Proof of the Flohr–Grabow–Koehn conjectures for characters of logarithmic conformal field theory*

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Abstract
In a recent paper, Flohr, Grabow and Koehn conjectured that the characters of the logarithmic conformal field theory \( c_{k,1} \) admit fermionic representations labelled by the Lie algebra \( D_k \). In this paper, we provide a simple analytic proof of this conjecture.

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1. Introduction
In the past two decades an almost complete understanding of the analytic and combinatorial structure of fermionic character representations for the minimal unitary models \( M(p, p') \) in conformal field theory has been obtained [3–6, 10–13, 16, 19–22]. In a recent paper, Flohr, Grabow and Koehn (FGK) [9] took the first tentative steps towards extending these results to the realm of logarithmic conformal field theory (LCFT). FGK focused on one of the simplest examples of a LCFT; the \( W(2, 2k - 1, 2k - 1, 2k - 1) \) series of triplet algebras of central charge

\[
c = 1 - \frac{6(k - 1)^2}{k},
\]
denoted as the \( c_{k,1} \) models for short. Surprisingly, FGK conjectured that the characters of the \( c_{k,1} \) models may be described in terms of the Lie algebra \( D_k \). For example, if \( B \) denotes the inverse Cartan matrix of \( D_k \), then, conjecturally,

\[
\chi_{\lambda}(\tau) = q^{\ell_{\chi}} \sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_k = 0}^{\infty} \frac{q^{\sum_{j=1}^{k} B_{ij} n_j + \frac{1}{2} (n_{k-1} - n_k)}}{(q; q)_{n_1} \cdots (q; q)_{n_k}}.
\]  

(1)

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Here $\chi_\lambda$ for $\lambda \in \{0, 1, \ldots, k\}$ is a $c_{k, 1}$ character, $\varphi_\lambda = \lambda^2/(4k) - 1/24$, $q = \exp(2\pi i \tau)$, $(q; q)_n = (1 - q)(1 - q^2)\cdots(1 - q^n)$ and $a \equiv b \pmod{c}$ is shorthand for $a \equiv b \pmod{c}$.

In support of (1) FGK provided a proof for the degenerate case $k = 2$ (in which case $B$ is half the $2 \times 2$ identity matrix) and showed that in the $q \to 1^-$ limit (1) gives rise to the well-known $D_k$ dilogarithm identity

$$2L\left(\frac{1}{k}\right) + \sum_{j=2}^{k-1} L\left(\frac{1}{j^2}\right) = \frac{\pi^2}{6},$$

where $L(x)$ is the Rogers dilogarithm [15]. (The $D_k$ nature of the above identity lies with the fact that $x = (1/4, 1/9, \ldots, 1/(k - 1)^2, 1/k, 1/k)$ solves the simultaneous equations $x_i = \prod_{j=1}^{k}(1 - x_j)2B_{ij}$ for $1 \leq i \leq k$.)

In this paper, we provide an analytic proof of (1) and its allied $c_{k, 1}$ character identities. Key is the observation that the matrix $B$ contains the submatrix

$$T = (\min(i, j))_{1 \leq i, j \leq k - 2}$$

which itself admits character identities similar to (1). Indeed it is a classical result—first discovered by Andrews [1] in the context of partition theory—that

$$\chi^{\text{Vir}}_{\lambda}(\tau) = q^{\phi_\lambda} \sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_{k-2} = 0}^{\infty} \frac{q^{\sum_{j=1}^{k-2}(1 - \lambda + 1)n_i}}{(q; q)_{n_1} \cdots (q; q)_{n_{k-2}}},$$

where $\chi^{\text{Vir}}_{\lambda}$ for $\lambda \in \{0, 1, \ldots, k - 1\}$ are the characters of the Virasoro minimal models $M(2, 2k - 1)$ and

$$\phi_\lambda = \frac{(2\lambda - 2k + 1)^2}{8(2k - 1)} - \frac{1}{24}.$$  

It is the connection between the conjectural (1) and Andrews’ (2) that will play a crucial role in our proof.

2. $c_{k, 1}$ character formulae

We will not formally define the characters of the $c_{k, 1}$ models but simply state their bosonic representation as obtained in [8].

