# A characterization of some graphs with metric dimension two 

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#### Abstract

A set $W \subseteq V(G)$ is called a resolving set, if for each pair of distinct vertices $u, v \in V(G)$ there exists $t \in W$ such that $d(u, t) \neq d(v, t)$, where $d(x, y)$ is the distance between vertices $x$ and $y$. The cardinality of a minimum resolving set for $G$ is called the metric dimension of $G$ and is denoted by $\operatorname{dim}_{M}(G)$. A $k$-tree is a chordal graph all of whose maximal cliques are the same size $k+1$ and all of whose minimal clique separators are also all the same size $k$. A $k$-path is a $k$-tree with maximum degree $2 k$, where for each integer $j, k \leq j<2 k$, there exists a unique pair of vertices, $u$ and $v$, such that $\operatorname{deg}(u)=\operatorname{deg}(v)=j$. In this paper, we prove that if $G$ is a $k$-path, then $\operatorname{dim}_{M}(G)=k$. Moreover, we provide a characterization of all 2 -trees with metric dimension two.


## 1 Introduction

Throughout this paper all graphs are finite, simple and undirected. The notions $\delta, \Delta$ and $N_{G}(v)$ stand for minimum degree, maximum degree and the set of neighbours of vertex $v$ in $G$, respectively.

For an ordered set $W=\left\{w_{1}, w_{2}, \ldots, w_{k}\right\}$ of vertices and a vertex $v$ in a connected graph $G$, the $k$-vector $r(v \mid W):=\left(d\left(v, w_{1}\right), d\left(v, w_{2}\right), \ldots, d\left(v, w_{k}\right)\right)$ is called the metric representation of $v$ with respect to $W$, where $d(x, y)$ is the distance between two vertices $x$ and $y$. The set $W$ is called a resolving set for $G$ if distinct vertices of $G$ have distinct representations with respect to $W$. We say a set $S \subseteq V(G)$ resolves a set $T \subseteq V(G)$ if for each pair of distinct vertices $u$ and $v$ in $T$ there is a vertex $s \in S$ such that $d(u, s) \neq d(v, s)$. A minimum resolving set is called a basis and the metric dimension of $G, \operatorname{dim}_{M}(G)$, is the cardinality of a basis for $G$. A graph with metric dimension $k$ is called $k$-dimensional.

[^0]The concept of the resolving set has various applications in diverse areas including coin weighing problems [10], network discovery and verification [1], robot navigation [8], mastermind game [3], problems of pattern recognition and image processing [9], and combinatorial search and optimization [10].

These concepts were introduced by Slater in [11. He described the usefulness of these concepts when working with U.S. Sonar and Coast Guard Loran stations. Independently, Harary and Melter [6] discovered these concepts. In [8], it is proved that determining the metric dimension of a graph in general is an $N P$-complete problem, but the metric dimension of trees can be obtained by a polynomial time algorithm.

It is obvious that for every graph $G$ of order $n, 1 \leq \operatorname{dim}_{M}(G) \leq n-1$. Chartrand et al. [5] proved that for $n \geq 2, \operatorname{dim}_{M}(G)=n-1$ if and only if $G$ is the complete graph $K_{n}$. They also provided a characterization of graphs of order $n$ and metric dimension $n-2$ [5]. Graphs with metric dimension $n-3$ are characterized in [7]. Khuller et al. [8] and Chartrand et al. 5 proved that $\operatorname{dim}_{M}(G)=1$ if and only if $G$ is a path. Moreover, in [12] some properties of 2-dimensional graphs are obtained.

Theorem 1.1 [12] Let $G$ be a 2-dimensional graph. If $\{a, b\}$ is a basis for $G$, then

1. there is a unique shortest path $P$ between $a$ and $b$,
2. the degrees of $a$ and $b$ are at most three,
3. the degree of each internal vertex on $P$ is at most five.

A chordal graph is a graph with no induced cycle of length greater than three. A $k$-tree is a chordal graph that all of whose maximal cliques are the same size $k+1$ and all of whose minimal clique separators are also all the same size $k$. In other words, a $k$-tree may be formed by starting with a set of $k+1$ pairwise adjacent vertices and then repeatedly adding vertices in such a way that each added vertex has exactly $k$ neighbours that form a $k$-clique.

By the above definition, it is clear that if $G$ is a $k$-tree, then $\delta(G)=k$. 1-trees are the same as trees; 2-trees are maximal series-parallel graphs [4] and include also the maximal outerplanar graphs. These graphs can be used to model series and parallel electric circuits. Planar 3-trees are also known as Apollonian networks [2].

A $k$-path is a $k$-tree with maximum degree $2 k$, where for each integer $j, k \leq j<2 k$, there exists a unique pair of vertices, $u$ and $v$, such that $\operatorname{deg}(u)=\operatorname{deg}(v)=j$. On the other hand, regards to the recursive construction of $k$-trees, a $k$-path $G$ can be considered as a graph with vertex set $V(G)=\left\{v_{1}, v_{2}, \ldots, v_{n}\right\}$ and edge set $E(G)=\left\{v_{i} v_{j}:|i-j| \leq k\right\}$. For instance, two different representations of a 2 -path $G$ with seven vertices $v_{1}, \ldots, v_{7}$ are shown in Figure 1


Figure 1: Two different representations of a 2-path.
In this paper, we show that the metric dimension of each $k$-path (as a generalization of a path) is $k$. Whereas, there are some examples of 2 -trees with metric dimension two that are not 2 -path. This fact motivates us to study the structure of 2 -dimensional 2 -trees. As a main result, we characterize the class of all 2 -trees with metric dimension two.

