

## SIGNED TOTAL $k$ -DOMATIC NUMBERS OF DIGRAPHS

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ABSTRACT. Let  $D$  be a finite and simple digraph with vertex set  $V(D)$ , and let  $f : V(D) \rightarrow \{-1, 1\}$  be a two-valued function. If  $k \geq 1$  is an integer and  $\sum_{x \in N^-(v)} f(x) \geq k$  for each  $v \in V(D)$ , where  $N^-(v)$  consists of all vertices of  $D$  from which arcs go into  $v$ , then  $f$  is a signed total  $k$ -dominating function on  $D$ . A set  $\{f_1, f_2, \dots, f_d\}$  of distinct signed total  $k$ -dominating functions of  $D$  with the property that  $\sum_{i=1}^d f_i(v) \leq 1$ , for each  $v \in V(D)$ , is called a *signed total  $k$ -dominating family* (of functions) of  $D$ . The maximum number of functions in a signed total  $k$ -dominating family of  $D$  is the *signed total  $k$ -domatic number* of  $D$ , denoted by  $d_{k,S}^+(D)$ . In this note we initiate the study of the signed total  $k$ -domatic numbers of digraphs and present some sharp upper bounds for this parameter.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In this paper,  $D$  is a finite and simple digraph with vertex set  $V = V(D)$  and arc set  $A = A(D)$ . Its underlying graph is denoted  $G(D)$ . We write  $\deg_D^+(v) = \deg^+(v)$  for the *outdegree* of a vertex  $v$  and  $\deg_D^-(v) = \deg^-(v)$  for its *indegree*. The *minimum* and *maximum indegree* are  $\delta^-(D)$  and  $\Delta^-(D)$ , respectively. The sets  $N^+(v) = \{x \mid (v, x) \in A(D)\}$  and  $N^-(v) = \{x \mid (x, v) \in A(D)\}$  are called the *outset* and *inset* of the vertex  $v$ . Likewise,  $N^+[v] = N^+(v) \cup \{v\}$  and  $N^-[v] = N^-(v) \cup \{v\}$ . If  $X \subseteq V(D)$ , then  $D[X]$  is the subdigraph induced by  $X$ . For an arc  $(x, y) \in A(D)$ , the vertex  $y$  is an *outer neighbor* of  $x$  and  $x$  is an *inner neighbor* of  $y$ . Note that for any digraph  $D$  with

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*Key words and phrases.* Digraph, signed total  $k$ -domatic number, signed total  $k$ -dominating function, signed total  $k$ -domination number.

2010 *Mathematics Subject Classification.* 05C69.

*Received:* August 23, 2011.

$m$  arcs,

$$(1.1) \quad \sum_{u \in V(D)} \deg^-(u) = \sum_{u \in V(D)} \deg^+(u) = m.$$

Consult [3] and [4] for notation and terminology which are not defined here.

For a real-valued function  $f : V(D) \rightarrow \mathbf{R}$  the weight of  $f$  is  $w(f) = \sum_{v \in V(D)} f(v)$ , and for  $S \subseteq V(D)$ , we define  $f(S) = \sum_{v \in S} f(v)$ , so  $w(f) = f(V(D))$ . If  $k \geq 1$  is an integer, then the *signed total  $k$ -dominating function* is defined as a function  $f : V(D) \rightarrow \{-1, 1\}$  such that  $f(N^-(v)) = \sum_{x \in N^-(v)} f(x) \geq k$  for every  $v \in V(D)$ . The *signed total  $k$ -domination number* for a digraph  $D$  is

$$\gamma_{kS}^t(D) = \min\{w(f) \mid f \text{ is a signed total } k\text{-dominating function of } D\}.$$

A  $\gamma_{kS}^t(D)$ -function is a signed total  $k$ -dominating function on  $D$  of weight  $\gamma_{kS}^t(D)$ . As the assumption  $\delta^-(D) \geq k$  is necessary, we always assume that when we discuss  $\gamma_{kS}^t(D)$ , all digraphs involved satisfy  $\delta^-(D) \geq k$  and thus  $n(D) \geq k + 1$ .

