

# Posets and Forbidden induced subgraph of the Comparability Graph

<sup>1</sup>Baiju Sukumaran, <sup>2</sup>Antony Mathews, <sup>3</sup>Sibi C Babu, <sup>4</sup>Athul T B

<sup>1</sup>Associate Professor, <sup>2</sup> Associate Professor, <sup>3</sup>Assistant Professor, <sup>4</sup>M.Phil Scholar

<sup>1</sup>Department of Mathematics,

<sup>1</sup> Sree Narayana College, Punalur, India

**Abstract:** The cover-incomparability graph of a poset  $P$  is the edge-union of the covering and the incomparability graph of  $P$ . As a continuation of the study of 3-colored diagrams we characterize some forbidden  $\triangleleft$ -preserving subposets of the posets whose cover-incomparability graph contains one of the forbidden induced subgraph of the comparability graph.

**Index Terms:**-Cover-incomparability graph, comparability graph, Poset

## INTRODUCTION

Cover-incomparability graphs of posets, or shortly C-I graphs, were introduced in [2] as the underlying graphs of the standard interval function or transit function on posets (for more on transit functions in discrete structures [3, 4, 5, 6, 11]). On the other hand, C-I graphs can be defined as the edge-union of the covering and incomparability graph of a poset; in fact, they present the only non-trivial way to obtain an associated graph as unions and/or intersections of the edge sets of the three standard associated graphs (i.e. covering, comparability and incomparability graph). In the paper that followed [9], it was shown that the complexity of recognizing whether a given graph is the C-I graph of some poset is in general NP-complete. In [1] the problem was investigated for the classes of split graphs and block graphs and the C-I graph within these two classes of graphs were characterized. This resulted in linear-time recognition algorithms for C-I block and C-I split graphs. It was also shown in [1] that whenever a C-I graph is a chordal graph, it is necessarily an interval graph, however a structural characterization of C-I interval graphs (and thus C-I chordal graphs) is still open. C-I distance-hereditary graphs have been characterized and shown to be efficiently recognizable [10]. Let  $P = (V; \leq)$  be a poset. If  $u \leq v$  but  $u \neq v$ , then we write  $u < v$ . For  $u, v \in V$  we say that  $v$  covers  $u$  in  $P$  if  $u < v$  and there is no  $w$  in  $V$  with  $u < w < v$ . If  $u \leq v$  we will sometimes say that  $u$  is below  $v$ , and that  $v$  is above  $u$ . Also, we will write  $u \triangleleft v$  if  $v$  covers  $u$ ; and  $u \triangleleft\triangleleft v$  if  $u$  is below  $v$  but not covered by  $v$ . By  $u \parallel v$  we denote that  $u$  and  $v$  are incomparable. Let  $V'$  be a nonempty subset of  $V$ . Then there is a natural poset  $Q = (V'; \leq')$ , where  $u \leq' v$  if and only if  $u \leq v$  for any  $u, v \in V'$ . The poset  $Q$  is called a *subposet* of  $P$  and its notation is simplified to  $Q = (V'; \leq)$ . If, in addition, together with any two comparable elements  $u$  and  $v$  of  $Q$ , a chain of shortest length between  $u$  and  $v$  of  $P$  is also in  $Q$ , we say that  $Q$  is an *isometric subposet* of  $P$ . Recall that a poset  $P$  is *dual* to a poset  $Q$  if for any  $x, y \in P$  the following holds:  $x \leq y$  in  $P$  if and only if  $y \leq x$  in  $Q$ . Given a poset  $P$ , its cover-incomparability graph  $G_P$  has  $V$  as its vertex set, and  $uv$  is an edge of  $G_P$  if  $u \triangleleft v$ ,  $v \triangleleft u$ , or  $u$  and  $v$  are incomparable. A graph that is a cover-incomparability graph of some poset  $P$  will be called a C-I graph.