## 2 Main Results

In this section, we first prove that the metric dimension of each $k$-path is $k$. Then, we introduce a class of graphs which shows that the inverse of this fact is not true in general. Later on, we concern on the case $k=2$ and toward to investigating all 2-trees with metric dimension two, we construct a family $\mathcal{F}$ of 2 -trees with metric dimension two. Finally, as the main result, we prove that the metric dimension of a 2 -tree $G$ is two if and only if $G$ belongs to $\mathcal{F}$.

Theorem 2.1 If $G$ is a $k$-path, then $\operatorname{dim}_{M}(G)=k$.

Proof. Let $G$ be a $k$-path with vertex set $V(G)=\left\{v_{1}, v_{2}, \ldots, v_{n}\right\}$ and edge set $E(G)=$ $\left\{v_{i} v_{j}:|i-j| \leq k\right\}$. Therefore, the distance between two vertices $v_{r}$ and $v_{s}$ in $G$ is given by $d\left(v_{r}, v_{s}\right)=\left\lceil\frac{|r-s|}{k}\right\rceil$.
At first, let $W=\left\{v_{1}, v_{2}, \ldots, v_{k}\right\}$ and $v_{i}, v_{j}$ be two distinct vertices of $G$ with $k<i<j$. By the division algorithm, there exist integers $r$ and $s$ such that $i=r k+s, 1 \leq s \leq k$. Thus, we have

$$
d\left(v_{i}, v_{s}\right)=\left\lceil\frac{|i-s|}{k}\right\rceil=\left\lceil\frac{r k}{k}\right\rceil=r
$$

and

$$
d\left(v_{j}, v_{s}\right)=\left\lceil\frac{|j-s|}{k}\right\rceil=\left\lceil\frac{r k+(j-i)}{k}\right\rceil=r+\left\lceil\frac{j-i}{k}\right\rceil \geq r+1 .
$$

This means $W$ is a resolving set for $G$. Hence, $\operatorname{dim}_{M}(G) \leq|W|=k$.
Now, we show that $\operatorname{dim}_{M}(G) \geq k$. Let $W$ be a basis of the $k$-path $G$, and let $X=$ $\left\{v_{1}, v_{2}, \ldots, v_{k+1}\right\}$. Assume that $|W \cap X|=s$ and $X \backslash W=\left\{v_{i_{1}}, v_{i_{2}}, \ldots, v_{i_{k+1-s}}\right\}$, where $1 \leq i_{1}<i_{2}<\cdots<i_{k+1-s} \leq k+1$. For convince, let $X^{\prime}=\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{k+1-s}\right\}$, where
$x_{r}=v_{i_{r}}$, for each $r, 1 \leq r \leq k+1-s$. Since each vertex $v_{i}$ of the $k$-path $G$ is adjacent to the next $k$ consecutive vertices $\left\{v_{i+1}, \ldots, v_{i+k}\right\}$, the induced subgraph on $X$ is a $(k+1)$ clique. Each vertex in $W \cap X$ is adjacent to each vertex in $X^{\prime}$. Thus, each pair of vertices in $X^{\prime}$ should be resolved by some element of $W \backslash X$. Assume that $W^{\prime}=\left\{w_{1}, w_{2}, \ldots, w_{t}\right\}$ is a minimum subset of $W \backslash X$ which resolves vertices in $X^{\prime}$. Thus, for each $w_{j} \in W^{\prime}$ there exists $\left\{x_{r}, x_{s}\right\} \subseteq X^{\prime}$ such that $d\left(w_{j}, x_{r}\right) \neq d\left(w_{j}, x_{s}\right)$. For each $j, 1 \leq j \leq t$, let

$$
r_{j}=\min \left\{r: d\left(w_{j}, x_{r}\right) \neq d\left(w_{j}, x_{r+1}\right)\right\},
$$

and, let

$$
A_{j}=\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{r_{j}}\right\}, B_{j}=\left\{x_{r_{j}+1}, x_{r_{j}+2}, \ldots, x_{k+1-s}\right\} .
$$

Note that $A_{j} \cup B_{j}=X^{\prime}, A_{j} \cap B_{j}=\emptyset, x_{1} \in A_{j}$ and $x_{k+1-s} \in B_{j}$. Also, the structure of $G$ implies that

$$
d\left(w_{j}, x_{1}\right)=d\left(w_{j}, x_{2}\right)=\cdots=d\left(w_{j}, x_{r_{j}}\right)
$$

and

$$
d\left(w_{j}, x_{r_{j}+1}\right)=d\left(w_{j}, x_{r_{j}+2}\right)=\cdots=d\left(w_{j}, x_{k+1-s}\right) .
$$

Since $W^{\prime}$ has the minimum size, for each $1 \leq j<j^{\prime} \leq t$ we have $A_{j} \neq A_{j^{\prime}}$ (otherwise, $w_{j}$ and $w_{j^{\prime}}$ resolve the same pair of vertices in $X^{\prime}$ ) and hence, $\left|A_{j}\right| \neq\left|A_{j^{\prime}}\right|$. Moreover, for each $r, 1 \leq r \leq k-s$, there exists $w_{j} \in W^{\prime}$ such that $d\left(w_{j}, x_{r}\right) \neq d\left(w_{j}, x_{r+1}\right)$ which implies $\left|A_{j}\right|=r$. Therefore,

$$
t=\left|\left\{\left|A_{1}\right|,\left|A_{2}\right|, \ldots,\left|A_{t}\right|\right\}\right|=|\{1,2, \ldots, k-s\}|=k-s
$$