The signed total  $k$ -domination number of digraphs was introduced by Sheikholeslami and Volkmann [7]. When  $k = 1$ , the signed total  $k$ -domination number  $\gamma_{kS}^t(D)$  is the usual *signed total domination number*  $\gamma_S^t(D)$ , which was introduced by Sheikholeslami in [6].

A set  $\{f_1, f_2, \dots, f_d\}$  of distinct signed total  $k$ -dominating functions on  $D$  with the property that  $\sum_{i=1}^d f_i(v) \leq 1$  for each  $v \in V(D)$ , is called a *signed total  $k$ -dominating family* on  $D$ . The maximum number of functions in a signed total  $k$ -dominating family on  $D$  is the *signed total  $k$ -domatic number* of  $D$ , denoted by  $d_{kS}^t(D)$ . The signed total  $k$ -domatic number is well-defined and  $d_{kS}^t(D) \geq 1$  for all digraphs  $D$  in which  $d_D^-(v) \geq k$  for all  $v \in V$ , since the set consisting of any one STkD function forms a STkD family of  $D$ . A  $d_{kS}^t(D)$ -family of a digraph  $D$  is a STkD family containing  $d_{kS}^t(D)$  STkD functions. When  $k = 1$ , the signed total  $k$ -domatic number of a digraph  $D$  is the usual *signed total domatic number*  $d_{st}(D)$ , which was introduced by Favaron and Sheikholeslami [1].

In this paper we initiate the study of the signed total  $k$ -domatic number of digraphs, and we present different bounds on  $d_{kS}^t(D)$ . Some of our results are extensions of well-known properties of the signed total domatic number  $d_{st}(D) = d_{1S}^t(D)$  of digraphs (see for example [1]) as well as the signed total  $k$ -domatic number of graphs  $G$  (see for example [2, 5]).

We make use of the following results and observations in this paper.

**Observation 1.1.** *Let  $D$  be a digraph of order  $n$ . Then  $\gamma_{kS}^t(D) = n$  if and only if  $k \leq \delta^-(D) \leq k + 1$  and for each  $v \in V(D)$  there exists a vertex  $u \in N^+(v)$  such that  $\deg^-(u) = k$  or  $\deg^-(u) = k + 1$ .*

*Proof.* If  $k \leq \delta^-(D) \leq k + 1$  and for each  $v \in V(D)$  there exists a vertex  $u \in N^+(v)$  such that  $\deg^-(u) = k$  or  $\deg^-(u) = k + 1$ , then trivially  $\gamma_{kS}^t(D) = n$ .

Conversely, assume that  $\gamma_{kS}^t(D) = n$ . By assumption  $k \leq \delta^-(D)$ . Let, to the contrary,  $\delta^-(D) > k + 1$  or there exists a vertex  $v \in V(D)$  such that  $\deg^-(u) \geq k + 2$  for each  $u \in N^+(v)$ . If  $\delta^-(D) > k + 1$ , define  $f : V(D) \rightarrow \{-1, 1\}$  by  $f(v) = -1$  for some fixed  $v$  and  $f(x) = 1$  for  $x \in V(D) \setminus \{v\}$ . Obviously,  $f$  is a signed total  $k$ -dominating function of  $D$  with weight less than  $n$ , a contradiction. Thus  $k \leq \delta^-(D) \leq k + 1$ . Now let  $v \in V(D)$  and  $\deg^-(u) \geq k + 2$  for each  $u \in N^+(v)$ . Define  $f : V(D) \rightarrow \{-1, 1\}$  by  $f(v) = -1$  and  $f(x) = 1$  for  $x \in V(D) \setminus \{v\}$ . Again,  $f$  is a signed total  $k$ -dominating function of  $D$ , a contradiction. This completes the proof.  $\square$

**Observation 1.2.** *Let  $k \geq 1$  be an integer, and let  $D$  be a digraph with  $\delta^-(D) \geq k$ . If for every vertex  $v \in V(D)$  the set  $N^+(v)$  contains a vertex  $x$  such that  $\deg^-(x) \leq k + 1$ , then  $d_{kS}^t(D) = 1$ .*

