

## EXISTENCE OF NONTRIVIAL SOLUTIONS FOR NEUMANN BOUNDARY $(p, q)$ -LAPLACIAN SYSTEMS

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ABSTRACT. In this paper, existence results of nontrivial solutions to a Neumann boundary  $(p, q)$ -Laplacian systems is established. Our technical is based on Bonanno's general critical points theorem.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In this paper we are concerned with the existence of nontrivial weak solutions for the following systems of  $(p, q)$ -Laplacian type

$$\begin{cases} -\Delta_p u + a(x)|u|^{p-2}u = \lambda F_u(x, u, v) & \text{in } \Omega, \\ -\Delta_q v + b(x)|v|^{q-2}v = \lambda F_v(x, u, v) & \text{in } \Omega, \\ \frac{\partial u}{\partial \nu} = \frac{\partial v}{\partial \nu} = 0, & \text{in } \partial\Omega, \end{cases} \quad (1)$$

where  $q \geq p > N$ ,  $\Omega$  is a nonempty bounded open set of  $\mathbb{R}^N$ , with a boundary of class  $C^1$  and  $\nu$  is the outer unit normal to  $\partial\Omega$ . Here,  $\lambda$  is a real positive parameter,  $a, b \in L^\infty(\Omega)$ , with  $\text{ess inf}_\Omega a \geq 0$ ,  $\text{ess inf}_\Omega b \geq 0$  and  $a \not\equiv 0$ ,  $b \not\equiv 0$ .  $F : \Omega \times \mathbb{R}^2 \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  is a function such that  $F(\cdot, s, t)$  is continuous in  $\Omega$ , for all  $(s, t) \in \mathbb{R}^2$  and  $F(x, \cdot, \cdot)$  is  $C^1$  in  $\mathbb{R}^2$  for every  $x \in \Omega$ , and  $F_u, F_v$  denote the partial derivatives of  $F$ , with respect to  $u, v$  respectively. Moreover,  $F(x, s, t)$  satisfies the following condition

(F)

$$\sup_{|s| \leq \sigma, |t| \leq \sigma} (|F_u(\cdot, s, t)| + |F_v(\cdot, s, t)|) \in L^1(\Omega), \text{ for all } \sigma > 0.$$

The investigation of existence and multiplicity of solutions for systems involving  $p$ -Laplacian operators has been the subject of numerous studies, see [2, 3, 7, 11, 14] and references therein. As well as the multiplicity results for perturbed Neumann problems has been extensively obtained by several authors, see, for instance [1, 6, 8, 9, 10, 13].

In this paper an interval of real parameters  $\lambda$ , for which the problem (1) admits at least one nontrivial solution, is established. Our approach is variational and main tool is a local minimum theorem due to Bonanno [4].

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In the sequel,  $X$  will denote the space  $W^{1,p}(\Omega) \times W^{1,q}(\Omega)$ , which is a reflexive Banach space endowed with the norm

$$\|(u, v)\| = \|u\|_p + \|v\|_q,$$

where

$$\|u\|_p = \left( \int_{\Omega} (|\nabla u|^p + a(x)|u|^p) dx \right)^{1/p} \quad \text{and} \quad \|v\|_q = \left( \int_{\Omega} (|\nabla v|^q + b(x)|v|^q) dx \right)^{1/q}.$$

Let

$$k := \max \left\{ \sup_{u \in W^{1,p}(\Omega) \setminus \{0\}} \frac{\max_{x \in \bar{\Omega}} |u(x)|^p}{\|u\|_p^p}, \sup_{v \in W^{1,q}(\Omega) \setminus \{0\}} \frac{\max_{x \in \bar{\Omega}} |v(x)|^q}{\|v\|_q^q} \right\}. \quad (2)$$