Throughout we let $\tau \in \mathbb{C}$, $\text{Im}(\tau) > 0$ and $q \in \mathbb{C}$ be related by $q = \exp(2\pi i \tau)$, so that $|q| < 1$. This will make all $q$-series considered in this paper absolutely convergent so that we need not concern ourselves with order of summation in multiple series. We also use the standard $q$-notations

$$(a; q)_n = \prod_{i=0}^{n-1} (1 - aq^i) \quad \text{and} \quad (a; q)_\infty = \prod_{i=0}^{\infty} (1 - aq^i),$$

and Dedekind’s eta-function $\eta(\tau) = q^{1/24}(q; q)_\infty$.

Finally, we need the theta and affine theta functions

$$\Theta_{\lambda, k}(\tau) = \sum_{n \in \mathbb{Z} + \frac{i}{k}} q^{kn^2},$$

$$(i\Theta)_{\lambda, k}(\tau) = \sum_{n \in \mathbb{Z} + \frac{i}{k}} 2knq^{kn^2}.$$
With the above notation the following bosonic character formulae corresponding to the $c_{k,1}$ LCFT hold [8]:

\[
\chi_{\lambda}(\tau) = \frac{\Theta_{k,\lambda}(\tau)}{\eta(\tau)},
\]

\[
\chi_{\lambda}^+(\tau) = \frac{(k - \lambda)\Theta_{k,\lambda}(\tau) + (\partial\Theta)_{k,\lambda}(\tau)}{k\eta(\tau)} = \frac{1}{\eta(\tau)} \sum_{n \in \mathbb{Z}} (2n + 1)q^{k(n + \frac{\lambda}{2})^2},
\]

\[
\chi_{\lambda}^-(\tau) = \frac{\lambda\Theta_{k,\lambda}(\tau) - (\partial\Theta)_{k,\lambda}(\tau)}{k\eta(\tau)} = \frac{1}{\eta(\tau)} \sum_{n \in \mathbb{Z}} 2nq^{k(n - \frac{\lambda}{2})^2},
\]

with $\lambda \in \{0, 1, \ldots, k\}$ in $\chi_{\lambda}$ and $\lambda \in \{1, \ldots, k - 1\}$ in $\chi_{\lambda}^\pm$.

To state the fermionic expressions of FGK we let $B$ be the inverse Cartan matrix of the Lie algebra $D_k$ with labelling of the vertices of the Dynkin diagram given by

\[
\begin{align*}
B_{k,k} &= B_k - 1, \\
B_{k,k-1} &= B_{k-1,k} = k - 2, \\
B_{i,j} &= \min(i, j) 1 \leq i, j \leq k - 2.
\end{align*}
\]

Then, the conjectures of FGK correspond to

\[
\chi_{\lambda}(\tau) = q^{\phi_\lambda} \sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_k = 0, n_{k-1} = 0}^{\infty} \frac{q^{\sum_{i=1}^{k-1} B_{i,i+1} n_i n_{i+1} + \frac{\lambda}{2}(n_{k-1} - n_k)}}{(q; q)_{n_1} \cdots (q; q)_{n_k}},
\]

\[
\chi_{\lambda}^+(\tau) = q^{\phi_\lambda} \sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_k = 0, n_{k-1} = 0}^{\infty} \frac{q^{\sum_{i=1}^{k-1} B_{i,i+1} n_i n_{i+1} + \frac{\lambda}{2}(n_{k-1} + n_k)}}{(q; q)_{n_1} \cdots (q; q)_{n_k}},
\]

and

\[
\chi_{\lambda}^-(\tau) = q^{\phi_\lambda} \sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_k = 0, n_{k-1} = 0}^{\infty} \frac{q^{\sum_{i=1}^{k-1} B_{i,i+1} n_i n_{i+1} + \frac{\lambda}{2}(n_{k-1} - n_k)}}{(q; q)_{n_1} \cdots (q; q)_{n_k}},
\]

where

\[
\phi_\lambda = \frac{\lambda^2}{4k} - \frac{1}{24}.
\]

Note that the last two expressions have identical summand and differ only in the restriction on the parity of $n_{k-1} + n_k$.

In addition to the above three conjectures we will also prove that

\[
\chi_{k-1}(\tau) = q^{\phi_\lambda} \sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_k = 0, n_{k-1} = 0}^{\infty} \frac{q^{\sum_{i=1}^{k-1} B_{i,i+1} n_i n_{i+1} + \frac{\lambda}{2}(n_{k-1} - n_k)}}{(q; q)_{n_1} \cdots (q; q)_{n_k}}
\]

so that we have two fermionic representations for every character $\chi_{\lambda}$. 

