

Research Article

Existence for Elliptic Equation Involving Decaying Cylindrical Potentials with Subcritical and Critical Exponent

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We consider the existence of nontrivial solutions to elliptic equations with decaying cylindrical potentials and subcritical exponent. We will obtain a local minimizer by using Ekeland's variational principle.

1. Introduction

In this paper, we study the existence of nontrivial solutions of the following problem:

$$-\Delta u - \mu |y|^{-2} u = |y|^{-a\gamma} |u|^{\gamma-2} u (1 + \lambda g(x)) \quad (\mathcal{P}_{\lambda, \mu})$$

in \mathbb{R}^N , $y \neq 0$, $u > 0$,

where $y \in \mathbb{R}^k$, and let k and N be integers such that $N \geq 3$ and k belongs to $\{1, \dots, N\}$. $2^* = 2N/(N-2)$ is the critical Sobolev exponent, $\gamma \leq 2^*$, $0 \leq a < 1$, g is a continuous function on \mathbb{R}^N , and λ and μ are parameters which we will specify later.

We denote point x in \mathbb{R}^N by the pair $(y, z) \in \mathbb{R}^k \times \mathbb{R}^{N-k}$, $\mathcal{D}_0^{1,2} = \mathcal{D}_0^{1,2}((\mathbb{R}^k \setminus \{0\}) \times \mathbb{R}^{N-k})$, and $\mathcal{H}_\mu = \mathcal{H}_\mu((\mathbb{R}^k \setminus \{0\}) \times \mathbb{R}^{N-k})$, the closure of $C_0^\infty((\mathbb{R}^k \setminus \{0\}) \times \mathbb{R}^{N-k})$ with respect to the norms

$$\|u\| = \left(\int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |\nabla u|^2 \right)^{1/2},$$

$$\|u\|_\mu = \left(\int_{\mathbb{R}^N} (|\nabla u|^2 - \mu |y|^{-2} |u|^2) dx \right)^{1/2} \quad (1)$$

with $\mu < \bar{\mu}_k = ((k-2)/2)^2$ for $k \neq 2$.

From the Hardy inequality, it is easy to see that the norm $\|u\|_\mu$ is equivalent to $\|u\|$.

We define the weighted Sobolev space $\mathcal{D} := \mathcal{H}_\mu \cap L^\gamma(\mathbb{R}^N, |y|^{-b} dx) \cap L^2(\mathbb{R}^N, |y|^{-2} dx)$ with $b = a\gamma$, which is a Banach space with respect to the norm defined by $\mathcal{N}(u) := \|u\|_\mu + (\int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |u|^\gamma dx)^{1/\gamma}$.

My motivation of this study is the fact that such equations arise in the search for solitary waves of nonlinear evolution equations of the Schrödinger or Klein-Gordon type (cf. [1–3]). Roughly speaking, a solitary wave is a nonsingular solution which travels as a localized packet in such a way that the physical quantities corresponding to the invariances of the equation are finite and conserved in time. Accordingly, a solitary wave preserves intrinsic properties of particles such as the energy, the angular momentum, and the charge, whose finiteness is strictly related to the finiteness of the L^2 -norm. Owing to their particle-like behavior, solitary waves can be regarded as a model for extended particles and they arise in many problems of mathematical physics, such as classical and quantum field theory, nonlinear optics, fluid mechanics, and plasma physics (see, e.g., [4]).

Several existence and nonexistence results are available in the case $k = N$, and we quote, for example, [5–7] and the references therein. When $\mu = 0$, $g(x) \equiv 1$; problem $(\mathcal{P}_{\lambda, \mu})$ has been studied in the famous papers by Brézis and Nirenberg [8] and Xuan [9] which consider the existence and nonexistence of nontrivial solutions to quasilinear Brézis-Nirenberg-type problems with singular weights.

