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STRONGLY MAXIMAL MATRIX FUNCTIONS
IN REGIONS CONTAINING STABLE SOLUTIONS

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Ito stochastic equations

$$(1) \quad dx = a(t,x)dt + B(t,x)dw$$

are considered where $w(t)$ is an n -dimensional Wiener process, $a(t,x)$ is an n -dimensional vector function, $B(t,x)$ is an $n \times n$ matrix function.

Hypothesis (A). $B_{ij}(t,x)$, $a_i(t,x)$ are defined for $t \geq 0$, $x \in \mathbb{R}^n$, are bounded, Lipschitz continuous in x and Hölder continuous in t . Let D be a given bounded region and K a compact subset of D .
Hypothesis (B). The matrix function $H(t,x) = B(t,x)B^T(t,x)$ is uniformly positive definite on $(0,\infty) \times S$ for every compact subset S of $\bar{D}-K$.

Define $P(B,x_0) = P\{\exists t: x(t;0,x_0) \notin D\}$, where $x(t;0,x_0)$ is the solution of (1), $x(t_0;0,x_0) = x_0$. We write $H_0(t,x) \geq H(t,x)$ (the diffusion generated by H_0 is greater than that generated by H) iff $H_0(t,x) - H(t,x)$ is positive semidefinite at every point of $\langle 0, \infty \rangle \times D$.

Definition (of stability). A compact set K is uniformly stable with respect to (1) iff for every neighbourhood U of K and every number $\varepsilon > 0$ there exists a neighbourhood U_ε of K such that $P\{\exists t: x(t;0,x_0) \notin U, t \geq t_0\} \leq \varepsilon$ for $x_0 \in U_\varepsilon$.

Definition (of maximality). Let $a(t,x)$, $B_0(t,x)$, a bounded region D and a subset K be given fulfilling Hypotheses (A), (B). We say that the matrix function $B_0(t,x)$ is strongly maximal (with respect to $a(t,x), D, K$) if $P(B_0,x_0) \geq P(B,x_0)$ for every initial value $x_0 \in D$ and for every matrix function $B(t,x)$ fulfilling Hypotheses (A), (B) and $B(t,x) \leq B_0(t,x)$.

Motivation of the problem. Let a technical device be described by $\dot{x} = a(t,x)$. The influence of random perturbations on such a system can be sometimes described by (1), where $B(t,x)$ determines the intensity and distribution of the random perturbations. Frequently the probability that the parameter x leaves the region D is required to be small. If $a(t,x)$ and $B(t,x)$ are given precisely then this probability $P(B,x_0)$ can be calculated. But often only an upper bound $B_0(t,x)$ for $B(t,x)$ ($B(t,x) \leq B_0(t,x)$) is available. Certainly B_0 is a good upper bound only if $P(B,x_0) \leq P(B_0,x_0)$, i.e. if B_0 is strongly maximal.

A similar problem was studied in [1] - [3] but in these papers

the probability $P(B, x_0)$ was considered on a finite time interval.

Before the results can be formulated, further assumptions are to be imposed on D and K .

Hypothesis (C). The region D is bounded and is of the type $C^{(3)}$, i.e. for every point $x^{(0)} \in \dot{D}$ (boundary of D) there exist a neighbourhood U of $x^{(0)}$, an index i and a function $x_i = h(x_1, \dots, x_{i-1}, x_{i+1}, \dots, x_n)$ having the third continuous derivatives so that $D \cap U = \{x : x_i > h(x_1, \dots, x_{i-1}, x_{i+1}, \dots, x_n) \cap U\}$. If $n=1$ then Hypothesis (C) is fulfilled for bounded intervals.

Hypothesis (C'). The set K is compact, can be expressed as $K = \bar{U}$ where U is a region, the boundary \dot{U} consists of one component only and U fulfills Hypothesis (C).

Hypothesis (C''). The compact set K is a union of a finite number of disjoint sets K_i fulfilling Hypothesis (C').

Lemma. Let R be a symmetric matrix. There exist symmetric positive definite matrices $R^{(i)}$, $i=1,2$, such that $R = R^{(1)} - R^{(2)}$. The matrices $R^{(i)}$ are determined uniquely provided they have the same eigenvectors as R .

Further notation. Denote $r(x) = \text{dist}(x, K)$ for $x \in \overline{D-K}$.

With regard to (C') there exist $\partial^2 r / \partial x_i \partial x_j(x)$ for $x \in \dot{K}$. We denote $R(x) = \{\partial^2 r / \partial x_i \partial x_j\}$ for $x \in \dot{K}$. Let $v(x)$ be the unit vector of the outward normal with respect to $D-K$.