Hence,

$$
|W|=|W \backslash X|+|W \cap X| \geq\left|W^{\prime}\right|+s=(k-s)+s=k,
$$

which completes the proof.
Definition 2.2 Let $G$ and $H$ be two 2-trees. We say that $H$ is a branch in $G$ on $\{u, v\}$, for convenience say $a(u, v)$-branch, if $V(H) \cap V(G)=\{u, v\}$, where $u v$ is an edge of $G$ belonging to only one of the triangles in $H$. The length of a branch in a 2-tree is the number of it's triangles, which is equal to the number of vertices of branch minus 2. A cane is a 2-path with a branch of length one on a specific edge as shown in Figure 2.


Figure 2: A cane.

In the following proposition, we provide some 2-trees with metric dimension two other than 2-paths.

Proposition 2.3 If $G$ is a 2-tree of metric dimension two with a basis whose elements are adjacent, then $G$ is a 2-path or a cane.


Figure 3: The possible cases for basis $\{a, b\}$ in 2-tree $G$
Proof. We prove the statement by induction on $n$, the order of $G$. If $n=3$, then $G=K_{3}$ and the statement holds. Let $G$ be a 2 -tree of order $n>3$ with a basis $B=\{a, b\}$, such that $d(a, b)=1$. Since each 2-tree of order greater than three has two non-adjacent vertices of degree two, there exists a vertex $x \in V(G) \backslash B$ of degree two. Moreover, $B$ is a basis for $G \backslash\{x\}$.

Now, by the induction hypothesis, $G \backslash\{x\}$ is a path or a cane and by Theorem 1.1 (2), the degrees of $a$ and $b$ are at most three. Therefore, $B=\{a, b\}$ is one of the possible cases shown in Figure 3. Note that dashed edges could be absent. It can be checked that in cases (b) and (c) the bold vertices get the same metric representation with respect to $B$. Thus, $B$ is one of the cases (a) or (d), where the metric representations of vertices are denoted in Figure 3.

Regards to the metric representation of vertices in $G, x$ could be adjacent to the vertices by metric representation $(t, t+1)$ and $(t, t)$ (in the case of not existence of dashed edges $(t-1, t)$ and $(t, t))$ and in the case (d) to the vertices by metric representation $(1,0)$ and $(1,1)$ as well. This concludes that $G$ is also a path or a cane.

The above proposition shows that the inverse of Theorem 2.1 is not true. Later on, we focus on the case $k=2$ and construct the family $\mathcal{F}$ of all 2 -trees with metric dimension two.

Let $\mathcal{F}$ be the family of 2-trees, where each member $G$ of $\mathcal{F}$ consists of a 2-tree $G_{0}$ and some branches on it that, in the case of existence, satisfying the following conditions.

1. $G_{0}$ is a 2-path or a 2-tree that is obtained by identifying two specific edges of two disjoint 2-paths as shown in Figure 4 .
2. On every edge there is at most one branch.
3. $G$ avoids any $\left(a_{i}, a_{i+1}\right)$-branch.
4. Each branch is either a 2-path or a cane.
5. In each $\left(a_{i}, b_{i}\right)$-branch the degree of $a_{i}$ is two.
6. If $G_{0}$ is as the graph depicted in Figure $\left[(b)\right.$, then $G$ avoids any $\left(a_{m}, x\right)$-branch.
7. $G$ contains at most one branch on the edges of the triangle containing $b_{i} b_{i+1}$ in $G_{0}$.
8. The degree of each $b_{i}$ in $G$ is at most 7 .
9. $G$ has at most one branch of length greater than one on the edges of the triangle containing $a_{i} a_{i+1}$ in $G_{0}$.
10. If $G_{0}$ is of the form of Figure $4(b)$, then $\left(b_{m-1}, b_{m}\right)$-branch and $\left(b_{m}, b_{m+1}\right)$-branch are 2-path and at most one of them is of length more than one.
11. For every $i, 2 \leq i \leq k-1$, at most one of the $\left(b_{i-1}, b_{i}\right)$-branches and $\left(b_{i}, b_{i+1}\right)$ branches is a cane.
12. All $\left(a_{i}, b_{i}\right)$-branches, $\left(a_{i}, b_{i+1}\right)$-branches and $\left(a_{i}, b_{i-1}\right)$-branches are 2-path.


Figure 4: Two different forms of $G_{0}$.

Theorem 2.4 If $G \in \mathcal{F}$, then $\operatorname{dim}_{M}(G)=2$.

Proof. Let $G \in \mathcal{F}$. Through the proof all of notations are the same as those which are used to introduce the family $\mathcal{F}$ and $G_{0}$ in Figure 4 . Since $G$ is not a path, $\operatorname{dim}_{M}(G) \geq 2$. Let $W=\left\{a_{1}, a_{k}\right\}$. We show in both possible cases for $G_{0}$ that $W$ is a resolving set for $G$ and hence, $\operatorname{dim}_{M}(G)=2$.

