JOURNAL OF THE CHUNGCHEONG MATHEMATICAL SOCIETY Volume 27, No. 1, February 2014 http://dx.doi.org/10.14403/jcms.2014.27.1.39

SECANT VARIETIES TO THE VARIETY OF REDUCIBLE FORMS

Yong-Su Shin*

ABSTRACT. We completely classify the dimension of secant varieties $\text{Sec}_1(\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2})$ to the variety of reducible forms in $\mathbb{k}[x_0, x_1, x_2]$ when $\lambda = (1, \ldots, 1, 3, \ldots, 3)$, and also show that they are all non-defective.

1. Introduction

Let $R = \Bbbk[x_0, x_1, \ldots, x_n]$ be an (n+1)-variable polynomial ring over a field \Bbbk and let I be a homogeneous ideal of R (or the ideal of a subscheme in \mathbb{P}^n). Then the numerical function

$$\mathbf{H}(R/I,t) := \dim_{\mathbb{K}} R_t - \dim_{\mathbb{K}} I_t$$

is called a *Hilbert function* of the ring R/I. If $I := I_X$ is the ideal of a subscheme X in \mathbb{P}^n , then we denote the Hilbert function of X by

$$\mathbf{H}_{\mathbb{X}}(t) := \mathbf{H}(R/I_{\mathbb{X}}, t).$$

To introduce a star-configuration, we start with varieties of some specific ideals of R. In [2], the authors proved that if F_1, \ldots, F_s are general forms in $R = \Bbbk[x_0, x_1, \ldots, x_n]$ and

$$\tilde{F}_j = \frac{\prod_{i=1}^s F_i}{F_j} \text{ for } j = 1, \dots, s,$$

then

$$(\tilde{F}_1,\ldots,\tilde{F}_s) = \bigcap_{1 \le i < j \le s} (F_i,F_j).$$

The variety \mathbb{X} in \mathbb{P}^n of the ideal

$$(\tilde{F}_1,\ldots,\tilde{F}_s) = \bigcap_{1 \le i < j \le s} (F_i,F_j)$$

2010 Mathematics Subject Classification: Primary 13A02; Secondary 16W50.

Received September 27, 2013; Accepted January 06, 2014.

Key words and phrases: star-configurations, linear star-configurations, secant varieties.

This research was supported by a grant from Sungshin Women's University in 2013.

is called a *star-configuration* in \mathbb{P}^n of type *s* defined by general forms $F_1 \ldots, F_s$. Furthermore, if F_1, \ldots, F_s are all general *linear* forms, then \mathbb{X} is called a *linear star-configuration* of type *s* (see also [1, 2, 6, 7]).

In this paper, we discuss some applications of star-configurations in \mathbb{P}^n . In other words, we study some examples of secant varieties to the variety of reducible forms in \mathbb{P}^2 , which is not defective, using the sum of ideals of two star-configurations in \mathbb{P}^2 .

In Section 2, we discuss the Hilbert function of the ideal of the union of two star-configurations \mathbb{X} and \mathbb{Y} in \mathbb{P}^2 when $\lambda = (1, \ldots, 1, 3, \ldots, 3)$, which we will use to find the dimension of secant varieties to the variety of reducible forms in Section 3 (see also [3, 4, 5]).

In Section 3, we prove that if $\lambda = (1, \ldots, 1, 3, \ldots, 3)$, then the secant variety $\operatorname{Sec}_1(\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2})$ to the variety $\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2}$ is not defective for 3 < d (see Theorem 3.5). Finally, we give a question on secant varieties for the further study.

2. The union of two star-configurations in \mathbb{P}^2 defined by linear forms and cubic forms

In this section, we study the Hilbert function and the minimal generators of the ideal the union of two star-configurations in \mathbb{P}^2 , and we use these in the next section. Throughout this paper,

a solid line	\mathbb{L}_i	is a line defined by a linear form	L_i ,
a dashed line	\mathbb{M}_i	is a line defined by a linear form	M_i
a thick line	\mathbb{L}_i	is a line defined by a cubic form	L_i^3 ,

for $1 \leq i \leq s$ with $s \geq 2$. Moreover, we define that

- $P_{i,j}$ is a point defined by linear forms L_i, L_j ,
- $P_{i,j}$ is a double point defined by a linear form and a quadratic form L_i, L_j^2 ,

 $\mathcal{P}_{i,j}$ is a triple point defined by a linear form and a cubic form L_i, L_j^3 , $Q_{i,j}$ is a point defined by linear forms M_i, M_j , and

 $Q_{i,j}$ is a double point defined by a linear form and a quadratic form M_i, M_i^2 ,

where L_i, L_j and M_i, M_j are linear forms in R with i < j.

