# NEW ORE-TYPE CONDITIONS FOR $H$-LINKED GRAPHS 

MICHAEL FERRARA ${ }^{1}$, RONALD GOULD ${ }^{2}$, MICHAEL JACOBSON ${ }^{3}$, FLORIAN PFENDER ${ }^{4}$, JEFFREY POWELL ${ }^{5}$, THOR WHALEN ${ }^{6}$


#### Abstract

For a fixed (multi)graph $H$, a graph $G$ is $H$-linked if any injection $f: V(H) \rightarrow V(G)$ can be extended to an $H$-subdivision in $G$. The notion of an $H$-linked graph encompasses several familiar graph classes, including $k$-linked, $k$ ordered and $k$-connected graphs. In this paper, we give two sharp Ore-type degree sum conditions that assure a graph $G$ is $H$-linked for arbitrary $H$. These results extend and refine several previous results on $H$-linked, $k$-linked and $k$-ordered graphs.


Keywords: $H$-linked graph, $k$-linked graph, $k$-ordered graph

All graphs in this paper are finite. For notation not defined here we refer the reader to [1]. If $X \subseteq V(G)$ is a vertex set, we will often just write $X$ for the induced subgraph $G[X]$ if the context is clear. Let $\delta(G)$ and $\Delta(G)$ denote the minimum and maximum degree of $G$, respectively, and let $\sigma_{2}(G)$ denote the minimum degree sum of nonadjacent vertices in $G$. Throughout the paper, we will often refer to $\sigma_{2}$ conditions as Ore-type conditions in light of Ore's classical theorem on hamiltonian graphs. We will also let $n_{i}(G)$ be the number of vertices of degree $i$ in $G$.

Given a vertex $v$ and set $A \subseteq V(G)$, we let $d_{A}(v)$ denote the number of neighbors of $v$ in the set $A$. For $A, B \subseteq V(G)$ we let $\delta_{B}(A)$ and $\Delta_{B}(A)$ denote the minimum and maximum respectively of $d_{B}(v)$ taken over all vertices in $A$. We will let $E_{G}(A, B)$ denote the number of edges in $G$ with one endpoint in $A$ and the other in $B$, and let $e_{G}(A, B)=\left|E_{G}(A, B)\right|$. We will frequently write $E(A, B)$ and $e(A, B)$ when the context is clear.

Given an integer-valued graph parameter $p$ and a graph property $\mathcal{P}$, the $p$-threshold for $\mathcal{P}$ is the minimum $k=k(n)$ such that any graph $G$ of order $n$ with $p(G) \geq k$ has property $\mathcal{P}$. We will frequently consider $p$-thresholds restricted to specific graph classes, such as sufficiently large graphs, or graphs with a prescribed number of edges.

A graph $G$ is $k$-linked if for any ordered subset of $2 k$ vertices $S=\left\{s_{1}, t_{1}, \ldots, s_{k}, t_{k}\right\}$ there exist disjoint paths $P_{1}, \ldots, P_{k}$ such that for each $i, P_{i}$ is an $s_{i}-t_{i}$ path. We will

[^0]refer to this collection of paths as an $S$-linkage in $G$. We also say that $G$ is $k$-ordered if for any list of $k$ vertices $v_{1}, \ldots, v_{k}$ in $G$, there exists a cycle that visits these vertices in the given order.

A subdivision of a (multi)graph $H$, or an $H$-subdivision is any simple graph obtained by replacing the edges of $H$ with internally disjoint paths. The vertices originally in $H$ are called the ground vertices or the ground set of the subdivision. For a fixed graph $H$, a graph $G$ is $H$-linked if any injection $f: V(H) \rightarrow V(G)$ can be extended to an $H$-subdivision in $G$ with ground vertices prescribed by $f$. We refer to the injection $f$ as an $H$-linkage problem (in $G$ ). The notion of an $H$-linked graph generalizes those of $k$-linked, $k$-ordered and $k$-connected graphs, as $G$ is $k K_{2}$-linked if and only if $G$ is $k$-linked, $G$ is $C_{k}$-linked if and only if $G$ is $k$-ordered and $G$ is $k$-connected if and only if $G$ is $K_{1, k}$-linked.

