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# Remarks on inequalities of Hardy-Sobolev Type

Ying-Xiong Xiao

Correspondence: yxxiao.  
math@gmail.com  
School of Mathematics and  
Statistics, Xiaogan University,  
Xiaogan 432000 Hubei, People's  
Republic of China

## Abstract

We obtain the sharp constants of some Hardy-Sobolev-type inequalities proved by Balinsky et al. (Banach J Math Anal 2(2):94-106).

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## 1. Introduction

Hardy inequality in  $\mathbb{R}^n$  reads, for all  $f \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^n)$  and  $n \geq 3$ ,

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\nabla f|^2 dx \geq \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \frac{f^2}{|x|^2} dx. \quad (1.1)$$

The Sobolev inequality states that, for all  $f \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^n)$  and  $n \geq 3$ ,

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\nabla f|^2 dx \geq S_n \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |f|^{2^*} dx \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}}, \quad (1.2)$$

where  $2^* = \frac{2n}{n-2}$  and  $S_n = \pi n(n-2) (\Gamma(\frac{n}{2})/\Gamma(n)) \frac{2}{n}$  is the best constant (cf. [1,2]). A

result of Stubbe [3] states that for  $0 \leq \delta < \frac{(n-2)^2}{4}$ ,

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\nabla f|^2 dx - \delta \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} \frac{f^2}{|x|^2} dx \geq \frac{\left( \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} - \delta \right)^{\frac{n-1}{n}}}{\left( \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} \right)^{\frac{n-1}{n}}} S_n \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |f|^{2^*} dx \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}} \quad (1.3)$$

and the constant in (1.3) is sharp. Recently, Balinsky et al. [4] prove analogous inequalities for the operator  $\mathcal{L} := \mathbf{x} \cdot \nabla$ . One of the results states that, for  $0 \leq \delta < n^2/4$  and  $f \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^n)$ ,

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\mathcal{L}f|^2 dx - \delta \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} f^2 dx \geq C \left( \frac{n^2}{4} - \delta \right)^{\frac{n-1}{n}} S_n \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |rF|^{2^*} dx \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}}, \quad (1.4)$$

where  $F(r)$  is the integral mean of  $f$  over the unit sphere  $\mathbb{S}^{n-1}$ , i.e.,

$$F(r) = \frac{1}{|\mathbb{S}^{n-1}|} \int_{\mathbb{S}^{n-1}} f(r\omega) d\omega,$$

and  $|\mathbb{S}^{n-1}| = \int_{\mathbb{S}^{n-1}} d\omega = \frac{2\pi^{n/2}}{\Gamma(n/2)}$ . Here, we use the polar coordinates  $x = r\omega$ . The aim of this note is to look for the sharp constant of inequality (1.4). To this end, we have:

**Theorem 1.1.** *Let  $f \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^n)$  and  $n \geq 3$ . There holds, for  $0 \leq \delta < \frac{n^2}{4}$ ,*

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\mathcal{L}f|^2 dx - \delta \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} f^2 dx \geq \frac{\left(\frac{n^2}{4} - \delta\right)^{\frac{n-1}{n}}}{\left(\frac{(n-2)^2}{4}\right)^{\frac{n-1}{n}}} S_n \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |rF(r)|^{2^*} dx \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}} \quad (1.5)$$

and the constant in (1.5) is sharp.

When  $\delta = n^2/4$ , we have the following Theorem, which generalize the results of [4], Corollary 4.6.

**Theorem 1.2.** *If  $f$  is supported in the annulus  $A_R := \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : R^{-1} < |x| < R\}$ , then*

$$\int_{A_R} |\mathcal{L}f|^2 dx - \frac{n^2}{4} \int_{A_R} f^2 dx \geq [2(n-2) \ln R]^{-\frac{2(n-1)}{n}} S_n \left( \int_{A_R} |rF(r)|^{2^*} dx \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}}.$$

## 2. The proofs

We first recall the Bliss lemma [5]:

