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HARVARD UNIVERSITY

ON A CERTAIN TYPE OF NONLINEAR
INTEGRAL EQUATIONS

MARK LOTKIN

1. **Introduction.** The object of this paper is to prove that the non-linear integral equation

$$(1) \quad \phi(x) = \lambda \left[f(x) + \sum_{i=1}^m \int_a^b \cdots \int_a^b K_i(x, s_1, \cdots, s_i) \cdot F_i(s_1, \cdots, s_i, \phi(s_1), \cdots, \phi(s_i)) ds_1 \cdots ds_i \right]$$

has at least one eigenvalue, provided the functionals

$$(2) \quad G_i(x, v) = \int_a^b \cdots \int_a^b K_i(x, s_1, \cdots, s_i) \cdot F_i(s_1, \cdots, s_i, v(s_1), \cdots, v(s_i)) ds_1 \cdots ds_i$$

are fully continuous, and the F_i satisfy a certain linear integrodifferential equation. The solution of (1) is shown to be equivalent to that of a variational problem containing infinitely many parameters. The latter problem, however, can be solved easily by the method of Rayleigh-Ritz, which consists in approaching the solution of the variational problem by a sequence of variational problems containing only a finite number of parameters. The convergence of this procedure is assured by a convergence theorem of Friedrich Riesz.

2. **Preparatory remarks.** Let I be the closed interval $a \leq x \leq b$, and L^2 the class of all functions having Lebesgue integrable squares on I with a norm not larger than N^2 . Let, further, $\{v_n(x)\}$ ($n = 1, 2, 3, \cdots$)

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be a set of functions in L^2 and $\bar{v}(x)$ a function such that¹

$$(3) \quad \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \int v_n(x) w(x) dx = \int \bar{v}(x) w(x) dx$$

for any arbitrary w of integrable square on I or, what is equivalent, for any arbitrary $w \in L^2$; that is, we assume the weak convergence of $\{v_n\}$, in the following denoted by $W\text{-}\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} v_n = \bar{v}$. We next show that $\bar{v} \in L^2$. Since the right-hand side of (3) is assumed to exist for every $w \in L^2$, it follows by a known result (see, for example, Kaczmarz-Steinhaus, *Theorie der Orthogonalreihen*) that \bar{v} is of integrable square over I . Hence, if $w = \bar{v}$, (3) becomes

$$\int \bar{v}^2(x) dx = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \int v_n(x) \bar{v}(x) dx,$$

and since by Schwarz's inequality

$$\left[\int v_n(x) \bar{v}(x) dx \right]^2 \leq N^2 \left[\int \bar{v}^2(x) dx \right],$$

we obtain, as claimed,

$$(4) \quad \int \bar{v}^2(x) dx \leq N^2.$$

We now assume that the functional $G_i(x, v)$ be fully continuous, that is, that

$$(5) \quad \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} G_i(x_n, v_n) = G_i(\bar{x}, \bar{v}), \quad i = 1, 2, \dots, m,$$

for any $\{x_n\} \in I$ and $v_n \in L^2$ for which $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} x_n = \bar{x}$ and $W\text{-}\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} v_n = \bar{v}$.

The introduction of a closed orthonormal system of functions $\{w_\nu(x)\} \in L^2$ associates with each v_n an infinite sequence of numbers

$$c_{n\nu} = \int v_n(x) w_\nu(x) dx, \quad \nu = 1, 2, \dots,$$

such that

$$\sum_{\nu=1}^{\infty} c_{n\nu}^2 = \int v_n^2(x) dx \leq N^2$$

for every $n \geq 1$. The class L^2 of functions v then corresponds to a class \mathfrak{S}^2 of vectors $\mathfrak{v} \equiv (c_1, c_2, \dots)$ with $c_\nu = \int v(x) w_\nu(x) dx$. The transition

¹ All integrations are to be extended over the interval I .

from L^2 to \mathfrak{S}^2 implies the substitution in $G_i(x_n, v_n)$ of $v_n(x)$ by its equivalent $v(x) \sim \sum_{\nu=1}^{\infty} c_{n\nu} w_{\nu}(x)$, and (5) now changes to

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} G_i(x_n, v_n) = G_i(\bar{x}, \bar{v}) \equiv P_i(\bar{x}, \bar{c}_1, \bar{c}_2, \dots)$$

for any $\{x_n\} \in I$ and $\{v_n\} \in \mathfrak{S}^2$ for which $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} x_n = \bar{x}$ and $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} c_{n\nu} = \bar{c}_{\nu}$, $\nu = 1, 2, \dots$. From the full continuity of the G_i thus follows the full continuity (*Vollstetigkeit*)² of the P_i . It is just as easily seen that the converse also holds true.