## 1. Degree Conditions for $H$-Linked Graphs

Kawarabayashi, Kostochka and Yu [8] determined sharp minimum degree and degree sum conditions for a graph $G$ of order at least $2 k$ to be $k$-linked.

Theorem 1. Let $G$ be a graph on $n \geq 2 k$ vertices. If

$$
\delta(G) \geq \begin{cases}\frac{n+2 k-3}{2}, & \text { if } n \geq 4 k-1 \\ \frac{n+5 k-5}{3}, & \text { if } 3 k \leq n \leq 4 k-2 \\ n-1, & \text { if } 2 k \leq n \leq 3 k-1\end{cases}
$$

or

$$
\sigma_{2}(G) \geq \begin{cases}n+2 k-3, & \text { if } n \geq 4 k-1 \\ \frac{2(n+5 k)}{3}-3, & \text { if } 3 k \leq n \leq 4 k-2 \\ 2 n-3, & \text { if } 2 k \leq n \leq 3 k-1\end{cases}
$$

then $G$ is $k$-linked. These bounds are best possible.
For sufficiently large graphs, the relevant portion of these conditions were obtained independently in [6]. Sharp minimum degree and degree sum conditions for $k$-ordered graphs were determined in [2] and [9], respectively.

Theorem 2. Let $G$ be a graph of order $n$ and $k \geq 2$ be an integer. If
(a) $n \geq 11 k-3$ and $\delta(G) \geq\left\lceil\frac{n}{2}\right\rceil+\left\lfloor\frac{k}{2}\right\rfloor-1$, or
(b) $n \geq 53 k^{2}$ and $\sigma_{2}(G) \geq n+\left\lceil\frac{3 k-9}{2}\right\rceil$,
then $G$ is $k$-ordered.
Turning our attention the the broader class of $H$-linked graphs, minimum degree conditions that assure a graph $G$ is $H$-linked for arbitrary connected $H$ were first given (independently) in [3] and [10]. These were subsequently strengthened in [5] to include arbitrary multigraphs $H$, thereby extending Theorem 1. Similar conditions
concerned with finding (strong) $H$-immersions in a graph $G$ appear in [4]. In order to discuss these results, we must first introduce a useful parameter.

For a (multi-)graph $H$, let

$$
b(H)=\max _{\substack{A \cup B \cup C=V(H) \\ e(A, B) \geq 1}} e(A, B)+|C|
$$

where we take this maximum over all partitions $A, B, C$ of $V(H)$. As every graph $G$ has a bipartite subgraph with at least half of the edges in $G, b(H) \geq|E(H)| / 2$. When $H$ is connected, it is straightforward to see that we may choose $C$ to be empty in any optimal partition, so that $b(H)$ is equal to the maximum number of edges in a bipartite subgraph of $H$. As was noted in [4] and [5], when $H$ is disconnected, $b(H)$ depends not only on the maximum size of a bipartite subgraph of $H$, but also on the number of components of $H$ without even cycles.

The following result of Gould, Kostochka and Yu [5] gives the $\delta$-threshold for $H$ linkedness.

Theorem 3. Let $H$ be a (multi-) graph with $c(H)$ components that do not contain even cycles and $G$ be a graph of order $n \geq 9.5(|E(H)|+c(H)+1)$. If

$$
\delta(G) \geq \frac{1}{2}(n+b(H)-2),
$$

then $G$ is $H$-linked. This result is sharp.
Kostochka and Yu [11] gave Ore-type conditions, dependent on $k$, implying that a graph $G$ is $H$-linked for every graph $H$ with $k$ edges.

Theorem 4. Let $G$ be a graph of order $n$ and let $H$ be a simple graph with $k$ edges and minimum degree at least two. If

$$
\sigma_{2}(G) \geq\left\{\begin{array}{cl}
\left\lceil n+\frac{3 k-9}{2}\right\rceil & n>2.5 k-5.5 \\
\left\lceil n+\frac{3 k-8}{2}\right\rceil & 2 k \leq n \leq 2.5 k-5.5 \\
2 n-3 & k \leq n \leq 2.5 k-1
\end{array}\right.
$$

then $G$ is $H$-linked.
In light of Theorem 2, one interesting consequence of Theorem 4 is that amongst those graphs $H$ with $k$ edges, $C_{k}$ has the largest $\sigma_{2}$-threshold for $H$-linkedness when $n$ is sufficiently large.