*Proof.* Assume that  $N^+(v)$  contains a vertex  $x_v$  such that  $\deg^-(x_v) \leq k + 1$  for every vertex  $v \in V(D)$ , and let  $f$  be a signed total  $k$ -dominating function on  $D$ . Since  $\deg^-(x_v) \leq k + 1$ , we deduce that  $f(v) = 1$ . Hence  $f(v) = 1$  for each  $v \in V(D)$  and thus  $d_{kS}^t(D) = 1$ .  $\square$

**Observation 1.3.** *The signed total  $k$ -domatic number of a digraph is an odd integer.*

*Proof.* Let  $\{f_1, f_2, \dots, f_d\}$  be a signed total  $k$ -dominating family on  $D$  such that  $d = d_{kS}^t(D)$ . Suppose to the contrary that  $d_{kS}^t(D)$  is an even integer. If  $x \in V(D)$  is an arbitrary vertex, then  $\sum_{i=1}^d f_i(x) \leq 1$ . On the left-hand side of this inequality a sum of an even number of odd summands occurs. Therefore it is an even number and we obtain  $\sum_{i=1}^d f_i(x) \leq 0$  for each  $x \in V(G)$ . If  $v$  is an arbitrary vertex, then it follows that

$$d \cdot k = \sum_{i=1}^d k \leq \sum_{i=1}^d \sum_{x \in N^-(v)} f_i(x) = \sum_{x \in N^-(v)} \sum_{i=1}^d f_i(x) \leq 0.$$

which is a contradiction, and the proof is complete.  $\square$

## 2. PROPERTIES AND UPPER BOUNDS

In this section we present basic properties of the signed total  $k$ -domatic number, and we find some sharp upper bounds for this parameter.

**Theorem 2.1.** *Let  $D$  be a digraph and  $v \in V(D)$ . Then*

$$d_{kS}^t(D) \leq \begin{cases} \frac{\deg^-(v)}{k} & \text{if } \deg^-(v) \equiv k \pmod{2} \\ \frac{\deg^-(v)}{k+1} & \text{if } \deg^-(v) \equiv k+1 \pmod{2}. \end{cases}$$

Moreover, if the equality holds, then for each function  $f_i$  of a STkD family  $\{f_1, f_2, \dots, f_d\}$  and for every  $u \in N^-(v)$ ,  $\sum_{u \in N^-(v)} f_i(u) = k$  if  $\deg^-(v) \equiv k \pmod{2}$ ,  $\sum_{u \in N^-(v)} f_i(u) = k+1$  if  $\deg^-(v) \equiv k+1 \pmod{2}$  and  $\sum_{i=1}^d f_i(u) = 1$ .

*Proof.* Let  $\{f_1, f_2, \dots, f_d\}$  be a STkD family of  $D$  such that  $d = d_{kS}^t(D)$ . If  $\deg^-(v) \equiv k \pmod{2}$ , then

$$\begin{aligned} d &= \sum_{i=1}^d 1 \leq \sum_{i=1}^d \frac{1}{k} \sum_{u \in N^-(v)} f_i(u) \\ &= \frac{1}{k} \sum_{u \in N^-(v)} \sum_{i=1}^d f_i(u) \leq \frac{1}{k} \sum_{u \in N^-(v)} 1 \\ &= \frac{\deg^-(v)}{k}. \end{aligned}$$

Similarly, if  $\deg^-(v) \equiv k+1 \pmod{2}$ , then

$$\begin{aligned} d &= \sum_{i=1}^d 1 \leq \sum_{i=1}^d \frac{1}{k+1} \sum_{u \in N^-(v)} f_i(u) \\ &= \frac{1}{k+1} \sum_{u \in N^-(v)} \sum_{i=1}^d f_i(u) \leq \frac{1}{k+1} \sum_{u \in N^-(v)} 1 \\ &= \frac{\deg^-(v)}{k+1}. \end{aligned}$$