Equating each of the fermionic forms with the corresponding bosonic form we obtain the following two \( q \)-series identities:

\[
\sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_k = 0}^{\infty} q^{\frac{1}{2}(n_1^2 + n_2^2 + \cdots + n_k^2) + \frac{1}{2}(n_1 + n_2 + \cdots + n_k + 1)^2} = \frac{1}{(q; q)^{\infty}} \sum_{n = -\infty}^{\infty} q^{kn^2 + (\lambda - \sigma)kn} \tag{4a}
\]

for \( \lambda \in \{0, \ldots, k\} \) and

\[
\sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_k = 0}^{\infty} q^{\frac{1}{2}(n_1^2 + n_2^2 + \cdots + n_k^2) + \frac{1}{2}(n_1 + n_2 + \cdots + n_k + 1)^2} \frac{1}{(q; q)_{n_1} \cdots (q; q)_{n_k}} = \frac{1}{(q; q)^{\infty}} \sum_{n = -\infty}^{\infty} (2n - \sigma + 1)q^{kn^2 + (\lambda - \sigma)kn} \tag{4b}
\]

for \( \lambda \in \{1, \ldots, k - 1\} \). In both formulae \( \sigma \) is either zero or one.

We remark that by the Jacobi triple product identity [2] the right-hand side of (4a) may also be written in product form as

\[
\frac{(-q^{k+\lambda-\sigma}, -q^{-k-\lambda+\sigma}, q^{2k}; q^{2k})_{\infty}}{(q; q)_{\infty}},
\]

where

\[
(a, q/a, q; q)_{\infty} = \prod_{i=1}^{\infty} (1 - aq^{-i})(1 - q^{-i}/a)(1 - q^{i}).
\]

3. Proof of (4a) and (4b)

As a first step we rewrite (4a) and (4b) by replacing the summation variables \( n_{k-1} \) and \( n_k \) by \( n \) and \( m \), respectively. Also eliminating explicit reference to the inverse Cartan matrix \( B \) using (3), we get

\[
\sum_{n, m = 0}^{\infty} q^{\frac{1}{2}(n^2 + m^2) + \frac{1}{2}(n + m + 1)^2} (q; q)_n(q; q)_m = \sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_{k-2} = 0}^{\infty} q^{N_2^1 + \cdots + N_2^{k-2} + (n + m)(N_1 + \cdots + N_{k-2})} \frac{1}{(q; q)_{n_1} \cdots (q; q)_{n_{k-2}}} \tag{5a}
\]

and

\[
\sum_{n, m = 0}^{\infty} q^{\frac{1}{2}(n^2 + m^2) + \frac{1}{2}(n + m + 1)^2} (q; q)_n(q; q)_m = \sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_{k-2} = 0}^{\infty} q^{N_2^1 + \cdots + N_2^{k-2} + (n + m)(N_1 + \cdots + N_{k-2})} \frac{1}{(q; q)_{n_1} \cdots (q; q)_{n_{k-2}}} \tag{5b}
\]

where \( N_i = n_i + n_{i+1} + \cdots + n_{k-2} \). We note that the quadratic form involving \( N_i \) may alternatively be expressed in terms of the submatrix \( T \) of \( B \) given by \( T_{ij} = \min(i, j) \) for \( 1 \leq i, j \leq k - 2 \). Specifically,

\[
N_1^2 + \cdots + N_{k-2}^2 = \sum_{i, j=1}^{k-2} T_{ij} n_i n_j.
\]
Proof of (5a). To prove (5a) we denote its left-hand side by $L_{\lambda,k,\sigma}$. Shifting the summation index $n \to 2n - m - \sigma$ and replacing $k \to k + 1$ we obtain

\[ L_{\lambda,k+1,\sigma} = \sum_{n=0}^{2n-m-\sigma} \sum_{m=0}^{\lambda} q^{kn^{2}+\lambda(n-n+\lambda-\lambda)-\sigma kn} \sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_{\lambda}} q^{N_{i_1}^{\lambda} + \cdots + N_{i_{\lambda}}^{\lambda} + (2n-\sigma)(N_{j_1}^{\lambda} + \cdots + N_{j_{\lambda}}^{\lambda})}, \tag{6} \]

where now

\[ N_{i} = n_{i} + \cdots + n_{k-1} \]

and $\lambda \in \{0, \ldots, k + 1\}$.

