

Definition 1. Let a, b, c be non-negative integers. We use $\mathcal{G}(a, b, c)$ to denote an undirected graph with three groups of vertices, namely A, B , and C with $|A| = a, |B| = b, |C| = c$ such that $A \cup B$ forms a clique and $B \cup C$ forms a clique.

Note that $\mathcal{G}(a, b, 0)$ is a graph formed by the union of two cliques K_a and K_b of size a and b , respectively.

Theorem 1. Any graph with $n \leq a + b$ vertices and $m \leq \lfloor (a + b)/2 \rfloor - 1$ edges ($0 < a \leq b$) is always a subgraph of $\mathcal{G}(a, b, 0)$ (or equivalently, a subgraph of $\mathcal{G}(b, a, 0)$).

Proof. We shall prove this theorem by induction.

(Basis Case:) If $a = b = 1$, then $\lfloor (a + b)/2 \rfloor - 1 = 0$. Any graph with $n \leq 2$ vertices and $m \leq 0$ edges (i.e., no edges) is always a subgraph of $\mathcal{G}(1, 1, 0)$.

(Inductive Case:) Suppose that the theorem holds for all $a + b \leq k$. Our target is to show that the theorem also holds for the case $a + b = k + 1$ with $a \leq b$. Consider a graph G with $n \leq k + 1$ vertices and with $m \leq \lfloor (k + 1)/2 \rfloor - 1$ edges.

1. If G is connected, then $n \leq m + 1 \leq (k + 1)/2 \leq b$, which is a subgraph of K_b , and thus a subgraph of $\mathcal{G}(a, b, 0)$.
2. Otherwise, G is not connected. If G has no edges, then G is obviously a subgraph of $\mathcal{G}(a, b, 0)$ since G has at most $a + b$ vertices. Else, let C be the connected component of G with the largest number n' of vertices (so that $n' \geq 2$). Then, the number of edges in C is at least $n' - 1$. To complete the proof, it is sufficient to show that $G - C$ is a subgraph of $\mathcal{G}(a, b - n', 0)$, as we can map C as a subgraph in K_b .

The number of vertices in $G - C$ is $k + 1 - n' = a + (b - n')$, and the number of edges of $G - C$ is at most

$$\begin{aligned}
 m - (n' - 1) &\leq \lfloor (k + 1)/2 \rfloor - n' &= \lfloor (k + 1)/2 - n' \rfloor \\
 &= \lfloor (k + 1 - n')/2 - n'/2 \rfloor \\
 &\leq \lfloor (k + 1 - n')/2 - 1 \rfloor \\
 &= \lfloor (k + 1 - n')/2 \rfloor - 1 = \lfloor (a + (b - n'))/2 \rfloor - 1.
 \end{aligned}$$

By induction hypothesis, $G - C$ is a subgraph of $\mathcal{G}(a, b - n', 0)$, and consequently G is a subgraph of $\mathcal{G}(a, b, 0)$.

In all cases, G is a subgraph of $\mathcal{G}(a, b, 0)$. This completes the proof of the induction case, so that by the principle of mathematical induction, the theorem follows. \square