \Lambda \geq 1 \text{ and all } x \in X, \ r > 0,
\]

then it is easy to get that the volume condition (1.5) is satisfied with, e.g., \(n \geq \log_2 \Lambda\) and \(C_0 = 1\). Therefore, (1.5) can be comprehended as the volume doubling condition with the explicit exponent \(n\). Besides, one can regard the volume condition (1.6) as a generalization of the classical Bishop-Gromov volume comparison for complete manifolds with non-negative Ricci curvature.

(5). The assertion of having \(n\)-dimensional volume growth implies that, for instance, the cylinder \(S^{n-1} \times \mathbb{R}\) does not satisfy (1.4) for any \(x \in X\) and \(C\). The volume doubling condition (1.5) implies that the Hausdorff dimension \(\dim_H X\) of \((X, d)\) is at most \(n\). Besides, as in (3), by the volume conditions (1.5) and (1.6), we have

\[
\frac{\mu(B(x_0, R))}{\mu(E(B_n(R)))} \leq C_0 \frac{\mu(B(x_0, r))}{\mu(E(B_n(r)))}
\]

for \(x_0 \in X\) and \(0 < r < R\), which implies that

\[
\limsup_{R \to 0} \frac{\mu(B(x_0, R))}{\mu(E(B_n(R)))} \leq \liminf_{r \to 0} C_0 \frac{\mu(B(x_0, r))}{\mu(E(B_n(r)))} = C_0.
\]

Therefore, we know that the Ahlfors \(n\)-regularity at \(x_0\) in the sense that \(\eta^{-1} r^n \leq \mu(B(x_0, r)) \leq \eta r^n\) for some \(\eta \geq 1\) and small \(r > 0\), which means that \(\dim_H X = n\). The volume doubling condition and the Ahlfors regularity are important in analysis on metric measure spaces. For this fact, see, e.g., [15] for the details. Note that the choice of the constant 1 chosen at the right hand side of (1.6) is only for simplicity. In fact, by (1.5), we know that \(\eta_{x_0} := \liminf_{r \to 0} \frac{\mu(B(x_0, r))}{\mu(E(B_n(r)))}\) is positive. So, one can normalize \(\mu\) so as to satisfy (1.6) once \(\eta_{x_0}\) is bounded.

By Theorem 2.3 (equivalently, see also Shen [27] or Ohta [25]), we know that for Finsler manifolds with non-negative \(n\)-Ricci curvature (for this notion, see Definition 2.1 for the precise statement), the volume doubling condition (1.5) holds with \(C_0 = 1\). For complete Finsler manifolds with non-negative \(n\)-Ricci curvature, when the Gagliardo-Nirenberg inequality (1.4) is satisfied with the best constant (i.e., \(C = \Phi\)), by applying Theorems 1.2 and 2.3, we can prove the following rigidity theorem.
Corollary 1.4. Let \((X, F)\) be a complete \(n\)-dimensional Finsler manifold. Let \(p, q, r, \theta, n\) be as in Theorem \([7, 7]\), \(x_0 \in X\), and \(C_0 \geq 1\). Fix a positive smooth measure \(\mu\) on \(X\) and assume that the \(n\)-Ricci curvature \(\text{Ric}_n\) of \((X, F, \mu)\) is nonnegative. If the Gagliardo-Nirenberg inequality (1.4) is satisfied with the best constant \((i.e., C = \Phi)\) and \(\lim_{r \to 0} \frac{\mu(B(x_0, r))}{w_n r^n} = 1\), then under the volume doubling condition (1.5), we have the flag curvature of \((X, F)\) is identically zero.

Remark 1.5. Finsler manifolds are special metric measure spaces with prescribed Finsler structures. See Subsection 2.2 for a brief introduction to Finsler manifolds.

A smooth metric measure space, which is also known as the weighted measure space, is actually a Riemannian manifold equipped with some measure (which is conformal to the usual Riemannian measure). More precisely, for a given complete \(n\)-dimensional Riemannian manifold \((M, g)\) with the metric \(g\), the triple \((M, g, e^{-f} dv_g)\) is called a smooth metric measure space, with \(f\) a smooth real-valued function on \(M\) and \(dv_g\) the Riemannian volume element related to \(g\) (sometimes, we also call \(dv_g\) the volume density). For a geodesic ball \(B(x, r)\), we can define its weighted (or \(f\)-)volume \(\text{Vol}_f[B(x, r)]\) as follows

\[
\text{Vol}_f[B(x, r)] = \int_{B(x, r)} e^{-f} dv_g. \quad (1.8)
\]

On a smooth metric measure space \((M, g, e^{-f} dv_g)\), the so called \(\infty\)-Bakry-Émery Ricci tensor \(\text{Ric}_f\) is defined by

\[
\text{Ric}_f = \text{Ric} + \text{Hess} f,
\]

which is also called the weighted Ricci curvature. Bakry and Émery \([8, 9]\) introduced firstly and investigated extensively the generalized Ricci tensor above and its relationship with diffusion processes. In 2014, Mao \([23]\) studied complete non-compact smooth measure metric spaces with nonnegative weighted Ricci curvature on which some Gagliardo-Nirenberg type inequality is satisfied, and proved the following result.