Case 1. $G_{0}$ is a 2-path as shown in Figure 4(a).
The metric representation of the vertices $\left\{a_{1}, a_{2}, \ldots, a_{k}, b_{1}, b_{2}, \ldots, b_{k}\right\}$ are as follows.

$$
\begin{aligned}
r\left(a_{i} \mid W\right) & =(i-1, k-i), 1 \leq i \leq k \\
r\left(b_{1} \mid W\right) & =(1, k) \\
r\left(b_{j} \mid W\right) & =(j-1, k-j+1), 2 \leq j \leq k
\end{aligned}
$$

Thus, different vertices of $G_{0}$ have different metric representations. Moreover, note that $\left\{d_{1}-d_{2}:\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)=r\left(a_{i} \mid W\right), 1 \leq i \leq k\right\}=\{1-k, 3-k, 5-k, \ldots, 2 i-k-1, \ldots, k-3, k-1\}$, and
$\left\{d_{1}-d_{2}:\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)=r\left(b_{i} \mid W\right), 1 \leq i \leq k\right\}=\{1-k, 2-k, 4-k, \ldots, 2 i-k-2, \ldots, k-4, k-2\}$.
If $G=G_{0}$, then we are done. Suppose that $G \neq G_{0}$ and let $H$ be a branch of $G$ on an edge $e$ of $G_{0}$. Regards to the structures of graphs in $\mathcal{F}$, we consider the following different possibilities.

- $H$ is a branch on the vertical edge $e=a_{i} b_{i}, 2 \leq i \leq k-1$.

Note that by the definition of $\mathcal{F}, H$ is a 2 -path and $\operatorname{deg}_{H}\left(a_{i}\right)=2$. Let $V(H)=$ $\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\}$ where $x_{1}=a_{i}, x_{2}=b_{i}$, and $E(H)=\left\{x_{r} x_{s}:|r-s| \leq 2\right\}$. If $j$ is odd, then $d\left(x_{j}, a_{1}\right)=d\left(x_{j}, a_{i}\right)+d\left(a_{i}, a_{1}\right)$ and $d\left(x_{j}, a_{k}\right)=d\left(x_{j}, a_{i}\right)+d\left(a_{i}, a_{k}\right)$. If $j$ is even, then $d\left(x_{j}, a_{1}\right)=d\left(x_{j}, b_{i}\right)+d\left(b_{i}, a_{1}\right)$ and $d\left(x_{j}, a_{k}\right)=d\left(x_{j}, b_{i}\right)+d\left(b_{i}, a_{k}\right)$. Hence, we have

$$
r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right)= \begin{cases}\left(i-1+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \text { is odd } \\ \left(i-1+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \text { is even }\end{cases}
$$

Moreover, note that

$$
\left\{d_{1}-d_{2}:\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)=r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right), 1 \leq j \leq t\right\}=\{2 i-k-1,2 i-k-2\}
$$

- $H$ is a branch on the oblique edge $e=a_{i} b_{i+1}, 2 \leq i \leq k-1$.

By the definition of $\mathcal{F}, H$ is a 2-path and $\operatorname{deg}_{H}\left(a_{i}\right)=2$. Let $V(H)=\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\}$ where $x_{1}=a_{i}, x_{2}=b_{i+1}$, and $E(H)=\left\{x_{r} x_{s}:|r-s| \leq 2\right\}$. If $j$ is odd, then $d\left(x_{j}, a_{1}\right)=d\left(x_{j}, a_{i}\right)+d\left(a_{i}, a_{1}\right)$ and $d\left(x_{j}, a_{k}\right)=d\left(x_{j}, a_{i}\right)+d\left(a_{i}, a_{k}\right)$. If $j$ is even, then $d\left(x_{j}, a_{1}\right)=d\left(x_{j}, b_{i+1}\right)+d\left(b_{i+1}, a_{1}\right)$ and $d\left(x_{j}, a_{k}\right)=d\left(x_{j}, b_{i+1}\right)+d\left(b_{i+1}, a_{k}\right)$. Hence, we have

$$
r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right)= \begin{cases}\left(i-1+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \text { is odd } \\ \left(i-1+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1\right) & j \text { is even }\end{cases}
$$

Moreover, note that

$$
\left\{d_{1}-d_{2}:\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)=r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right), 1 \leq j \leq t\right\}=\{2 i-k-1,2 i-k\}
$$

- $H$ is a branch on the horizontal edge $e=b_{i} b_{i+1}, 1 \leq i \leq k-1$.

Using the definition of $\mathcal{F}, H$ is either a 2 -path or a cane. Generally, assume that

$$
\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\} \subseteq V(H) \subseteq\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\} \cup\{x\}
$$

where the induced subgraph of $H$ on $\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\}$ is a 2-path with the edge set $\left\{x_{r} x_{s}:|r-s| \leq 2\right\}$. We consider two different possibilities.
a) $x_{1}=b_{i}, x_{2}=b_{i+1}$. Hence, if $H$ is a cane, then we have $N_{H}(x)=\left\{b_{i}, x_{3}\right\}$. Similar to the previous cases, we have

$$
\begin{aligned}
& r\left(x_{1} \mid W\right)=(i-1, k-i+1), \\
& r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right)= \begin{cases}\left(i-1+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \geq 3 \text { is odd } \\
\left(i-1+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1\right) & j \text { is even. }\end{cases}
\end{aligned}
$$

Also, if $H$ is a cane, then $r(x \mid W)=(i-1+1, k-i+2)$.
b) $x_{1}=b_{i+1}, x_{2}=b_{i}$. Hence, if $H$ is a cane, then we have $N_{H}(x)=\left\{b_{i+1}, x_{3}\right\}$. Similarly, we have

$$
\begin{aligned}
& r\left(x_{1} \mid W\right)=(i-1+1, k-i), \\
& r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right)= \begin{cases}\left(i-1+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor, k-i+\left\lfloor\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right)\right. & j \text { is odd } \\
\left(i-1+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \text { is even. }\end{cases}
\end{aligned}
$$

Also, if $H$ is a cane, then $r(x \mid W)=(i-1+2, k-i+1)$.

