

# Generalizing the Ramsey Problem through Diameter

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## Abstract

Given a graph  $G$  and positive integers  $d, k$ , let  $f_d^k(G)$  be the maximum  $t$  such that every  $k$ -coloring of  $E(G)$  yields a monochromatic subgraph with diameter at most  $d$  on at least  $t$  vertices. Determining  $f_1^k(K_n)$  is equivalent to determining classical Ramsey numbers for multicolorings. Our results include

- determining  $f_d^k(K_{a,b})$  within 1 for all  $d, k, a, b$
- for  $d \geq 4$ ,  $f_d^3(K_n) = \lceil n/2 \rceil + 1$  or  $\lfloor n/2 \rfloor$  depending on whether  $n \equiv 2 \pmod{4}$  or not
- $f_3^k(K_n) > \frac{n}{k-1+1/k}$

The third result is almost sharp, since a construction due to Calkin implies that  $f_3^k(K_n) \leq \frac{n}{k-1} + k - 1$  when  $k - 1$  is a prime power. The asymptotics for  $f_d^k(K_n)$  remain open when  $d = k = 3$  and when  $d \geq 3, k \geq 4$  are fixed.

## 1 Introduction

The Ramsey problem for multicolorings asks for the minimum  $n$  such that every  $k$ -coloring of the edges of  $K_n$  yields a monochromatic  $K_p$ . This problem has been generalized in many ways (see, e.g., [2, 6, 7, 9, 12, 13, 14]). We begin with the following generalization due to Paul Erdős [8] (see also [11]):

**Problem 1** *What is the maximum  $t$  with the property that every  $k$ -coloring of  $E(K_n)$  yields a monochromatic subgraph of diameter at most two on at least  $t$  vertices?*

A related problem is investigated in [14], where the existence of the Ramsey number is proven when the host graph is not necessarily a clique. Call a subgraph of diameter at most  $d$  a  $d$ -subgraph.

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**Theorem 2** (Tonoyan [14]) *Let  $D, k \geq 1, d \geq D, n \geq 2$ . Then there is a smallest integer  $t = R_{D,k}(n, d)$  such that every graph  $G$  with diameter  $D$  on at least  $t$  vertices has the following property: every  $k$ -coloring of  $E(G)$  yields a monochromatic  $d$ -subgraph on at least  $n$  vertices.*

We study a problem closely related to Tonoyan's result that also generalizes Problem 1 to larger diameter.

**Definition 3** *Let  $G$  be a graph and  $d, k$  be positive integers. Then  $f_d^k(G)$  is the maximum  $t$  with the property that every  $k$ -coloring of  $E(G)$  yields a monochromatic  $d$ -subgraph on at least  $t$  vertices.*

The asymptotics for  $f_d^k(G)$  when  $G = K_n$  and  $d = 2$  (Erdős' problem) were determined in [10].

**Theorem 4** (Fowler [10])  *$f_2^2(K_n) = \lceil 3n/4 \rceil$  and if  $k \geq 3$ , then  $f_2^k(K_n) \sim n/k$  as  $n \rightarrow \infty$ .*

In this paper, we study  $f_d^k(G)$  when  $G$  is a complete graph or a complete bipartite graph. In the latter case, we determine its value within 1.

**Theorem 5** (Section 3) *Let  $k, a, b \geq 2$ . Then  $f_2^k(K_{a,b}) = 1 + \lceil \max\{a, b\}/k \rceil$ , and for  $d \geq 3$ ,*

$$\left\lceil \frac{1}{ab} \left( \left\lceil \frac{ab^2}{k} \right\rceil + \left\lceil \frac{a^2b}{k} \right\rceil \right) \right\rceil \leq f_d^k(K_{a,b}) \leq \left\lceil \frac{a}{k} \right\rceil + \left\lceil \frac{b}{k} \right\rceil.$$

Determining  $f_d^k(K_n)$  (for  $d \geq 3$ ) seems more difficult. We succeed in doing this only when  $d > k = 3$ .

**Theorem 6** (Section 4) *Let  $d \geq 4$ . Then*

$$f_d^3(K_n) = \begin{cases} n/2 + 1 & n \equiv 2 \pmod{4} \\ \lceil n/2 \rceil & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

When  $d = 3$  we are able to obtain bounds for  $f_d^k(K_n)$ .