3. Construction of a solution of the integral equation. In the G_i we now admit as arguments v_n only aggregates of the form $v_n(x) = \sum_{\nu=1}^n c_{n\nu} w_{\nu}(x)$ with $\sum_{\nu=1}^n c_{n\nu}^2 = N^2$ for every fixed n . The functional

$$(6) \quad J(v_n) = 2 \left[\int f(x)v_n(x)dx + \sum_{i=1}^m e_i \int G_i(x, v_n)v_n(x)dx \right]$$

—here the e_i denote finite numbers to be determined later—is now a continuous function of the $c_{n\nu}$ and so has at least one minimum. Let $c_{n\nu} = a_{n\nu}$ ($\nu = 1, 2, \dots, n$) be the minimal coordinates:

$$(7) \quad \min J(v_n) = d_n = J(\phi_n), \quad \phi_n(x) = \sum_{\nu=1}^n a_{n\nu} w_{\nu}(x), \quad \sum_{\nu=1}^n a_{n\nu}^2 = N^2.$$

As a consequence of (7) we have³

$$(8) \quad \frac{\partial}{\partial c_{n\nu}} \left[J(v_n) + \frac{1}{\lambda_n} \left(N^2 - \sum_{\mu=1}^n c_{n\mu}^2 \right) \right]_{c_{n\nu} = a_{n\nu}} = 0, \quad \nu = 1, 2, \dots, n.$$

However,

$$\frac{\partial J(v_n)}{\partial c_{n\nu}} = 2 \left[\int f w_{\nu} dx + \sum_i e_i \int \int \dots \int K_i \left(v_n \frac{\partial F_i}{\partial c_{n\nu}} + w_{\nu} F_i \right) dx ds_1 \dots ds_i \right].$$

We must now make the following assumption: *The F_i satisfy the linear integrodifferential equations*

$$(9) \quad \int \int \dots \int K_i \left[e_i v_n \frac{\partial F_i}{\partial c_{n\nu}} - (1 - e_i) w_{\nu} F_i \right] dx ds_1 \dots ds_i = 0$$

² See D. Hilbert, *Grundzüge einer allgemeinen Theorie der linearen Integralgleichungen*, 1912, p. 177. A fully continuous function $P(x, c_1, c_2, \dots)$, where $x \in I$ and $\sum_{r=1}^{\infty} c_r \leq N^2$, is bounded.

³ In (8), $1/\lambda_n$ denotes Lagrange's multiplier for the extremum problem under consideration. As will be shown subsequently, $\lambda_n \neq 0$ for every n .

for all arguments $v_n = \sum_{(\nu)} c_{n\nu} w_\nu$, identically in the $c_{n\nu}$.

In this case we obtain

$$\frac{\partial J(v_n)}{\partial c_{n\nu}} = 2 \left[\int \left(f + \sum_i \int \cdots \int K_i F_i ds_1 \cdots ds_i \right) w_\nu dx \right],$$

and (8) leads to

$$(10) \quad a_{n\nu} = \lambda_n \int G(x, \phi_n) w_\nu dx, \quad \nu = 1, 2, \dots, n,$$

with

$$G(x, \phi_n) = f(x) + \sum_i \int \cdots \int K_i(x, s_1, \dots, s_i) \cdot F_i(s_1, \dots, s_i, \phi_n(s_1), \dots, \phi_n(s_i)) ds_1 \cdots ds_i.$$

On account of $a_{n\nu} = \int \phi_n w_\nu dx$ the relations (10) may be written as

$$(11) \quad \int (\phi_n - \lambda_n G(x, \phi_n)) w_\nu dx = 0 \quad \text{for } \nu = 1, 2, \dots, n.$$