The goal of this paper is to refine Theorem 4 by giving sharp Ore-type conditions that assure a graph $G$ is $H$-linked for an arbitrarily chosen $H$. We note here that the $\sigma_{2}$-threshold for $H$-linkedness is not, in general, twice the minimum degree given in Theorem 3, as Theorem 2 demonstrates that this is not the case for $H=C_{k}$ when $n$ is sufficiently large. Our first result demonstrates that twice the minimum degree in Theorem 3 does suffice if we add only a mild minimum degree condition to $G$.

Theorem 5. Let $H$ be a multigraph and $G$ be a graph with $|G| \geq 20|E(H)|+n_{0}(H)$. If

$$
\begin{aligned}
\delta(G) & \geq 4|E(H)|+n_{0}(H), \text { and } \\
\sigma_{2}(G) & \geq|G|+b(H)-2,
\end{aligned}
$$

then $G$ is $H$-linked. This result is sharp.
We also utilize Theorem 5 to give a sharp $\sigma_{2}$ bound that, without any additional minimum degree condition, assures a graph $G$ is $H$-linked for any simple graph $H$. Let

$$
a(H)=\max _{A \cup B=V(H)}\left(e(A, B)+|B|-\Delta_{B}(A)\right)
$$

Theorem 6. Let $H$ be a simple graph and $G$ be a graph of order $n>20|E(H)|$. If

$$
\sigma_{2}(G) \geq n+a(H)-2
$$

then $G$ is $H$-linked. This result is sharp.
Observe that for arbitrary $H, a(H) \geq b(H)$. To see this, suppose that $V(H)=$ $A \cup B \cup C$ with $e(A, B)+|C|=b(H)$. Then, if we let $B^{*}=B \cup C$, it follows that

$$
a(H) \geq e\left(A, B^{*}\right)+\left|B^{*}\right|-\Delta_{B^{*}}(A) \geq e(A, B)+|C|=b(H) .
$$

There are a number of graphs $H$, including $C_{k}(k \geq 5)$, for which $a(H)>b(H)$. As such, Theorem 6 demonstrates that there are many choices of $H$ for which the $\sigma_{2}$-threshold for $H$-linkedness is more than twice the $\delta$-threshold.

## 2. Preliminary Lemmas

A version of the following Lemma originally appears in [12], pertaining to directed graphs. The proof for undirected graphs is analogous and, hence, omitted.

Lemma 7. Let $G$ be a graph, $k \geq 1$ and $v \in V(G)$ with $d(v) \geq 2 k-1$. If $G-v$ is $k$-linked, then $G$ is $k$-linked.

Thomas and Wollan [14] used the following to prove that every $10 m$-connected graph is $m$-linked, which represents the current best bound on connectivity sufficient to assure $k$-linkedness.

Theorem 8. Let $k \geq 2$ and $G$ be a $2 k$-connected graph. If $|E(G)| \geq 5 k|G|$, then $G$ is $k$-linked.

Corollary 9. Let $k \geq 2$ and $G$ be a $2 k$-connected graph of order $n$. If $\sigma_{2}(G) \geq n$ and $n \geq 20 k$, then $G$ is $k$-linked.

Proof. This follows from the observation that any graph $G$ of order $n$ with $\sigma_{2}(G) \geq n$ must have at least $\frac{n^{2}}{4}$ edges. Indeed, if $\delta=\delta(G) \geq \frac{n}{2}$ then there is nothing to prove
so assume otherwise and let $v$ be a vertex of $G$ with $d(v)=\delta$. Counting the degrees of the neighbors and non-neighbors of $v$ respectively, we have that

$$
|E(G)| \geq \frac{1}{2}(\delta(\delta+1)+(n-\delta-1)(n-\delta))
$$

which is greater than $\frac{n^{2}}{4}$ for $\delta<\frac{n}{2}$.
We close with the following fact and lemma, both of which are straightforward to prove and will be useful as we proceed.