Since  $p > N$  and  $q > N$ , the Rellich Kondrachov theorem assures that  $W^{1,p}(\Omega) \hookrightarrow C^0(\bar{\Omega})$  and  $W^{1,q}(\Omega) \hookrightarrow C^0(\bar{\Omega})$  are compact, and hence  $k < \infty$ . Moreover

$$\min(k\|a\|_1, k\|b\|_1) \geq 1, \quad (3)$$

where

$$\|a\|_1 = \int_{\Omega} |a(x)| dx \quad \text{and} \quad \|b\|_1 = \int_{\Omega} |b(x)| dx.$$

In addition, if  $\Omega$  is convex, it is known that

$$\sup_{u \in W^{1,p}(\Omega) \setminus \{0\}} \frac{\max_{x \in \bar{\Omega}} |u(x)|}{\|u\|_p} \leq 2^{\frac{p-1}{p}} \max \left\{ \left( \frac{1}{\|a\|_1} \right)^{1/p}; \frac{d}{N^{1/p}} \left( \frac{p-1}{p-N} m(\Omega) \right)^{\frac{p-1}{p}} \frac{\|a\|_{\infty}}{\|a\|_1} \right\}, \quad (4)$$

where  $d = \text{diam}(\Omega)$  and  $m(\Omega)$  is the Lebesgue measure of the set  $\Omega$  (see [5]), and equality occurs when  $\Omega$  is a ball.

We recall that  $(u, v) \in X$  is weak solution of problem (1) if  $(u, v)$  satisfies the following condition

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_{\Omega} |\nabla u|^{p-2} \nabla u \nabla \varphi dx + \int_{\Omega} a(x) |u|^{p-2} u \varphi dx + \int_{\Omega} |\nabla v|^{q-2} \nabla v \nabla \psi dx \\ & + \int_{\Omega} b(x) |v|^{q-2} v \psi dx - \lambda \int_{\Omega} F_u(x, u, v) \varphi dx - \lambda \int_{\Omega} F_v(x, u, v) \psi dx = 0, \end{aligned}$$

for all  $(\varphi, \psi) \in X$ .

We see that weak solutions of system (1) are critical points of the functional  $I_{\lambda} : X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ , given by

$$I_{\lambda}(u, v) = \Phi(u, v) - \lambda \Psi(u, v) \quad \text{for all } (u, v) \in X,$$

where

$$\Phi(u, v) = \frac{1}{p} \|u\|_p^p + \frac{1}{q} \|v\|_q^q \quad \text{and} \quad \Psi(u, v) = \int_{\Omega} F(x, u, v) dx.$$

Since  $X$  is compactly embedded in  $C^0(\bar{\Omega}) \times C^0(\bar{\Omega})$ , it is well known that  $\Phi$  and  $\Psi$  are well defined Gâteaux differentiable functionals whose Gâteaux derivatives at  $(u, v) \in X$  are given by

$$\begin{aligned} \langle \Phi'(u, v), (\varphi, \psi) \rangle &= \int_{\Omega} |\nabla u|^{p-2} \nabla u \nabla \varphi dx + \int_{\Omega} a(x) |u|^{p-2} u \varphi dx \\ &+ \int_{\Omega} |\nabla v|^{q-2} \nabla v \nabla \psi dx + \int_{\Omega} b(x) |v|^{q-2} v \psi dx, \end{aligned}$$

$$\langle \Psi'(u, v), (\varphi, \psi) \rangle = \int_{\Omega} F_u(x, u, v) \varphi dx + \int_{\Omega} F_v(x, u, v) \psi dx,$$

for all  $(\varphi, \psi) \in X$ . Moreover, by the weakly lower semicontinuity of norm, we see that  $\Phi$  is sequentially weakly lower semi continuous and whose Gateaux derivative admits a continuous inverse on  $X^*$  (see Proposition 1 in [7]). Thanks to  $p, q > N$  and  $(F)$ ,  $\Psi$  has compact derivative, it follows that  $\Psi$  is sequentially weakly continuous.