Concerning the existence result in the case $k < N$, we cite [10, 11] and the references therein. As noticed in [10], for

$\mu < 0$ and $a = 0$, Badiale and Rolando have considered the problem $(\mathcal{P}_{0,\mu})$. They established the existence of nontrivial nonnegative radial solution when $\beta \in (0, 2)$ and $\gamma \in (2_\beta, 2^*)$ or $\beta \in (2, +\infty)$ and $\gamma \in (2^*, 2_\beta)$; in addition, if the function $f(u) = |u|^{\gamma-1}u$ is odd, then $(\mathcal{P}_{0,\mu})$ has infinitely many radial solutions. In [5], Badiale et al. proved the nonexistence of nonzero classical solutions when $k \leq N$ and the pair (β, γ) belongs to the light gray region. That is, $(\beta, \gamma) \in \mathcal{A} = \mathcal{A}_1 \cup \mathcal{A}_2 \cup \mathcal{A}_3$, where

$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{A}_1 &:= \{(\beta, \gamma) \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \beta \in (0, 2), \gamma \notin (2_\beta, 2^*), \gamma \geq 2\} \setminus \{(2, 2^*)\}, \\ \mathcal{A}_2 &:= \{(\beta, \gamma) \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \beta \in (2, N), \gamma \notin (2^*, 2_\beta), \gamma \geq 2\}, \\ \mathcal{A}_3 &:= \{(\beta, \gamma) \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \beta \in [N, +\infty), \gamma \in [2, 2^*]\}.\end{aligned}\quad (2)$$

Since our approach is variational, we define the functional $I_{\lambda,\mu}$ on \mathcal{D} by

$$\begin{aligned}I_{\lambda,\mu}(u) &:= \left(\frac{1}{2}\right) \|u\|_\mu^2 \\ &\quad - \left(\frac{1}{\gamma}\right) \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |u|^\gamma (1 + \lambda g(x)) dx.\end{aligned}\quad (3)$$

We say that $u \in \mathcal{D}$ is a weak solution of the problem $(\mathcal{P}_{\lambda,\mu})$ if it is a nontrivial nonnegative function and satisfies

$$\begin{aligned}\langle I'_{\lambda,\mu}(u), v \rangle &:= \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} (\nabla u \nabla v - \mu |y|^{-2} uv \\ &\quad - |y|^{-b} |u|^{\gamma-2} uv (1 + \lambda g(x))) = 0, \quad \text{for } v \in \mathcal{D}.\end{aligned}\quad (4)$$

Throughout this work, we consider the following regions $\mathcal{R}_1, \mathcal{R}_2$, such that

$$\begin{aligned}\mathcal{R}_1 &:= \{(2, \gamma) \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \gamma \in (2_{2-2a}, 2^*)\}, \\ \mathcal{R}_2 &:= \{(2, \gamma) \in \mathbb{R}^2 : \gamma \in (2, 2_{2-2a})\}\end{aligned}\quad (5)$$

with $2_{2-2a} = 2N/(N - (2 - 2a))$.

Concerning the perturbation g , we assume

$$\begin{aligned}g &\in L^\infty(\mathbb{R}^N), \\ g(x) &> 0 \quad \forall x \in \mathbb{R}^N.\end{aligned}\quad (G)$$

In our work, we prove the existence of at least one critical point of $I_{\lambda,\mu}$ by Ekeland's variational principle in [12].

We will state our main result.

Theorem 1. Assume that $2 < k \leq N$, $\mu < \bar{\mu}_k$, $0 < a < 1$, and (G) hold.

If $(2, \gamma) \in \mathcal{R}_1 \cup \mathcal{R}_2$, then there exists $\Lambda^* > 0$ such that the problem $(\mathcal{P}_{\lambda,\mu})$ has at least one nontrivial solution for any $\lambda > \Lambda^*$.

This paper is organized as follows. In Section 2, we give some preliminaries. Section 3 is devoted to the proof of Theorem 1.