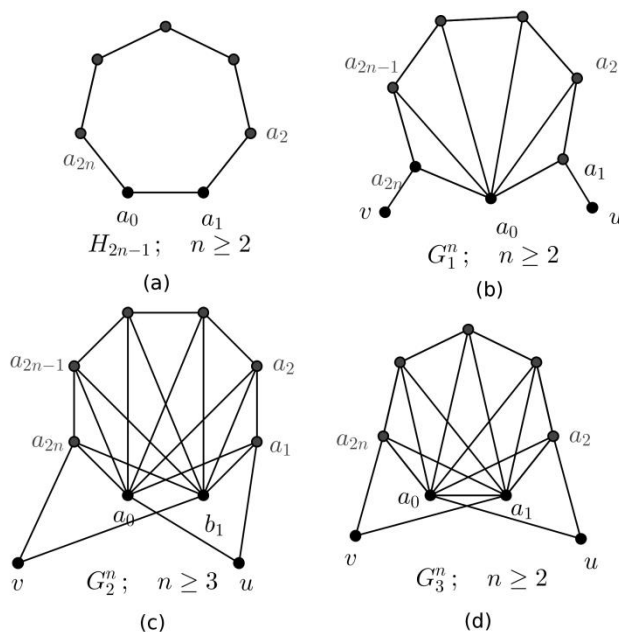
**Lemma 1** [2] Let  $P$  be a poset and  $G_P$  its C-I graph. Then

- (i)  $G_P$  is connected;
- (ii) vertices in an independent set of  $G_P$  lie on a common chain of  $P$ ;
- (iii) an antichain of  $P$  corresponds to a complete subgraph in  $G_P$ ;
- (iv)  $G_P$  contains no induced cycles of length greater than 4.

## II.3-colored diagrams

A 3-coloured diagram  $Q$  in [13] is explained as follows. Let  $G$  be a C-I graph and  $H$  be an induced subgraph of  $G$ . We note that there can be different  $\triangleleft$ -preserving subposets  $Q_i$  of some posets with  $G_{Q_i}$  isomorphic to the subgraph  $H$ . Let  $u, v, w$  be an induced path in the direction from  $u$  to  $v$  in  $H$ . There are four possibilities in which  $u, v$  and  $w$  can be related in the  $\triangleleft$ -preserving subposets. It is possible to have  $u \triangleleft v$ ,  $u \parallel v$ ,  $v \triangleleft w$  and  $v \parallel w$ . Each case will appear as a  $\triangleleft$ -preserving subposet of four different posets. If  $u \triangleleft v$  and  $v \triangleleft w$  in a subposet, then  $u \triangleleft v \triangleleft w$  is a chain in the subposet and  $u, v, w$  is an induced path in  $H$ . If there is either  $u \parallel v$  or  $v \parallel w$  in a subposet  $Q$ , then there should be another chain from  $u$  to  $w$  in  $Q$  in order to have  $u, v, w$  an induced path in  $H$ . We try to capture this situation using the idea of 3-colored diagram. Suppose in  $\triangleleft$ -preserving subposet  $Q$  of a poset  $P$ , there exists two elements  $u, v$  which is always connected by some chain of length three in  $Q$ . Let  $w$  be an element in  $Q$  such that either both  $uw$  and  $vw$  are red edges or any one of them is a red edge. Then in order to have a chain between  $u$  and  $v$ , there must exist an element  $x$  in  $Q$  so that  $u, x, v$  form a chain in  $Q$ . When both edges are normal, then we have the chain  $u, w, v$  in  $Q$  and hence the chain  $u, x, v$  is not required in this case. We denote the chain  $u, x, v$  by dashed lines between  $ux$  and  $xv$  in order to specify that it is possible to have the presence or absence of the chain  $u, x, v$  in  $Q$ . The presence of the chain  $u, x, v$  implies that either both of the edges  $uw$  and  $wv$  are red edges or one of them is a red edge. The absence of the chain implies that both  $uw$  and  $wv$  are normal edges in  $Q$ . We call posets having the above mentioned diagrams as 3-colored diagrams.

**Theorem 2:** (Theorem 1, [8]): Let  $G$  be a class of graphs with a forbidden induced subgraphs characterization. Let  $\mathcal{F} = \{P \mid P \text{ is a poset with } G_{TP} \in G\}$ . Then  $\mathcal{F}$  has a characterization by forbidden  $\triangleleft$ -preserving subposets.



