



# On Cayley Graphs of Abelian Groups

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**Abstract.** Let  $G$  be a finite Abelian group and  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$  the Cayley (di)-graph of  $G$  with respect to  $S$ , and let  $A = \text{Aut Cay}(G, S)$  and  $A_1$  the stabilizer of 1 in  $A$ . In this paper, we first prove that if  $A_1$  is unfaithful on  $S$  then  $S$  contains a coset of some nontrivial subgroup of  $G$ , and then characterize  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$  if  $A_1^S$  contains the alternating group on  $S$ . Finally, we precisely determine all  $m$ -DCI  $p$ -groups for  $2 \leq m \leq p + 1$ , where  $p$  is a prime.

**Keywords:** Cayley graph, isomorphism, CI-subset,  $m$ -DCI group

## 1. Introduction

Let  $G$  be a finite group and  $S$  a *Cayley subset* of  $G$ , that is,  $S$  does not contain the identity of  $G$ . The *Cayley (di)-graph*  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$  of  $G$  with respect to  $S$  has the elements of  $G$  as vertices and the pairs  $(g, sg)$ ,  $g \in G$ ,  $s \in S$ , as edges. Given a Cayley subset  $S$  of  $G$ , if, for any Cayley subset  $T$  of  $G$ ,  $\text{Cay}(G, S) \cong \text{Cay}(G, T)$  implies  $T = S^\sigma$  for some  $\sigma \in \text{Aut}(G)$ , then  $S$  is called a *CI-subset* (CI stands for *Cayley Isomorphism*). A finite group  $G$  is called an  *$m$ -DCI group* if all of its Cayley subsets of  $G$  of size at most  $m$  are CI-subsets;  $G$  is called a *DCI-group* if it is a  $|G|$ -DCI group. Similarly,  $G$  is called an  *$m$ -CI group* if all Cayley subsets  $S$  of  $G$  of size at most  $m$  with  $S = S^{-1}$  are CI-subsets,  $G$  is called a *CI-group* if  $G$  is an  $|G|$ -CI group. The problem of determining which groups are  $m$ -DCI groups and  $m$ -CI groups has been investigated for a long time, see [6, 10, 12] for references. Recently, all  $m$ -DCI groups and all  $m$ -CI groups for  $m \geq 2$  have been classified in [10] and [9], respectively, in the sense that all the possibilities for such groups are explicitly listed. However, it is still a difficult question to determine which of them are really  $m$ -DCI ( $m$ -CI) groups. Babai and Frankl [2] asked whether the elementary abelian group  $Z_p^d$  for any  $p$  and  $d$  was an  $m$ -CI group for all  $m \leq |G|$  (in other words,  $Z_p^d$  is a CI-group). Godsil [6] and Dobson [4] proved this to be true for  $d = 2, 3$ , respectively. However, recently Nowitz [11] gave a negative answer to the question by proving that  $Z_2^6$  is not a 31-CI group. It is not known if this the answer of the question is positive for odd prime  $p$  and  $d \geq 4$ . The main aims of this paper are to characterize Cayley graphs  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$  of abelian groups by the action of  $A_1$  on  $S$ , where  $A_1$  is the stabilizer of 1 in  $\text{Aut Cay}(G, S)$ , and to determine precisely  $m$ -DCI  $p$ -groups for  $2 \leq m \leq p + 1$ , which implies that the answer of Babai and Frankl's question is positive for any  $p, d$  and  $m \leq p + 1$ .

**Notation** In this paper,  $Z_n$  denotes a cyclic group of order  $n$ ,  $Q_8$  is the quaternion group of order 8. Recall that a group is called *homocyclic* if it is a direct product of some cyclic