Fact 10. Let $G$ be a graph and $H$ a (multi-)graph with $|E(H)|=m$ and $n_{0}(H)=0$. If $G$ is m-linked, then $G$ is $H$-linked.

Lemma 11. Let $H$ be a multigraph, and let $G$ be an edge maximal non- $H$-linked graph. Then for every $m \geq|E(H)|$ and $X \subseteq V(G)$ with $|X| \geq 2 m$ :

$$
G[X] \text { is } m \text {-linked } \Longleftrightarrow G[X] \text { is complete. }
$$

Proof. Assume that $X$ is as given, that there are nonadjacent $x$ and $y$ in $X$ and that $f$ is an $H$-linkage problem in $G$. By maximality, $G+x y$ is $H$-linked, so let $F$ be a solution to the $H$-linkage problem $f$ in $G+x y$. Let $P_{i}$ be the path in $F$ corresponding to the edge $e_{i}$ in $H$ for $1 \leq i \leq|E(G)|$ and when traversing $P$, let $x_{i}$ and $y_{i}$ be the extreme (first and last) vertices in $V(P) \cap X$ (note that $x_{i}$ and $y_{i}$ may not be distinct). For each $i$, delete all vertices of $P_{i}$ that lie strictly between $x_{i}$ and $y_{i}$ to create $F^{\prime}$, a partial solution to the $H$-linkage problem $f$ in $G$. As $G[X]$ is $m$-linked and $x y \notin F^{\prime}$, we can extend $F^{\prime}$ to an $H$-linkage in $G$, contradicting the assumption that $G$ is not $H$-linked.

## 3. Proofs of Theorems 5 and 6

We are now ready to prove our main results.
Proof of Theorem 5. Sharpness is established by the following example, which is identical to the sharpness example for Theorem 3. Let $A \cup B \cup C$ be a partition of $V(H)$ such that $e(A, B)+|C|=b(H)$. Create $G$ by first adding $e(A, B)-1$ vertices to $C$ to obtain $C^{*}$, and then adding vertices to $A$ and $B$ to create sets $A^{*}$ and $B^{*}$, each of size $\frac{n-\left|C^{*}\right|}{2}$. The edges of $G$ are all possible edges in $\left(A^{*} \cup C^{*}\right)$ and $\left(B^{*} \cup C^{*}\right)$. It is straightforward to see that $G$ is not $H$-linked, as there is not a sufficient number of vertices in $C^{*}$ to create paths representing the edges in $E(A, B)$.

Let $n=|G|$ and $m=|E(H)|$. Note that the statement is trivial for $m \leq 1$, so we may also assume that $m \geq 2$. For the sake of contradiction, we assume that there is no $H$-linkage in $G$, and furthermore that Theorem 5 holds for every proper subgraph $H^{\prime} \subsetneq H$. Further, assume that $G$ is edge maximal without an $H$-linkage.

If $v \in V(H)$ is isolated in $H$, then solving the $H$-linkage problem in $G$ is equivalent to solving the $(H-v)$-linkage problem $\left.f\right|_{V(H)-\{v\}}$ in $G-v$. As $G-v$ satisfies all of the
conditions in Theorem 5 (note that $b(H-v)=b(H)-1$ ), this yields a contradiction, so $H$ does not contain any isolated vertices.

If $G$ is $2 m$-connected, we are done by Corollary 9 , so we may assume that there is a minimal cut set $Z$ in $G$ with $|Z| \leq 2 m-1$. The degree conditions on $G$ imply that $G-Z$ has exactly two components, call them $X$ and $Y$ and we assume without loss of generality that $|X| \leq|Y|$. Let $x \in X$ and $y \in Y$, then

$$
n+b(H)-2 \leq d(x)+d(y) \leq|X|+|Y|+2|Z|-2 \leq n+|Z|-2,
$$

so

$$
\delta_{X}(X)+\delta_{Y}(Y) \geq|X|+|Y|-|Z|+b(H)-2
$$

Therefore,

$$
\delta_{X}(X) \geq \max \{|X|-|Z|+b(H)-1, \delta(G)-|Z|\} \geq|X|-\frac{3}{2} m
$$