Our main tools are two consequences of a local minimum theorem [4], which is a more general version of the Ricceri Variational Principle (see [12]). Given a set  $X$  and two functionals  $\Phi, \Psi : X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$ , put

$$\beta(r_1, r_2) := \inf_{u \in \Phi^{-1}(]r_1, r_2])} \frac{\left( \sup_{v \in \Phi^{-1}(]r_1, r_2])} \Psi(v) \right) - \Psi(u)}{r_2 - \Phi(u)} \quad (5)$$

$$\rho_2(r_1, r_2) := \sup_{u \in \Phi^{-1}(]r_1, r_2])} \frac{\Psi(u) - \left( \sup_{v \in \Phi^{-1}(]-\infty, r_1])} \Psi(v) \right)}{\Phi(u) - r_1} \quad (6)$$

for all  $r_1, r_2 \in \mathbb{R}$ , with  $r_1 < r_2$ , and

$$\rho(r) := \sup_{u \in \Phi^{-1}(]r, +\infty])} \frac{\Psi(u) - \left( \sup_{v \in \Phi^{-1}(]-\infty, r])} \Psi(v) \right)}{\Phi(u) - r} \quad (7)$$

for all  $r \in \mathbb{R}$ .

**Theorem 1.**[[4], Theorem 5.1] Let  $X$  be a reflexive real Banach space;  $\Phi : X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be a sequentially weakly lower semicontinuous, coercive and continuously Gateaux differentiable function whose Gateaux derivative admits a continuous inverse on  $X^*$ ;  $\Psi : X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be a continuously Gateaux differentiable function whose Gateaux derivative is compact. Put  $I_\lambda = \Phi - \lambda\Psi$  assume that there are  $r_1, r_2 \in \mathbb{R}$ , with  $r_1 < r_2$ , such that

$$\beta(r_1, r_2) < \rho_2(r_1, r_2), \quad (8)$$

where  $\beta, \rho$  are given by (5) and (6).

Then, for each  $\lambda \in \left] \frac{1}{\rho_2(r_1, r_2)}, \frac{1}{\beta(r_1, r_2)} \right[$ , there is  $u_{0, \lambda} \in \Phi^{-1}(]r_1, r_2])$  such that  $I_\lambda(u_{0, \lambda}) \leq I_\lambda(u)$  for all  $u \in \Phi^{-1}(]r_1, r_2])$  and  $I'_\lambda(u_{0, \lambda}) = 0$ .

**Theorem 2.**[[4], Theorem 5.3] Let  $X$  be a real Banach space;  $\Phi : X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be a continuously Gateaux differentiable function whose Gateaux derivative admits a continuous inverse on  $X^*$ .  $\Psi : X \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be a continuously Gateaux differentiable function whose Gateaux derivative is compact. Fix  $\inf_X \Phi < r < \sup_X \Phi$  and assume that

$$\rho(r) > 0 \quad (9)$$

where  $\rho$  is given by (7), for each  $\lambda > \frac{1}{\rho(r)}$ , the functional  $I_\lambda = \Phi - \lambda\Psi$  is coercive. Then, for  $\lambda > \frac{1}{\rho(r)}$ , there is  $u_{0, \lambda} \in \Phi^{-1}(]r, +\infty])$  such that  $I_\lambda(u_{0, \lambda}) \leq I_\lambda(u)$  for all  $u \in \Phi^{-1}(]r, +\infty])$  and  $I'_\lambda(u_{0, \lambda}) = 0$ .

## 2. MAIN RESULTS

Given two nonnegative constants  $c, d$  such that

$$\frac{c^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p} \neq \frac{d^q}{p} (\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1),$$

where  $k$  is given by (2). Put

$$A_d(c) := \frac{\int_{\Omega} \max_{|s|+|t|\leq c} F(x, s, t) dx - \int_{\Omega} F(x, d, d) dx}{\frac{c^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p} - \frac{d^q}{p} (\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1)}$$

Now we are ready to state our main results.