If  $d_{kS}^t(D) = \frac{\deg^-(v)}{k}$  when  $\deg^-(v) \equiv k \pmod{2}$  or  $d_{kS}^t(D) = \frac{\deg^-(v)}{k+1}$  when  $\deg^-(v) \equiv k+1 \pmod{2}$ , then the two inequalities occurring in the proof of each corresponding case become equalities, which gives the properties given in the statement.  $\square$

**Corollary 2.1.** *Let  $D$  be a digraph and  $1 \leq k \leq \delta^-(D)$ . Then*

$$d_{kS}^t(D) \leq \begin{cases} \frac{\delta^-(D)}{k}, & \text{if } \delta^-(D) \equiv k \pmod{2}, \\ \frac{\delta^-(D)}{k+1}, & \text{if } \delta^-(D) \equiv k+1 \pmod{2}. \end{cases}$$

**Corollary 2.2.** *Let  $k \geq 1$  be an integer, and let  $D$  be a  $(k+2)$ -inregular digraph of order  $n$ . If  $k \geq 2$  or  $k = 1$  and  $n \not\equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ , then  $d_{kS}^t(D) = 1$ .*

*Proof.* By Corollary 2.1,  $d_{kS}^t(D) \leq \frac{k+2}{k}$ . If  $k \geq 2$ , then it follows from Observation 1.3 that  $d_{kS}^t(D) = 1$ . Now let  $k = 1$ . Then  $d_{kS}^t(D) = 1$  or  $d_{kS}^t(D) = 3$  by Observation 1.3. Suppose to the contrary that  $d_{kS}^t(D) = 3$ . Let  $f$  belong to a signed total  $k$ -dominating family on  $D$  of order 3. By Theorem 2.1, we have  $\sum_{x \in N^-(v)} f(x) = 1$  for every  $v \in V(D)$ . This implies that

$$n = \sum_{v \in V(D)} \sum_{x \in N^-(v)} f(x) = \sum_{x \in N^-(v)} \sum_{v \in V(D)} f(x) = 3w(f).$$

Since  $w(f)$  is an integer, 3 is a divisor of  $n$  which contradicts the hypotheses  $n \not\equiv 0 \pmod{3}$ , and the proof is complete. □

**Corollary 2.3.** *Let  $k \geq 1$  be an integer, and let  $D$  be a  $(k+3)$ -inregular digraph of order  $n$ . Then  $d_{kS}^t(D) = 1$ .*

*Proof.* By Corollary 2.1,  $d_{kS}^t(D) \leq \frac{k+3}{k+1}$ . Therefore Observation 1.3 implies that  $d_{kS}^t(D) = 1$ . □

**Theorem 2.2.** *Let  $k \geq 1$  be an integer, and let  $D$  be an  $r$ -inregular digraph of order  $n$  such that  $r \geq k$ . If  $r < 3k$ , then  $d_{kS}^t(D) = 1$ , and if  $r \geq 3k$  and  $(n, r) = 1$ , then*

$$d_{kS}^t(D) < \begin{cases} \frac{r}{k}, & \text{if } r \equiv k \pmod{2}, \\ \frac{r}{k+1}, & \text{if } r \equiv k+1 \pmod{2}. \end{cases}$$

*Proof.* If  $r < 3k$ , then it follows from Corollary 2.1 that  $d_{kS}^t(D) \leq \frac{r}{k} < 3$ . Therefore Observation 1.3 implies that  $d_{kS}^t(D) = 1$ .

Now assume that  $r \geq 3k$  and  $(n, r) = 1$ . First let  $r = \delta^-(D) \equiv k \pmod{2}$  (if  $\delta^-(D) \equiv k+1 \pmod{2}$ , then the proof is similar). Suppose to the contrary that  $d_{kS}^t(D) \geq \frac{\delta^-(D)}{k}$ . Then by Corollary 2.1,  $d_{kS}^t(D) = \frac{\delta^-(D)}{k}$ . Let  $f$  belong to a signed total  $k$ -dominating family on  $D$  of order  $\frac{\delta^-(D)}{k}$ . By Theorem 2.1, we have

$\sum_{x \in N^-(v)} f(x) = k$  for every  $v \in V(D)$ . This implies that

$$nk = \sum_{v \in V(D)} \sum_{x \in N^-(v)} f(x) = \sum_{x \in N^-(v)} \sum_{v \in V(D)} f(x) = rw(f).$$