In order the evaluate the multisum on the second line we consider the more general expression

\[ Q_{k,i}(x) = \sum_{n_{1}, \ldots, n_{\lambda}} \frac{x^{N_{i_1}^{\lambda} + \cdots + N_{i_{\lambda}}^{\lambda}}}{(q;q)_{n_1} \cdots (q;q)_{n_{\lambda}}}, \tag{7} \]

for $i \in \{1, \ldots, k\}$. This multisum was first introduced by Andrews [1, equation (2.5)] in his proof of the analytic form of Gordon’s partition identities. (In the notation of Andrews’ book *Partition Theory* we have $Q_{k,i}(x) = J_{k,i}(0; x; q)$, see [2, equation (7.3.8)].)

In [1, equation (2.1)] (see also [2, equations (7.2.1) and (7.2.2)]) we find the following single-sum form for $Q_{k,i}$:

\[ Q_{k,i}(x) = \frac{1}{(xq;q)_{\infty}} \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} (-1)^{j} x^{j} q^{j(k+\lambda+1)(\lambda-k+1)}(1 - x^{j} q^{(j+1)}) \frac{(q;q)_{j+2n-\sigma}}{(q;q)_{j}}. \tag{8} \]

This in fact shows that $Q_{k,i}$ coincides with functions studied earlier by Rogers [17] and Selberg [18]. From the above we infer that

\[ Q_{k,k-\lambda+1}(q^{2n-\sigma}) = \frac{1}{(q;q)_{\infty}} \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} (-1)^{j} q^{j(k+\lambda+1)(\lambda-k+1)} \times (1 - q^{(k-\lambda+1)(2j+2n-\sigma+1)}) \frac{(q;q)_{j+2n-\sigma}}{(q;q)_{j}}. \tag{9} \]

Let us now return to (6). By (7) the multisum on the second line of (6) may be identified as $Q_{k,k}(q^{2n-\sigma})$ and by (8) with $\lambda = 1$ this may be simplified to a single sum. Therefore,

\[ L_{\lambda,k+1,\sigma} = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \sum_{m=0}^{2n-\sigma} (-1)^{j} q^{kn^{2}+\lambda(n-n+\lambda-\lambda)-\sigma kn} \times (1 - q^{k(2n-\sigma+1)}) \frac{(q;q)_{j+2n-\sigma}}{(q;q)_{j}} \frac{(q;q)_{j+2n-\sigma}}{(q;q)_{j}}. \]

Our next step is to shift the summation indices $n \to n - j$ and $m \to m - j$, resulting in

\[ L_{\lambda,k+1,\sigma} = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \sum_{m=0}^{2n-\sigma} (-1)^{j} q^{kn(n-a-\sigma)+(n-m)(n-m+\lambda-\sigma)-\sigma kn} \times (1 - q^{k(2n-\sigma+1)}) \frac{(q;q)_{j+2n-\sigma}}{(q;q)_{j}}. \tag{9} \]

Employing standard basic hypergeometric notation [14] this may also be written as

\[ L_{\lambda,k+1,\sigma} = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \sum_{m=0}^{2n-\sigma} (-1)^{j} q^{kn(n-a-\sigma)+(n-m)(n-m+\lambda-\sigma)-\sigma kn} \times (1 - q^{k(2n-\sigma+1)}) \frac{(q;q)_{j+2n-\sigma}}{(q;q)_{j}}. \tag{9} \]
To proceed we need the $q$-Chu–Vandermonde sum [14, equation (II.6)]

$$2\phi_1\left[a, q^{-n} \left/ c, q, q \right. \right] = a^n \binom{c/a}{c; q}_n.$$  

Hence, the $2\phi_1$ series may be summed to

$$\frac{(q; q)_m(q; q)_{2n-m-\sigma}}{(q; q)_{2n-\sigma}}$$

leading to

$$L_{\lambda, k+1, \sigma} = \frac{1}{(q; q)_{2n-\sigma}} \sum_{m=0}^{2n-\sigma} \sum_{n=0}^{m} q^{kn(n-\sigma)+(n-m)(n-m+\lambda-\sigma)} (1 - q^{k(2n-\sigma+1)}).$$

The remainder of the proof requires only elementary manipulations:

$$L_{\lambda, k+1, \sigma} = \frac{1}{(q; q)_{2n-\sigma}} \sum_{m=0}^{2n-\sigma} q^{kn(n-\sigma)+(n-m)(m+\lambda+\sigma)} (1 - q^{k(2n-\sigma+1)}).$$

Finally, replacing $k \rightarrow k - 1$ and changing the summation index $m \rightarrow -n$ completes the proof of (5a).