Equations (10) show that the $|\lambda_n|$ have a common positive lower bound: multiplication of (10) by $a_{n\nu}$ and summation for $\nu = 1, \dots, n$ result in

$$(12) \quad N^2 = \lambda_n \int G(x, \phi_n) \phi_n dx.$$

But since $G(x, \phi_n)$ is a fully continuous function of the $a_{n\nu}$ for $x \in I$ and $\phi_n \in H^2$ it is bounded: there exists a $\delta > 0$ such that

$$|G(x, \phi_n)| \leq N/(b-a)^{1/2} \delta \quad \text{for every } n.$$

Therefore

$$\left| \int G(x, \phi_n) \phi_n dx \right| \leq \left[\int G^2(x, \phi_n) dx \right]^{1/2} \left[\int \phi_n^2 dx \right]^{1/2} \leq N^2/\delta,$$

whence $|\lambda_n| \geq \delta > 0$ for every n .

Now the $\int \phi_n^2 dx$ all have the same value N^2 . This property of the sequence $\{\phi_n\}$ guarantees the existence of a $\bar{\phi}(x)$ —defined almost everywhere in I and possessing a Lebesgue integrable square—which is the W -lim of a suitably chosen subsequence $\{\phi_{\bar{n}}\}$ of $\{\phi_n\}$,⁴

⁴ Friedrich Riesz, *Untersuchungen über Systeme integrierbarer Funktionen*, Math. Ann. vol. 69 (1910) p. 467. The sequence $\{\bar{n}\}$ is determined by Hilbert's diagonal method (see, for example, Hellinger-Toeplitz, *Encyklopädie der mathematischen Wissenschaften* vol. II C 13, p. 1405).

$$(13) \quad W\text{-}\lim_{\bar{n} \rightarrow \infty} \phi_{\bar{n}}(x) = \bar{\phi}(x);$$

because the system $\{w_v\}$ is closed $\bar{\phi}$ is determined uniquely almost everywhere in I . On account of (4), $\int \bar{\phi}^2(x) dx \leq N^2$.

We are now going to show that

$$(14) \quad \lim_{\bar{n} \rightarrow \infty} \int G(x, \phi_{\bar{n}}) \phi_{\bar{n}} dx = \int G(x, \bar{\phi}) \bar{\phi} dx.$$

Since

$$\left| \int G(x, \bar{\phi}) \bar{\phi} dx - \int G(x, \phi_{\bar{n}}) \phi_{\bar{n}} dx \right| \leq \left| \int G(x, \bar{\phi}) (\bar{\phi} - \phi_{\bar{n}}) dx \right| \\ + \left| \int (G(x, \bar{\phi}) - G(x, \phi_{\bar{n}})) \phi_{\bar{n}} dx \right|,$$

and the first expression on the right hand side—by (13)—may be made as small as desired by taking \bar{n} sufficiently large, only the second term remains to be considered. Now

$$\left| \int (G(x, \bar{\phi}) - G(x, \phi_{\bar{n}})) \phi_{\bar{n}} dx \right| \leq N \left[\int (G(x, \bar{\phi}) - G(x, \phi_{\bar{n}}))^2 dx \right]^{1/2},$$

and so (14) will be proved if we can show that $\lim_{\bar{n} \rightarrow \infty} \int (G(x, \bar{\phi}) - G(x, \phi_{\bar{n}}))^2 dx = 0$. This, however, follows immediately from the convergence theorem of Lebesgue.⁵ The sequence $L_{\bar{n}} \equiv (G(x, \bar{\phi}) - G(x, \phi_{\bar{n}}))^2$ obviously satisfies the conditions of that theorem: (a) $L_{\bar{n}}$ is Lebesgue integrable; (b) Since $|G(x, v)| \leq N/(b-a)^{1/2} \delta$, $|L_{\bar{n}}| \leq 4N^2/(b-a) \delta^2$ for every \bar{n} ; (c) Because of the full continuity of $G(x, v)$, $\lim_{\bar{n} \rightarrow \infty} (G(x, \bar{\phi}) - G(x, \phi_{\bar{n}})) = 0$. Therefore $\bar{L} = 0$, which proves (14).