We now wish to show that both $X$ and $Y$ are $m$-linked. If $|X| \geq 5 m$, then $\delta_{X}(X) \geq \frac{|X|}{2}+m$, so $X$ is $m$-linked by Theorem 1. Suppose then that $|X|<5 m$, so $2(|X|+|Z|)<|G|$ and $X$ is complete by the degree sum condition. Since $|X| \geq$ $\delta(G)+1-|Z| \geq 2 m+2$, the fact that $X$ is complete implies that $X$ is $m$-linked. Analogously, we also conclude that $Y$ is $m$-linked.

Let $z \in Z$, and suppose there are vertices $x \in X$ and $y \in Y$ such that $x z, y z \notin$ $E(G)$. Then

$$
n+|Z|+2 d(z) \geq d(x)+2 d(z)+d(y) \geq 2 n+m-4,
$$

so

$$
d(z) \geq \frac{1}{2}(n+m-|Z|-4) \geq \frac{1}{2}(n-m-4)>6 m .
$$

Thus, for every $z \in Z$, we have $d_{X}(z) \geq 2 m$ or $d_{Y}(z) \geq 2 m$. Let $V(G)=A \cup B$ be a partition with

$$
\begin{aligned}
& X \subseteq A \subseteq\left\{v \in V(G): d_{X}(v) \geq 2 m-1\right\}, \text { and } \\
& Y \subseteq B \subseteq\left\{v \in V(G): d_{Y}(v) \geq 2 m-1\right\}
\end{aligned}
$$

Then, $A$ and $B$ are $m$-linked by Lemma 7, and therefore complete by Lemma 11. Let $A^{H}, B^{H}$ be the partition of $V(H)$ induced by this partition of $V(G)$.

Choose $a b \in E(H)$, let $H^{\prime}=H-a b$, and let $F \subseteq G$ be a solution to the $H^{\prime}$-linkage problem. As $A$ and $B$ are complete, we may choose $F$ such that every path in $F$ corresponding to an edge in $E\left(H^{\prime}\right)$ contains at most two vertices in $A$ and at most two vertices in $B$. In particular, as $n_{0}(H)=0$, this implies that $|F \cap A| \leq 2 m$ and $|F \cap B| \leq 2 m$, so $A \backslash F \neq \emptyset$ and $B \backslash F \neq \emptyset$. We conclude that $a \in A$ and $b \in B$, and in particular, $E(H)=E_{H}(A, B)$. We also have that $\left|E_{F}(A, B)\right|=$ $\left|E_{H^{\prime}}(A, B)\right|=|E(H)|-1$. There are three types of paths in $F$ corresponding to edges $y z \in E_{H^{\prime}}(A, B)$ :

1: yuvz with $u \in A, v \in B$,
2: yuz with $u \in A \cup B$, and
3: $y z$.

Choose $F$ such that the number of type 1 paths is maximized.
Let $w \in A \backslash F$ and $x \in B \backslash F$. If $w x \in E(G)$, then we can extend $F$ to a solution of the $H$-linkage problem using the path $a w x b$, so we conclude that $w x \notin E(G)$. Similarly, if there exists an $c \in(N(w) \cap N(x)) \backslash F$, we can extend $F$ to a solution of the $H$-linkage problem using awcxb, so $N(x) \cap N(w) \subseteq F$.

If yuvz is a path of type 1 in $F$, then we claim that

$$
N(w) \cap N(x) \cap\{y, u, v, z\} \subsetneq\{u, v\}
$$

Indeed, if $w z \in E(G)$, then we can replace yuvz by $y w z$ and use the path auvb to complete an $H$-linkage. If $w v, x u \in E(G)$, then we can replace $y u v z$ with $y u x z$ and use the path $a w v b$ to complete an $H$-linkage. The case where $x y \in E(G)$ is handled similarly.

Now if $y u z$ is a path of type 2 in $F$, then $u \notin N(w) \cap N(x)$, as otherwise we could replace $y u z$ by $y u x z$ or $y w u z$ and increase the number of type 1 paths in $F$.