Theorem 1.6. (\([23]\)) Let \(p, q, r, \theta, n\) be as in Theorem \([7, 7]\), and let \((M, g, e^{-f} dv_g)\) be an \(n\)-dimensional \((n \geq 2)\) complete noncompact smooth metric measure space with non-negative weighted Ricci curvature. For a point \(x_0 \in M\) at which \(f(x_0)\) is away from \(-\infty\), assume that the radial derivative \(\partial_r f\) satisfies \(\partial_r f \geq 0\) along all minimal geodesic segments from \(x_0\), with \(t := d(x_0, \cdot)\) the distance to \(x_0\). Furthermore, for any \(u \in C_0(M)\) and some constant \(C > 0\), if the following Gagliardo-Nirenberg type inequality

\[
\left( \int_M |u(x)|^r e^{-f} dv_g \right)^{\frac{1}{r}} \leq C \left( \int_M |\nabla u|^p(x) e^{-f} dv_g \right)^{\frac{\theta}{p}} \left( \int_M |u(x)|^q e^{-f} dv_g \right)^{\frac{1-\theta}{q}} \quad (1.9)
\]

is satisfied, then we have

\[
\text{Vol}_f[B(x_0, R)] \geq e^{-f(x_0)} \left( C^{-1} \Phi \left( \frac{\theta}{p} + \frac{1-\theta}{q} \right) \right)^{-1} \text{Vol}_0(R), \quad \forall R > 0, \quad (1.10)
\]

where \(\text{Vol}_0(R)\) denotes the volume of an \(R\)-ball in \(\mathbb{R}^n\).
Remark 1.7. (1) By applying Theorem 1.2, we can give an alternative proof to Theorem 1.6 for smooth metric measure spaces of dimension \( n \geq 2 \) – see Subsection 3.3 for the details.

(2) If the Gagliardo-Nirenberg type inequality (1.9) is satisfied with the best constant (i.e., \( C = \Phi \)), then by Theorems 1.6 and 3.1, and together with generalized Bishop-type volume comparisons (cf. [11, Theorem 3.3, Corollary 3.5 and Theorem 4.2]) for complete manifolds with radial curvature bounded, a rigidity conclusion, \((M, g)\) is isometric to \((\mathbb{R}^n, g_{\mathbb{R}^n})\) with \( g_{\mathbb{R}^n} \) being the usual Euclidean metric, can be obtained (cf. [23, Corollary 1.5] for the precise statement).

It is interesting to know under what kind of conditions a complete open \( n \)-manifold \((n \geq 2)\) is isometric to \( \mathbb{R}^n \) or has finite topological type, which in essence has relation with the splittingness of the prescribed manifold. This is a classical topic in the global differential geometry, which has been investigated intensively (see, e.g., [7, 20, 26]).

2 Proofs of Theorem 1.2 and Corollary 1.4

2.1 Proof of Theorem 1.2

Proof. As pointed out in Remark 1.3 (3), if we want to get the \( n \)-dimensional volume growth assertion in Theorem 1.2, we only need to show (1.7). Now, in the rest of this subsection, we would like to give the details of the proof of (1.7) as follows.

First, we introduce two auxiliary functions \( F, G : (0, +\infty) \rightarrow \mathbb{R} \) defined by

\[
F(\lambda) := \int_X \frac{1}{\lambda + d(x_0, x)^{\frac{p}{q-p}}(\frac{p-1}{q-p})^q} d\mu(x)
\]

and

\[
G(\lambda) := \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \frac{1}{\lambda + |x|^\frac{p}{q-p}} d\mu_E(x)
\]

respectively, which are well defined and of class \( C^1 \).

By the layer cake representation of functions, one has

\[
F(\lambda) = \int_0^{+\infty} \mu \left\{ x \in X : \frac{1}{\lambda + d(x_0, x)^{\frac{p}{q-p}}(\frac{p-1}{q-p})^q} > s \right\} ds.
\]

By taking into account that \( \text{diam}(X) = \infty \) and making the variable change

\[
s = \frac{1}{\left(\lambda + \rho^{\frac{p}{q-p}}\right)^{\frac{p-1}{q-p}}},
\]

then

\[
F(\lambda) = \frac{pq}{q-p} \int_0^{+\infty} \mu(B(x_0, \rho)) f(\lambda, \rho) d\rho,
\]

(2.1)
where
\[ f(\lambda, \rho) = \frac{\rho^{\frac{1}{p-1}}}{(\lambda + \rho \frac{p}{q-p})^{\frac{(q-1)p}{q-p}}}. \]

Similar to the above process, we can also get
\[ G(\lambda) = \frac{pq}{q-p} \int_0^\infty \mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho)) f(\lambda, \rho) d\rho. \]  

(2.2)

On the other hand, since the inequalities (1.5) and (1.6) hold on \((X, d, \mu)\), we have
\[ \mu(B(x_0, \rho)) \leq C_0 \mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho)). \]  

(2.3)

Then, it follows from (2.1)--(2.3) that
\[ 0 \leq F(\lambda) \leq C_0 G(\lambda). \]  

(2.4)

Since \( q < \frac{np}{n-p} \), we have
\[ n + \frac{1}{p-1} - \frac{p^2(q-1)}{(p-1)(q-p)} = n + \frac{1}{p-1} - \frac{p^2}{p-1} - \frac{p^2}{q-p} < -1, \]
and from which we know that \( 0 \leq F(\lambda) < \infty \), for any \( \lambda > 0 \), and \( F(\lambda) \) is differentiable. Also, we have
\[ F'(\lambda) = -\left(\frac{p-1}{q-p}\right) \int_X \frac{d\mu(x)}{\left(\lambda + d(x_0, x) \frac{p}{q-1}\right)^{\frac{(q-1)p}{q-p}}}. \]  

(2.5)

For each \( \lambda > 0 \), consider the sequence of functions
\[ u_{\lambda, k}(x) := \max\{0, \min\{0, k - d(x_0, x)\} + 1\} \left(\lambda + \max\{d(x_0, x), k^{-1}\} \frac{p}{q-1}\right)^{\frac{p-1}{q-p}}. \]