Since  $w(f)$  is an integer and  $(n, r) = 1$ , the number  $r$  is a divisor of  $k$ . It follows from  $k \leq \delta^-(D) = r$  that  $k = r$ , a contradiction to the hypothesis that  $r \geq 3k$ .  $\square$

**Theorem 2.3.** *Let  $D$  be a digraph with  $\delta^-(D) \geq k$ , and let  $\Delta = \Delta(G(D))$  be the maximum degree of  $G(D)$ . Then*

$$d_{kS}^t(D) \leq \begin{cases} \frac{\Delta}{2k}, & \text{if } \delta^-(D) \equiv k \pmod{2}, \\ \frac{\Delta}{2(k+1)}, & \text{if } \delta^-(D) \equiv k+1 \pmod{2}. \end{cases}$$

*Proof.* First of all, we show that  $\delta^-(D) \leq \Delta/2$ . Suppose to the contrary that  $\delta^-(D) > \Delta/2$ . Then  $\Delta^+(D) \leq \Delta - \delta^-(D) < \Delta/2$ , and (1.1) leads to the contradiction

$$\frac{\Delta \cdot |V(D)|}{2} < \sum_{u \in V(D)} \text{deg}^-(u) = \sum_{u \in V(D)} \text{deg}^+(u) < \frac{\Delta \cdot |V(D)|}{2}.$$

Applying Corollary 2.1, we deduce the desired result.  $\square$

Let  $D$  be a digraph. By  $D^{-1}$  we denote the digraph obtained by reversing all the arcs of  $D$ . A digraph without directed cycles of length 2 is called an *oriented graph*. An oriented graph  $D$  is a *tournament* when either  $(x, y) \in A(D)$  or  $(y, x) \in A(D)$  for each pair of distinct vertices  $x, y \in V(D)$ .

**Theorem 2.4.** *For every oriented graph  $D$  of order  $n$  and  $1 \leq k \leq \min\{\delta^-(D), \delta^-(D^{-1})\}$ ,*

$$(2.1) \quad d_{kS}^t(D) + d_{kS}^t(D^{-1}) \leq \frac{n-1}{k}$$

*with equality if and only if  $D$  is an  $r$ -regular tournament of order  $n = 2r + 1$  and  $k = r$ .*

*Proof.* Since  $\delta^-(D) + \delta^-(D^{-1}) \leq n - 1$ , Corollary 2.1 implies that

$$d_{kS}^t(D) + d_{kS}^t(D^{-1}) \leq \frac{\delta^-(D)}{k} + \frac{\delta^-(D^{-1})}{k} \leq \frac{n-1}{k}.$$

If  $D$  is an  $r$ -regular tournament of order  $n = 2r + 1$  and  $k = r$ , then  $D^{-1}$  is also an  $r$ -regular tournament, and it follows from Observation 1.2 that

$$d_{kS}^t(D) + d_{kS}^t(D^{-1}) = 2 = \frac{2r}{k} = \frac{n-1}{k}.$$

If  $D$  is not a tournament or  $D$  is a non-regular tournament, then  $\delta^-(D) + \delta^-(D^{-1}) \leq n - 2$  and hence we deduce from Corollary 2.1 that

$$d_{kS}^t(D) + d_{kS}^t(D^{-1}) \leq \frac{n - 2}{k}.$$

If  $D$  is an  $r$ -regular tournament, then  $n = 2r + 1$ . If  $k < r < 3k$ , then Theorem 2.2 leads to

$$2 = d_{kS}^t(D) + d_{kS}^t(D^{-1}) < \frac{n - 1}{k}.$$

Finally, assume that  $r \geq 3k$ . We observe that  $(n, r) = (2r + 1, r) = 1$ . Using Theorem 2.2, we deduce that

$$d_{kS}^t(D) + d_{kS}^t(D^{-1}) < \frac{\delta^-(D)}{k} + \frac{\delta^-(D^{-1})}{k} = \frac{n - 1}{k},$$