**Lemma 2.1.** *For  $s \geq 0$ ,  $q > p > 1$  and  $r = q/p - 1$ ,*

$$\left( \int_0^\infty \left| \int_0^s g(t) dt \right|^q s^{r-q} ds \right)^{p/q} \leq C_{p,q} \int_0^\infty |g(t)|^p dt,$$

where

$$C_{p,q} = (q - r - 1)^{-p/q} \left( \frac{r\Gamma(q/r)}{\Gamma(1/r)\Gamma((q-1)/r)} \right)^{rp/q}$$

is the sharp constant. Equality is attained for functions of the form

$$g(t) = c_1(c_2 s^r + 1)^{-\frac{r+1}{r}}, \quad c_1 > 0, c_2 > 0.$$

Using the Bliss lemma, we can prove the Theorem 1.1 for the radial function  $f$ , i.e.,  $f(x) = \tilde{f}(|x|)$  for some  $\tilde{f} \in C_0^\infty([0, \infty))$ .

**Lemma 2.2.** Let  $f(|x|) \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^n)$  and  $n \geq 3$ . There holds, for  $0 \leq \delta < \frac{n^2}{4}$

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\mathcal{L}f|^2 dx - \delta \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} f^2 dx \geq \frac{\left(\frac{n^2}{4} - \delta\right) \frac{n-1}{n}}{\left(\frac{(n-2)^2}{4}\right) \frac{n-1}{n}} S_n \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |rF(r)|^{2^*} dx \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}} \quad (2.1)$$

and the constant in (2.1) is sharp.

*Proof.* We note if  $f$  is radial, then  $F(r) = f(r)$  and  $\mathcal{L}f = rf'(r)$ . Therefore, inequality (2.1) is equivalent to

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_0^\infty |f'(r)|^2 r^{n+1} dr - \delta \int_0^\infty |f(r)|^2 r^{n-1} dr \\ & \geq \frac{\left(\frac{n^2}{4} - \delta\right) \frac{n-1}{n}}{\left(\frac{(n-2)^2}{4}\right) \frac{n-1}{n}} S_n \cdot |\mathbb{S}^{n-1}|^{-\frac{2}{n}} \left( \int_0^\infty |f(r)|^{2^*} r^{2^*+n-1} dx \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}}. \end{aligned} \quad (2.2)$$

Let  $0 \leq \beta < n/2$  and set  $g(r) = r^\beta f(r)$ . Through integration by parts, we have that

$$\int_0^\infty |g'(r)|^2 r^{n+1-2\beta} dr = \int_0^\infty |f'(r)|^2 r^{n+1} dr - \beta(n-\beta) \int_0^\infty |f(r)|^2 r^{n-1} dr. \quad (2.3)$$

Make the change of variables  $s = r^{n-2\beta}$ ,

$$\int_0^\infty |g'(r)|^2 r^{n+1-2\beta} dr = (n-2\beta) \int_0^\infty s^2 \left| \frac{\partial g}{\partial s} \right|^2 ds. \quad (2.4)$$

On the other hand, set  $h(s) = \frac{\partial g}{\partial s}$  so that  $g = -\int_s^{+\infty} h(t) dt$ , we have

$$\int_0^\infty s^2 \left| \frac{\partial g}{\partial s} \right|^2 ds = \int_0^\infty s^2 h^2 ds = \int_0^\infty |w(s)|^2 ds,$$

where  $w(s) = s^{-2} h(s^{-1})$ . By Bliss lemma,

$$\int_0^\infty |w(s)|^2 ds \geq \left(\frac{n}{n-2}\right) \frac{n-2}{n} \left(\frac{\Gamma(n/2)\Gamma(1+n/2)}{\Gamma(n)}\right) \frac{2}{n} \left( \int_0^\infty \left| \int_0^s |w(t)| dt \right|^{2^*} s^{\frac{2-2n}{n-2}} ds \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}},$$