Since \((X,d)\) is proper, \( \text{supp}(u_{\lambda, k}) := \{x \in X : d(x_0, x) \leq k + 1\} \) is compact. Therefore, we have \( u_{\lambda, k} \in \text{Lip}_0(X) \) for every \( \lambda > 0 \) and \( k \in \mathbb{N} \). Set
\[ u_{\lambda}(x) := \lim_{k \to \infty} u_{\lambda, k}(x) = \left(\lambda + d(x_0, x) \frac{p}{q-1}\right)^{\frac{p-1}{q-p}}. \]

Since the functions \( u_{\lambda, k} \) verify the Gagliardo-Nirenberg inequality (1.4), by an approximation based on (2.4), we know that \( u_{\lambda} \) verifies the Gagliardo-Nirenberg inequality (1.4) also. Together with the fact that \( x \to d(x_0, x) \) is 1-Lipschitz (i.e., \(|Dd(x_0, \cdot)|(x) \leq 1 \) for all \( x \)), we can obtain
\[ \left(\int_X \frac{d\mu(x)}{\left(\lambda + d(x_0, x) \frac{p}{q-1}\right)^{\frac{(q-1)p}{q-p}}}\right)^{\frac{1}{p}} \leq C \left(\frac{p}{q-p}\right)^\theta \left(\int_X \frac{d(x_0, x) \frac{p}{q-1} d\mu(x)}{\left(\lambda + d(x_0, x) \frac{p}{q-1}\right)^{\frac{(q-1)p}{q-p}}}\right)^{\frac{q}{p}} \left(\int_X \frac{d\mu(x)}{\left(\lambda + d(x_0, x) \frac{p}{q-1}\right)^{\frac{(q-1)p}{q-p}}}\right)^{\frac{1-\theta}{q}}. \]  

(2.6)
by using a chain rule for the local Lipschitz constant. By the definition of $F(\lambda)$ and (2.5), the above equality can be rewritten as follows

\[ (-F'(\lambda))^{\frac{p}{\theta}} \leq l \left( F(\lambda) + \frac{q-p}{(p-1)q} \lambda F'(\lambda) \right) F(\lambda)^{\frac{(1-\theta)p}{\theta q}}, \quad (2.7) \]

where

\[ l = C^{\frac{p}{\theta}} \left( \frac{p}{q-p} \right)^p \left( \frac{(p-1)q}{q-p} \right)^{\frac{p}{\theta}}. \]

Since $v_\lambda(x) = \left( \lambda + |x|^{\frac{p}{q-p}} \right)^{-\frac{p-1}{q-p}}$ is a minimizer of the Gagliardo-Nirenberg inequality in $\mathbb{R}^n$, then for every $\lambda > 0$, the following equality

\[ \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |v_\lambda(x)|^{\frac{1}{r}} d\mu_E(x) \right)^{\frac{1}{r}} = \Phi \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\nabla v_\lambda(x)|^p d\mu_E(x) \right)^{\frac{\theta}{p}} \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |v_\lambda(x)|^q d\mu_E(x) \right)^{\frac{1-\theta}{q}} \]

holds. By the definition of $G(\lambda)$ and a similar argument as (2.7), the above equality can be rewritten as follows

\[ (-G'(\lambda))^{\frac{p}{\theta}} = \tilde{l} \left( G(\lambda) + \frac{q-p}{(p-1)q} \lambda G'(\lambda) \right) G(\lambda)^{\frac{(1-\theta)p}{\theta q}}, \quad (2.8) \]

where

\[ \tilde{l} = \Phi^{\frac{p}{\theta}} \left( \frac{p}{q-p} \right)^p \left( \frac{(p-1)q}{q-p} \right)^{\frac{p}{\theta}}. \]

Substituting $G(\lambda) = G(1) \lambda^{(p-1)\left(\frac{n}{p} - \frac{q}{q-p}\right)}$ into (2.8), we have

\[ \left( 1 - \frac{n(q-p)}{pq} \right)^{\frac{p}{\theta}} = \Phi^{\frac{p}{\theta}} \left( \frac{p}{q-p} \right)^p \left( \frac{(q-p)^n}{pq} \right) G(1)^{\frac{p}{\theta} \left(\frac{q}{q} + \frac{1-\theta}{q} \frac{1}{r}\right)} \]. \quad (2.9) \]

Consider the constant $A$ given by

\[ \left( 1 - \frac{n(q-p)}{pq} \right)^{\frac{p}{\theta}} = C^{\frac{p}{\theta}} \left( \frac{p}{q-p} \right)^p \left( \frac{(q-p)^n}{pq} \right) A^{\frac{p}{\theta} \left(\frac{q}{q} + \frac{1-\theta}{q} \frac{1}{r}\right)} \]. \quad (2.10) \]

It is easy to check that the function

\[ H_0(\lambda) = A \lambda^{(p-1)\left(\frac{n}{p} - \frac{q}{q-p}\right)}, \quad \lambda \in (0, +\infty), \]

satisfies the differential equation

\[ (-q'(\lambda))^{\frac{p}{\theta}} = l \left( q(\lambda) + \frac{q-p}{(p-1)q} \lambda q'(\lambda) \right) q(\lambda)^{\frac{(1-\theta)p}{\theta q}}. \quad (2.11) \]
By (2.9) and (2.10), we get

\[ A = \left( \frac{\Phi}{C} \right)^{\left( \frac{q}{p} + \frac{1 - \theta}{q} \right)^{-1}} G(1), \]

which implies

\[ H_0(\lambda) = \left( \frac{\Phi}{C} \right)^{\left( \frac{q}{p} + \frac{1 - \theta}{q} \right)^{-1}} \lambda^{(p-1)\left( \frac{q}{p} - \frac{\theta}{q} - \frac{1}{q} \right)} G(1) = \left( \frac{\Phi}{C} \right)^{\left( \frac{q}{p} + \frac{1 - \theta}{q} \right)^{-1}} G(\lambda). \quad (2.12) \]