2. Preliminaries

We list here a few integrals inequalities. The first inequality that we need is the weighted Hardy inequality [13]

$$\bar{\mu}_k \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-2} v^2 dx \leq \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |\nabla v|^2 dx, \quad \forall v \in \mathcal{H}_\mu. \quad (6)$$

The starting point for studying $(\mathcal{P}_{\lambda,\mu})$ is the Hardy-Sobolev-Maz'ya inequality that is peculiar to the cylindrical case $k < N$ and that was proved by Gazzini and Musina in [14]. It states that there exists positive constant C_γ such that

$$C_\gamma \left(\int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |v|^\gamma dx \right)^{2/\gamma} \leq \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} (|\nabla v|^2 - \mu |y|^{-2} v^2) dx, \quad (7)$$

for $\mu = 0$; equation of $(\mathcal{P}_{\lambda,\mu})$ is related to a family of inequalities given by Caffarelli et al. [15], for any $v \in C_c^\infty((\mathbb{R}^k \setminus \{0\}) \times \mathbb{R}^{N-k})$. The embedding $\mathcal{H}_\mu \hookrightarrow L^\gamma(\mathbb{R}^N, |y|^{-b} dx)$ is compact, where $b = a\gamma$ and $L^\gamma(\mathbb{R}^N, |y|^{-b} dx)$ is the weighted L^γ space with respect to the norm

$$|u|_{\gamma,b}^2 = \left(\int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |v|^\gamma dx \right)^{2/\gamma}. \quad (8)$$

Definition 2. Assume $2 \leq k < N$, $0 < \mu \leq \bar{\mu}_k$, and $2 < \gamma < 2^*$. Then, the infimum $S_{\mu,\gamma}$ defined by

$$S_{\mu,\gamma} = S_{\mu,\gamma}(k, \gamma) := \inf_{v \in \mathcal{D} \setminus \{0\}} \frac{\int_{\mathbb{R}^N} (|\nabla v|^2 - \mu |y|^{-2} v^2) dx}{\left(\int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |v|^\gamma dx \right)^{2/\gamma}} \quad (9)$$

is achieved on \mathcal{H}_μ .

Lemma 3. Let $(u_n) \subset \mathcal{D}$ be a Palais-Smale sequence $((PS)_\delta)$ for short) of $I_{\lambda,\mu}$ such that

$$\begin{aligned}I_{\lambda,\mu}(u_n) &\longrightarrow \delta, \\ I'_{\beta,\lambda,\mu}(u_n) &\longrightarrow 0\end{aligned}\quad (10)$$

in \mathcal{D}' (dual of \mathcal{D}) as $n \rightarrow \infty$,

for some $\delta \in \mathbb{R}$. Then, $u_n \rightharpoonup u$ in \mathcal{D} and $I'_{\beta,\lambda,\mu}(u) = 0$.

Proof. From (10), we have

$$\begin{aligned}\left(\frac{1}{2}\right) \|u_n\|_\mu^2 - \left(\frac{1}{\gamma}\right) \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |u_n|^\gamma (1 + \lambda g(x)) dx \\ = \delta + o_n(1),\end{aligned}\quad (11)$$

$$\|u_n\|_\mu^2 - \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |u_n|^\gamma (1 + \lambda g(x)) dx = o_n(1),$$

for n large,

where $o_n(1)$ denotes $o_n(1) \rightarrow 0$ as $n \rightarrow \infty$. Then,

$$\begin{aligned}\delta + o_n(1) &= I_{\lambda,\mu}(u_n) - \left(\frac{1}{\gamma}\right) \langle I'_{\beta,\lambda,\mu}(u_n), u_n \rangle \\ &= \left(\frac{\gamma-2}{2\gamma}\right) \|u_n\|_\mu^2,\end{aligned}\quad (12)$$

and (u_n) is bounded in \mathcal{D} . Going if necessary to a subsequence, we can assume that there exists $u \in \mathcal{D}$ such that

$$\begin{aligned} u_n &\rightharpoonup u \quad \text{in } \mathcal{D}, \\ u_n &\longrightarrow u \quad \text{in } L^{\gamma}(\mathbb{R}^N, |y|^{-b} dx), \\ u_n &\longrightarrow u \quad \text{a.e. in } \mathbb{R}^N. \end{aligned} \quad (13)$$

Consequently, we get, for all $v \in C_0^{\infty}((\mathbb{R}^k \setminus \{0\}) \times \mathbb{R}^{N-k})$,

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} (\nabla u \nabla v - \mu |y|^{-2} uv \\ - |y|^{-b} |u|^{\gamma-2} uv (1 + \lambda g(x))) = 0, \end{aligned} \quad (14)$$

which means that

$$I'_{\beta, \lambda, \mu}(u) = 0. \quad (15)$$

□

3. Existence Result

Firstly, we require the following lemmas.