Note that in both states (and regardless of being a 2-path or a cane), we have

$$
\left\{d_{1}-d_{2}:\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)=r(v \mid W), v \in V(H)\right\}=\{2 i-k-2,2 i-k-1,2 i-k\} .
$$

Therefore, in all the above cases, distinct vertices of $H$ have different metric representations. Also, the metric representation of the vertices in $V(H)$ are different from the metric representations of the vertices in $V\left(G_{0}\right) \backslash\{x, y\}$, where $H$ is a $(x, y)$-branch. Moreover, using the subtraction value of two coordinates in the metric representation of each vertex, it is easy to check that vertices of different (possible) branches on $G_{0}$ (satisfying the conditions mentioned in the definition of $\mathcal{F}$ ) have different metric representations. Thus, in this case $W$ is a resolving set for $G$.

Case 2. $G_{0}$ is a 2 -tree of the form Figure [4(b).
The metric representation of the vertices $\left\{a_{1}, a_{2}, \ldots, a_{m}, \ldots, a_{k}\right\} \cup\left\{b_{1}, b_{2}, \ldots, b_{m}, \ldots, b_{k}\right\}$ are as follows.

$$
\begin{aligned}
& r\left(a_{i} \mid W\right)=(i-1, k-i), 1 \leq i \leq k \\
& r\left(b_{j} \mid W\right)= \begin{cases}(j, k-j) & 1 \leq j \leq m-1 \\
(m, k-m+1) & j=m \\
(j-1, k-j+1) & m+1 \leq j \leq k\end{cases}
\end{aligned}
$$

Therefore, different vertices of $G_{0}$ have different metric representations. Moreover, note that

$$
\begin{gathered}
\left\{d_{1}-d_{2}:\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)=r\left(a_{i} \mid W\right), 1 \leq i \leq k\right\}= \\
\{1-k, 3-k, 5-k, \ldots, 2 m-k-3,2 m-k-1,2 m-k+1, \ldots, k-3, k-1\}
\end{gathered}
$$

and

$$
\begin{gathered}
\left\{d_{1}-d_{2}:\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)=r\left(b_{j} \mid W\right), 1 \leq j \leq k\right\}= \\
\{2-k, 4-k, 6-k, \ldots, 2 m-k-2,2 m-k-1,2 m-k, \ldots, k-4, k-2\}
\end{gathered}
$$

If $G=G_{0}$, then we are done. Hence, suppose that $G \neq G_{0}$ and let $H$ be a branch of $G$ on an edge $e$ of $G_{0}$. Again, using the possible structures of $H$ according to the definition of $\mathcal{F}$, we consider the following different cases.

- $H$ is a branch on the vertical edge $e=a_{i} b_{i}, 2 \leq i \leq m-1$.

Note that by the definition of $\mathcal{F}, H$ is a 2 -path and $\operatorname{deg}_{H}\left(a_{i}\right)=2$. Let $V(H)=$ $\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\}$ where $x_{1}=a_{i}, x_{2}=b_{i}$, and $E(H)=\left\{x_{r} x_{s}:|r-s| \leq 2\right\}$. It is straightforward to check that

$$
r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right)= \begin{cases}\left(i-1+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \text { is odd } \\ \left(i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1\right) & j \text { is even. }\end{cases}
$$

Moreover, note that

$$
\left\{d_{1}-d_{2}:\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)=r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right), 1 \leq j \leq t\right\}=\{2 i-k-1,2 i-k\}
$$

- $H$ is a branch on the vertical edge $e=a_{i} b_{i}, m+1 \leq i \leq k-1$.

By the definition of $\mathcal{F}, H$ is a 2-path and $\operatorname{deg}_{H}\left(a_{i}\right)=2$. Let $V(H)=\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\}$ where $x_{1}=a_{i}, x_{2}=b_{i}$, and $E(H)=\left\{x_{r} x_{s}:|r-s| \leq 2\right\}$. We have

$$
r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right)= \begin{cases}\left(i-1+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \text { is odd } \\ \left(i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-2, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \text { is even. }\end{cases}
$$

Moreover, note that

$$
\left\{d_{1}-d_{2}:\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)=r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right), 1 \leq j \leq t\right\}=\{2 i-k-1,2 i-k-2\}
$$

- $H$ is a branch on the oblique edge $e=a_{i} b_{i-1}, 2 \leq i \leq m-1$.

Since $G \in \mathcal{F}, H$ is a 2 -path and $\operatorname{deg}_{H}\left(a_{i}\right)=2$. Let $V(H)=\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\}$ where $x_{1}=a_{i}, x_{2}=b_{i-1}$, and $E(H)=\left\{x_{r} x_{s}:|r-s| \leq 2\right\}$. We have

$$
r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right)= \begin{cases}\left(i-1+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \text { is odd } \\ \left(i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-2, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \text { is even. }\end{cases}
$$

Moreover,

$$
\left\{d_{1}-d_{2}:\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)=r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right), 1 \leq j \leq t\right\}=\{2 i-k-1,2 i-k-2\}
$$

- $H$ is a branch on the oblique edge $e=a_{i} b_{i+1}, m+1 \leq i \leq k-1$.