We must now distinguish between these two cases:

I. There exists a $\delta' > 0$ such that $\left| \int G(x, \bar{\phi}) \bar{\phi} dx \right| \geq N^2/\delta'$;

II. $\int G(x, \bar{\phi}) \bar{\phi} dx = 0$.

CASE I. By (12), $\lambda_{\bar{n}} = N^2/\int G(x, \phi_{\bar{n}}) \phi_{\bar{n}} dx$, so that by (14)

$$(15) \quad \lim_{\bar{n} \rightarrow \infty} \lambda_{\bar{n}} = \bar{\lambda} = \frac{N^2}{\int G(x, \bar{\phi}) \bar{\phi} dx}$$

exists; because of I, $|\bar{\lambda}| \leq \delta'$.

⁵ If a sequence of Lebesgue integrable functions $L_n(x)$ possessing a common bound has a limit function $\bar{L}(x)$, then \bar{L} , too, is Lebesgue integrable and $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \int L_n(x) dx = \int \bar{L}(x) dx$.

If we now apply equations (11) to indices \bar{n} only and then take the $\lim_{\bar{n} \rightarrow \infty}$ we obtain

$$\int (\bar{\phi}(x) - \bar{\lambda}G(x, \bar{\phi}))w_\nu(x)dx = 0 \quad \text{for } \nu = 1, 2, \dots .$$

Since the system of the $\{w_\nu\}$ is closed we may deduce $\bar{\phi} - \bar{\lambda}G(x, \bar{\phi}) = 0$, that is,

$$\bar{\phi}(x) = \bar{\lambda} \left[f(x) + \sum_{i=1}^m \int \dots \int K_i(x, s_1, \dots, s_i) \cdot F_i(s_1, \dots, s_i, \bar{\phi}(s_1), \dots, \bar{\phi}(s_i)) ds_1 \dots ds_i \right]$$

almost everywhere in I . We have thus obtained a solution $\bar{\phi}(x)$ of (1) belonging to the finite eigenvalue $\bar{\lambda}$.

The previously derived relationship $\int \bar{\phi}^2(x)dx \leq N^2$ may now be improved: replacing $G(x, \bar{\phi})$ in (15) by its equal $(1/\bar{\lambda})\bar{\phi}$ leads to $\int \bar{\phi}^2(x)dx = N^2$.

CASE II. We write equations (10) for indices \bar{n} only:

$$\int G(x, \phi_{\bar{n}})w_\nu dx = \frac{1}{\lambda \bar{n}} a_{\bar{n}\nu}, \quad \nu = 1, 2, \dots, \bar{n},$$

and increasing \bar{n} beyond any bound we obtain, since $\lim_{\bar{n} \rightarrow \infty} \lambda \bar{n} = \infty$ and $|a_{\bar{n}\nu}| \leq N$,

$$\int G(x, \bar{\phi})w_\nu dx = 0, \quad \nu = 1, 2, \dots .$$

In this case $\bar{\phi}(x)$ may be considered a solution of (1) belonging to $\lambda = \infty$.

4. The variational problem. We see, then, that $\bar{\phi}$ is always a solution of (1). This function possesses another important property: If $\bar{\mathfrak{F}}^2$ denotes the class of all $v(x) \sim \sum_{(\nu)} c_\nu w_\nu(x)$ with $\sum_{(\nu)} c_\nu^2 = N^2$, and

$$\bar{v}(x) \sim \sum_{\nu=1}^{\infty} \bar{a}_\nu w_\nu(x) \quad \text{with} \quad \bar{a}_\nu = \int \bar{\phi}(x)w_\nu(x)dx,$$

then \bar{v} minimizes $J(v)$.

To prove this we notice first that $J(v_n)$ results from $J(v_{n+1})$ if we put $c_{n+1} = 0$. Let d_n be the minimum of $J(v_n)$ in $\bar{\mathfrak{F}}^2$. Then obviously $d_n \geq d_{n+1}$. Let, further, d be the minimum of $J(v)$ for $v \in \bar{\mathfrak{F}}^2$; then $d_n \geq d$ for every n . Therefore, if $\bar{d} = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} d_n = J(\bar{v})$, we get $\bar{d} \geq d$ or $\bar{d} = d + \eta$ with $\eta \geq 0$. We shall show that $\eta = 0$.