Let $\lambda = (d_1, \ldots, d_s)$, where $1 \leq d_1 \leq \cdots \leq d_s$ and $d := \sum_{i=1}^s d_i$. We denote by $\mathbb{X}^{(\lambda)}$ a star-configuration in \mathbb{P}^2 defined by forms F_1, \ldots, F_s in $R = \Bbbk[x_0, x_1, x_2]$ with deg $(F_i) = d_i$ for every *i*.

LEMMA 2.1. Let $\lambda = (1, \ldots, 1, 3)$, and $\mathbb{X}_1 := \mathbb{X}_1^{(\lambda)}$ and $\mathbb{X}_2 := \mathbb{X}_2^{(\lambda)}$ be star-configurations in \mathbb{P}^2 with $5 \leq d \leq 7$. Then $\mathbb{X} := \mathbb{X}_1 \cup \mathbb{X}_2$ has generic Hilbert function. In particular, $\dim_{\mathbb{K}} (I_{\mathbb{X}_1} + I_{\mathbb{X}_2})_d = \binom{d+2}{2}$.

Proof. First, we assume that \mathbb{X}_1 and \mathbb{X}_2 are defined by L_1, L_2, L_3^3 , and $M_1, M_2, M_3 M_4 M_5$, respectively, where L_i and M_i are linear forms in R for every i (see Figure 1). Furthermore, we assume that L_1 vanishes on four points in \mathbb{X}_1 , and one more point in \mathbb{X}_2 , defined by two linear forms M_1 and M_2 , and L_2 vanishes on three points in \mathbb{X}_1 and one more point in \mathbb{X}_2 defined by linear forms M_1 and M_5 (see Figure 1 again).



By *Bezóut*'s Theorem, for $N \in (I_X)_4$, $N = \alpha L_1 L_2 M_2 M_1$ for some $\alpha \in \mathbb{k}$. Therefore, the Hilbert function of X is 1 3 6 10 14 \rightarrow , as we wished.

Using the following exact sequence

$$0 \quad \rightarrow \quad R/I_{\mathbb{X}} \quad \rightarrow \quad R/I_{\mathbb{X}_1} \oplus R/I_{\mathbb{X}_2} \quad \rightarrow \quad R/(I_{\mathbb{X}_1} + I_{\mathbb{X}_2}) \quad \rightarrow \quad 0,$$

we have $\dim_{\mathbb{K}}(I_{\mathbb{X}_1} + I_{\mathbb{X}_2})_5 = \binom{5+2}{2}$. By the same method as above, one can show that \mathbb{X} has generic Hilbert function when d = 6, 7, and so

$$\dim_{\mathbb{K}}(I_{\mathbb{X}_1} + I_{\mathbb{X}_2})_d = \binom{d+2}{2},$$

for $5 \le d \le 7$, which completes the proof.

THEOREM 2.2. Let $\lambda = (1, \ldots, 1, 3)$ and let \mathbb{X} be the union of two star-configurations $\mathbb{X}_1 := \mathbb{X}_1^{(\lambda)}$ and $\mathbb{X}_2 := \mathbb{X}_2^{(\lambda)}$ in \mathbb{P}^2 with $d \geq 8$. Then

$$\dim_{\mathbb{K}}(I_{\mathbb{X}_1} + I_{\mathbb{X}_2})_d = 4d + 8.$$

Proof. First, we assume that X_1 and X_2 are defined by $L_1, \ldots, L_{d-3}, L_{d-2}^3$ and $M_1, \ldots, M_{d-3}, M_{d-2}M_{d-1}^2$, respectively, where L_i and M_j are linear forms in R for every i and j. Without loss of generality, we assume

$$\begin{array}{ll} L_1 & \text{vanishes on } d+1 \text{ points } & P_{1,2}, \dots, P_{1,d-3}, \mathcal{P}_{1,d-2}, \, \boldsymbol{Q}_{1,d-1}, \\ L_2 & \text{vanishes on } d \text{ points } & P_{2,3}, \dots, P_{3,d-3}, \mathcal{P}_{2,d-2}, \, \boldsymbol{Q}_{2,d-1}, \\ \vdots & \vdots \end{array}$$