We know that $H$ is a 2 -path and $\operatorname{deg}_{H}\left(a_{i}\right)=2$. Let $V(H)=\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\}$ where $x_{1}=a_{i}, x_{2}=b_{i+1}$, and $E(H)=\left\{x_{r} x_{s}:|r-s| \leq 2\right\}$. Similarly, it can be easily checked that

$$
r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right)= \begin{cases}\left(i-1+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \text { is odd } \\ \left(i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1\right) & j \text { is even. }\end{cases}
$$

Moreover, note that

$$
\left\{d_{1}-d_{2}:\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)=r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right), 1 \leq j \leq t\right\}=\{2 i-k-1,2 i-k\} .
$$

- $H$ is a branch on the horizontal edge $e=b_{i} b_{i+1}, 1 \leq i \leq m-2$.

Using the definition of $\mathcal{F}, H$ is either a 2-path or a cane. Generally, assume that

$$
\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\} \subseteq V(H) \subseteq\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\} \cup\{x\}
$$

where the induced subgraph of $H$ on $\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\}$ is a 2-path with the edge set $\left\{x_{r} x_{s}:|r-s| \leq 2\right\}$. We consider two different possibilities.
a) $x_{1}=b_{i}, x_{2}=b_{i+1}$. Hence, if $H$ is a cane, then we have $N_{H}(x)=\left\{b_{i}, x_{3}\right\}$. Similar to the previous cases, we have

$$
\begin{aligned}
& r\left(x_{1} \mid W\right)=(i, k-i), \\
& r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right)= \begin{cases}\left(i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1\right) & j \geq 3 \text { is odd } \\
\left(i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-2\right) & j \text { is even. }\end{cases}
\end{aligned}
$$

Also, if $H$ is a cane, then $r(x \mid W)=(i+1, k-i+1)$.
b) $x_{1}=b_{i+1}, x_{2}=b_{i}$. Hence, if $H$ is a cane, then we have $N_{H}(x)=\left\{b_{i+1}, x_{3}\right\}$. Similarly, we have

$$
\begin{aligned}
& r\left(x_{1} \mid W\right)=(i+1, k-i-1), \\
& r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right)= \begin{cases}\left(i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1\right) & j \geq 3 \text { is odd } \\
\left(i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1\right) & \text { is even. }\end{cases}
\end{aligned}
$$

Also, if $H$ is a cane, then $r(x \mid W)=(i+2, k-i)$.

Note that in the both states (and regardless of being a 2-path or a cane) we have

$$
\left\{d_{1}-d_{2}:\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)=r(v \mid W), v \in V(H)\right\}=\{2 i-k, 2 i-k+1,2 i-k+2\} .
$$

- $H$ is a branch on the horizontal edge $e=b_{m-1} b_{m}$.

By the definition of $\mathcal{F}, H$ is a 2-path and $\operatorname{deg}_{H}\left(b_{m-1}\right)=2$. Let $V(H)=\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\}$ where $x_{1}=b_{m-1}, x_{2}=b_{m}$, and $E(H)=\left\{x_{r} x_{s}:|r-s| \leq 2\right\}$. We have

$$
r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right)= \begin{cases}\left(m+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1, k-m+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor+1\right) & j \text { is odd } \\ \left(m+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1, k-m+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \text { is even. }\end{cases}
$$

Moreover, note that

$$
\left\{d_{1}-d_{2}:\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)=r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right), 1 \leq j \leq t\right\}=\{2 m-k-2,2 m-k-1\} .
$$

- $H$ is a branch on the horizontal edge $e=b_{m} b_{m+1}$.

By the definition of $\mathcal{F}, H$ is a 2-path and $\operatorname{deg}_{H}\left(b_{m+1}\right)=2$. Let $V(H)=\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\}$ where $x_{1}=b_{m+1}, x_{2}=b_{m}$, and $E(H)=\left\{x_{r} x_{s}:|r-s| \leq 2\right\}$. We have

$$
r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right)=\left\{\begin{array}{lc}
\left(m+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor, k-m+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \text { is odd } \\
\left(m+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1, k-m+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \text { even } .
\end{array}\right.
$$

Moreover, note that

$$
\left\{d_{1}-d_{2}:\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)=r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right), 1 \leq j \leq t\right\}=\{2 m-k-1,2 m-k\} .
$$

- $H$ is a branch on the horizontal edge $e=b_{i} b_{i+1}, m+1 \leq i \leq k-1$.