**Theorem 7** (Section 5) *Let  $k \geq 2$ . Then  $f_3^k(K_n) > n/(k - 1 + 1/k)$ .*

In section 5 we also describe an unpublished construction of Calkin which implies that  $f_3^k(K_n) \leq n/(k - 1) + k - 1$  when  $k - 1$  is a prime power. This shows that the bound in Theorem 7 is not far off from being best possible. In section 6 we summarize the known results for  $f_d^k(K_n)$ . Our main tool for Theorems 5 and 7 is developed in Section 2.

## 2 The Main Lemma

In this section we prove a statement about 3-subgraphs in colorings of bipartite graphs. Although this is later used in the proofs of Theorems 5 and 7, we feel it is of independent interest.

Suppose that  $G$  is a graph and  $c : E(G) \rightarrow [k]$  is a  $k$ -coloring of its edges. For each  $i \in [k]$  and  $x \in V(G)$ , let  $N_i(x) = \{y \in N(x) : c(xy) = i\}$  and  $d_i(x) = |N_i(x)|$ . For  $uv \in E(G)$ , let the *weight* of  $uv$  be

$$w(uv) = d_{c(uv)}(u) + d_{c(uv)}(v).$$

**Lemma 8** *Let  $G$  be a subgraph of  $K_{a,b}$  with  $e$  edges and  $d \geq 3$ . Then*

$$f_d^k(G) \geq \left\lceil \frac{1}{e} \left( \left\lceil \frac{e^2}{ak} \right\rceil + \left\lceil \frac{e^2}{bk} \right\rceil \right) \right\rceil \geq \left\lceil \frac{e}{ak} \right\rceil + \left\lceil \frac{e}{bk} \right\rceil - 1.$$

**Proof:** Suppose that  $K_{a,b}$  has bipartition  $A, B$  with  $X = V(G) \cap A$ , and  $Y = V(G) \cap B$ . Let  $c : E(G) \rightarrow [k]$  be a  $k$ -coloring. Observe that an edge with weight  $w$  gives rise to a 3-subgraph on  $w$  vertices. We prove the stronger statement that  $G$  has an edge with weight at least

$$\left\lceil \frac{1}{e} \left( \left\lceil \frac{e^2}{ak} \right\rceil + \left\lceil \frac{e^2}{bk} \right\rceil \right) \right\rceil.$$

We obtain a lower bound on the sum of all the edge-weights.

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{uv \in E(G)} w(uv) &= \sum_{x \in X} \sum_{i \in [k]} \sum_{y \in N_i(x)} w(xy) \\ &= \sum_{x \in X} \sum_{i \in [k]} \sum_{y \in N_i(x)} d_i(x) + d_i(y) \\ &= \sum_{x \in X} \sum_{i \in [k]} [d_i(x)]^2 + \sum_{y \in Y} \sum_{i \in [k]} [d_i(y)]^2 \\ &\geq \left\lceil \frac{e^2}{ak} \right\rceil + \left\lceil \frac{e^2}{bk} \right\rceil, \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

where (1) follows from the Cauchy-Schwarz inequality applied to each double sum. Since there is an edge with weight at least as large as the average, we have

$$f_d^k(G) \geq \left\lceil \frac{1}{e} \left( \left\lceil \frac{e^2}{ak} \right\rceil + \left\lceil \frac{e^2}{bk} \right\rceil \right) \right\rceil \geq \left\lceil \frac{e}{ak} + \frac{e}{bk} \right\rceil \geq \left\lceil \frac{e}{ak} \right\rceil + \left\lceil \frac{e}{bk} \right\rceil - 1. \quad \square$$

A slight variation of the proof of Lemma 8 also yields the following more general result.

**Lemma 9** *Suppose that  $G$  is a graph with  $n$  vertices and  $e$  edges. Let  $c : E(G) \rightarrow [k]$  be a  $k$ -coloring of  $E(G)$  such that every color class is triangle-free. Then  $G$  contains a monochromatic 3-subgraph on at least  $4e/(nk)$  vertices.*

### 3 Bipartite Graphs

**Proof of Theorem 5:** Let  $c : E(K_{a,b}) \rightarrow [k]$  be a  $k$ -coloring. The lower bound for the case  $d = 2$  is obtained by considering a pair  $(v, i)$  for which  $d_i(v)$  is maximized. The set  $v \cup N_i(v)$  induces a monochromatic 2-subgraph. The lower bound when  $d \geq 3$  follows from Lemma 8. For the upper bounds we provide the following constructions.