In the following, we will show that when \( C > \Phi \), for every \( \lambda > 0 \),

\[ F(\lambda) \geq H_0(\lambda). \quad (2.13) \]

First, we claim that if \( F(\lambda_0) < H_0(\lambda_0) \), for some \( \lambda_0 > 0 \), then \( F(\lambda) < H_0(\lambda), \forall \lambda \in (0, \lambda_0] \). We prove this by contradiction. Suppose that the claim is not true. Then there exists some \( \tilde{\lambda} \in (0, \lambda_0) \) such that \( F(\tilde{\lambda}) \geq H_0(\tilde{\lambda}) \). Set \( \lambda_1 := \sup \{ \lambda < \lambda_0 : F(\lambda) = H_0(\lambda) \} \). Then for any \( \lambda \in [\lambda_1, \lambda_0], 0 < F(\lambda) \leq H_0(\lambda) \), and so from (2.7), we have

\[ (-F'(\lambda))^{\frac{q}{p}} \leq l \left( H_0(\lambda) + \frac{q - p}{(p - 1)q} \lambda F'(\lambda) \right) H_0(\lambda)^{\left( \frac{1 - \theta}{\theta q} \right)} \]. \quad (2.14)

For every \( \lambda > 0 \), define a function \( z_{\lambda} : (0, \infty) \to \mathbb{R} \) by \( z_{\lambda}(\rho) = \rho \frac{q}{p} + \frac{l_\lambda (q - p)\rho}{(p - 1)q} H_0(\lambda)^{\left( \frac{1 - \theta}{\theta q} \right)} \). Clearly, \( z_{\lambda} \) is increasing. Hence, when \( \lambda \in [\lambda_1, \lambda_0] \), we infer from (2.14) and (2.11) that

\[ z_{\lambda}(-F'(\lambda)) = (-F'(\lambda))^{\frac{q}{p}} + \frac{l_\lambda (q - p)}{(p - 1)q} (-F'(\lambda)) H_0(\lambda)^{\left( \frac{1 - \theta}{\theta q} \right)} \]

\[ \leq l H_0(\lambda)^{1 + \left( \frac{1 - \theta}{\theta q} \right) = z_{\lambda}(-H_0'(\lambda)), \]

which means \( F'(\lambda) \geq H_0'(\lambda), \forall \lambda \in [\lambda_1, \lambda_0] \). Thus, we know that the function \( F - H_0 \) is increasing on \([\lambda_1, \lambda_0]\), which implies that

\[ 0 = (F - H_0)(\lambda_1) \leq (F - H_0)(\lambda_0) < 0. \]

This is a contradiction. Hence, the above claim is true.

By (1.6), we know that for every \( \varepsilon > 0 \), there exists \( \delta > 0 \) such that \( \mu(B(x_0, \rho)) \geq (1 - \varepsilon) \mu_E(B(\rho)) \) for all \( 0 \leq \rho \leq \delta \). Therefore, by (2.7) and making a variable change \( \rho = \lambda \frac{1 - \theta}{\theta q} t \), we can get

\[ F(\lambda) \geq \frac{pq}{p - q} (1 - \varepsilon) \int_0^\delta \mu_E(B_n(\rho)f(\lambda, \rho)) d\rho \]

\[ = \frac{1 - a}{n - 1 + a} (1 - \varepsilon) \lambda^{\left( \frac{(p - 1)\rho}{p} + 1 - \frac{p(q - 1)}{q - p} \right)} \int_0^\delta \mu_E(B_n(t)f(1, t)) dt. \]