Proof of (5b). As in the proof of (5a) we denote the left-hand side of (5b) by $L_{\lambda, k, \sigma}$. Again we carry out the shift $n \rightarrow 2n - m - \sigma$ in the summation index and replace $k \rightarrow k + 1$. Thus,

$$L_{\lambda, k, \sigma} = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \sum_{m=0}^{n} \frac{q^{kn(n-\sigma)+(n-m)(\lambda-\sigma) + (\lambda-\sigma)j}}{(q; q)_{2n-m-\sigma} (q; q)_m} \times \sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_{k+1} = 0}^{\infty} \frac{q^{\delta n_1 + \cdots + \delta n_{k+1}} (q; q)_{n_1} \cdots (q; q)_{n_{k+1}}}{(q; q)_{n_1} \cdots (q; q)_{n_{k-1}}}. $$

From (7) we infer that the second line is $L_{\lambda, k+1}(q^{2n-\sigma})$ so that we may invoke (8) to obtain

$$L_{\lambda, k+1, \sigma} = \frac{1}{(q; q)_{2n-\sigma}} \sum_{j,n=0}^{\infty} \sum_{m=0}^{n} (-1)^j q^{k(j+1) + (\lambda-\sigma)(j+n) + (\lambda-\sigma)(n-m)(\lambda-\sigma)} \times (1 - q^{k(\lambda-1)(2j+2n-\sigma+1)}) \frac{(q; q)_{j+2n-\sigma}}{(q; q)_j (q; q)_m (q; q)_{2n-m-\sigma}}.$$ 

Following the earlier proof we shift $n \rightarrow n - j$ and $m \rightarrow m - j$, and use basic hypergeometric notation to find

$$L_{\lambda, k+1, \sigma} = \frac{1}{(q; q)_{2n-\sigma}} \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \sum_{m=0}^{n} q^{kn(n-\sigma) + ((n-m)(\lambda-\sigma) + (n-m)(\lambda-\sigma))} (1 - q^{k(\lambda-1)(2n-\sigma+1)}) \times \frac{(q; q)_{2n-\sigma}}{(q; q)_n (q; q)_{2n-m-\sigma}} 2\phi_1 \left[\frac{q^{-m}, q^{-2n-\sigma}}{q^{2n-\sigma}}, q; 1 \right].$$

This time we need the second form of the $q$-Chu–Vandermonde sum [14, equation (II.7)]

$$2\phi_1\left[a, q^{-n} \left/ c, q^n, a \left/ c, q \right. \right] = \frac{(c/a; q)_n}{(c; q)_n}.$$  

(11)
to sum the $2\phi_1$ series to
\[ q^{(2n-\sigma)m-m^2} \frac{(q; q)_m(q; q)_{2n-m-\sigma}}{(q; q)_{2n-\sigma}}. \]

Hence,
\[ L_{\lambda, k, \sigma} = \frac{1}{(q; q)_{2n-\sigma}} \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \sum_{m=0}^{2n-\sigma} q^{kn^2(\lambda-\sigma)k} (1 - q^{(k-\lambda)(2n+1)}) \]
\[ = \frac{1}{(q; q)_{2n-\sigma}} \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} (2n - \sigma + 1) q^{kn^2(\lambda-\sigma)k} (1 - q^{(k-\lambda)(2n+1)}) \]
\[ = \frac{1}{(q; q)_{2n-\sigma}} \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} (2n - \sigma + 1) q^{kn^2(\lambda-\sigma)k} \]
(12)
establishing (5b).

4. Discussion

The $c_{k, 1}$ character identities proved in this paper admit polynomial analogues. Defining the $q$-binomial coefficient as
\[ \binom{n + m}{n} = \frac{(q; q)_n(q; q)_m}{(q; q)_m(q; q)_n} \]
for $n, m$ nonnegative integers, and assuming $k \geq 3$, we for example have
\[ \sum_{n_1, ..., n_k = 0}^{\infty} z^{1(\lambda_{i, j})} q^{\sum_{j=1}^{k} B_{i, n_{i, n_{i,j}}}} \prod_{i=1}^{k} \left[ \binom{n_i + m_i}{n_i} \right] = \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} z^n q^{kn^2} \left[ \frac{2L}{L - kn} \right]. \]
(14)

Here, the $m_i$ appearing in the $q$-binomial coefficients are fixed by
\[ m_i = \sum_{j=1}^{k} B_{j, (2L\delta_{j, 1} - 2n_j)}. \]

When $L$ tends to infinity and $z$ is specialized to $q^k$ the identity (14) simplifies to (4a) with $\sigma = 0$. It is interesting to note that for $q = 1$ it provides an identity for the number of walks of length $2L$ on the rooted cyclic graph $C_{2k}$ beginning and terminating at the root. Here, the parameter $z$ in the generating function serves to keep track of the number of cycles of the rooted walks on $C_{2k}$.