groups of the same order. For groups  $G$  and  $H$ ,  $H \leq G$  denotes that  $H$  is a subgroup of  $G$ , and  $G \rtimes H$  denotes a semidirect product of  $G$  by  $H$ . For a positive integer  $n$ ,  $C_n$  denotes the directed cycle of length  $n$ ,  $K_n$  denotes the complete graph on  $n$  vertices and  $K_{n,n}$  denotes the complete-bipartite graph on  $2n$  vertices. For a directed graph  $\Gamma = (V, E)$ , its *complement*  $\bar{\Gamma} = (V, \bar{E})$  is the directed graph with vertex set  $V$  such that  $(a, b) \in \bar{E}$  if and only if  $(a, b) \notin E$ . The *direct product*  $\Gamma_1 \times \Gamma_2$  of two directed graphs  $\Gamma_1 = (V_1, E_1)$  and  $\Gamma_2 = (V_2, E_2)$  is the directed graph with vertex set  $V_1 \times V_2$  such that  $((a_1, a_2), (b_1, b_2))$  is an edge if and only if either  $(a_1, b_1) \in E_1$  and  $a_2 = b_2$ , or  $(a_2, b_2) \in E_2$  and  $a_1 = b_1$ . The *lexicographic product*  $\Gamma_1[\Gamma_2]$  of two directed graphs  $\Gamma_1 = (V_1, E_1)$  and  $\Gamma_2 = (V_2, E_2)$  is the graph with vertex set  $V_1 \times V_2$  such that  $((a_1, a_2), (b_1, b_2))$  is an edge if and only if either  $(a_1, b_1) \in E_1$  or  $a_1 = b_1$  and  $(a_2, b_2) \in E_2$ . For any vertex  $x$  of graph  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$ , the neighborhood  $\Gamma(x)$  of  $x$  in  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$  equals  $xS = \{xa_i \mid 1 \leq i \leq m\}$ . Let  $\Gamma_i(x) = \{y \in G \mid d(x, y) = i\}$ , where  $d(x, y)$  denotes the distance from  $x$  to  $y$  in  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$ . Note that  $\Gamma(x) = \Gamma_1(x)$ .

In Section 2, we quote some results which are used in the following sections. Section 3 characterizes some Cayley graphs on Abelian groups, and Section 4 precisely determines  $m$ -DCI  $p$ -groups for certain values of  $m$ .

## 2. Preliminaries

In this section, we quote some results which we need in the following sections. Let  $G$  be a finite group,  $S$  a Cayley subset of  $G$  and let  $A = \text{Aut Cay}(G, S)$ . Babai [1] gave a criterion for a subset of  $G$  to be a CI-subset.

**Theorem 2.1 ([1])** *For a given group  $G$  and a Cayley subset  $S$  of  $G$ ,  $S$  is a CI-subset if and only if for any  $\tau \in \text{Sym}(G)$  with  $\tau G \tau^{-1} \leq A$ , there exists  $\alpha \in A$  such that  $\alpha G \alpha^{-1} = \tau G \tau^{-1}$ , where  $\text{Sym}(G)$  is the symmetric group on  $G$ .*

The normalizer of  $G$  in  $A$  is often useful for characterizing  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$ .

**Lemma 2.2 ([5])** *Let  $A = \text{Aut Cay}(G, S)$  and  $\text{Aut}(G, S) = \{\alpha \in \text{Aut}(G) \mid S^\alpha = S\}$ . Then  $N_A(G)$  equals a semidirect product of  $G$  by  $\text{Aut}(G, S)$ , that is,  $N_A(G) = G \rtimes \text{Aut}(G, S)$ .*

All finite  $m$ -DCI groups for  $m \geq 2$  have been explicitly listed in [10], in particular, we have

**Lemma 2.3 ([10, Proposition 3.1])** *Let  $G$  be a finite  $m$ -DCI  $p$ -group, where  $m \geq 2$  and  $p$  is a prime.*

- (1) *If  $p$  is odd and  $2 \leq m \leq p - 1$ , then  $G$  is homocyclic.*
- (2) *If  $m = p$ , then either  $G$  is elementary Abelian, cyclic, or  $G = Q_8$ .*
- (3) *If  $m = p + 1$ , then either  $G$  is elementary Abelian, or  $G = Z_4$  or  $Q_8$ .*

**Lemma 2.4 ([16])** *The quaternion group  $Q_8$  is a DCI-group.*

### 3. Cayley graphs of Abelian groups

In this section, we characterize some properties of Cayley graphs of Abelian groups. Let  $G$  be a finite group,  $S = \{a_1, a_2, \dots, a_m\}$  be a Cayley subset of  $G$  and  $\Gamma = \text{Cay}(G, S)$ . Let  $A$  be the full automorphism group of  $\Gamma$  and  $A_1$  the stabilizer of 1 in  $A$ . For  $h$  distinct elements  $a_{i_1}, a_{i_2}, \dots, a_{i_h} \in S$  and  $y \in G$ , let

$$\begin{cases} \Gamma(ya_{i_1}, \dots, ya_{i_h}) = \Gamma(ya_{i_1}) \cap \dots \cap \Gamma(ya_{i_h}), \\ \Gamma^*(ya_{i_1}, \dots, ya_{i_h}) = \Gamma(ya_{i_1}, \dots, ya_{i_h}) \setminus \bigcup_{x \in R} \Gamma(yx), \end{cases}$$