**Theorem 3.** Assume that there exist three constants  $c_1, c_2, d$  with

$$(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q}) \max \left( q^{1/p}, (\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1)^{1/p} \right) \leq c_1 < c_2, \quad (10)$$

and

$$\frac{c_1}{(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q}) (\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1)^{1/p}} < d < \left( \frac{pc_2^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p (\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1)} \right)^{1/q} \quad (11)$$

such that

$$A_d(c_2) < A_d(c_1)$$

Then, for each

$$\lambda \in \left] \frac{1}{A_d(c_1)}, \frac{1}{A_d(c_2)} \right[ ,$$

problem (1) admits at least one nontrivial weak solution  $(\tilde{u}, \tilde{v})$  such that

$$\frac{c_1^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p} < \Phi(\tilde{u}, \tilde{v}) < \frac{c_2^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p}.$$

**Proof.** Let  $\Phi, \Psi$  be the functionals defined in Section 1, it is well known that they satisfy all regularity assumptions requested in Theorem 1. So, our aim is to verify condition (8), put

$$u_0(x) = d \quad \text{for all } x \in \Omega.$$

Clearly,  $(u_0, u_0) \in X$ , and

$$\Psi(u_0, u_0) = \int_{\Omega} F(x, u_0, u_0) dx = \int_{\Omega} F(x, d, d) dx. \quad (12)$$

From the definition of  $\Phi$  and the above conditions, we have

$$\frac{d^p}{q} (\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1) \leq \Phi(u_0, u_0) \leq \frac{d^q}{p} (\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1). \quad (13)$$

Fix  $c_1, c_2, d$  satisfying conditions (10) and (11), put

$$r_1 = \frac{c_1^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p} \quad \text{and} \quad r_2 = \frac{c_2^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p}.$$

Then, we obtain  $r_1 < \Phi(u_0, u_0) < r_2$ .

Moreover, for all  $(u, v) \in X$  such that  $(u, v) \in \Phi^{-1}(] - \infty, r_2[)$ , we get, from (2) and (10), that

$$|u| + |v| \leq c_2,$$

therefore

$$\Psi(u, v) = \int_{\Omega} F(x, u, v) dx \leq \int_{\Omega} \max_{|s|+|t| \leq c_2} F(x, s, t) dx \quad \text{for all } (u, v) \in \Phi^{-1}(]-\infty, r_2]).$$

Hence

$$\sup_{(u, v) \in \Phi^{-1}(]-\infty, r_2])} \Psi(u, v) \leq \int_{\Omega} \max_{|s|+|t| \leq c_2} F(x, s, t) dx \quad (14)$$

by the same argument, we obtain

$$\sup_{(u, v) \in \Phi^{-1}(]-\infty, r_1])} \Psi(u, v) \leq \int_{\Omega} \max_{|s|+|t| \leq c_1} F(x, s, t) dx. \quad (15)$$

Combining (12), (13), (14) and (15), we get

$$\begin{aligned} \beta(r_1, r_2) &\leq \frac{\left( \sup_{(u, v) \in \Phi^{-1}(]r_1, r_2])} \Psi(u, v) \right) - \Psi(u_0, u_0)}{r_2 - \Phi(u_0, u_0)} \\ &\leq \frac{\int_{\Omega} \max_{|s|+|t| \leq c_2} F(x, s, t) dx - \int_{\Omega} F(x, d, d) dx}{\frac{c_2^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p} - \frac{d^q}{p} (\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1)} = A_d(c_2) \end{aligned}$$

and

$$\begin{aligned} \rho_2(r_1, r_2) &\geq \frac{\Psi(u_0, u_0) - \left( \sup_{(u, v) \in \Phi^{-1}(]-\infty, r_1])} \Psi(u, v) \right)}{\Phi(u_0, u_0) - r_1} \\ &\geq \frac{\int_{\Omega} F(x, d, d) dx - \int_{\Omega} \max_{|s|+|t| \leq c_1} F(x, s, t) dx}{\frac{d^q}{p} (\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1) - \frac{c_1^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p}} = A_d(c_1). \end{aligned}$$