The previous method of proof fails to also deal with (14) but, as will be shown in appendix A, (14) may be proved by induction on $k$.

Finally, we remark that if we replace $q \to 1/q$ in (14) and then let $L$ tend to infinity we obtain the dual identity
\[ \sum_{m_1, ..., m_k = 0}^{\infty} z^{\frac{1}{2}(m_{1,-} - m_k)} q^{\frac{1}{2} \sum_{i=1}^{k} C_{i, m_i, m_j}} \prod_{i=2}^{k} \left[ \binom{n_i + m_i}{m_i} \right] = \frac{1}{(q; q)_{2n-\sigma}} \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} z^n q^{k(k-1)n^2} \]
\[ = \frac{(-zq^{k(k-1)}; q, q^{2k(k-1)})_{\infty}}{(q; q)_{\infty}}. \]
where \( C = B^{-1} \) is the \( D_k \) Cartan matrix and

\[
C_i = -\frac{1}{2} \sum_{j=1}^{k} C_{ij} m_j.
\]

5. Postscript

Shortly after completing this paper B Feigin, E Feigin and Tipunin proved another family of character formulae for the \( c_k \) models \([7]\). Replacing \( p \to k \) and \( s \to k - \lambda \) and \((n_+, n_-) \to (n, m)\) in \([7, \text{theorem 1.1}]\) the result of Feigin et al reads

\[
\chi^+_{\lambda}(q) + \chi^-_{\lambda}(q) = q^\psi_2 \sum_{n,m=0}^{\infty} q^{\frac{1}{2}(n+m)^2+\frac{1}{4}(n+m)(n+m+\sigma)} (q; q)_n (q; q)_m \times \sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_{k-1}=0}^{\infty} \frac{q^{N_i} (q; q)_{n_1} \cdots (q; q)_{n_{k-1}}}{(q; q)_n (q; q)_m},
\]

where \( N_i = n_1 + \cdots + n_{k-1} \).

When the sum over \( n \) and \( m \) is restricted to even (odd) values of \( n + m \) we obtain \( \chi^+_{\lambda}(q) \) \((\chi^-_{\lambda}(q))\), and in appendix B the method used in section 3 to prove the FGK conjectures is employed to establish that

\[
\sum_{n,m=0}^{\infty} q^\frac{1}{2}(n+m)^2+\frac{1}{4}(n+m+\sigma) (q; q)_n (q; q)_m \sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_{k-1}=0}^{\infty} q^{N_i} (q; q)_{n_1} \cdots (q; q)_{n_{k-1}}
\]

\[= \frac{1}{(q; q)_\infty} \sum_{n=-\infty}^{\infty} (2n - \sigma + 1) q^{kn^2+(-\sigma)k}.
\]

This is to be compared with \((5b)\). Summing the above over \( \sigma \in \{0, 1\} \) yields \((15)\).

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Appendix A

In this appendix we prove \((14)\). To begin we replace \( n_k \to 2n + n_{k-1} \) on the left and \( n \to -n \) on the right. Then equating coefficients of \( z^{-n} \) and finally replacing \( k \to k + 1 \) yields

\[
\sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_{k}=0}^{\infty} q^{N_i(N_i+2n)} \left[ (L - (k-1)n - \sum_{i=1}^{k-1} N_i) \right] \left[ (L - (k-1)n - \sum_{i=1}^{k-1} N_i) \right] \times \prod_{i=1}^{k-1} \left[ \frac{2L - 2in + n_{i} - 2 \sum_{j=1}^{i} N_j}{n_{i}} \right] = \left[ \frac{2L}{L - (k+1)n} \right],
\]

where

\[ N_i = n_1 + \cdots + n_{i} \]
The Flohr–Grabow–Koehn conjectures

Note that we may without loss of generality assume from now on that \( n \) is a nonnegative integer. Indeed, by the shift \( n_k \rightarrow n_k - 2n \) we obtain the same identity but with \( n \) replaced by \(-n\).