Since d is the lower bound of $J(v)$ in $\bar{\mathfrak{F}}^2$ there exists a $p(x) \sim \sum_{(v)} p_v w_v(x)$ in $\bar{\mathfrak{F}}^2$ so that $J(p) = \bar{d} - \theta\eta$ with $0 < \theta \leq 1$. If, now, $\epsilon > 0$ be chosen as small as desired, there is, because of the full continuity of $J(v)$, a $\delta > 0$ and an index r such that $|J(v) - J(p)| < \epsilon$ for every $v \in \bar{\mathfrak{F}}^2$, so long as $|c_\nu - p_\nu| < \delta$ for $\nu = 1, 2, \dots, r$. We take $\epsilon = \theta\eta$ and choose $r' \geq r$ large enough to have $\sum_{\nu=1}^{r'} p_\nu^2 = N'^2 > N^2 \cdot N^2 / (N + \delta)^2$. Then the vector $\bar{p}(x) = \sum_{\nu=1}^{r'} \bar{p}_\nu w_\nu(x)$ with $\bar{p}_\nu = (N/N')p_\nu$, belongs to $\bar{\mathfrak{F}}^2$, and since $N' > N^2 / (N + \delta)$,

$$|\bar{p}_\nu - p_\nu| = |p_\nu| \cdot (N/N' - 1) \leq N(N/N' - 1) < \delta$$

for $\nu = 1, 2, \dots, r'$. We may, therefore, conclude that $|J(\bar{p}) - J(p)| < \theta\eta$ or $J(\bar{p}) < J(p) + \theta\eta = \bar{d}$. But $d_{r'} \leq J(\bar{p})$, and so $d_{r'} < \bar{d}$.

By now choosing \bar{n} , $\bar{n} \geq r'$, such that $d_{\bar{n}} \leq d_{r'}$, we get $d_{\bar{n}} \leq \bar{d}$, a relation which contradicts the fact that the sequence d_n converges to \bar{d} from above. Thus we see that $\eta = 0$ or $\bar{d} = J(\bar{v})$.

5. Solution of the integrodifferential equation. It is easy to verify that equations (9) are fulfilled if we put $e_i = 1/(i+1)$, K_i continuous and

$$K_i(x, s_1, \dots, s_k, \dots, s_i) = K_i(s_k, s_1, \dots, x, \dots, s_i),$$

$$k = 1, 2, \dots, i,$$

$$F_i(s_1, \dots, s_i, u_1, \dots, u_i) = a_i u_1 \dots u_i$$

for $i = 1, 2, \dots, m$.

It remains to be shown that functionals of the type

$$Q(x, v) = \int \dots \int K(x, s_1, \dots, s_i) v(s_1) \dots v(s_i) ds_1 \dots ds_i$$

are fully continuous for $x \in I$ and $v \in L^2$. Let us, therefore, assume that $\{x_n\} \in I$, $\{v_n\} \in L^2$, $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} x_n = \bar{x}$, and $W\text{-}\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} v_n = \bar{v}$. Then

$$|Q(\bar{x}, \bar{v}) - Q(x_n, v_n)| \leq |Q(\bar{x}, \bar{v}) - Q(\bar{x}, v_n)| + |Q(\bar{x}, v_n) - Q(x_n, v_n)|$$

$$= \left| \int \dots \int K(\bar{x}, s_1, \dots, s_i) [\bar{v}(s_1) \dots \bar{v}(s_i) - v_n(s_1) \dots v_n(s_i)] ds_1 \dots ds_i \right|$$

$$+ \left| \int \dots \int [K(\bar{x}, s_1, \dots, s_i) - K(x_n, s_1, \dots, s_i)] v_n(s_1) \dots v_n(s_i) ds_1 \dots ds_i \right|.$$