 L_{d-3} vanishes on 5 points $\mathcal{P}_{d-3,d-2}, Q_{d-3,d-1}.$

By *Bezóut*'s Theorem, for $N \in (I_{\mathbb{X}})_d$, $N = L_1 \cdots L_{d-3}N'$ for some $N' \in R_3$. Since a linear star-configuration \mathbb{Y} in \mathbb{P}^2 defined by M_1, \ldots, M_{d-2} has no generators in degree 3 and N' has to vanishes on all points in \mathbb{Y} , we see that N' = 0, i.e., N = 0, and so $\dim_{\mathbb{K}}(I_{\mathbb{X}})_d = 0$.

Using the following exact sequence

$$0 \quad \rightarrow \quad R/I_{\mathbb{X}} \quad \rightarrow \quad R/I_{\mathbb{X}_1} \oplus R/I_{\mathbb{X}_2} \quad \rightarrow \quad R/(I_{\mathbb{X}_1} + I_{\mathbb{X}_2}) \quad \rightarrow \quad 0,$$

we have

$$\dim_{\mathbb{K}}(I_{\mathbb{X}_1} + I_{\mathbb{X}_2})_d = 2 \cdot \dim_{\mathbb{K}} R_d - 2 \cdot \deg(\mathbb{X}_1) = 4d + 8,$$

which completes the proof of this theorem.

LEMMA 2.3. Let $\lambda = (1,3,3)$ or (1,1,3,3), and $\mathbb{X}_1 := \mathbb{X}_1^{(\lambda)}$ and $\mathbb{X}_2 := \mathbb{X}_2^{(\lambda)}$ be star-configurations in \mathbb{P}^2 . Then $\mathbb{X} := \mathbb{X}_1 \cup \mathbb{X}_2$ has generic Hilbert function. In particular, $\dim_{\mathbb{K}} (I_{\mathbb{X}_1} + I_{\mathbb{X}_2})_d = \binom{d+2}{2}$.

Proof. We shall introduce only the proof for the case $\lambda = (1, 3, 3)$, and we omit the proof for the case $\lambda = (1, 1, 3, 3)$ since it simply reiterates the same arguments we will use. So we assume $\lambda = (1, 3, 3)$. Let $\lambda' = (3, 3)$, and $\mathbb{Y}_1 := \mathbb{X}_1^{(\lambda')}$ and $\mathbb{Y}_2 := \mathbb{X}_2^{(\lambda')}$ be star-configurations in \mathbb{P}^2 . Let \mathbb{Y}_1 and \mathbb{Y}_2 be defined by $L_2 L_3 L_4$, $L_5 L_6 L_7$ and $M_2 M_3 M_4$, $M_5 M_6 M_7$, respectively, where L_i and M_j are linear forms in R for every i, j. Then it is not hard to see that the Hilbert function of $\mathbb{Y} := \mathbb{Y}_1 \cup \mathbb{Y}_2$ is $1 \quad 3 \quad 6 \quad 10 \quad 15 \quad 18 \quad \rightarrow$.

Now assume that $\mathbb{X}_1 := \mathbb{X}_1^{(\lambda)}$ is defined by $L_1, L_2L_3L_4, L_5L_6L_7$, where L_1 is a linear form in R, and $\mathbb{Z} := \mathbb{X}_1 \cup \mathbb{Y}_2$. Using the following exact sequence

$$0 \quad \rightarrow \quad R/I_{\mathbb{Z}} \quad \rightarrow \quad R/I_{\mathbb{Y}} \oplus R/(L_1, G_6) \quad \rightarrow \quad R/(I_{\mathbb{Y}}, L_1, G_6) \quad \rightarrow \quad 0,$$

where $G_6 = L_2 \cdots L_7$, we obtain the following Hilbert functions.