Next we use the symmetry in \( n \) and \( m \) of the \( q \)-binomial coefficient (13) to rewrite the above multisum as

\[
\sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_k=0}^{\infty} q^{\sum_{i=1}^{k} N_i(N_i+2n)} \left[ \frac{L - (k - 1)n - \sum_{i=1}^{k-1} N_i}{L - (k + 1)n - \sum_{i=1}^{k} N_i} \right]_{n_k} \left[ \frac{L - (k - 1)n - \sum_{i=1}^{k-1} N_i}{L - (k + 1)n - \sum_{i=1}^{k} N_i} \right]_{n_k} \\
\times \prod_{i=1}^{k-1} \left[ \frac{2L - 2i n + n_i - 2 \sum_{j=1}^{i} N_j}{n_i} \right] = \left[ \frac{2L}{L - (k + 1)n} \right]. \tag{A.1}
\]

At first sight this may not appear at all significant, but a close inspection reveals that we may now replace (13) by

\[
\begin{align*}
\left[ n + m \right] &= \left\{ \begin{array}{ll}
\left( \frac{q^{m+1}}{q}; q \right)_n & \text{for } n \geq 0 \\
0 & \text{for } n < 0.
\end{array} \right.
\end{align*}
\tag{A.2}
\]

The difference with the earlier definition is that the above \( q \)-binomial coefficient is non-zero when \( n + m < 0 \) and \( n \geq 0 \). Clearly, if we can show that negative upper entries cannot occur in the \( q \)-binomial coefficients of (A.1), then the change of definition is justified. To achieve this we note that both \( q \)-binomial definitions imply that the summand of (A.1) vanishes unless \( n_1, \ldots, n_k \geq 0 \) and

\[
\sum_{j=1}^{k} N_j \leq L - (k + 1)n.
\]

But this implies that

\[
L - (k - 1)n - \sum_{i=1}^{k-1} N_i \geq 2n \geq 0
\]

and

\[
2L - 2i n + n_i - 2 \sum_{j=1}^{i} N_j \geq 2(k - i + 1)n + n_i \geq 0
\]

as required.

We now proceed by proving the identity

\[
\sum_{n_1, \ldots, n_k=0}^{\infty} q^{\sum_{i=1}^{k} N_i(N_i+m)} \left[ \frac{L_1 + m - \sum_{i=1}^{k-1} N_i}{L_1 - \sum_{i=1}^{k} N_i} \right]_{n_k} \left[ \frac{L_2 - km - \sum_{i=1}^{k-1} N_i}{L_2 - km - \sum_{i=1}^{k} N_i} \right]_{n_k} \\
\times \prod_{i=1}^{k-1} \left[ \frac{L_1 + L_2 - im + n_i - 2 \sum_{j=1}^{i} N_j}{n_i} \right] = \left[ \frac{L_1 + L_2}{L_1} \right], \tag{A.3}
\]

where \( L_1, L_2, m \) are arbitrary integers. (For \( L_1 < 0 \) both sides trivially vanish since the sum over \( n_i \) is bounded by \( \sum_{j=1}^{k} N_j \leq L_1 \).) The identity (A.1) is recovered by taking

\[
(L_1, L_2, m) \rightarrow (L - (k + 1)n, L + (k + 1)n, 2n).
\]

Before we continue let us remark that, generally, (A.3) is not true if one assumes definition (13) of the \( q \)-binomial coefficient.
Key to our proof of (A.3) are the polynomial form of the $q$-Pfaff–Saalschütz sum [2, equation (3.3.11)]

$$
\min(b,d) \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} q^{n(n+a-b)} \left[ \begin{array}{c}
\frac{a}{b-n} \\
\frac{c}{n}
\end{array} \right] \left[ \begin{array}{c}
a + c + d - n \\
d - n
\end{array} \right] = \left[ \begin{array}{c}
a + d \\
b
\end{array} \right] \left[ \begin{array}{c}
a - b + c + d \\
d
\end{array} \right]
$$

(A.4)

and its $d \to \infty$ limit (which corresponds to a polynomial analogue of the $q$-Chu–Vandermonde sum (11))

$$
\sum_{n=0}^{b} q^{n(n+a-b)} \left[ \begin{array}{c}
\frac{a}{b-n} \\
\frac{c}{n}
\end{array} \right] = \left[ \begin{array}{c}
a + c
\end{array} \right].
$$

(A.5)

Thanks to (A.2) the above two summations are true for all integers $a, b, c, d$.