Lemma 4. Let $(u_n) \subset \mathcal{D}$ be a $(PS)_{\delta}$ sequence of $I_{\lambda, \mu}$ for some $\delta \in \mathbb{R}$. Then,

$$u_n \rightharpoonup u \quad \text{in } \mathcal{D} \quad (16)$$

and either

$$\begin{aligned} u_n &\longrightarrow u \\ \text{or } \delta &\geq I_{\lambda, \mu}(u) + \left(\frac{(\gamma-2)}{2\gamma} \right) (S_{\mu, \gamma})^{\gamma/(\gamma-2)}. \end{aligned} \quad (17)$$

Proof. We know that (u_n) is bounded in \mathcal{D} . Up to a subsequence if necessary, we have that

$$\begin{aligned} u_n &\rightharpoonup u \quad \text{in } \mathcal{D} \\ u_n &\longrightarrow u \quad \text{a.e. in } \mathbb{R}^N. \end{aligned} \quad (18)$$

Denote $v_n = u_n - u$, and then $v_n \rightharpoonup 0$. As in Brézis and Lieb [16], we have

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |u_n|^{\gamma} &= \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |v_n|^{\gamma} + \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |u|^{\gamma}, \\ \|u_n\|_{\mu}^2 &= \|v_n\|_{\mu}^2 + \|u\|_{\mu}^2. \end{aligned} \quad (19)$$

From Lebesgue theorem and by using the assumption (G), we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} g(x) |y|^{-b} |u_n|^{\gamma} dx \\ = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} g(x) |y|^{-b} |u|^{\gamma} dx. \end{aligned} \quad (20)$$

Then, we deduce that

$$\begin{aligned} I_{\lambda, \mu}(u_n) &= I_{\lambda, \mu}(u) + \left(\frac{1}{2} \right) \|v_n\|_{\mu}^2 \\ &\quad - \left(\frac{1}{\gamma} \right) \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |v_n|^{\gamma} + o_n(1), \end{aligned} \quad (21)$$

$$\langle I'_{\lambda, \mu}(u_n), u_n \rangle = \|v_n\|_{\mu}^2 - \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |v_n|^{\gamma} + o_n(1).$$

From the fact that $v_n \rightharpoonup 0$ in \mathcal{D} , we can assume that

$$\lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \|v_n\|_{\mu}^2 = \lim_{n \rightarrow \infty} \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |v_n|^{\gamma} = \alpha \geq 0. \quad (22)$$

Assuming that $\alpha > 0$, we have by definition of $S_{\mu, \gamma}$

$$\alpha \geq S_{\mu, \gamma} I^{(2/\gamma)}, \quad (23)$$

and so

$$\alpha \geq (S_{\mu, \gamma})^{\gamma/(\gamma-2)}. \quad (24)$$

Then, we get

$$\delta \geq I_{\lambda, \mu}(u) + \left(\frac{(\gamma-2)}{2\gamma} \right) (S_{\mu, \gamma})^{\gamma/(\gamma-2)}. \quad (25)$$

Therefore, if not, we obtain $\alpha = 0$. That is, $u_n \rightarrow u$ in \mathcal{D} . □

Lemma 5. Suppose that $2 < k \leq N$, $\mu < \bar{\mu}_k$, and (G) hold. If $(2, \gamma) \in \mathcal{R}_1 \cup \mathcal{R}_2$, then there exist $\Lambda^* > 0$ and ϱ and ν positive constants such that, for all $\lambda > \Lambda^*$,

(i) there exist $\omega \in \mathbb{R}^N$ such that $I_{\lambda, \mu}(\omega) < 0$,

(ii) we have

$$I_{\lambda, \mu}(u) \geq \nu > 0 \quad \text{for } \|u\|_{\mu} = \varrho_0. \quad (26)$$