i.e.,

$$\begin{aligned}
 \int_0^\infty s^2 \left| \frac{\partial g}{\partial s} \right|^2 ds &= \int_0^\infty s^2 h^2 ds = \int_0^\infty |w(s)|^2 ds \\
 &\geq \left( \frac{n}{n-2} \right)^{\frac{n-2}{n}} \left( \frac{\Gamma(n/2)\Gamma(1+n/2)}{\Gamma(n)} \right)^{\frac{2}{n}} \left( \int_0^\infty \left| \int_0^s |w(t)| dt \right|^{2^*} \frac{2-2n}{s^{n-2}} ds \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}} \\
 &= \left( \frac{n}{n-2} \right)^{\frac{n-2}{n}} \left( \frac{\Gamma(n/2)\Gamma(1+n/2)}{\Gamma(n)} \right)^{\frac{2}{n}} \left( \int_0^\infty \left| \int_s^\infty |h(t)| dt \right|^{2^*} \frac{2}{s^{n-2}} ds \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}} \\
 &\geq \left( \frac{n}{n-2} \right)^{\frac{n-2}{n}} \left( \frac{\Gamma(n/2)\Gamma(1+n/2)}{\Gamma(n)} \right)^{\frac{2}{n}} \left( \int_0^\infty |g|^{2^*} s^{\frac{2}{n-2}} ds \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}}.
 \end{aligned} \tag{2.5}$$

Recall that  $s = r^{n-2\beta}$  and  $g(r) = r^\beta f(r)$ ,

$$\int_0^\infty g^{2^*} s^{\frac{2}{n-2}} ds = (n-2\beta) \int_0^\infty (r^{1-\beta} g)^{2^*} r^{n-1} dr = (n-2\beta) \int_0^\infty (rf)^{2^*} r^{n-1} dr. \tag{2.6}$$

Therefore, by (2.3), (2.4), (2.5) and (2.6),

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\int_0^\infty |f'(r)|^2 r^{n+1} dr - \beta(n-\beta) \int_0^\infty |f(r)|^2 r^{n-1} dr \\
 &= (n-2\beta) \int_0^\infty s^2 \left| \frac{\partial g}{\partial s} \right|^2 ds \\
 &\geq (n-2\beta)^{1+\frac{2}{2^*}} \left( \frac{n}{n-2} \right)^{\frac{n-2}{n}} \left( \frac{\Gamma(n/2)\Gamma(1+n/2)}{\Gamma(n)} \right)^{\frac{2}{n}} \left( \int_0^\infty (rf)^{2^*} r^{n-1} dr \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}} \\
 &= (n-2\beta)^{\frac{2n-2}{n}} \left( \frac{n}{n-2} \right)^{\frac{n-2}{n}} \left( \frac{\Gamma(n/2)\Gamma(1+n/2)}{\Gamma(n)} \right)^{\frac{2}{n}} \left( \int_0^\infty (rf)^{2^*} r^{n-1} dr \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}}.
 \end{aligned}$$

Since  $|\mathbb{S}^{n-1}| = \int_{\mathbb{S}^{n-1}} d\omega = \frac{2\pi^{n/2}}{\Gamma(n/2)}$  and  $S_n = \pi n(n-2)(\Gamma(\frac{n}{2})/\Gamma(n))\frac{2}{n}$ , we have

$$\begin{aligned}
 &\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\mathcal{L}f|^2 dx - \beta(n-\beta) \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} f^2 dx \\
 &= |\mathbb{S}^{n-1}| \int_0^\infty |f'(r)|^2 r^{n+1} dr - \beta(n-\beta) |\mathbb{S}^{n-1}| \int_0^\infty |f(r)|^2 r^{n-1} dr \\
 &\geq |\mathbb{S}^{n-1}| \cdot (n-2\beta)^{\frac{2n-2}{n}} \left( \frac{n}{n-2} \right)^{\frac{n-2}{n}} \left( \frac{\Gamma(n/2)\Gamma(1+n/2)}{\Gamma(n)} \right)^{\frac{2}{n}} \left( \int_0^\infty (rf)^{2^*} r^{n-1} dr \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}} \\
 &= |\mathbb{S}^{n-1}|^{\frac{2}{n}} (n-2\beta)^{\frac{2n-2}{n}} \left( \frac{n}{n-2} \right)^{\frac{n-2}{n}} \left( \frac{\Gamma(n/2)\Gamma(1+n/2)}{\Gamma(n)} \right)^{\frac{2}{n}} \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |rf(r)|^{2^*} dx \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}} \\
 &= \left( \frac{n-2\beta}{n-2} \right)^{\frac{2n-2}{n}} S_n \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |rf(r)|^{2^*} dx \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}}.
 \end{aligned}$$

Let  $\beta = \frac{n - \sqrt{n^2 - 4\delta}}{2}$  when  $0 \leq \delta < n^2/4$ . Then,  $0 \leq \beta < n/2$  and  $\delta = \beta(n - \beta)$ . Therefore,

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\mathcal{L}f|^2 dx - \delta \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} f^2 dx \geq \left( \frac{n^2 - 4\delta}{(n - 2)^2} \right)^{\frac{n-1}{n}} S_n \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |rf(r)|^{2^*} dx \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}}.$$

Inequality (2.1) follows.