Let $F_{1}$ be the edges in $H^{\prime}$ corresponding to type 1 paths in $F$, and $F_{2}:=E\left(H^{\prime}\right) \backslash F_{1}$. Furthermore, let $H_{1} \subseteq V(H)$ be the vertices in $H$ incident to $F_{1}$, and let $H_{2}:=$ $V(H) \backslash H_{1}$. Then

$$
\begin{equation*}
n-2+b(H) \leq d(w)+d(x) \leq n-2+\left|F_{1}\right|+\left|H_{2} \cap N(w) \cap N(x)\right| \tag{1}
\end{equation*}
$$

If $H_{2}=\emptyset$, observe that $\left|F_{1}\right| \leq\left|E_{H}(A, B)\right|-1<b(H)$, so (1) gives a contradiction.
Also, if $F_{1}=\emptyset$, note that $b(H) \geq|H|-1=\left|H_{2}\right|-1$, and thus by (1), N(w) $\cap N(x)$ may miss at most one vertex in $V(H)$. Therefore, $a \in N(x)$ or $b \in N(w)$. But then, we can complete the $H$-linkage via $a x b$ or $a w b$, a contradiction.

Finally, suppose that $F_{1} \neq \emptyset$ and $H_{2} \neq \emptyset$, so that $b(H) \geq\left|F_{1}\right|+\left|H_{2}\right|$, with the lower bound realized by a partition of $H$ with all vertices of $H_{2}$ in $C$, and the remaining vertices partitioned according to their membership in $A^{H}$ and $B^{H}$. Therefore by (1), $H_{2} \subseteq N(w) \cap N(x)$ for every pair of vertices $w \in A \backslash V(F)$ and $x \in B \backslash V(F)$. If $H$ contains no edge between two vertices in $H_{2}$, then $\left|H_{2}\right| \leq\left|F_{2}\right|$, and $\left|F_{1}\right|+\left|F_{2}\right|=$ $\left|E_{H}(A, B)\right|-1<b(H)$, so (1) gives a contradiction. Thus, there are two vertices $y \in H_{2} \cap A$ and $z \in H_{2} \cap B$. As $n \geq 20 m$, we may assume by symmetry that $|A| \geq 10 m$, and therefore since $z$ is in $N(w) \cap N(x)$ for all $w \in A \backslash V(F)$ and $x \in B \backslash V(F)$, that $d_{A}(z) \geq 8 m$. By Lemma 11, $z$ is connected to all vertices in $V(G)$. But now, there is an $(H-z)$-linkage in $G-z$ by the minimality of $H$, and this linkage can trivially be expanded to an $H$-linkage in $G$.
Proof of Theorem 6. Sharpness follows from the following example. Starting from a partition $A \cup B$ of $V(H)$ with $\left(e(A, B)+|B|-\Delta_{B}(A)\right)=a(H)$, add a set $C$ of $e(A, B)-1$ vertices. Blow up $B$ to $B^{*}$ by adding $n-|A|-|B|-|C|$ vertices to $B$ and then add all edges in $A \cup C, B^{*} \cup C$, and all edges between $A$ and $B$ except for the edges in $H$. This graph is not $H$-linked, as there is not a sufficient number of vertices in $C$ to create paths representing the edges in $E(A, B)$, and has $\sigma_{2}=n+a(H)-3$.

As in the proof of Theorem 5, assume that $H$ is a minimal counterexample to the statement, and furthermore that $G$ is edge maximal without creating an $H$-linkage.

Let $m=|E(H)|$ and $n=|G|$. Again, we have $n_{0}(H)=0$ as isolated vertices in $H$ contribute 2 to $|G|+a(H)$ and at most 2 to $\sigma_{2}(G)$.