We now eliminate the variables $n_i$ by $n_i = N_i - N_{i+1}$ (with $N_{k+1} = 0$) from (A.3) to obtain the equivalent formula

$$
\sum_{N_i \geq \cdots \geq N_k \geq 0} q^{\sum_{i=1}^{k-1} N_i(N_i+m)} \left[ \begin{array}{c}
L_1 + m - \sum_{i=1}^{k-1} N_i \\
L_1 - \sum_{i=1}^{k-1} N_i
\end{array} \right] \left[ \begin{array}{c}
L_2 - km - \sum_{i=1}^{k-1} N_i \\
N_k
\end{array} \right] \times \prod_{i=1}^{k-1} \left[ \begin{array}{c}
L_1 + L_2 - im + N_i - N_{i+1} - 2 \sum_{j=1}^{i} N_j \\
N_i - N_{i+1}
\end{array} \right] = \left[ \begin{array}{c}
L_1 + L_2 \\
L_1
\end{array} \right].
$$

(A.6)

For $k = 1$ this is

$$
\sum_{N_i \geq 0} q^{N_i(N_i+m)} \left[ \begin{array}{c}
L_1 + m \\
L_1 - N_1
\end{array} \right] \left[ \begin{array}{c}
L_2 - m \\
N_1
\end{array} \right] = \left[ \begin{array}{c}
L_1 + L_2 \\
L_1
\end{array} \right],
$$

which follows from (A.5). Now assume that $k \geq 2$ and write the left-hand side of (A.6) as $f_k$.

Then,

$$
f_k = \sum_{N_i \geq \cdots \geq N_{k-1} \geq 0} q^{\sum_{i=1}^{k-1} N_i(N_i+m)} \prod_{i=1}^{k-2} \left[ \begin{array}{c}
L_1 + L_2 - im + N_i - N_{i+1} - 2 \sum_{j=1}^{i} N_j \\
N_i - N_{i+1}
\end{array} \right] \times \sum_{N_i \geq 0} q^{N_i(N_i+m)} \left[ \begin{array}{c}
L_1 + m - \sum_{i=1}^{k-1} N_i \\
L_1 - \sum_{i=1}^{k-1} N_i
\end{array} \right] \left[ \begin{array}{c}
L_2 - km - \sum_{i=1}^{k-1} N_i \\
N_k
\end{array} \right] \times \left[ \begin{array}{c}
L_1 + L_2 - (k - 1)m + N_{k-1} - N_k - 2 \sum_{j=1}^{k-1} N_j \\
N_{k-1} - N_k
\end{array} \right].
$$

The sum over $N_k$ may be performed by (A.4), resulting in

$$
f_k = f_{k-1}.
$$

A standard induction argument completes the proof.

Appendix B

In this appendix we prove (16). First we shift $n \to 2n - m - \sigma$ to find

$$
\text{LHS}(16) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \sum_{m=0}^{2n-\sigma} q^{kn^2+(\lambda-\sigma)k} \frac{(q; q)_{2n-m-\sigma} (q; q)_{m}}{(q; q)_{2n-\sigma}} Q_{k,k-\lambda}(q^{2n-\sigma}),
$$
with $Q_{k,i}(x)$ defined in (7). By (8) with $\lambda \rightarrow \lambda + 1$ this becomes

$$\text{LHS}(16) = \frac{1}{(q; q)\infty} \sum_{j,a=0}^{\infty} \sum_{m=0}^{2n-\sigma} (-1)^j q^{\binom{j}{2} + h(j+n) + (\lambda - \sigma)k(j+n)}$$

$$\times (1 - q^{(k-\lambda)(2j+2n-\sigma+1)}) \frac{(q; q)_j (q; q)_{2n-\sigma}}{(q; q)_m (q; q)_{2n-\sigma}}.$$

After the shifts $n \rightarrow n - j$ and $m \rightarrow m - j$ this is

$$\text{LHS}(16) = \frac{1}{(q; q)\infty} \sum_{n=0}^{2n-\sigma} q^{ka^2 + (\lambda - \sigma)kn} (1 - q^{(k-\lambda)(2n-\sigma+1)})$$

$$\times \frac{(q; q)_{2n-\sigma}}{(q; q)_m (q; q)_{2n-\sigma}} \sum_{m=0}^{2n-\sigma} q^{ka^2 + (\lambda - \sigma)kn} (1 - q^{(k-\lambda)(2n-\sigma+1)})$$

$$= \frac{1}{(q; q)\infty} \sum_{n=0}^{2n-\sigma} (2n - \sigma + 1)q^{ka^2 + (\lambda - \sigma)kn}.$$

Here, the second equality follows by noting that the same $\phi_1$ sum occurs in (9) so that it equates to (10). The last equality follows from (12).

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