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Secant varieties to the variety of reducible forms

By *Bezóut*'s Theorem, it is easily to show that $(I_{\mathbb{Z}})_5 = \{0\}$, and so the Hilbert function of \mathbb{Z} is $\mathbf{H}(R/I_{\mathbb{Z}}, -)$: 1 3 6 10 15 21 24 \rightarrow , as we wished. Using the same idea as above and by *Bezóut*'s Theorem, one can show that \mathbb{X} has generic Hilbert function. Therefore, we get that

$$\dim_{\mathbb{K}} \left(I_{\mathbb{X}_1} + I_{\mathbb{X}_2} \right)_d = \binom{d+2}{2},$$

for d = 7, 8, as we wished.

By the same idea as in the proof of Theorem 2.2, the following theorem can be easily obtained, and so we omit the proof.

THEOREM 2.4. Let
$$\lambda = (\underbrace{1, \ldots, 1}_{(s-\ell)\text{-times}}, \underbrace{3, \ldots, 3}_{\ell\text{-times}})$$
 and let X be the union

of two star-configurations $\mathbb{X}_1 := \mathbb{X}_1^{(\lambda)}$ and $\mathbb{X}_2 := \mathbb{X}_2^{(\lambda)}$ in \mathbb{P}^2 with either $\ell \geq 3$ or $\ell = 2$ and $d \geq 9$. Then $\dim_{\mathbb{K}}(I_{\mathbb{X}_1} + I_{\mathbb{X}_2})_d = 4d + 6\ell + 2$.

3. Varieties of reducible forms and their secants

We first recall the definition of the secant variety $\operatorname{Sec}_{s-1}(\mathbb{X})$ to the variety \mathbb{X} in \mathbb{P}^n . Let $\lambda \vdash d$ denote a *partition* of the integer d, i.e.

$$\lambda = (d_1, \dots, d_s)$$
 where $1 \le d_1 \le \dots \le d_s$ and $\sum_{i=1}^s d_i = d$.

We associate a variety, denoted by $\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,n}$, to $R = \Bbbk[x_0, x_1, \dots, x_n]$ and λ , which is defined by

$$\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,n} := \{ [F] \in \mathbb{P}(R_d) \mid F = F_1 \cdots F_s, \ \deg F_i = d_i \}.$$

Such varieties are called *varieties of reducible forms*. If λ is the *d*-tuple $(1, \ldots, 1)$, then the variety is often referred to as the variety of *completely decomposable forms* or *split* forms. In this case, $\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,n}$ is denoted by $\operatorname{Split}_{d}(\mathbb{P}^{n})$.

Since the map below has only finite fibers,

$$\mathbb{P}(R_{d_1}) \times \cdots \times \mathbb{P}(R_{d_s}) \longrightarrow \mathbb{X}_{\lambda,n}$$
, where $[F_1] \times \cdots \times [F_s] \longrightarrow [F_1 \cdots F_s]$

the dimension of $\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,n}$ is

 $\dim \mathbb{X}_{\lambda,n} = \left(\binom{d_1+n}{n} - 1 \right) + \dots + \left(\binom{d_s+n}{n} - 1 \right) = \sum_{i=1}^{s} \binom{d_i+n}{n} - s.$

DEFINITION 3.1. Let $\mathbb{X}_1, \ldots, \mathbb{X}_s$ all be non-degenerate, reduced and irreducible varieties in \mathbb{P}^n with dim $\mathbb{X}_i = d_i$.

(a) Choose points $P_i \in X_i$ such that $\{P_1, \ldots, P_s\}$ are linearly independent (and so $s \leq n$). The *join* of $\{P_1, \ldots, P_s\}$ is the linear space spanned by the points, i.e.,

$$\Lambda(P_1,\ldots,P_s) := \langle P_1,\ldots,P_s \rangle \simeq \mathbb{P}^{s-1}$$

- (b) The join of $\mathbb{X}_1, \ldots, \mathbb{X}_s$ is $\Lambda(\mathbb{X}_1, \ldots, \mathbb{X}_s) :=$
- $\bigcup \{\Lambda(P_1, \dots, P_s) \mid \text{for } P_1, \dots, P_s \text{ linearly independent, } P_i \in \mathbb{X}_i \}.$ (c) If $\mathbb{X}_1 = \dots = \mathbb{X}_s = \mathbb{X}$ with dim $\mathbb{X} = d$, then we write $\Lambda(\mathbb{X}_1, \dots, \mathbb{X}_s)$ = Sec_{s-1}(\mathbb{X}) and call it the (s-1)-st secant variety to \mathbb{X} .