Using the definition of $\mathcal{F}, H$ is either a 2 -path or a cane. Generally, assume that

$$
\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\} \subseteq V(H) \subseteq\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\} \cup\{x\}
$$

where the induced subgraph of $H$ on $\left\{x_{1}, x_{2}, \ldots, x_{t}\right\}$ is a 2-path with the edge set $\left\{x_{r} x_{s}:|r-s| \leq 2\right\}$. Again, we consider two different possibilities.
a) $x_{1}=b_{i}, x_{2}=b_{i+1}$. Hence, if $H$ is a cane and $N_{H}(x)=\left\{b_{i}, x_{3}\right\}$, then We have

$$
\begin{aligned}
& r\left(x_{1} \mid W\right)=(i-1, k-i+1), \\
& r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right)= \begin{cases}\left(i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \geq 3 \text { is odd } \\
\left(i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1\right) & j \text { is even. }\end{cases}
\end{aligned}
$$

Also, if $H$ is a cane, then $r(x \mid W)=(i, k-i+2)$.
b) $x_{1}=b_{i+1}, x_{2}=b_{i}$. Hence, if $H$ is a cane, then we have $N_{H}(x)=\left\{b_{i+1}, x_{3}\right\}$. Similarly, we have

$$
\begin{aligned}
& r\left(x_{1} \mid W\right)=(i, k-i), \\
& r\left(x_{j} \mid W\right)= \begin{cases}\left(i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-1, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \geq 3 \text { is odd } \\
\left(i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor-2, k-i+\left\lfloor\frac{j}{2}\right\rfloor\right) & j \text { is even. }\end{cases}
\end{aligned}
$$

Also, if $H$ is a cane, then $r(x \mid W)=(i+1, k-i+1)$.

Note that in the both states (and regardless of being a 2-path or a cane) we have

$$
\left\{d_{1}-d_{2}:\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)=r(v \mid W), v \in V(H)\right\}=\{2 i-k-2,2 i-k-1,2 i-k\} .
$$

Therefore, in all of above cases, distinct vertices of $H$ have different metric representations. Also, the metric representation of the vertices in $V(H)$ are different from the metric representations of the vertices in $V\left(G_{0}\right) \backslash\{x, y\}$, where $H$ is a $(x, y)$-branch. Moreover, using the subtraction value of two coordinates in the metric representation of each vertex, it is easy to check that vertices of different (possible) branches on $G_{0}$ (satisfying the conditions mentioned in the definition of $\mathcal{F}$ ) have different metric representations. Thus, in this case $W$ is a resolving set for $G$.

To prove the converse of Theorem [2.4, we need the following lemma.
Lemma 2.5 Let $H$ be $a\{u, v\}$-branch of $G$ and let $\{a, b\}$ be a basis for $G \cup H$. If $\{a, b\} \cap$ $V(H) \subseteq\{u, v\}$, then $\{u, v\}$ is a metric basis for $H$.

Proof. Suppose on the contrary, there are two different vertices $x$ and $y$ in $H$ such that

$$
d(x, u)=d(y, u)=r, \quad d(x, v)=d(y, v)=s .
$$

Since $H$ is a branch on $\{u, v\}$, each path connecting a vertex in $H$ with a vertex in $V(G) \backslash V(H)$ passes through $u$ or $v$. Assume that

$$
d(u, a)=r_{1}, \quad d(v, a)=s_{1}, \quad d(u, b)=r_{2}, \quad d(v, b)=s_{2} .
$$

Hence,

$$
d(x, a)=\min \left\{r+r_{1}, s+s_{1}\right\}=d(y, a), \quad d(x, b)=\min \left\{r+r_{2}, s+s_{2}\right\}=d(y, b) .
$$

This contradicts that $\{a, b\}$ is a resolving set for $G \cup H$.

Now, we prove that every 2 -dimensional 2 -tree belongs to the family $\mathcal{F}$.
Theorem 2.6 If $G$ is a 2-tree of metric dimension two, then $G \in \mathcal{F}$.

Proof. Let $G$ be a 2-tree and $\{a, b\}$ be a basis of $G$. If $d(a, b)=1$, then by Proposition 2.3, $G$ is a 2-path or a cane which belongs to $\mathcal{F}$. Thus, assume that $d(a, b)>1$ and let $H$ be a minimal induced 2-connected subgraph of $G$ as shown in Figure 5, containing $a$ and $b$. Since the clique number of $G$ is three, in each square exactly one of the dashed edges are allowed. Moreover, by the minimality of $H$ we have $\operatorname{deg}_{H}(a)=\operatorname{deg}_{H}(b)=2$, where $a \in\left\{a_{1}, b_{1}\right\}$ and $b \in\left\{a_{k}, b_{k}\right\}$. Hence, one of two vertices $a_{1}, b_{1}$ or one of two vertices $a_{k}, b_{k}$ may not exist. One can check that $\{a, b\} \neq\left\{a_{1}, b_{k}\right\}$ and $\{a, b\} \neq\left\{b_{1}, a_{k}\right\}$, otherwise, two neighbours of $a$ or $b$ get the same metric representation. Thus, by the symmetry, we may assume $\{a, b\}=\left\{a_{1}, a_{k}\right\}$.


Figure 5: A minimal induced 2-connected subgraph of $G$.

If $\Delta(H) \leq 4$, then $H$ is a 2-path as shown in Figure [4(a). Otherwise $\Delta(H)=5$. If there exists a vertex $b_{j}$ of degree 5 , then it can be easily checked that $b_{j}$ and $a_{j}$ have the same representation with respect to $\left\{a_{1}, a_{k}\right\}$. Also, existence of two vertices $a_{i}$ and $a_{i^{\prime}}$ both of degree $5, i \leq i^{\prime}$, implies that there exists some vertex $b_{j}, i \leq j \leq i^{\prime}$, of degree 5 , which is impossible. Thus, there exists a unique $a_{i}$ of degree 5 . Therefore, $H$ is the graph shown in Figure ${ }^{4}(\mathrm{~b})$. Thus, $H$ is a 2 -path or a 2 -tree obtained by identifying the specific edge, say $a_{m} b_{m}$, of two 2-paths (see Figure 4(b)), where $B=\left\{a_{1}, a_{k}\right\}$. Thus, $G$ satisfies property (1).