Now we can prove Theorem 1.1.

**Proof of Theorem 1.1.** Decomposing  $f$  into spherical harmonics, we get (see e.g. [6])

$$f = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} f_k := \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} g_k(r)\phi_k(\sigma),$$

where  $\phi_k(\sigma)$  are the orthonormal eigenfunctions of the Laplace-Beltrami operator with responding eigenvalues

$$c_k = k(N + k - 2), \quad k \geq 0.$$

The functions  $g_k(r)$  belong to  $C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^n)$ , satisfying  $g_k(r) = O(r^k)$  and  $g'_k(r) = O(r^{k-1})$  as  $r \rightarrow 0$ . By orthogonality,

$$F(r) = \frac{1}{|\mathbb{S}^{n-1}|} \int_{\mathbb{S}^{n-1}} f(r\omega) d\omega = g_0(r).$$

On the other hand,

$$\mathcal{L}f(x) = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} r \frac{\partial(g_k(r)\phi_k)}{\partial r} = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} r g'_k(r)\phi_k(\sigma).$$

Here, we use the radial derivative  $\frac{\partial}{\partial r} = \frac{\mathbf{x} \cdot \nabla}{|\mathbf{x}|} = \frac{\mathcal{L}}{|\mathbf{x}|}$ . Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\mathcal{L}f|^2 dx - \delta \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} f^2 dx &= \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} r^2 |g'_k(r)|^2 dx - \delta \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} g_k^2 dx \right) \\ &\geq \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} r^2 |g'_0(r)|^2 dx - \delta \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} g_0^2 dx = \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} r^2 |F'(r)|^2 dx - \delta \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} F(r)^2 dx \end{aligned}$$

since

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\mathcal{L}u|^2 dx \geq \frac{n^2}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} u^2 dx$$

holds for all  $u \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^n)$  and  $\mathcal{L}u = ru'(r)$  if  $u$  is radial. By Lemma 2.2,

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} r^2 |F'(r)|^2 dx - \delta \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} F(r)^2 dx \geq \frac{\left(\frac{n^2}{4} - \delta\right) \frac{n-1}{n}}{\left(\frac{(n-2)^2}{4}\right) \frac{n-1}{n}} S_n \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |rF(r)|^{2^*} dx \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}}$$

Therefore,

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\mathcal{L}f|^2 dx - \delta \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} f^2 dx \\ & \geq \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} r^2 |F'(r)|^2 dx - \delta \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} F(r)^2 dx \\ & \geq \frac{\left(\frac{n^2}{4} - \delta\right) \frac{n-1}{n}}{\left(\frac{(n-2)^2}{4}\right) \frac{n-1}{n}} S_n \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |rF(r)|^{2^*} dx \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}}. \end{aligned}$$

The proof of Theorem 1.1 is completed.

**Proof of Theorem 1.2.** We denote by  $B_R \subset \mathbb{R}^N$  the unit ball centered at zero. Step 1. Assume  $f$  is radial and  $f \in C_0^\infty(B_R)$ . Then,

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_{B_R} |\mathcal{L}f|^2 dx - \frac{n^2}{4} \int_{B_R} f^2 dx = \int_{B_R} |rf'(r)|^2 dx - \frac{n^2}{4} \int_{B_R} f^2(r) dx \\ & = \int_{B_R} |(rf(r))'|^2 dx - \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} \int_{B_R} \frac{(rf)^2}{|x|^2} dx. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, by Theorem B in [7],

$$\begin{aligned} & \int_{B_R} |(rf(r))'|^2 dx - \frac{(n-2)^2}{4} \int_{B_R} \frac{(rf)^2}{|x|^2} dx \\ & \geq (n-2)^{-\frac{2(n-1)}{n}} S_n \left( \int_{B_R} X_1^{\frac{2(n-1)}{n-2}} \left(a, \frac{|x|}{R}\right) |rf|^{\frac{2n}{n-2}} dx \right)^{\frac{n-2}{n}}, \end{aligned}$$