If $\delta(G) \geq 4 m$, we are done by Theorem $5($ as $b(H) \leq a(H))$, so there is a vertex $v$ with $d(v)<4 m$. Let $Y:=V(G) \backslash N[v]$. Then $|Y|>16 m$ and, since for any $y \in Y$ we have that $d(v)+d(y) \geq n+a(H)-2$, it follows that

$$
\delta_{Y}(Y)>|Y|-4 m>\frac{1}{2}|Y|+m
$$

Therefore $Y$ is $m$-linked by Theorem 1. Let $B \supseteq Y$ be maximal such that $B$ is $m$ linked, and $A:=V(G) \backslash B \subseteq N[v]$. If $A=\emptyset$ we are done, so assume that $A \neq \emptyset$. By Lemma 7 no vertex in $A$ has $2 m$ neighbors in $B$, so since $|A| \leq|N[v]| \leq 4 m$, we have that $\Delta_{G}(A)<6 \mathrm{~m}$. Therefore $A$ is complete by the degree sum condition. We now continue in a manner similar to the proof of Theorem 5.

Let $A^{H} \cup B^{H}$ be the partition of $V(H)$ induced by $A$ and $B$. Note that $B$ is complete by Lemma 11. If there is an edge $e \in E(H) \cap E(G)$, we can extend any solution of the $(H-e)$-linkage problem trivially to a solution of the $H$-linkage problem, so we conclude that $E(H) \cap E(G)=\emptyset$, and in particular, $E(H)=E_{H}(A, B)$.

Let $a \in A^{H}$ maximize $\left|E_{H}(a, B)\right|$, and choose $a b \in E(H)$. For $H^{\prime}=H-a b$, let $F \subseteq G$ be a solution of the $H^{\prime}$-linkage problem of minimum order, so that in particular $\left|E_{F}(A, B)\right|=\left|E\left(H^{\prime}\right)\right|$. Further assume that $|F \cap A|$ is minimized.

Next, choose $w \in B \backslash F$. If $a w \in E(G)$, then we can extend $F$ to a solution of the $H$-linkage problem using the path $a w b$, so we conclude that $a w \notin E(G)$. Similarly, if there exists an $x \in(N(a) \cap N(w)) \backslash F$, we can extend $F$ to a solution of the $H$-linkage problem using $a x w b$, so $N(a) \cap N(w) \subseteq F$.

Now we consider paths $P \subset F$ corresponding to edges in $H^{\prime}$ with types identical to those described in the proof of Theorem 5. If $P=a^{\prime} u v b^{\prime}$ is of type 1 , then $a^{\prime} w, u w \notin E(G)$ by the minimality of $|F \cap A|$. Similarly, if $P=a^{\prime} u b^{\prime}$ is of type 2 with $u \in A$, then $a^{\prime} w$, uw $\notin E(G)$. If $P=a^{\prime} v b^{\prime}$ is of type 1 with $v \in B$, and $a^{\prime} w, a v \in E(G)$, then we can replace $a v$ by $a w$ in $F$ and complete the $H$-linkage via avb.

Therefore, for every path $P \subset F$ corresponding to an edge in $H^{\prime}$, we have

$$
\left|(V(P) \cap N(a) \cap N(w)) \backslash\left(B^{H} \backslash N_{H}(a)\right)\right| \leq 1
$$

But this yields a contradiction, as then

$$
\begin{aligned}
& a(H) \leq|N(a) \cap N(w)| \leq\left|E_{F}(A, B)\right|+\left|B^{H} \backslash N_{H}(a)\right| \\
& =|E(H)|-1+\left|B^{H}\right|-\Delta_{B^{H}}\left(A^{H}\right) \leq a(H)-1
\end{aligned}
$$

We note here that Theorem 6 does not extend to arbitrary multigraphs $H$. To see this, let $k \geq 6, r=2(k-1)$, and let $H$ be the disjoint union of a star having center $c$ and leaves $\ell_{1}, \ldots, \ell_{r}$ with an edge $u v$ of multiplicity $k$. As defined above, $a(H)=3 k-1$ (let $B$ consist of $u$ and all of the $\ell_{i}$ ). However, consider the following
example. Let $A=\{c, u, v\}$ be a triangle and $X$ be a clique of order $n-3$ containing disjoint subsets $L, X_{u}$ and $X_{v}$ of $X$ with $\left|X_{v}\right|=r,\left|X_{u}\right|=r-1$ and $L=\left\{\ell_{1}, \ldots, \ell_{r}\right\}$.