so, from our assumption it follows that

$$\beta(r_1, r_2) < \rho_2(r_1, r_2).$$

Hence, by Theorem 1 for each  $\lambda \in \left] \frac{1}{A_d(c_1)}, \frac{1}{A_d(c_2)} \right[$ , the functional  $I_{\lambda}$  admit at least one critical point  $(\tilde{u}, \tilde{v})$  such that

$$\frac{c_1^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p} < \Phi(\tilde{u}, \tilde{v}) < \frac{c_2^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p}.$$

Now, we give an application of Theorem 2.

**Theorem 4.** Assume that

(i) there exist two constants  $\bar{c}, \bar{d}$  with

$$\max \left( 1, \left( \frac{q}{\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1} \right)^{1/p} \right) \leq \frac{\bar{c}}{(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q}) (\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1)^{1/p}} < \bar{d} \quad (16)$$

such that

$$\int_{\Omega} \max_{|s|+|t| \leq \bar{c}} F(x, s, t) dx < \int_{\Omega} F(x, \bar{d}, \bar{d}) dx \quad (17)$$

(ii)

$$\limsup_{|s|+|t| \rightarrow +\infty} \frac{F(x, s, t)}{|s|^p + |t|^q} \leq 0 \quad \text{uniformly in } X. \quad (18)$$

Then, for each  $\lambda > \bar{\lambda}$ , where

$$\bar{\lambda} = \frac{\frac{\bar{c}^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p} - \frac{\bar{d}^q}{p} (\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1)}{\int_{\Omega} \max_{|s|+|t| \leq \bar{c}} F(x, s, t) dx - \int_{\Omega} F(x, \bar{d}, \bar{d}) dx},$$

problem (1) admits at least one nontrivial weak solution  $(\tilde{u}, \tilde{v})$  such that

$$\Phi(\tilde{u}, \tilde{v}) > \frac{\bar{c}^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p}.$$

**Proof.** First, note that  $\min_X \Phi = \Phi(0, 0) = 0$ . Moreover, the condition (18) and (F) implies that, for every  $\varepsilon > 0$  there exists  $l_\varepsilon \in L^1(\Omega)$  such that

$$F(x, s, t) \leq \varepsilon(|s|^p + |t|^q) + l_\varepsilon(x) \quad \text{for all } (x, s, t) \in \Omega \times \mathbb{R}^2,$$

thus

$$\int_{\Omega} F(x, u, v) dx \leq \varepsilon (C_p \|u\|_p^p + C_q \|v\|_q^q) + \int_{\Omega} l_\varepsilon(x) dx \quad \text{for all } (u, v) \in X,$$

where  $C_p, C_q$  are constants of Sobolev. Therefore

$$I_\lambda(u, v) \geq \left(\frac{1}{p} - \varepsilon C_p\right) \|u\|_p^p + \left(\frac{1}{q} - \varepsilon C_q\right) \|v\|_q^q - \int_{\Omega} l_\varepsilon(x) dx.$$

So, choosing  $\varepsilon$  small enough we deduce that  $I_\lambda$  is coercive. Our aim is to verify condition (9) of Theorem 2. Indeed, let

$$u_0 = \bar{d} \quad \text{for all } x \in \Omega.$$

Working as in the proof of Theorem 3, put

$$r = \frac{\bar{c}^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p}.$$

For all  $(u, v) \in X$  such that  $(u, v) \in \Phi^{-1}(]-\infty, r])$ , one has

$$|u| + |v| \leq \bar{c},$$

and we have

$$\begin{aligned} \rho(r) &\geq \frac{\Psi(u_0, u_0) - \left(\sup_{v \in \Phi^{-1}(]-\infty, r])} \Psi(v)\right)}{\Phi(u_0, u_0) - r} \\ &\geq \frac{\int_{\Omega} F(x, \bar{d}, \bar{d}) dx - \int_{\Omega} \max_{|s|+|t| \leq \bar{c}} F(x, s, t) dx}{\frac{\bar{d}^q}{p} (\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1) - \frac{\bar{c}^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p}} > 0. \end{aligned}$$