and the proof is complete. □

**Theorem 2.5.** *Let  $D$  be a digraph of order  $n$  and  $\delta^-(D) \geq k > 0$ . Then  $\gamma_{kS}^t(D) \cdot d_{kS}^t(D) \leq n$ . Moreover if  $\gamma_{kS}^t(D) \cdot d_{kS}^t(D) = n$ , then for each  $d = d_{kS}^t(D)$ -family  $\{f_1, f_2, \dots, f_d\}$  of  $D$  each function  $f_i$  is a  $\gamma_{kS}^t(D)$ -function and  $\sum_{i=1}^d f_i(v) = 1$  for all  $v \in V$ .*

*Proof.* Let  $\{f_1, f_2, \dots, f_d\}$  be a STkD family of  $D$  such that  $d = d_{kS}^t(D)$  and let  $v \in V$ . Then

$$\begin{aligned} d \cdot \gamma_{kS}^t(D) &= \sum_{i=1}^d \gamma_{kS}^t(D) \\ &\leq \sum_{i=1}^d \sum_{v \in V} f_i(v) \\ &= \sum_{v \in V} \sum_{i=1}^d f_i(v) \\ &\leq \sum_{v \in V} 1 \\ &= n. \end{aligned}$$

If  $\gamma_{kS}^t(D) \cdot d_{kS}^t(D) = n$ , then the two inequalities occurring in the proof become equalities. Hence for the  $d_{kS}^t(D)$ -family  $\{f_1, f_2, \dots, f_d\}$  of  $D$  and for each  $i$ ,  $\sum_{v \in V} f_i(v) = \gamma_{kS}^t(D)$ , thus each function  $f_i$  is a  $\gamma_{kS}^t(D)$ -function, and  $\sum_{i=1}^d f_i(v) = 1$  for all  $v$ . □

**Corollary 2.4.** *If  $D$  is a digraph of order  $n$ , then  $\gamma_{kS}^t(D) + d_{kS}^t(D) \leq n + 1$ .*

*Proof.* By Theorem 2.5,

$$(2.2) \quad \gamma_{kS}^t(D) + d_{kS}^t(D) \leq d_{kS}^t(D) + \frac{n}{d_{kS}^t(D)}.$$

Using the fact that the function  $g(x) = x + n/x$  is decreasing for  $1 \leq x \leq \sqrt{n}$  and increasing for  $\sqrt{n} \leq x \leq n$ , this inequality leads to the desired bound immediately.  $\square$

**Corollary 2.5.** *Let  $D$  be a digraph of order  $n \geq 3$ . If  $2 \leq \gamma_{kS}^t(D) \leq n - 1$ , then*

$$\gamma_{kS}^t(D) + d_{kS}^t(D) \leq n.$$

*Proof.* Theorem 2.5 implies that

$$(2.3) \quad \gamma_{kS}^t(D) + d_{kS}^t(D) \leq \gamma_{kS}^t(D) + \frac{n}{\gamma_{kS}^t(D)}.$$

If we define  $x = \gamma_{kS}^t(D)$  and  $g(x) = x + n/x$  for  $x > 0$ , then because  $2 \leq \gamma_{kS}^t(D) \leq n - 1$ , we have to determine the maximum of the function  $g$  on the interval  $I : 2 \leq x \leq n - 1$ . It is easy to see that

$$\begin{aligned} \max_{x \in I} \{g(x)\} &= \max\{g(2), g(n-1)\} \\ &= \max\left\{2 + \frac{n}{2}, n-1 + \frac{n}{n-1}\right\} \\ &= n-1 + \frac{n}{n-1} < n+1, \end{aligned}$$

and we obtain  $\gamma_{kS}^t(D) + d_{kS}^t(D) \leq n$ . This completes the proof.  $\square$