Let  $K_{a,b}$  have bipartition  $X = \{x_1, \dots, x_a\}$  and  $Y = \{y_1, \dots, y_b\}$ , and assume that  $a \leq b$ . Partition  $X$  into  $k$  sets  $X_1, \dots, X_k$ , each of size  $\lceil a/k \rceil$  or  $\lfloor a/k \rfloor$ , and partition  $Y$  into  $k$  sets  $Y_1, \dots, Y_k$ , each of size  $\lceil b/k \rceil$  or  $\lfloor b/k \rfloor$ . Furthermore, let both these partitions be “consecutive” in the sense that  $X_1 = \{x_1, x_2, \dots, x_r\}$ ,  $X_2 = \{x_{r+1}, x_{r+2}, \dots, x_{r+s}\}$ , etc. Finally, for each nonnegative integer  $t$ , let  $Y_i + t = \{y_{i+t} : y_i \in Y_i\}$ , where subscripts are taken modulo  $b$ .

When  $d = 2$  and  $j \in [k]$ , let the  $j^{\text{th}}$  color class be all edges between  $x_i$  and  $Y_j + (i - 1)$  for each  $i \in [n]$ . Because  $K_{a,b}$  is bipartite, the distance between a pair of nonadjacent vertices  $x \in X$  and  $y \in Y$  in the subgraph formed by the edges in color  $j$  is at least three. Thus a 2-subgraph of  $K_{a,b}$  is a complete bipartite graph.

For  $1 \leq i \leq k$ , let  $\alpha_i$  be the smallest subscript of an element in  $Y_i$ . Thus  $\alpha_{i+1} - \alpha_i = |Y_i|$  since  $Y_i = \{y_{\alpha_i}, y_{\alpha_i+1}, \dots, y_{\alpha_{i+1}-1}\}$ . Fix  $l \in [k]$  and let  $H$  be a largest monochromatic complete bipartite graph in color  $l$ . Let  $A = V(H) \cap X$  and  $B = V(H) \cap Y$ . Let  $r$  be the smallest index such that  $x_r \in A$  and let  $s$  be the largest index such that  $x_s \in A$ . As  $N_H(x_r) = \{y_{\alpha_l+r-1}, y_{\alpha_l+r}, \dots, y_{\alpha_{l+1}+r-2}\}$  and  $N_H(x_s) = \{y_{\alpha_l+s-1}, y_{\alpha_l+s}, \dots, y_{\alpha_{l+1}+s-2}\}$ , we have  $N_H(x_r) \cap N_H(x_s) = \{y_{\alpha_l+s-1}, \dots, y_{\alpha_{l+1}+r-2}\}$ , where subscripts are taken modulo  $b$ . Consequently,

$$\begin{aligned} |V(H)| &\leq |\{x_r, \dots, x_s\}| + |\{y_{\alpha_l+s-1}, \dots, y_{\alpha_{l+1}+r-2}\}| \\ &= (s - r + 1) + (\alpha_{l+1} + r - 2 - (\alpha_l + s - 1) + 1) \\ &= 1 + \alpha_{l+1} - \alpha_l \\ &= 1 + |Y_l| \\ &\leq 1 + \lceil b/k \rceil. \end{aligned}$$

When  $d > 2$  and  $j \in [k]$ , let the  $j^{\text{th}}$  color class consist of the edges between  $X_i$  and  $Y_{i-1+j}$  (subscripts taken modulo  $k$ ) for each  $i \in [k]$ . The maximum size of a connected monochromatic subgraph is  $\max_{i,i'} \{|X_i| + |Y_{i'}|\} = \lceil a/k \rceil + \lceil b/k \rceil$ .  $\square$

Recall that the bipartite Ramsey number for multicolorings  $b_k(H)$  is the minimum  $n$  such that every  $k$ -coloring of  $E(K_{n,n})$  yields a monochromatic copy of  $H$ . Analogous to the case with the classical Ramsey numbers, determining these numbers is hard. Chvátal [5], and Bienenke-Schwenk [3] proved that when  $H = K_{p,q}$ , this number is at most  $(q - 1)k^p + O(k^{p-1})$ , and some exact results for the case  $H = K_{2,q}$  were also obtained in [3].