On the other hand, we have

\[ G(\lambda) = \frac{1 - a}{n - 1 + a} \lambda^{\left( \frac{(p - 1)\rho}{p} + 1 - \frac{p(q - 1)}{q - p} \right)} \int_0^\infty \mu_E(B_n(t)f(1, t)) dt. \]
Therefore, we have
\[
\liminf_{\lambda \to 0} \frac{F(\lambda)}{G(\lambda)} \geq 1 - \varepsilon.
\]
Letting \(\varepsilon \to 0\) yields
\[
\liminf_{\lambda \to 0} \frac{F(\lambda)}{G(\lambda)} \geq 1.
\]
When \(C > \Phi\), we infer from the above inequality and (2.12) that
\[
\liminf_{\lambda \to 0} \frac{F(\lambda)}{H_0(\lambda)} = \left(\frac{C}{\Phi}\right) \left(\frac{\theta + \frac{1 - \theta}{q}}{\frac{q}{p} - \frac{1 - \theta}{q}}\right)^{-1} \liminf_{\lambda \to 0} \frac{F(\lambda)}{G(\lambda)} \geq \left(\frac{C}{\Phi}\right) \left(\frac{\theta + \frac{1 - \theta}{q}}{\frac{q}{p} - \frac{1 - \theta}{q}}\right)^{-1} > 1.
\]
Then, together with the previous claim, we can get \(F(\lambda) \geq H_0(\lambda), \forall \lambda > 0\). Thus, for any \(\lambda > 0\), we can get from (2.1), (2.2), (2.12) that
\[
\int_0^{+\infty} \{\mu(B(x_0, \rho)) - b\mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho))\} f(\lambda, \rho) d\rho \geq 0, \quad \text{(2.15)}
\]
where \(b = \left(\frac{C}{\Phi}\right) \left(\frac{\theta + \frac{1 - \theta}{q}}{\frac{q}{p} - \frac{1 - \theta}{q}}\right)^{-1}\). By (1.5), for a fixed \(\rho > 0\), we have
\[
C_0 \frac{\mu(B(x_0, \rho))}{\mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho))} \geq \frac{\mu(B(x_0, r))}{\mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(r))}
\]
for any \(r > \rho \geq 0\). We can assume
\[
b_0 := \limsup_{r \to \infty} \frac{\mu(B(x_0, r))}{\mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(r))}.
\]
In order to prove (1.7) in the case that \(C > \Phi\), it suffices to show that \(b_0 \geq b\). We will prove this by contradiction. By the definition of \(b_0\), we know that for some \(\rho_0 > 0\), there exists \(\varepsilon_0 > 0\) such that
\[
\frac{\mu(B(x_0, \rho))}{\mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho))} \leq b - \varepsilon_0, \quad \forall \rho \geq \rho_0.
\]
Substituting (2.16) into (2.15), and together with (2.3), for every \(\lambda > 0\), we have
\[
0 \leq \int_0^{+\infty} \{\mu(B(x_0, \rho)) - b\mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho))\} f(\lambda, \rho) d\rho
\]
\[
\leq \int_0^{\rho_0} \mu(B(x_0, \rho)) f(\lambda, \rho) d\rho + (b - \varepsilon_0) \int_{\rho_0}^{+\infty} \mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho)) f(\lambda, \rho) d\rho
\]
\[
- b \int_{\rho_0}^{+\infty} \mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho)) f(\lambda, \rho) d\rho
\]
\[
\leq C_0 \int_0^{\rho_0} \mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho)) f(\lambda, \rho) d\rho - b \int_0^{\rho_0} \mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho)) f(\lambda, \rho) d\rho
\]
\[
- \varepsilon_0 \int_{\rho_0}^{+\infty} \mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho)) f(\lambda, \rho) d\rho
\]
\[
= (C_0 + \varepsilon_0) \int_0^{\rho_0} \mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho)) f(\lambda, \rho) d\rho - \varepsilon_0 \int_{\rho_0}^{+\infty} \mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho)) f(\lambda, \rho) d\rho
\]
\[
= (C_0 - \varepsilon_0) \int_0^{\rho_0} \mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho)) f(\lambda, \rho) d\rho - \varepsilon_0 \frac{q - p}{pq} \lambda^{(p-1)} \left(\frac{\theta + \frac{1 - \theta}{q}}{\frac{q}{p} - \frac{1 - \theta}{q}}\right) G(1).
\]
Since \( f(\lambda, \rho) = \frac{\rho^{\frac{1}{p}}}{(\lambda + \rho)^{\frac{q-1}{p-q}}}; \) one has

\[
\int_0^{\rho_0} \rho^n f(\lambda, \rho) d\rho = \int_0^{\rho_0} \frac{\rho^{n+\frac{1}{p}}}{(\lambda + \rho)^{\frac{q-1}{p-q}}} d\rho \leq \lambda \frac{\rho_0^{n+\frac{1}{p}}}{(n+1 + \frac{1}{p-1})}.
\]

By the above two inequalities, we can get the inequality of type

\[
M_1 \lambda^{(p-1)} \left(\frac{\frac{n}{p} - \frac{q}{q-p}}{\Phi}\right) \leq M_2 \lambda^{\frac{p(q-1)}{q-p}}, \quad \forall \lambda > 0,
\]

where \( M_1, M_2 > 0 \) are constants independent of \( \lambda \). Observing \( \frac{p(q-1)}{q-p} - (p-1) \left(\frac{n}{p} - \frac{q}{q-p}\right) = \frac{(1-p)n}{p} - 1 < 0 \), letting \( \lambda \to +\infty \) in the above inequality, one can obtain a contradiction. This means that (1.7) holds in the case that \( \lambda \to +\infty \).

When \( C = \Phi \), we can also get (1.7). In fact, in this case, for any fixed \( \delta > 0 \), we have

\[
\left( \int_X |u(x)|^q d\mu(x) \right)^{\frac{1}{q}} \leq (\Phi + \delta) \left( \int_X |\nabla u|^p(x) d\mu(x) \right)^{\frac{1}{p}} \left( \int_X |u(x)|^q d\mu(x) \right)^{\frac{q-1}{q}}.
\]

Therefore, for any \( x \in X \), by the previous argument, we have

\[
\mu(B(x, \rho)) \geq C_{0}^{-1} \left( \frac{\Phi}{\Phi + \delta} \right)^{\frac{q}{p} + \frac{1}{q} - \frac{1}{p} - \frac{1}{q}} \mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho)), \quad \forall \rho > 0.
\]

Letting \( \delta \to 0 \), we can obtain

\[
\mu(B(x, \rho)) \geq C_{0}^{-1} \mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho)), \quad \forall \rho > 0,
\]

which implies (1.7) holds in the case that \( C = \Phi \).

This completes the proof of Theorem 1.2. \( \square \)

### 2.2 Preliminary notions and a Bishop-Gromov type volume comparison theorem in Finsler geometry

Before applying Theorem 1.2 to prove Corollary 1.4, we briefly recall some concepts in Finsler geometry. We refer to [6] for a fundamental but overall introduction about Finsler geometry.