Proof. (i) Let $t_0 > 0$ where t_0 is small, and $\phi \in C_0^{\infty}((\mathbb{R}^k \setminus \{0\}) \times \mathbb{R}^{N-k})$ such that $\phi \not\equiv 0$. Choosing $\Lambda^* = |t_0 \phi|^{1-\gamma}$, then, if $\lambda > \Lambda^*$ large enough,

$$\begin{aligned} I_{\lambda, \mu}(t_0 \phi) &:= \left(\frac{t_0^2}{2} \right) \|\phi\|_{\mu}^2 - \left(\frac{t_0^{\gamma}}{\gamma} \right) \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |\phi|^{\gamma} 1 \\ &\quad - \left(\frac{t_0^{\gamma}}{\gamma} \right) \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |\phi|^{\gamma} \lambda g(x) \\ &< \left(\frac{t_0^2}{2} \right) \|\phi\|_{\mu}^2 - \left(\frac{t_0^{\gamma}}{\gamma} \right) \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |\phi|^{\gamma} 1 \\ &\quad - \left(\frac{t_0}{\gamma} \right) \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |\phi| g(x) < 0. \end{aligned} \quad (27)$$

Thus, if $\omega = t_0 \phi$, we obtain that $I_{\lambda, \mu}(\omega) < 0$.

(ii) By the Holder inequality and the definition of $S_{\mu,\gamma}$ and since $\gamma > 2$, we get for all $u \in \mathcal{D} \setminus \{0\}$

$$\begin{aligned} I_{\lambda,\mu}(u) &:= \left(\frac{1}{2}\right) \|u\|_{\mu}^2 \\ &\quad - \left(\frac{1}{\gamma}\right) \int_{\mathbb{R}^N} |y|^{-b} |u|^{\gamma} (1 + \lambda g(x)) dx \\ &\geq \left(\frac{1}{2}\right) \|u\|_{\mu}^2 - \left(\frac{1}{\gamma}\right) S_{\mu,\gamma} \|u\|_{\mu}^{\gamma} (1 + \lambda \|g\|_{\infty}). \end{aligned} \quad (28)$$

If $\lambda > \Lambda^*$, then there exist $\nu > 0$ and $\varrho_0 > 0$ small enough such that

$$I_{\lambda,\mu}(u) \geq \nu > 0 \quad \text{for } \|u\|_{\mu} = \varrho_0. \quad (29)$$

We also assume that t_0 is small enough such that $\|t_0\phi\|_{\mu} < \varrho_0$. Thus, we have

$$\begin{aligned} c_1 &= \inf \{I_{\lambda,\mu}(u) : u \in B_{\varrho_0}\} < 0, \\ &\quad \text{where } B_{\varrho_0} = \{u \in \mathcal{D}, \mathcal{N}(u) \leq \varrho_0\}. \end{aligned} \quad (30)$$

Using Ekeland's variational principle, for the complete metric space \overline{B}_{ϱ_0} with respect to the norm of \mathcal{D} , we can prove that there exists a $(PC)_{c_1}$ sequence $(u_n) \subset \overline{B}_{\varrho_0}$ such that $u_n \rightharpoonup u_1$ for some u_1 with $\mathcal{N}(u_1) \leq \varrho_0$.

Now, we claim that $u_n \rightarrow u_1$. If not, by Lemma 4, we have

$$\begin{aligned} c_1 &\geq I_{\lambda,\mu}(u_1) + \left(\frac{\gamma-2}{2\gamma}\right) (S_{\mu,\gamma})^{\gamma/(\gamma-2)} \\ &\geq c_1 + \left(\frac{\gamma-2}{2\gamma}\right) (S_{\mu,\gamma})^{\gamma/(\gamma-2)} > c_1, \end{aligned} \quad (31)$$

which is a contradiction.

Then, we obtain a critical point u_1 of $I_{\lambda,\mu}$ for all $\lambda > \Lambda^*$ large enough satisfying

$$c_1 = \left(\frac{\gamma-2}{2\gamma}\right) \|u_1\|_{\mu}^2 > 0. \quad (32)$$

□

Proof of Theorem 1. From Lemmas 4 and 5, we can deduce that there exists at least a nontrivial solution u_1 for our problem $(\mathcal{P}_{\lambda,\mu})$ with positive energy. □

Conflict of Interests

The author declares that there is no conflict of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

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