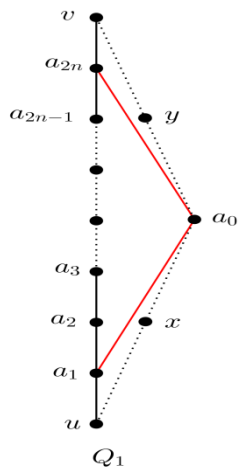
**Figure 1:**Families of forbidden induced subgraphs for comparability graph[14]

Let  $\mathcal{F}(G)$  be a collection of forbidden induced subgraphs. We consider the posets whose cover-incomparability graph  $G_P$  contains the graphs in  $\mathcal{F}(G)$ .

**III.  $\triangleleft$  - preserving subsets of posets whose C-I graphs contains the graphs in  $\mathcal{F}(G)$**

We have the following theorem regarding the graph family  $\mathcal{F}(G)$

**Theorem 3:** If  $P$  is a poset, then  $G_P$  contains  $\mathcal{F}(G_1^n)$ ,  $n \geq 2$  if and only if  $P$  contains the 3-colored diagrams  $Q_1$  from Figure 2 and their duals.



**Figure 2:**Forbidden 3-colored diagrams for posets whose C-I graphs contains  $G_1^n$ , depicted in Figure 1 (b).

Proof. Suppose  $P$  contains 3-colored diagram  $Q_1$ . Then since  $a_2, a_3, \dots, a_{2n-1}$  and  $a_0$  are incomparable in  $P$ , the set of vertices  $\{u, a_0, a_1, a_2, a_3, \dots, a_{2n-1}, v\}$  induce the graph  $G_1^n$ ,  $n \geq 2$  from Figure 1.

Conversely, suppose  $G_P \in \mathcal{F}(G_1^n)$ . Then  $G_P$  contains an induced subgraph  $G_1^n$ ,  $n \geq 2$  shown in Figure 1(b), with vertices labeled by  $u, a_0, a_1, a_2, a_3, \dots, a_{2n-1}, v$ . The set of vertices  $\{a_2, a_4, \dots, a_{2n}\}$  is an independent set in  $G_1^n$ ,  $n \geq 2$ . Therefore these vertices lie on a common chain in  $P$  (by Lemma 1(ii)) and they are not in a covering relation. Denote the chain containing  $\{a_2, a_4, \dots, a_{2n}\}$  by  $C$ . Then the following cases (i) and (ii) cannot occur.

(i):  $a_{2i-4} \triangleleft a_{2i} \triangleleft a_{2i-2}$ ,  $i \geq 3$ :

Since  $a_{2i-3}$  and  $a_{2i}$  are nonadjacent in  $G$  they lie on a common chain in  $P$ .

$a_{2i-3} \triangleleft a_{2i}$ : then  $a_{2i-3} \triangleleft a_{2i} \triangleleft a_{2i-2}$  in  $P$ , contradicting  $a_{2i-3}$  and  $a_{2i-2}$  are adjacent in  $G$ .

$a_{2i} \triangleleft a_{2i-3}$ : then  $a_{2i-4} \triangleleft a_{2i} \triangleleft a_{2i-3}$  in  $P$ , contradicting  $a_{2i-4}$  and  $a_{2i-3}$  are adjacent in  $G$ .

The same contradiction arise if  $a_{2i-2} \triangleleft a_{2i-1} \triangleleft a_{2i-4}$ .

(ii):  $a_{2i-2} \triangleleft a_{2i-4} \triangleleft a_{2i}, i \geq 3$ :

Since  $a_{2i-4}$  and  $a_{2i-1}$  are nonadjacent in  $G$ , they lie on a common chain in  $P$ .

$a_{2i-4} \triangleleft a_{2i-1}$ : then  $a_{2i-2} \triangleleft a_{2i-4} \triangleleft a_{2i-1}$  in  $P$ , contradicting  $a_{2i-2}$  and  $a_{2i-1}$  are adjacent in  $G$ .