**Definition 2.1.** Let \( X \) be a connected \( n \)-dimensional smooth manifold and \( TX = \bigcup_{x \in X} T_xX \) be its tangent bundle. The pair \((X, F)\) is called a Finsler manifold if a continuous function \( F : TX \to [0, \infty) \) satisfies the following conditions

1. \( F \in C^\infty(TX \setminus \{0\}); \)
2. \( F(x, tv) = |t|F(x, v) \) for all \( t \in \mathbb{R} \) and \((x, v) \in TX; \)
3. The \( n \times n \) matrix

\[
g_{ij}(x, v) := \frac{1}{2} \frac{\partial^2 (F^2)}{\partial v^i \partial v^j}, \quad \text{where} \quad v = \sum_{i=1}^{n} v^i \frac{\partial}{\partial x^i}, \quad (2.17)
\]

is positive definite for all \((x, v) \in TX \setminus \{0\} \). \( F \) is called the Finsler structure of \((X, F)\).
We will denote by $\langle , \rangle_v$ the inner product on $T_xX$ induced by (2.17). We know that $(X, F)$ becomes a Riemannian manifold if and only if $g_{ij}(x, v)$ is independent of $v$ in each $T_xX \setminus \{0\}$. For a smooth curve $\sigma : [0, l) \to X$, one can define its integral length $L_F \sigma$ by $L_F \sigma = \int_0^l F(\sigma, \dot{\sigma}) \, dt$. Based on this, the distance function $d_F : X \times X \to [0, \infty)$ can be defined by $d_F(x_1, x_2) := \inf_{\sigma} L_F \sigma$, where $\sigma$ runs over all smooth curves from $x_1$ to $x_2$. A smooth curve $\sigma : [0, l) \to X$ is called a geodesic if it locally minimizes $d_F$ and has a constant speed (i.e., $F(\sigma, \dot{\sigma})$ is constant). The geodesic (Euler-Lagrange) equation can be written down in terms of covariant derivative along $\sigma$, which only depends on $\sigma$ from (the details). For vectors $v, w \in T_xX$, which are linearly independent, and $\mathcal{S} = \text{span}\{v, w\}$, the flag curvature of the flag $(\mathcal{S}, v)$ can be defined as follows

$$K(\mathcal{S}, v) := \frac{\langle R^v(w, v)v, w \rangle_v}{F(v)^2 \langle w, w \rangle_v - \langle v, w \rangle_v^2}.$$ 

If $(X, F)$ is a Riemannian manifold, then the flag curvature degenerates into the sectional curvature which only depends on $\mathcal{S}$ (not on the choice of $v \in \mathcal{S}$). Choose $v \in T_xX$ with $F(x, v) = 1$, and let $\{e_i\}_{i=1}^n$ with $e_n = v$ be an orthonormal basis of $(T_xX, \langle , \rangle_v)$, and let $\mathcal{S}_i = \text{span}\{e_i, v\}$ for $i = 1, 2, \ldots, n - 1$. The Ricci curvature of $v$ is defined by $\text{Ric}(v) := \sum_{i=1}^{n-1} K(\mathcal{S}_i; v)$. We also set $\text{Ric}(cv) := c^2 \text{Ric}(v)$ for $c \geq 0$.

For those Finsler curvatures mentioned above, Shen has explained them from the Riemannian viewpoint (see [28, Section 6.2 of Chapter 6]). Fixing $v \in T_xX \setminus \{0\}$ and extending it to a smooth vector field $V$ around $x$ such that all integral curves of $V$ are geodesics, then the flag curvature $K(\mathcal{S}, v)$ is the same as the sectional curvature of $\mathcal{S}$ w.r.t. the Riemannian structure $\langle , \rangle_v$, and correspondingly, $\text{Ric}(v)$ is the same as the Ricci curvature of $v$ w.r.t. $\langle , \rangle_v$. This fact leads to the following definition of $N$-Ricci curvature associated with an arbitrary measure on $X$ (see also, e.g., [17], [25] for this notion).

**Definition 2.2.** Let $\mu$ be a positive smooth measure on $X$. Given $v \in T_xX \setminus \{0\}$, let $\sigma : (-\epsilon, \epsilon) \to X$ be the geodesic with $\dot{\sigma} = v$ and decompose $\mu$ along $\sigma$ as $\mu = e^{-\psi} \text{Vol}_\sigma$, where $\text{Vol}_\sigma$ is the volume element of the Riemannian structure $\langle , \rangle_\sigma$. Then, for $N \in [n, \infty]$, the $N$-Ricci curvature $\text{Ric}_N$ is defined by

$$\text{Ric}_N(v) = \text{Ric}(v) + (\psi \circ \sigma)''(0) - \frac{(\psi \circ \sigma)'(0)^2}{N-n},$$

where the third term is understood as 0 if $N = \infty$ or if $N = n$ with $(\psi \circ \sigma)'(0) = 0$, and as $-\infty$ if $N = n$ with $(\psi \circ \sigma)'(0) \neq 0$. 

By applying the concept of the $N$-Ricci curvature $\text{Ric}_N$, Ohta [25] proved the following Bishop-Gromov type volume comparison result in the Finsler case.

**Theorem 2.3.** (Theorem 7.3) Let $(X, F, \mu)$ be a complete $n$-dimensional Finsler manifold with nonnegative $N$-Ricci curvature. Then we have

$$\frac{\mu(B(x, R))}{\mu(B(x, r))} \leq \left(\frac{R}{r}\right)^N,$$

for every $x \in X$, and $0 < r < R$.

Moreover, if equality holds with $N = n$ for all $x \in X$ and $0 < r < R$, then any Jacobi field $J$ along a geodesic $\sigma$ has the form $J(t) = tP(t)$, where $P$ is a parallel vector field along $\sigma$ (i.e., $D^\sigma_\sigma P \equiv 0$).