where

$$X_1(a, s) := (a - \ln s)^{-1}, \quad a > 0, \quad 0 < s \leq 1.$$

Thus,

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{B_R} |\mathcal{L}f|^2 dx - \frac{n^2}{4} \int_{B_R} f^2 dx &= \int_{B_R} |rf'(r)|^2 dx - \frac{n^2}{4} \int_{B_R} f^2(r) dx \\ &\geq (n-2)^{-\frac{2(n-1)}{n}} S_n \left( \int_{B_R} X_1^{\frac{2(n-1)}{n-2}} \left( a, \frac{|x|}{R} \right) |rf|^{n-2} dx \right)^{\frac{n-2}{n}}. \end{aligned}$$

Step 2. Assume  $f$  is not radial and  $f \in C_0^\infty(B_R)$ . We extend  $f$  as zero outside  $B_R$ . So  $f \in C_0^\infty(\mathbb{R}^n)$ . Decomposing  $f$  into spherical harmonics, we have

$$f = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} f_k := \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} g_k(r) \phi_k(\sigma),$$

where  $\phi_k(\sigma)$  are the orthonormal eigenfunctions of the Laplace-Beltrami operator with responding eigenvalues

$$c_k = k(N + k - 2), \quad k \geq 0.$$

The functions  $f_k(r)$  belong to  $C_0^\infty(B_R)$ . By the proof of Theorem 1.1 and Step 1,

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\mathcal{L}f|^2 dx - \frac{n^2}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} f^2 dx &= \sum_{k=0}^{\infty} \left( \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} r^2 |g'_k(r)|^2 dx - \frac{n^2}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} g_k^2 dx \right) \\ &\geq \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} r^2 |g'_0(r)|^2 dx - \frac{n^2}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} g_0^2 dx = \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} r^2 |F'(r)|^2 dx - \frac{n^2}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} F(r)^2 dx \\ &\geq (n-2)^{-\frac{2(n-1)}{n}} S_n \left( \int_{B_R} X_1^{\frac{2(n-1)}{n-2}} \left( a, \frac{|x|}{R} \right) |rF|^{n-2} dx \right)^{\frac{n-2}{n}}. \end{aligned}$$

Step 3. By Step 1 and Step 2, the following inequality holds for  $f \in C_0^\infty(B_R)$

$$\int_{\mathbb{R}^n} |\mathcal{L}f|^2 dx - \frac{n^2}{4} \int_{\mathbb{R}^n} f^2 dx \geq (n-2)^{-\frac{2(n-1)}{n}} S_n \left( \int_{B_R} X_1^{\frac{2(n-1)}{n-2}} \left( a, \frac{|x|}{R} \right) |rF|^{n-2} dx \right)^{\frac{n-2}{n}}.$$

We note if  $R^{-1} < |x| < R$ , then

$$X_1^{\frac{2(N-1)}{N-2}} \left( a, \frac{|x|}{D} \right) = \left( \frac{1}{a - \ln \frac{|x|}{R}} \right)^{\frac{2(N-1)}{N-2}} \geq \left( \frac{1}{a + 2 \ln R} \right)^{\frac{2(N-1)}{N-2}}.$$

Therefore, If  $f$  is supported in the annulus  $A_R := \{x \in \mathbb{R}^n : R^{-1} < |x| < R\}$ , then

$$\int_{A_R} |\mathcal{L}f|^2 dx - \frac{n^2}{4} \int_{A_R} f^2 dx \geq [(n-2)(2 \ln R + a)]^{-\frac{2(n-1)}{n}} S_n \left( \int_{A_R} |rF(r)|^{2^*} dx \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}}.$$

Letting  $a \rightarrow 0$ , we have

$$\int_{A_R} |\mathcal{L}f|^2 dx - \frac{n^2}{4} \int_{A_R} f^2 dx \geq [2(n-2) \ln R]^{-\frac{2(n-1)}{n}} S_n \left( \int_{A_R} |rF(r)|^{2^*} dx \right)^{\frac{2}{2^*}}.$$

The proof of Theorem 2 is completed.

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#### Authors' contributions

YX designed and performed all the steps of proof in this research and also wrote the paper. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

#### Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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