The number of parameters shows that the upper bound of the dimension of the join is

$$\dim \Lambda(\mathbb{X}_1,\ldots,\mathbb{X}_s) \le \min \left\{ n, \sum_{i=1}^s d_i + (s-1) \right\},\$$

and thus

$$\dim \operatorname{Sec}_{s-1}(\mathbb{X}) \le \min\{n, ds + (s-1)\}.$$

DEFINITION 3.2. Let $\mathbb{X} \subset \mathbb{P}^n$ be a projective variety of dimension d. Then the *expected dimension* of the secant variety $\operatorname{Sec}_{s-1}(\mathbb{X})$ to \mathbb{X} is defined by

$$\operatorname{expdim}(\operatorname{Sec}_{s-1}(\mathbb{X})) = \min\{n, ds + (s-1)\}.$$

However, the expected dimension of $\operatorname{Sec}_{s-1}(\mathbb{X})$ is not always the same as dim $\operatorname{Sec}_{s-1}(\mathbb{X})$. If $\operatorname{expdim}(\operatorname{Sec}_{s-1}(\mathbb{X})) - \operatorname{dim} \operatorname{Sec}_{s-1}(\mathbb{X}) > 0$, we say that the secant variety $\operatorname{Sec}_{s-1}(\mathbb{X})$ to \mathbb{X} is *defective*.

Since we are interested in the secants to the varieties of reducible forms, we introduce another important result in [5] to find a description of the tangent space at a generic point of those varieties.

PROPOSITION 3.3 ([5]). Let $\lambda \vdash d$, $\lambda = (d_1, \ldots, d_s)$ and let $\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,n} \subset \mathbb{P}^{\binom{d+n}{n}-1}$. Let $P = [F_1 \cdots F_s]$ be a generic point of $\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,n}$ where deg $F_i = d_i$, $i = 1, \ldots, s$. Then $T_{P,\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,n}} = \mathbb{P}(V_P)$ where V_P is the subspace of $R_d = \Bbbk[x_0, \ldots, x_n]_d$ defined by $V_P := (\tilde{F}_1, \ldots, \tilde{F}_s)$, where $\tilde{F}_i = \frac{\prod_{j=1}^s F_j}{F_i}$ for every $i = 1, \ldots, s$.

The following corollary is useful for finding whether or not the given secant varieties are defective.

COROLLARY 3.4 ([5]). Let $\lambda \vdash d$, $\lambda = (d_1, \ldots, d_s)$ and let $\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,n} \subset$ $\mathbb{P}^{\binom{d+n}{n}-1}$. Let P_1, \ldots, P_s be s generic points on $\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,n}$. Then

$$\dim \operatorname{Sec}_{s-1}(\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,n}) = \left[\binom{d+n}{n} - \mathbf{H}(A,d) \right] - 1 = \dim_{\mathbb{K}} I_d - 1$$

where A = R/I and $I = \mathcal{T}_{P_1} + \cdots + \mathcal{T}_{P_{\circ}}$.

In this paper, we are interested in the secant variety $\operatorname{Sec}_1(\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2})$ to the variety $\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,n} := \{ [F] \in \mathbb{P}(R_d) \mid F = F_1 \cdots F_s, \deg F_i = 1 \text{ or } 2 \}.$

In [3] and [6] the authors showed that the secant variety $\operatorname{Sec}_1(\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,n}) =$ $\operatorname{Sec}_1(\operatorname{Split}_d(\mathbb{P}^n))$ is not defective for $n \geq 2$. Moreover, since it is not hard to show that the secant variety $\text{Sec}_1(\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2})$ is not defective when $d_i = 3$ for every i, we shall not introduce the proof in this paper. Thus we assume that $d_1 = \cdots = d_{s-\ell} = 1$ and $d_{s-\ell+1} = \cdots = d_s = 3$ with $1 \le \ell < s$ for the rest of this paper. We now introduce the main theorem in this paper.