It is worth noting that the function  $f_2^k(K_{a,b})$  seems fundamentally different (and much easier to determine) from the numbers  $b_k(K_{p,q})$ , since we do not require our complete bipartite subgraphs to have a specified number of vertices in each partite set.

## 4 Diameter at least four

In this section we consider  $f_d^k(K_n)$ . Since a 1-subgraph is a clique, the problem is hopeless if  $d = 1$ . The case  $d = 2$  was settled in [10], where nontrivial constructions were obtained that matched the trivial lower bounds asymptotically. We investigate the problem for larger  $d$ . We include the following slight strengthening of a well-known (and easy) fact for completeness (see problem 2.1.34 of [15]).

**Proposition 10** *Every 2-coloring of  $E(K_n)$  yields a monochromatic spanning 2-subgraph or a monochromatic spanning 3-subgraph in each color. Thus in particular,  $f_d^2(K_n) = n$  for  $d \geq 3$ .*

**Proof:** Suppose that the coloring uses red and blue. We may assume that both the red subgraph and the blue subgraph have diameter at least three. Thus there exist vertices  $r_1, r_2$  (respectively,  $b_1, b_2$ ) with the shortest red  $r_1, r_2$ -path (respectively, blue  $b_1, b_2$ -path) having length at least three. We will show that the blue subgraph has diameter at most three.

Let  $u, v$  be arbitrary vertices in  $K_n$ . If  $\{u, v\} \cap \{r_1, r_2\} \neq \emptyset$ , then the fact that there is no red  $r_1, r_2$ -path of length at most two guarantees a blue  $u, v$ -path of length at most two. We may therefore assume that  $\{u, v\} \cap \{r_1, r_2\} = \emptyset$ .

At least one of  $ur_1, ur_2$  is blue, and at least one of  $vr_1, vr_2$  is blue. Together with the blue edge  $r_1r_2$ , these three blue edges contain a  $u, v$ -path of length at most three. Since  $u$  and  $v$  are arbitrary, the blue subgraph has diameter at most three. Similarly, the vertices  $b_1, b_2$  can be used to show that the red subgraph also has diameter at most three.  $\square$

We now turn to the case when  $d, k \geq 3$ . The following  $k$ -coloring of  $K_n$  has the property that the largest connected monochromatic subgraph has order  $2\lceil n/(k+1) \rceil$  when  $k$  is odd and  $2\lceil n/k \rceil$  when  $k$  is even. As we will see below, this is sharp when  $k = 3$ , but not for any other value of  $k$  when  $k - 1$  is a prime power [4].

This construction was suggested independently by Erdős. It uses the well-known fact that the edge-chromatic number of  $K_n$  is  $n$  if  $n$  is odd and  $n - 1$  if  $n$  is even.

**Construction 11** When  $k$  is odd, partition  $V(K_n)$  into  $k + 1$  sets  $V_1, \dots, V_{k+1}$ , each of size  $\lfloor n/(k+1) \rfloor$  or  $\lceil n/(k+1) \rceil$ . Contract each  $V_i$  to a single vertex  $v_i$ , and the edges between any pair  $V_i, V_j$  to a single edge  $v_iv_j$  to obtain  $K_{k+1}$ . Let  $c : E(K_{k+1}) \rightarrow [k]$  be a proper edge-coloring. Expand  $K_{k+1}$  back to the original  $K_n$ , coloring every edge between  $V_i$  and  $V_j$  with  $c(v_iv_j)$ . Color all edges within each  $V_i$  with color 1.

Because  $c$  is a proper edge-coloring, a monochromatic connected graph  $G$  can have  $V(G) \cap V_i \neq \emptyset$  for at most two distinct indices  $i \in [k]$ . Thus  $|V(G)| \leq 2\lceil n/(k+1) \rceil$ . In the case  $n \equiv 1 \pmod{k}$ , only one  $V_i$  has size  $\lceil n/(k+1) \rceil$  and all the rest have size  $\lfloor n/(k+1) \rfloor$ , so  $|V(G)| \leq \lceil n/(k+1) \rceil + \lfloor n/(k+1) \rfloor$ .