Because of the continuity of K the second term on the right-hand side may be made arbitrarily small by choosing n sufficiently large. In order to show that the same applies also to the first term we continue as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} & \left| \int \cdots \int K [\bar{v}(s_1) \cdots \bar{v}(s_i) - v_n(s_1) \cdots v_n(s_i)] ds_1 \cdots ds_i \right| \\ &= \left| \int \cdots \int K \sum_{k=1}^i \bar{v}(s_1) \cdots \bar{v}(s_{k-1}) [\bar{v}(s_k) - v_n(s_k)] \right. \\ & \qquad \qquad \qquad \left. \cdot v_n(s_{k+1}) \cdots v_n(s_i) ds_1 \cdots ds_i \right| \\ &\leq \sum_{k=1}^i \left| \int \cdots \int \left(\int K [\bar{v}(s_k) - v_n(s_k)] ds_k \right) \right. \\ & \qquad \qquad \qquad \left. \cdot \bar{v}(s_1) \cdots \bar{v}(s_{k-1}) v_n(s_{k+1}) \cdots v_n(s_i) ds_1 \cdots ds_i \right| \\ &\leq \sum_{k=1}^i \left\{ \int \cdots \int \left(\int K [\bar{v}(s_k) - v_n(s_k)] ds_k \right)^2 \right. \\ & \qquad \qquad \qquad \left. \cdot ds_1 \cdots ds_{k-1} ds_{k+1} \cdots ds_i \right\}^{1/2} \cdot N^{i-1}. \end{aligned}$$

Since $W\text{-}\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} v_n = \bar{v}$, $\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} (\int K [\bar{v}(s_k) - v_n(s_k)] ds_k) = 0$, and since $|\int K(x, s_1, \dots, s_i) [\bar{v}(s_k) - v_n(s_k)] ds_k| \leq 2N(b-a) \cdot \max |K|$, we see that the sequence of Lebesgue integrable functions $(\int K(x, s_1, \dots, s_i) \cdot [\bar{v}(s_k) - v_n(s_k)] ds_k)^2$ has a common bound and the limit function zero. By Lebesgue's convergence theorem we may conclude that

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \int \cdots \int \left(\int K [\bar{v}(s_k) - v_n(s_k)] ds_k \right)^2 ds_1 \cdots ds_{k-1} ds_{k+1} \cdots ds_i = 0$$

for $k = 1, 2, \dots, i$, so that the proof of the full continuity of $Q(x, v)$ is now complete.

6. A special case. The deductions of §4 are therefore applicable to the integral equation

$$\phi(x) = \lambda \left[f(x) + \sum_{i=1}^m a_i \int \cdots \int K_i(x, s_1, \dots, s_i) \cdot \phi(s_1) \cdots \phi(s_i) ds_1 \cdots ds_i \right].$$

If we assume that $a_m = 1$, $a_i = 0$ for $i = 1, 2, \dots, m-1$, that is, if we consider

$$\phi(x) = \lambda \left[f(x) + \int \cdots \int K_m(x, s_1, \dots, s_m) \cdot \phi(s_1) \cdots \phi(s_m) ds_1 \cdots ds_m \right],$$

we know that it has at least one solution, and that this solution may belong to a finite or an infinite eigenvalue. The homogeneous equation

$$\phi(x) = \lambda \int \cdots \int K_m(x, s_1, \dots, s_m) \phi(s_1) \cdots \phi(s_m) ds_1 \cdots ds_m,$$

however, has always at least one finite eigenvalue. In this case namely (see (6))

$$J(v_n) = 2e_m \int G_m(x, v_n) v_n(x) dx,$$

so that

$$d_n = \frac{2}{m+1} \int G_m(x, \phi_n) \phi_n(x) dx = \frac{2}{m+1} \cdot \frac{N^2}{\lambda_n}$$

or

$$\lambda_n \cdot d_n = (2/(m+1))N^2.$$

But since the functional

$$\frac{1}{2(m+1)} J(v) = \int \cdots \int K_m(x, s_1, \dots, s_m) \cdot v(s_1) \cdots v(s_m) dx ds_1 \cdots ds_m,$$

$K_m \neq 0$, $v \in \bar{H}^2$, certainly has a minimum \bar{d} differing from zero,

$$\bar{\lambda} = \lim_{\bar{n} \rightarrow \infty} \lambda_{\bar{n}} = \frac{2N^2}{\bar{d}(m+1)}$$

is finite.