Problem (P). Find a bounded solution $u(t, x)$ of

$$Lu = \partial u / \partial t + \sum_i a_i(t, x) \partial u / \partial x_i + \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i,j} (H_0)_{ij}(t, x) \partial^2 u / \partial x_i \partial x_j = 0 \\ \text{in the region } (0, \infty) \times (D-K),$$

fulfilling

$$u(t, x) = 1 \text{ for } x \in \dot{D}, \quad t \geq 0,$$

$$u(t, y) \rightarrow 0 \text{ for } y \rightarrow K \text{ uniformly with respect to } t.$$

We shall consider the Ito equation

$$(2) \quad dx = a(t, x)dt + B_0(t, x)dw.$$

Theorem 1. Let the coefficients $a(t, x)$, $B_0(t, x)$ fulfil Hypotheses (A), (B), let the region D fulfil Hypotheses (C) and let the compact set K , $K \subset D$, be a union of two disjoint sets K_1, K_2 such that

- 1) $H_{ij}(t, x) \leq 0$ for $t \geq 0$, $x \in K_1$ (if K_1 is nonempty),
- 2) K_2 fulfills Hypothesis (C'') and
$$\sum_i a_i(t, x) v_i(x) - \frac{1}{2} \sum_{i,j} (H_0)_{ij}(t, x) R^{(2)}(x) \geq 0 \text{ for } t \geq 0, \\ x \in K_2 \text{ (if } K_2 \text{ is nonempty)},$$
- 3) K is uniformly stable with respect to (2),
- 4) every point of $D-K$ can be connected with \dot{D} by a continuous curve lying in $D-K$.

Then $B_0(t, x)$ is strongly maximal if and only if the solution u

of the problem (P) is a convex function of x in $(0, \infty) \times D-K$.

The theorem gives conditions for the matrix function $B_0(t, x)$ to be strongly maximal. Notice that $B_0(t, x)$ need not be strongly maximal even if it is a constant matrix and even in the scalar case (see [1], [2]). The method of the proof uses modified results of [4], [5] on attainable and nonattainable sets and on degenerate partial differential equations of parabolic type.

Theorem 1 yields that a necessary condition for $B_0(t, x)$ to be strongly maximal is that the set K is convex. Using this fact as an assumption we obtain

Theorem 2. Let the coefficients $a(t, x)$, $B_0(t, x)$ fulfil Hypotheses (A), (B), let the region D fulfil Hypothesis (C) and let the compact set K be convex. Assume that K is uniformly stable with respect to (2) and that at least one of the following assumptions is fulfilled:

- 1) $H(t, x) = 0$ for $t \geq 0$, $x \in K$
- 2) K fulfils (C').

Then the statement of Theorem 1 is valid.

Scalar case ($n=1$). In this case $D = (x_1, x_2)$. We shall assume (without loss of generality) that $K = \{x_1\}$. In this case we obtain more explicit results.

Theorem 3. Let functions $a(t, x)$, $B(t, x)$ fulfil Hypotheses (A), (B). Assume that $a(t, x_1) = B(t, x_1) = 0$ and that the solution $x(t) = x_1$ is uniformly stable with respect to (1). Let the function $a(t, x)$ be a convex function of x in $(0, \infty) \times D$. The function $B_0(t, x)$ is strongly maximal if and only if $a(t, x_2) \leq 0$.

Theorem 3 can be derived from Theorem 2 and it is a starting point for deriving theorems involving no assumption on convexity of $a(t, x)$. Let $f'(x)$ be the derivative of f with respect to x .

Theorem 4. Let $a(t, x)$, $B(t, x)$ fulfil Hypotheses (A), (B), $D=(0, 1)$, $a(t, 0) = B(t, 0) = 0$, let $x(t) = 0$ of (1) be uniformly stable, a' and B'' continuous, $a(t, 1) < 0$. Denote $g = \sup \frac{1}{2} B^2(t, 1) / (-a(t, 1))$. Assume there exists a number $m \geq g$ such that

$$(a'(t, x) + B'(t, x) + B(t, x)B''(t, x))s^2 + \\ + (2a(t, x) + 5B(t, x)B'(t, x))s + 6B^2(t, x) + a''(t, x)s^3 \geq 0$$

for all $t \geq 0$, $x \in (0, 1)$, $s \in (m, m+2)$.

Then the function $B(t, x)$ is strongly maximal.

A very simple condition for strong maximality can be given in the autonomous scalar case, i.e. when $n=1$ and $a(t, x)$, $B(t, x)$ do not depend on t .

Theorem 5. Let $a(x)$, $B(x)$ be real, Lipschitz continuous functions, $D = (0,1)$, $a(0) = B(0) = 0$, $B(x) \neq 0$ for $x \in (0,1)$. If the solution $x(t) = 0$ is stable with respect to (1) then $B(x)$ is strongly maximal if and only if $a(x) \leq 0$ for $x \in (0,1)$.

Notice that the condition $a \leq 0$ is neither necessary nor sufficient in the nonautonomous case. The condition of uniform stability of K can be given in terms of Lyapunov functions.

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