When  $k$  is even, partition  $V(K_n)$  into  $k$  sets, color as described above with  $k - 1$  colors and change the color on any single edge to the  $k$ th color.  $\square$

**Proof of Theorem 6:** For the upper bounds we use Construction 11. When  $n \equiv 0, 3 \pmod{4}$ ,  $2\lceil n/4 \rceil = \lceil n/2 \rceil$ . When  $n \equiv 2 \pmod{4}$ ,  $2\lceil n/4 \rceil = n/2 + 1$ . When  $n \equiv 1 \pmod{4}$ , the construction gives the improvement  $\lceil n/4 \rceil + \lfloor n/4 \rfloor$  which again equals the claimed bound  $\lceil n/2 \rceil$ .

For the lower bound, consider a 3-coloring  $c : E(K_n) \rightarrow [3]$ . Pick any vertex  $v$ , and assume without loss of generality that  $\max\{d_i(v)\} = d_1(v)$ . Let  $N = v \cup N_1(v)$  and let  $N' = (\cup_{w \in N} N_1(w)) - N$ . The subgraph in color 1 induced by  $N \cup N'$  is a 4-subgraph, thus we are done unless  $|N| + |N'| \leq n/2$ , which we may henceforth assume.

Let  $M = V(K_n) - N - N'$ . Observe that color 1 is forbidden on edges between  $N$  and  $M$ . Since  $M \subseteq N_2(v) \cup N_3(v)$ , we may assume without loss of generality that the set  $S = N_2(v) \cap M$  satisfies  $|S| \geq |M|/2 \geq n/4$ .

If every  $x \in N$  has the property that there is a  $y \in S$  with  $c(xy) = 2$ , then the subgraph in color 2 induced by  $N \cup S$  is a 4-subgraph with at least  $(n+2)/3 + n/4$  vertices, and we are done. We may therefore suppose that there is an  $x \in N$  such that  $c(xx') = 3$  for every  $x' \in S$ . For  $i = 2, 3$ , let

$$A_i = \{u \in N \cup N' \cup (M - S) : \text{there is a } u' \in S \text{ with } c(uu') = i\}.$$

By the definitions of  $N, M$ , and  $A_i$ , we have  $A_2 \cup A_3 \supseteq N$ . We next strengthen this to  $A_2 \cup A_3 \supseteq N \cup N'$ . If there is a vertex  $z \in N'$  with  $c(zy) = 1$  for every  $y \in S$ , then the subgraph in color 1 induced by  $S \cup N \cup \{z\}$  is a monochromatic 4-subgraph on at least  $n/4 + (n+2)/3 + 1 \geq n/2 + 1$  vertices. Therefore we assume the  $A_2 \cup A_3 \supseteq N \cup N'$ .

Because of  $v$  and  $x$ , each of the sets  $A_i \cup S$  induces a monochromatic 4-subgraph. Consequently, there is a monochromatic 4-subgraph of order at least  $|S| + \max_i\{|A_i|\}$ . By the previous observations, this is at least

$$\begin{aligned} |S| + \frac{|A_2| + |A_3|}{2} &\geq \left\lceil \frac{|M|}{2} \right\rceil + \left\lceil \frac{|A_2 \cup A_3|}{2} \right\rceil \geq \\ &\geq \left\lceil \frac{|M|}{2} \right\rceil + \left\lceil \frac{|N \cup N'|}{2} \right\rceil = \left\lceil \frac{|M|}{2} \right\rceil + \left\lceil \frac{n - |M|}{2} \right\rceil \geq \left\lceil \frac{n}{2} \right\rceil. \end{aligned}$$

We now improve this bound by one when  $n = 4l+2$ . We obtain the improvement unless equality holds above, which forces  $|M|$  to be even,  $|S| = |M|/2$ , and  $A_2 \cup A_3 = N \cup N'$ . Recall that  $|N| + |N'| \leq n/2$ , which implies that  $|M| \geq n/2 = 2l + 1$ . Because  $|M|$  is even, we obtain  $|M| \geq 2l + 2 = n/2 + 1$ .