THEOREM 3.5. Let $\lambda \mapsto d$ and $\lambda = (\underbrace{1, \ldots, 1}_{(s-\ell)\text{-times}}, \underbrace{3, \ldots, 3}_{\ell\text{-times}})$. Then the secant variety $\operatorname{Sec}_1(\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2})$ is not defective for $s \geq 3$ and $1 \leq \ell < s$.

Proof. If d = 5 and $\ell = 1$, then by Lemma 2.1 and Corollary 3.4, expdimSec₁($\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2}$) $= \min\left\{2 \cdot \dim\left(\left(\mathbb{P}(R_1) \times \mathbb{P}(R_1) \times \mathbb{P}(R_1) \times \mathbb{P}(R_3)\right) + 1, \binom{5+2}{2} - 1\right\}\right\}$ $= 20 = \dim_{\mathbb{K}} (I_{\mathbb{X}_1} + I_{\mathbb{X}_2})_5 - 1 = \dim \operatorname{Sec}_1(\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2}).$

By the same method as above with Lemmas 2.1, 2.3, and Corollary 3.4, one can see that expdimSec₁($\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2}$) = dim Sec₁($\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2}$) for either d = 6, 7and $\ell = 1$ or d = 7, 8 and $\ell = 2$.

Now suppose either $\ell = 1$ and $d \ge 8$ or $\ell = 2$ and $d \ge 9$. Then, by Theorems 2.2, 2.4, and Corollary 3.4,

$$\begin{aligned} & \operatorname{expdimSec}_{1}(\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2}) \\ &= \min\left\{2 \cdot \dim((\underbrace{\mathbb{P}(R_{1}) \times \cdots \times \mathbb{P}(R_{1})}_{(s-1)-\operatorname{times}} \times \mathbb{P}(R_{3})) + 1, \binom{d+2}{2} - 1\right\} \\ &= 4d + 7 \text{ (since } d \geq 8) \\ &= \dim_{\mathbb{K}}(I_{\mathbb{X}_{1}} + I_{\mathbb{X}_{2}})_{d} - 1 = \dim \operatorname{Sec}_{1}(\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2}), \end{aligned}$$

and

$$\begin{aligned} & \operatorname{expdimSec}_{1}(\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2}) \\ &= \min\left\{2 \cdot \dim((\underbrace{\mathbb{P}(R_{1}) \times \cdots \times \mathbb{P}(R_{1})}_{(s-2) \text{-times}} \times \mathbb{P}(R_{3}) \times \mathbb{P}(R_{3})) + 1, \binom{d+2}{2} - 1\right\} \\ &= 4d + 13 \text{ (since } d \geq 8) = \dim_{\Bbbk}(I_{\mathbb{X}_{1}} + I_{\mathbb{X}_{2}})_{d} - 1 = \dim \operatorname{Sec}_{1}(\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2}), \end{aligned}$$

respectively, as we wished.

Now assume that $\ell \geq 3$. Then by Theorem 2.4 and Corollary 3.4,

$$\begin{aligned} & \operatorname{expdimSec}_{1}(\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2}) \\ &= \min\left\{2 \cdot \left((\underbrace{\mathbb{P}(R_{1}) \times \cdots \times \mathbb{P}(R_{1})}_{(s-\ell) \text{-times}} \times \underbrace{\mathbb{P}(R_{3}) \times \cdots \times \mathbb{P}(R_{3})}_{\ell \text{-times}}\right) + 1, \binom{d+2}{2} - 1\right\} \\ &= 4d + 6\ell + 1 \text{ (since } d \geq 3\ell + 1) \\ &= \dim_{\Bbbk}(I_{\mathbb{X}_{1}} + I_{\mathbb{X}_{2}})_{d} - 1 \\ &= \dim \operatorname{Sec}_{1}(\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2}), \end{aligned}$$

which completes the proof.

Now we give a question on secant varieties to the variety $\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,n}$.

QUESTION 3.6. Is the secant variety $\operatorname{Sec}_{s-1}(\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2})$ to the variety $\mathbb{X}_{\lambda,2}$ non-defective for s > 2 when $\lambda = (1, \ldots, 1, 3, \ldots, 3)$?

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Department of Mathematics Sungshin Women's University Seoul 136-742, Republic of Korea *E-mail*: ysshin@sungshin.ac.kr