Hence, Theorem 2 ensures the existence of nontrivial solution  $(\tilde{u}, \tilde{v})$  of (1), such that

$$\Phi(\tilde{u}, \tilde{v}) > \frac{\bar{c}^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p}.$$

A further consequence of Theorem 4 is the following result.

**Theorem 5.** Assume that  $F_u$  and  $F_v$  are nonnegative, in addition

(i) there exist two constants  $\bar{c}, \bar{d}$  with

$$\max \left( 1, \left( \frac{q}{\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1} \right)^{1/p} \right) \leq \frac{\bar{c}}{(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})(\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1)^{1/p}} < \bar{d} \quad (19)$$

such that

$$\frac{F(\bar{c}, \bar{c})}{\bar{c}^p} < \frac{F(\bar{d}, \bar{d})}{(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p (\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1) \bar{d}^p} \quad (20)$$

(ii)

$$\limsup_{|s|+|t| \rightarrow +\infty} \frac{F(x, s, t)}{|s|^p + |t|^q} = 0 \quad \text{uniformly in } X. \quad (21)$$

Then, for each

$$\lambda > \frac{\frac{\bar{c}^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p} - \frac{\bar{d}^q}{p} (\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1)}{F(\bar{c}, \bar{c}) - F(\bar{d}, \bar{d})},$$

problem

$$\begin{cases} -\Delta_p u + a(x)|u|^{p-2}u = \lambda F_u(u, v) & \text{in } \Omega, \\ -\Delta_q v + b(x)|v|^{q-2}v = \lambda F_v(u, v) & \text{in } \Omega, \\ \frac{\partial u}{\partial \nu} = \frac{\partial v}{\partial \nu} = 0, & \text{in } \partial\Omega, \end{cases} \quad (22)$$

admits at least one nontrivial weak solution.

**Proof.** Clearly, (21) implies (18), and by a simple computations show that (20) implies (17). Hence Theorem 4 ensures the conclusion.

**Example.** The problem

$$\begin{cases} -u'' + u = \lambda \left( \frac{3}{2}v\sqrt{u} + v\sqrt{v} \right) & \text{in } (0, 1), \\ -v'' + v = \lambda \left( \frac{3}{2}u\sqrt{v} + u\sqrt{u} \right) & \text{in } (0, 1), \\ u'(0) = v'(0) = u'(1) = v'(1) = 0, \end{cases} \quad (23)$$

admits at least one nontrivial solution for every

$$\lambda > \frac{\sqrt{2} - 2^{20}}{2^6 - 2^{26}}.$$

In fact, if we choose, for example  $\bar{c} = 4, \bar{d} = 2^{10}$  and  $F : \mathbb{R}^+ \times \mathbb{R}^+ \rightarrow \mathbb{R}$  be a function defined by

$$F(s, t) = st \left( \sqrt{s} + \sqrt{t} \right),$$

Taking into account that (3) and the estimate (4) implies  $1 \leq k \leq \sqrt{2}$ , we deduce that

$$\frac{\frac{\bar{c}^p}{q(k^{1/p} + k^{1/q})^p} - \frac{\bar{d}^q}{p} (\|a\|_1 + \|b\|_1)}{F(\bar{c}, \bar{c}) - F(\bar{d}, \bar{d})} \leq \frac{\sqrt{2} - 2^{20}}{2^6 - 2^{26}},$$

and all hypotheses of Theorem 5 are satisfied.

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