Since  $A_2 \cup A_3 = N \cup N'$ , every vertex in  $M - S$  has no edge to  $S$  in color 2 or 3. Thus all edges between  $S$  and  $M - S$  are of color 1, and the complete bipartite graph  $B$  with parts  $S$  and  $M - S$  is monochromatic. Because  $|S| = |M|/2$ , both  $S$  and  $M - S$  are nonempty. This implies that  $B$  is a monochromatic 2-subgraph with  $|M| \geq n/2 + 1$  vertices.  $\square$

## 5 Diameter three and infinity

In this section we prove Theorem 7 and also present an unpublished construction of Calkin which improves the bounds given by Construction 11 when  $k - 1 > 3$  is a prime power.

**Proof of Theorem 7:** Given a  $k$ -coloring  $c : E(K_n) \rightarrow [k]$ , choose  $v \in V(K_n)$ , and assume that  $d_i(v)$  is maximized when  $i = 1$ . Consider the bipartite graph  $G$  with bipartition  $A = v \cup N_1(v)$  and  $B = V(K_n) - A$ ; set  $a = |A|$ . For  $x \in A$  and  $y \in B$ , let  $xy \in E(G)$  if  $c(xy) \neq 1$ . Let  $\Delta = \max_{w \in A} |N_1(w) \cap B|$ . Then  $E(G) \geq a(n - a - \Delta)$ .

For any  $w \in A$  with  $|N_1(w) \cap B| = \Delta$ , the subgraph in color 1 induced by  $A \cup N_1(w)$  is a 3-subgraph with at least  $a + \Delta$  vertices. By definition, color 1 is absent in  $G$  and thus  $E(G)$  is  $(k - 1)$ -colored. Lemma 8 applied to  $G$  yields a 3-subgraph on at least  $(n - a - \Delta)/(k - 1) + a(n - a - \Delta)/((k - 1)(n - a))$  vertices. Thus  $K_n$  contains a 3-subgraph of order at least

$$\min_{\substack{a, \Delta \\ a \geq 1 + (n-1)/k \\ \Delta \leq n-a}} \max \left\{ a + \Delta, \frac{a(n - a - \Delta)}{k - 1} \left( \frac{1}{a} + \frac{1}{n - a} \right) \right\}.$$

We let  $\Delta$  and  $a$  take on real values to obtain a lower bound on this minimum. Since one of these functions is increasing in  $\Delta$  and the other is decreasing in  $\Delta$ , the choice of  $\Delta$  that minimizes the maximum (for fixed  $a$ ) is that for which the two quantities are equal. This choice is

$$\Delta = \frac{(n - a)(n - a(k - 1))}{kn - a(k - 1)},$$

and both functions become  $n^2/(kn - a(k - 1))$ . Since this is an increasing function for  $1 + (n - 1)/k \leq a < kn/(k - 1)$ , and since we are assuming  $a \leq n$ , the minimum is obtained at  $a = 1 + (n - 1)/k$ . This yields a lower bound of  $kn^2/((k^2 - k + 1)n - (k - 1)^2)$ .  $\square$

**Definition 12** For a positive integer  $k$ , let  $f_\infty^k(G)$  be the maximum  $t$  with the property that every  $k$ -coloring of  $E(G)$  yields a monochromatic connected subgraph on at least  $t$  vertices.

Clearly  $f_d^k(G) \leq f_\infty^k(G)$  for each  $d$ , since a  $d$ -subgraph is connected. Construction 11 and Theorem 6 therefore immediately yield  $f_\infty^3(K_n) = n/2 + 1$  or  $\lceil n/2 \rceil$  depending on whether  $n \equiv 2 \pmod{4}$  or not (see also exercise 14 of Chapter 6 of [1]). For larger  $k$ , however, the following unpublished construction due to Calkin improves Construction 11

**Construction 13** (Calkin) Let  $q$  be a prime power and  $\mathbf{F}$  be a finite field on  $q$  elements. We exhibit a  $q + 1$ -coloring of  $E(K_{q^2})$ . Let  $V(K_{q^2}) = \mathbf{F} \times \mathbf{F}$ . Color the edge  $(i, j)(i', j')$  by the field element  $(j' - j)/(i' - i)$  if  $i \neq i'$ , and color all edges  $(i, j)(i, j')$  with a single new color. This coloring is well-defined since  $(j' - j)/(i' - i) = (j - j')/(i - i')$ .  $\square$

**Lemma 14** *Construction 13 produces a  $q + 1$ -coloring of  $E(K_{q^2})$  such that the subgraph of any given color consists of  $q$  vertex disjoint copies of  $K_q$ .*

**Proof:** This is certainly true of the color on edges of the form  $(i, j)(i, j')$ . Now fix a color  $l \in \mathbf{F}$ . Let  $(x, y) \sim (x', y')$  if the edge  $(x, y)(x', y')$  has color  $l$ . We will show that this relation is transitive.