**Corollary 2.6.** *Let  $D$  be a digraph of order  $n$  and let  $k \geq 1$  be an integer. If  $\min\{\gamma_{kS}^t(D), d_{kS}^t(D)\} \geq 2$ , then*

$$\gamma_{kS}^t(D) + d_{kS}^t(D) \leq \frac{n}{2} + 2.$$

*Proof.* Since  $\min\{\gamma_{kS}^t(D), d_{kS}^t(D)\} \geq 2$ , it follows by Theorem 2.5 that  $2 \leq d_{kS}^t(D) \leq \frac{n}{2}$ . By (2.2) and the fact that the maximum of  $g(x) = x + n/x$  on the interval  $2 \leq x \leq n/2$  is  $g(2) = g(n/2)$ , we see that

$$\gamma_{kS}^t(D) + d_{kS}^t(D) \leq d_{kS}^t(D) + \frac{n}{d_{kS}^t(D)} \leq \frac{n}{2} + 2.$$

$\square$

Observation 1.2 shows that Corollary 2.6 is no longer true if  $\min\{\gamma_{kS}^t(D), d_{kS}^t(D)\} = 1$ .



3. SIGNED TOTAL  $k$ -DOMATIC NUMBER OF GRAPHS

The *signed total  $k$ -dominating function* of a graph  $G$  is defined in [8] as a function  $f : V(G) \rightarrow \{-1, 1\}$  such that  $\sum_{x \in N_G(v)} f(x) \geq k$  for all  $v \in V(G)$ . The sum  $\sum_{x \in V(G)} f(x)$  is the weight  $w(f)$  of  $f$ . The minimum of weights  $w(f)$ , taken over all signed total  $k$ -dominating functions  $f$  on  $G$  is called the *signed total  $k$ -domination number* of  $G$ , denoted by  $\gamma_{kS}^t(G)$ . The special case  $k = 1$  was defined and investigated in [10].

A set  $\{f_1, f_2, \dots, f_d\}$  of distinct signed total  $k$ -dominating functions on  $G$  with the property that  $\sum_{i=1}^d f_i(v) \leq 1$  for each  $v \in V(G)$ , is called a *signed total  $k$ -dominating family* on  $G$ . The maximum number of functions in a signed total  $k$ -dominating family on  $G$  is the *signed total  $k$ -domatic number* of  $G$ , denoted by  $d_{kS}^t(G)$ . This parameter was introduced by Khodkar and Sheikholeslami in [5]. In the case  $k = 1$ , we write  $d_{st}(G)$  instead of  $d_{1S}^t(G)$  which was introduced by Henning [2].

The *associated digraph*  $D(G)$  of a graph  $G$  is the digraph obtained from  $G$  when each edge  $e$  of  $G$  is replaced by two oppositely oriented arcs with the same ends as  $e$ . Since  $N_{D(G)}^-(v) = N_G(v)$  for each vertex  $v \in V(G) = V(D(G))$ , the following useful observation is valid.

**Observation 3.1.** *If  $D(G)$  is the associated digraph of a graph  $G$ , then  $\gamma_{kS}^t(D(G)) = \gamma_{kS}^t(G)$  and  $d_{kS}^t(D(G)) = d_{kS}^t(G)$ .*

There are a lot of interesting applications of Observation 3.1, as for example the following results. Using Observation 1.3, we obtain the first one.

**Corollary 3.1.** *(Henning [2]) The signed total domatic number  $d_{st}(G)$  of a graph  $G$  is an odd integer.*

Since  $\delta^-(D(G)) = \delta(G)$ , the next result follows from Observation 3.1 and Corollary 2.1.

**Corollary 3.2.** *(Khodkar and Sheikholeslami [5]) If  $G$  is a graph with minimum degree  $\delta(G) \geq k$ , then*

$$d_{kS}^t(G) \leq \begin{cases} \frac{\delta(G)}{k}, & \text{if } \delta(G) \equiv k \pmod{2}, \\ \frac{\delta(G)}{k+1}, & \text{if } \delta(G) \equiv k+1 \pmod{2}. \end{cases}$$

The case  $k = 1$  in Corollary 3.2 can be found in [2].

In view of Observation 3.1 and Corollary 2.4, we obtain the next result immediately.

**Corollary 3.3.** (*Khodkar and Sheikholeslami* [5]) *If  $G$  is a graph of order  $n$ , then*

$$\gamma_{kS}^t(G) + d_{kS}^t(G) \leq n + 1.$$

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