Clearly, on every edge there is at most one branch; thus, property (2) follows. Also, $G$ avoids any $\left(a_{i}, a_{i+1}\right)$-branch, because each vertex adjacent to both $a_{i}$ and $a_{i+1}$ has the same metric representation as $b_{i}$ or $b_{i+1}$. Thus, $G$ contains only ( $a_{i}, b_{i}$ )-branches, $\left(a_{i}, b_{i+1}\right)$ branches, $\left(a_{i+1}, b_{i}\right)$-branches or ( $\left.b_{i}, b_{i+1}\right)$-branches; which implies property (3). Moreover, by Proposition 2.3 and Lemma 2.5, each of these branches is a 2 -path or a cane. Therefore, property (4) holds. Also, by Theorem 1.1, for every $i, 1 \leq i \leq k$, there is at most one $\left(a_{i}, x\right)$-branch in $G$. Moreover, in each $\left(a_{i}, b_{i}\right)$-branch the degree of $a_{i}$ is two, which shows trueness of property (5).
To see property (6), first note that by property (3) there is no ( $a_{m-1}, a_{m}$ )-branch or $\left(a_{m}, a_{m+1}\right)$-branch. Moreover, in each $\left(a_{m}, x\right)$-branch, for $x \in\left\{b_{m-1}, b_{m}, b_{m+1}\right\}$, the unique neighbour of $a_{m}$ on the branch has the same metric representation as $b_{m}$.

To show that $G$ has property (7), suppose that a triangle $a_{i} b_{i} b_{i+1}$ has more than one branch. By Theorem 1.1, at most one of $\left(a_{i}, b_{i}\right)$-branch and $\left(a_{i}, b_{i+1}\right)$-branch exists. Therefore, $b_{i} b_{i+1}$ has a branch $H_{1}$ and one of the edges $a_{i} b_{i}$ or $a_{i} b_{i+1}$ has another branch $H_{2}$. Let $x$ and $y$ be the vertices of distance one from $G_{0}$ on branches $H_{1}$ and $H_{2}$, respectively. Hence, $d\left(a_{1}, x\right)=d\left(a_{1}, y\right)=i$ and $d\left(a_{k}, x\right)=d\left(a_{k}, y\right)=k-i+1$. That is, $\left\{a_{1}, a_{k}\right\}$ is not a basis of $G$, which is a contradiction. A similar reason works for triangle $a_{i} b_{i-1} b_{i}$. Hence, $G$ has property (7).

Let $\left(d_{1}, d_{2}\right)$ be metric representation of $b_{i}$. Then metric representations of each neighbour of $b_{i}$ which is out of $G_{0}$ could be one of $\left(d_{1}+1, d_{2}+1\right),\left(d_{1}+1, d_{2}\right)$ or $\left(d_{1}, d_{2}+1\right)$. Thus, $b_{i}$ has at most three neighbours out of $G_{0}$. Hence, the degree of $b_{i}$ in $G$ is at most 7 that is property (8).

If there are two branches of length at least 2 on a triangle containing $a_{i} a_{i+1}$, then the metric representation of the second vertices on these branches are the same, a contradiction. Thus, $G$ satisfies property (9).

If $H$ is a $\left(b_{m-1}, b_{m}\right)$-branch of cane type, then one can find two vertices in $N_{G}\left(b_{m}\right) \cup$ $N_{G}\left(b_{m-1}\right)$ with the same metric representation. A similar argument holds whenever $H$ is a $\left(b_{m}, b_{m+1}\right)$-branch of cane type. If there is a $\left(b_{m-1}, b_{m}\right)$-branch, say $H_{1}$, and a $\left(b_{m}, b_{m+1}\right)$ branch, say $H_{2}$, both of length at least two, then $b_{m}$ has a neighbour in $H_{1}$ with the same metric representation as a neighbour of $b_{m}$ in $H_{2}$. Hence, property (10) holds.

Suppose that two branches on $\left(b_{i-1}, b_{i}\right)$ and $\left(b_{i}, b_{i+1}\right)$ are canes. In this case, it can be checked that in the set of neighbours of $b_{i}$ in these branches there are two vertices with the same metric representation. Thus, $G$ satisfies property (11).

Using Theorem 1.1 the degree of each $a_{i}$ in $G, 1<i<n$, is at most five. Note that $\operatorname{deg}\left(a_{i}\right) \in\{4,5\}$. Now suppose that $H$ is a branch on the edge $\left\{a_{i}, b_{i}\right\},\left\{a_{i}, b_{i+1}\right\}$ or $\left\{a_{i}, b_{i-1}\right\}$. If $H$ is a cane, then $\operatorname{deg}_{G}\left(a_{i}\right) \geq 6$ or two neighbours of $b_{i-1}, b_{i}$ or $b_{i+1}$ in $H$ get the same metric representation, which both are contradictions. Thus, each branch on the edge $\left\{a_{i}, b_{i-1}\right\},\left\{a_{i}, b_{i}\right\}$ or $\left\{a_{i}, b_{i+1}\right\}$ is a 2 -path and $G$ satisfies property (12).

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