### 2.3 Proof of Corollary 1.4

**Proof.** Since $(X, F)$ is complete, by applying the Hopf-Rinow theorem, we know that $(X, d_F, \mu)$ is a proper metric measure space. Since the $n$-Ricci curvature $\text{Ric}_n$ is nonnegative, by Theorem 2.3, we can obtain (1.6) with $C_0 = 1$. As pointed out in Remark 1.3 (5), one can normalize the fixed positive measure $\mu$ such that (1.6) is satisfied. Then by these two facts, similar to Remark 1.3 (3), we can easily get

$$\mu(B(x, \rho)) \leq \mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho)), \quad \text{for all } \rho > 0, x \in X.$$

However, since the Gagliardo-Nirenberg inequality (1.4) is satisfied with the best constant (i.e., $C = \Phi$), by Theorem 1.2, we have

$$\mu(B(x, \rho)) \geq \mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho)), \quad \text{for all } \rho > 0, x \in X.$$

Therefore, $\mu(B(x, \rho)) = \mu_E(\mathbb{B}_n(\rho))$ for all $\rho > 0$ and $x \in X$. By applying Theorem 2.3 directly, we know that every Jacobi field $J$ along a geodesic $\sigma$ has the form $J(t) = tP(t)$, where $P$ is a parallel vector field along $\sigma$. Together with the Jacobi equation (2.18), it follows that $R^\sigma(J, \dot{\sigma})\dot{\sigma} \equiv 0$. Then $K(\mathcal{S}^\sigma; \dot{\sigma}) \equiv 0$ with $\mathcal{S}^\sigma = \text{span}(\sigma, P)$. Since $\sigma$ and $J$ are arbitrary, we know $K \equiv 0$, which equivalently says that the flag curvature of $(X, F)$ is identically zero. \hfill $\square$

### 3 Proof of Theorem 1.6

In this section, as mentioned before, we would like to give an alternative proof to Theorem 1.6. However, before that, we need to introduce some notions. For more details, we refer readers to [11, 21, 22, 23, 24].

#### 3.1 Some basic notions

Denote by $S^{n-1}$ the unit sphere in $\mathbb{R}^n$. Given an $n$-dimensional ($n \geq 2$) complete Riemannian manifold $(M, g)$ with the metric $g$, for a point $x \in M$, let $S^{n-1}_x$ be the unit sphere with center $x$ in the tangent space $T_xM$, and let $\text{Cut}(x)$ be the cut-locus of $x$, which is a closed set of zero $n$-Hausdorff measure. Clearly,

$$\mathbb{D}_x = \{t\xi | 0 \leq t < d_x, \xi \in S^{n-1}_x\}$$
is a star-shaped open set of $T_xM$, and through which the exponential map $\exp_x : D_x \to M \setminus \text{Cut}(x)$ gives a diffeomorphism from $D_x$ to the open set $M \setminus \text{Cut}(x)$, where $d_\xi$ is defined by

$$d_\xi = d_\xi(x) := \sup\{t > 0| \gamma_\xi(s) := \exp_x(s\xi) \text{ is the unique minimal geodesic joining } x \text{ and } \gamma_\xi(t)\}.  \tag{3.1}$$

We can introduce two important maps used to construct the geodesic spherical coordinate chart at a prescribed point on a Riemannian manifold. For a fixed vector $\xi \in T_xM, |\xi| = 1$, let $\xi^\perp$ be the orthogonal complement of $\{\mathbb{R}\xi\}$ in $T_xM$, and let $\tau : T_xM \to T_{\exp(x\xi)}M$ be the parallel translation along $\gamma_\xi(t)$. The path of linear transformations $A(t, \xi) : \xi^\perp \to \xi^\perp$ is defined by

$$A(t, \xi)\eta = (\tau_t)^{-1}Y_\eta(t),$$

where $Y_\eta(t) = d(\exp_x(t\xi))(t\eta)$ is the Jacobi field along $\gamma_\xi(t)$ satisfying $Y_\eta(0) = 0$, and $(\nabla Y_\eta)(0) = \eta$. Moreover, for $\eta \in \xi^\perp$, set $R(t)\eta = (\tau_t)^{-1}R(\gamma_\xi'(t), \tau_t\eta)\gamma_\xi'(t)$, where the curvature tensor $R(X, Y)Z$ is defined by $R(X, Y)Z = -[\nabla_X, \nabla_Y]Z + \nabla_{[X, Y]}Z$. Then $R(t)$ is a self-adjoint operator on $\xi^\perp$, whose trace is the radial Ricci tensor $\text{Ric}_{\gamma_\xi}(\gamma_\xi'(t), \gamma_\xi'(t))$. Clearly, the map $A(t, \xi)$ satisfies the Jacobi equation $A'' + R A = 0$ with initial conditions $A(0, \xi) = 0$, $A'(0, \xi) = I$. By Gauss’s lemma, the Riemannian metric of $M \setminus \text{Cut}(x)$ in the geodesic spherical coordinate chart can be expressed by

$$ds^2(\exp_x(t\xi)) = dt^2 + |A(t, \xi)d\xi|^2, \quad \forall t \xi \in D_x. \tag{3.2}$$

We consider the metric components $g_{ij}(t, \xi), i, j \geq 1$, in a coordinate system $\{t, \xi_a\}$ formed by fixing an orthonormal basis $\{\eta_a, a \geq 2\}$ of $\xi^\perp = T_xS^n-1$, and then extending it to a local frame $\{\xi_a, a \geq 2\}$ of $S^n$. Define a function $J > 0$ on $D_x \setminus \{x\}$ by

$$J^{n-1} = \sqrt{|g|} := \sqrt{\det[g_{ij}]}.$$

Since $\tau_t : S^{n-1}_x \to S^{n-1}_{\gamma_\xi(t)}$ is an isometry, we have

$$\langle d(\exp_x)_\xi(t\eta_a), d(\exp_x)_\xi(t\eta_b) \rangle_g = \langle A(t, \xi)(\eta_a), A(t, \xi)(\eta_b) \rangle_g,$$

and then $\sqrt{|g|} = \det A(t, \xi)$. So, by applying (3.1) and (3.2), the volume $\text{vol}(B(x, r))$ of a geodesic ball $B(x, r)$, with radius $r$ and center $x$, on $M$ is given by

$$\text{Vol}(B(x, r)) = \int_{S^{n-1}_x} \int_0^{\min\{r, d_\xi\}} \sqrt{|g|} dt d\sigma = \int_{S^{n-1}_x} \int_0^{\min\{r, d_\xi\}} \det(A(t, \xi)) dt d\sigma, \tag{3.3}$$