Suppose that  $(i, j) \sim (i', j')$  and  $(i', j') \sim (i'', j'')$ . Then

$$(j' - j)/(i' - i) = l = (j'' - j')/(i'' - i').$$

Consequently,

$$(j'' - j) = (j'' - j') + (j' - j) = l(i'' - i') + l(i' - i) = l(i'' - i)$$

and therefore  $(i, j) \sim (i'', j'')$ .

Since this relation on  $V(K_{q^2}) \times V(K_{q^2})$  is an equivalence relation, the edges in color  $l$  form vertex disjoint complete graphs. For fixed  $i, j, l$ , there are exactly  $q - 1$  distinct  $(x, y) \neq (i, j)$  for which  $(x, y) \sim (i, j)$ , because  $x \neq i$  uniquely determines  $y$ . This completes the proof.  $\square$

Lemma 14 together with Theorem 5 allows us to easily obtain good bounds for  $f_{\infty}^k(K_n)$ . The author believes that the following theorem was also proved independently by Calkin. Our proof of the lower bound given below uses Theorem 5.

**Theorem 15** *Let  $k - 1$  be a prime power. Then  $n/(k - 1) \leq f_{\infty}^k(K_n) \leq n/(k - 1) + k - 1$ .*

**Proof:** For the upper bound we use the idea of Construction 13. Let  $\mathbf{F}$  be a finite field of  $q = k - 1$  elements. Partition  $V(K_n)$  into  $(k - 1)^2$  sets  $V_{i,j}$  of size  $\lfloor n/(k - 1)^2 \rfloor$  or  $\lceil n/(k - 1)^2 \rceil$ , where  $i, j \in \mathbf{F}$ . Color all edges between  $V_{i,j}$  and  $V_{i',j'}$  by the field element  $(j' - j)/(i' - i)$  if  $i \neq i'$ , and by a new color if  $i = i'$ . Color all edges within each  $V_{i,j}$  by a single color in  $\mathbf{F}$ .

Lemma 14 implies that the order of the largest monochromatic connected subgraph is at most  $\lceil n/(k - 1)^2 \rceil(k - 1) \leq n/(k - 1) + k - 1$ .

For the lower bound, consider a  $k$ -coloring of  $E(K_n)$ . We may assume that the subgraph  $H$  in some color  $l$  is not a connected spanning subgraph. This yields a partition  $X \cup Y$  of  $V(K_n)$  such that no edge between  $X$  and  $Y$  has color  $l$  (let  $X$  be a component of  $H$ ). The bipartite graph  $B$  formed by the  $X, Y$  edges is colored with  $k - 1$  colors. Applying Theorem 5 to  $B$  yields a 3-subgraph of order at least  $|X|/(k - 1) + |Y|/(k - 1) = n/(k - 1)$ .  $\square$

## 6 Table of Results

Table of Results for  $f_d^k(K_n)$

$d \backslash k$	2	3	4	5	...
1	Equivalent to classical Ramsey numbers				
2	$\left\lceil \frac{3n}{4} \right\rceil$ , [10]	$\sim \frac{n}{k}$ , [10]			
3	$n$ , Proposition 10	$\leq \left\lceil \frac{n}{2} \right\rceil + 1$ , Construction 11 $> \frac{3n}{7}$ , Theorem 7	$\leq \frac{n}{3} + 2$ , Construction 13 $> \frac{4n}{13}$ , Theorem 7	$\leq \frac{n}{k-1} + k - 1$ , $k - 1$ prime power, Construction 13 $> \frac{n}{k-1 + 1/k}$ , Theorem 7	
4 ⋮		$\left\lceil \frac{n}{2} \right\rceil$ or $\left\lceil \frac{n}{2} \right\rceil + 1$ Construction 11 Theorem 6	$\leq \frac{n}{3} + 3$ , Construction 13	$\leq \frac{n}{4} + 4$ , Construction 13	

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