$a_{2i-1} \triangleleft a_{2i-4}$ : then  $a_{2i-1} \triangleleft a_{2i-4} \triangleleft a_{2i}$  in  $P$ , contradicting  $a_{2i-1}$  and  $a_{2i}$  are adjacent in  $G$ .

The same contradiction arise if  $a_{2i} \triangleleft a_{2i-4} \triangleleft a_{2i-2}, i \geq 3$ .

The only possible cases are  $a_{2i-4} \triangleleft a_{2i-2} \triangleleft a_{2i}, i \geq 3$  and  $a_{2i} \triangleleft a_{2i-2} \triangleleft a_{2i-4}, i \geq 3$ . Without loss of generality, assume that  $a_{2i-4} \triangleleft a_{2i-2} \triangleleft a_{2i}$ . Since  $a_{2i-3}$  is adjacent to  $a_{2i-4}$  and  $a_{2i-2}$  and  $a_{2i-1}$  is adjacent to  $a_{2i-2}$  and  $a_{2i}$  in  $G$ , we have  $a_2 \triangleleft a_3 \triangleleft a_4 \dots \triangleleft a_{2n}$ . Again  $a_1$  is adjacent to  $a_2$  and nonadjacent to all vertices of  $G$  in  $C$ , we have  $a_1 \triangleleft a_2$ . Also  $u$  is adjacent to  $a_1$  and  $v$  is adjacent to  $a_{2n}$  in  $G$  and these vertices are nonadjacent to all other vertices in  $G$  implies  $u \triangleleft a_1 \triangleleft a_2 \triangleleft a_3 \triangleleft a_4 \dots \triangleleft a_{2n} \triangleleft v$ ; then we have two possibilities.

**Case (1):**  $a_1 \triangleleft a_0$  in  $P$ : again we have two possibilities.

**Subcase (1.1)**  $a_0 \triangleleft a_{2n}$  in  $P$ : take  $(a_1, a_0)$  and  $(a_0, a_{2n})$  as normal edges and avoid all dashed lines in Figure 2 to obtain the  $\triangleleft$ -preserving subposet  $P_1$  in Figure 3.

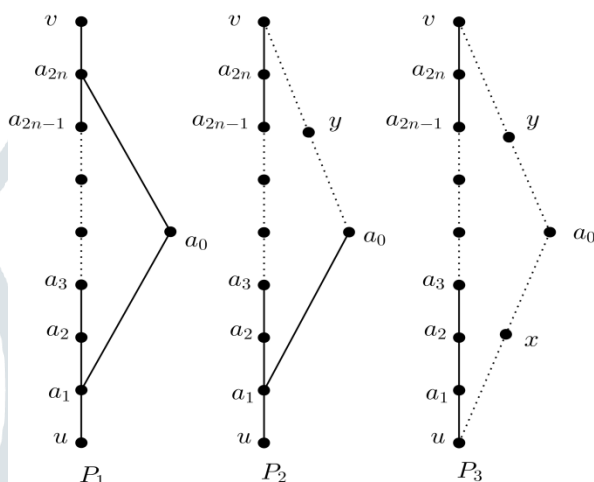


Figure 3:  $\triangleleft$ -preserving subposets corresponding to  $Q_1$ .

**Subcase (1.2)**  $a_{2n} \parallel a_0$  in  $P$ : take the chain from  $v$  to  $a_0$  through  $y$  to obtain the  $\triangleleft$ -preserving subposet  $P_2$  in Figure 3.

**Case (2):**  $a_1 \parallel a_0$  in  $P$ : take the chain from  $u$  to  $a_0$  through  $x$  to obtain the  $\triangleleft$ -preserving subposet  $P_3$  in Figure 3.

All posets in Figure 3 are represented by a single 3-colored diagram  $Q_1$  in Figure 2. □

Since Figure 1(a) has an induced cycle of length 5, it is not an induced subgraph of Cover-incomparable graph (by Lemma 3.3,[2]).

**Remarks**

Here we characterize forbidden  $\triangleleft$ -preserving subposets of  $G_1^n$  in Figure1 by Theorem 2 and introduce the idea of 3-colored diagrams to minimize the list of subposets.

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