where $d\sigma$ denotes the $(n - 1)$-dimensional volume element on $S^{n-1} \equiv S^{n-1}_x \subseteq T_xM$. As in Section 1, let $r(z) = d(x, z)$ be the intrinsic distance to the point $x \in M$. Since for any $\xi \in S^{n-1}_x$ and $t_0 > 0$, we have $\nabla r(\gamma_\xi(t_0)) = \gamma_\xi'(t_0)$ when the point $\gamma_\xi(t_0) = \exp_x(t_0\xi)$ is away from the cut locus of $x$ (cf. [12]), then, by the definition of a non-zero tangent vector “radial” to a prescribed point on a manifold given in the first page of [16], we know that for $z \in M \setminus \text{Cut}(x) \cup x$ the unit vector field $v_z := \nabla r(z)$
is the radial unit tangent vector at \( z \). We also need the following fact about \( r(z) \) (cf. Prop. 39 on p. 266 of \([26]\)),
\[
\partial_r \Delta r + \frac{(\Delta r)^2}{n-1} \leq \Delta r + |\text{Hess}r|^2 = -\text{Ric}(\partial_r, \partial_r), \quad \text{with } \Delta r = \partial_r \ln(\sqrt{|g|}),
\]
with \( \partial_r = \nabla r \) as a differentiable vector (cf. Prop. 7 on p. 47 of \([26]\) for the differentiation of \( \partial_r \)), where \( \Delta \) is the Laplace operator on \( M \) and \( \text{Hess}r \) is the Hessian of \( r(z) \). Then, together with (3.2), we have
\[
J'' + \frac{1}{n-1} \text{Ric} \left( \gamma'_\xi(t), \gamma'_\xi(t) \right) J \leq 0,
\]
\[
J(t, \xi) = t + O(t^2), \quad J'(t, \xi) = 1 + O(t). \quad (3.4)
\]

### 3.2 A volume comparison theorem in smooth metric measure spaces

We also need the following volume comparison theorem proven by Wei and Wylie (cf. \([30\), Theorem 1.2]) which is the key point to prove Theorem 1.6.

**Theorem 3.1.** (\([30\]) Let \((M, g, e^{-f} \text{dv}_g)\) be \( n \)-dimensional \((n \geq 2)\) complete smooth metric measure space with \( \text{Ric}_f \geq (n-1)H \). Fix \( x_0 \in M \). If \( \partial_t f \geq -a \) along all minimal geodesic segments from \( x_0 \) then for \( R \geq r > 0 \) (assume \( R \leq \pi/2\sqrt{H} \) if \( H > 0 \)),
\[
\frac{\text{Vol}_f[B(x_0, R)]}{\text{Vol}_f[B(x_0, r)]} \leq e^{aR} \frac{\text{Vol}^n_H(R)}{\text{Vol}^n_H(r)},
\]
where \( \text{Vol}^n_H(\cdot) \) is the volume of the geodesic ball with the prescribed radius in the space \( n \)-form with constant sectional curvature \( H \), and, as before, \( \text{Vol}_f(\cdot) \) denotes the weighted (or \( f \))-volume of the given geodesic ball on \( M \). Moreover, equality in the above inequality holds if and only if the radial sectional curvatures are equal to \( H \) and \( \partial_t f \equiv -a \). In particular, if \( \partial_t f \geq 0 \) and \( \text{Ric} \geq 0 \), then \( M \) has \( f \)-volume growth of degree at most \( n \).

### 3.3 Proof of Theorem 1.6

**Proof.** For complete and non-compact \( n \)-space \((M, g, e^{-f} \text{dv}_g)\), if \( \partial_t f \geq 0 \) (along all minimal geodesic segments from \( x_0 \)) and \( \text{Ric}_f \geq 0 \), then by Theorem 3.1 we have
\[
\frac{\text{Vol}_f[B(x_0, R)]}{\text{Vol}_f[B(x_0, r)]} \leq e^{0R} \frac{V_0(R)}{V_0(r)} = \left( \frac{R}{r} \right)^n,
\]
with, as before, \( V_0(\cdot) \) denotes the volume of the ball with the prescribed radius in \( \mathbb{R}^n \). Clearly, here the volume doubling condition (1.5) is satisfied with \( C_0 = 1 \).

For \((M, g, e^{-f} \text{dv}_g)\), in order to apply Theorem 1.2 to prove Theorem 1.6, we need to normalize the original measure \( e^{-f} \text{dv}_g \) such that the volume condition (1.6) can be satisfied. In fact, we need to choose the positive measure \( \mu \) to be \( \mu = e^{f(x_0)-f} \text{dv}_g \). Then by applying (1.8), (3.2), (3.3) and
(3.4), we can get
\[
\lim_{r \to 0} \frac{\mu(B(x_0, r))}{\mu_E(B_n(r))} = \lim_{r \to 0} \frac{e^{f(x_0)} \cdot \text{Vol}_f[B(x_0, r)]}{V_0(r)} = \lim_{r \to 0} \frac{\int_{S^{n-1}} \left( \min\{r, d_\xi\} \cdot e^{-f} dt \right) d\sigma}{e^{-f(x_0)} \int_{S^{n-1}} r t^{n-1} dt d\sigma} = \frac{J'(0, \xi) \cdot e^{-f(x_0)}}{e^{-f(x_0)}} = 1
\]
by applying L’Hôpital’s rule \(n\)-times, which implies (1.6) is satisfied. Therefore, if in addition the Gagliardo-Nirenberg type inequality (1.9) is satisfied, then by applying Theorem 1.2, we can get (1.10) directly. This completes the proof of Theorem 1.6.

\[\square\]

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