Construct $G$ from $A$ and $X$ by adding all edges from $u$ to $X_{u} \cup L, v$ to $X_{v} \cup L$ and $c$ to $X_{u} \cup X_{v}$ and note that $\sigma_{2}(G)=n+(4 k-4)-2>n+a(H)-2$. If we let the vertex labels in $G$ define an $H$-linkage problem $\rho$, then we require at least one vertex from $X_{u} \cup X_{v}$ to construct the $r$ desired paths from $c$ to $L$ and at least two vertices from $X_{u} \cup X_{v}$ to construct each of the remaining $k-1$ paths from $u$ to $v$. This is a total of at least $2 k-4$ additional vertices, which exceeds the $2 k-5$ vertices in $X_{u} \cup X_{v}$. Hence $G$ is not $H$-linked.

Theorems 5 and 6 also allow us to obtain a number of interesting results on $k$-linked and $k$-ordered graphs as corollaries. In particular, we obtain the degree conditions for sufficiently large $k$-linked, $k$-ordered and $H$-linked graphs found in Theorems 2, 3 and 4 , respectively. In most cases, our bounds on $|G|$ are reasonable, but slightly larger than those in the original theorems due to the more general nature of our results.

Acknowledgement: The authors would like to thank the anonymous referees, whose careful reading of this paper resulted in a much improved final product.

## References

1. R. Diestel, "Graph Theory," Springer Verlag, Heidelberg, 2005.
2. J. Faudree, R. Faudree, R. Gould, M. Jacobson and L. Lesniak, On $k$-ordered graphs, J. Graph Theory 35 (2000), 69-82.
3. M. Ferrara, R. Gould, G. Tansey and T. Whalen, On H-linked graphs, Graphs. Combin. 22 (2006), 217-224.
4. M. Ferrara, R. Gould, G. Tansey and T. Whalen, On H-immersions, J. Graph Theory 57 (2008), 245-254.
5. R. Gould, A. Kostochka, G. Yu, On minimum degree implying that a graph is $H$-linked, SIAM J. Discrete Math. 20 (2006), 829-840.
6. R. Gould and T. Whalen, Distance between two $k$-sets and path-systems extendibility, Ars Combin. 79 (2006), 211-228.
7. H. A. Jung, Eine verallgemeinrung des n-fachen zusammenhangs fur graphen, Math. Ann. 187 (1970), 95-103.
8. K. Karawabayashi, A. Kostochka and G. Yu, On sufficient degree conditions for a graph to be $k$-linked, Combin. Probab. Comput. 15 (2006), 685-694.
9. H. Kierstead, G. Sárközy and S. Selkow, On $k$-ordered Hamiltonian graphs, J. Graph Theory 32, 17-25.
10. A. Kostochka and G. Yu, Minimum degree conditions for $H$-linked graphs, Discrete Appl. Math. 156 (2008), 1542-1548.
11. A. Kostochka and G. Yu, Ore-type degree conditions for H-linked graphs, J. Graph Theory 58 (2008), 14-26.
12. Y. Manoussakis, $k$-linked and $k$-cyclic digraphs, J. Comb. Theory Ser. B 48 (1990), 216-226.
13. O. Ore, A Note on Hamilton Circuits, Amer. Math. Monthly 67 (1960), 55.
14. R. Thomas and P. Wollan, An improved linear edge bound for graph linkage. European J. Combin. 26 (2005), 309-324.

[^0]:    1991 Mathematics Subject Classification. 05C38, 05C83.
    Key words and phrases. H-linked Graph, $k$-linked Graph, Degree Conditions.
    ${ }^{1}$ University of Colorado Denver, Denver CO, michael.ferrara@ucdenver.edu
    ${ }^{2}$ Emory University, Atlanta GA, rg@mathcs. emory. edu
    ${ }^{3}$ University of Colorado Denver, Denver CO, michael.jacobson@ucdenver.edu
    ${ }^{4}$ Universität Rostock, Rostock, Germany, Florian. Pfender@uni-Rostock.de
    ${ }^{5}$ Samford University, Birmingham, AL, jspowel1@samford.edu
    ${ }^{6}$ Methodic Solutions, Inc., thorwhalen@gmail.com