where  $R = S \setminus \{a_{i_1}, \dots, a_{i_h}\}$ , that is,  $\Gamma^*(ya_{i_1}, \dots, ya_{i_h})$  is the set of all vertices of  $\Gamma$  which are joined to every element of  $\{ya_{i_1}, \dots, ya_{i_h}\}$  and to no element of  $yR$ . Let

$$\Gamma_i^* = \max\{|\Gamma^*(u_1, \dots, u_i)| \mid u_1, \dots, u_i \in S\}.$$

If  $R = \{u_1, \dots, u_i\} \subseteq S$ , then denote  $\Gamma^*(u_1, \dots, u_i)$  by  $\Gamma^*(R)$  sometimes.

**Lemma 3.1** *Suppose that  $G$  is an Abelian group. Then*

- (i)  $1 \in \Gamma^*(W)$  for  $W \subseteq S$  if and only if  $W = W^{-1}$  and  $(S \setminus W) \cap (S \setminus W)^{-1} = \emptyset$ ;
- (ii)  $\Gamma^*(xx_1, \dots, xx_k) = x\Gamma^*(x_1, \dots, x_k)$  for any  $x \in G$  and any  $x_1, \dots, x_k \in S$ ;
- (iii)  $\Gamma_k^* \leq k$  for every  $k \geq 1$ ;
- (iv) every element of  $\Gamma_2(1)$  lies in  $\Gamma^*(x_1, \dots, x_k)$  for some  $x_1, \dots, x_k \in S$ .

**Proof:** By the definition of  $\Gamma^*(x_1, \dots, x_k)$ , part (i) is clear. Again by definition, we have

$$\begin{aligned} y \in \Gamma^*(xx_1, \dots, xx_k) &\Leftrightarrow y \in \Gamma^*(xx_1) \cap \dots \cap \Gamma^*(xx_k) \setminus \bigcup_{z \in R} \Gamma(xz) \\ &\Leftrightarrow x^{-1}y \in \Gamma(x_1) \cap \dots \cap \Gamma(x_k) \setminus \bigcup_{z \in R} \Gamma(z) \\ &\Leftrightarrow y \in x(\Gamma(x_1) \cap \dots \cap \Gamma(x_k) \setminus \bigcup_{z \in R} \Gamma(z)) \\ &= x\Gamma^*(x_1, \dots, x_k), \end{aligned}$$

where  $R = S \setminus \{x_1, \dots, x_k\}$ . Thus part (ii) is true. Now suppose that  $\Gamma_k^* = |\Gamma^*(x_1, \dots, x_k)|$  for some  $x_1, \dots, x_k \in S$ . By definition,  $x_1x \notin \Gamma^*(x_1, \dots, x_k)$  for any  $x \in S \setminus \{x_1, \dots, x_k\}$ , so  $\Gamma^*(x_1, \dots, x_k) \subseteq \{x_1x_1, \dots, x_1x_k\}$ . Hence  $\Gamma_k^* = |\Gamma^*(x_1, \dots, x_k)| \leq k$  as in (iii). Finally, for any  $y \in \Gamma_2(1)$ , let  $\{x_1, \dots, x_k\} = \{x \in S \mid y \in \Gamma(x)\}$ . Then  $y \in \Gamma^*(x_1, \dots, x_k)$  is as in (iv). □

It is clear that if  $\text{Cay}(G, S) \cong C_l[\bar{K}_m]$  for  $m > 1$  then  $A_1$  is not faithful on  $S$ . Conversely, the following theorem shows that if  $A_1$  is not faithful on  $S$  then  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$  contains such a subgraph.

**Theorem 3.2** *Let  $G$  be an Abelian group and  $\Gamma = \text{Cay}(G, S)$  for some  $S \subset G$  such that  $G = \langle S \rangle$ . Let  $A = \text{Aut } \Gamma$  and  $A_1$  the stabilizer of 1 in  $A$ . Then either  $A_1$  is faithful on  $S$ , or  $S$  contains a coset of some nontrivial subgroup of  $G$  and  $\Gamma$  has a subgraph isomorphic to  $C_l[\bar{K}_n]$  for some integers  $l$  and  $n$ .*

**Proof:** Let  $S = \{a_1, a_2, \dots, a_m\}$ . Assume first that for any integer  $h \geq 1$  and any  $h$  elements  $x_1, \dots, x_h \in S$ ,  $|\Gamma^*(x_1, \dots, x_h)| \leq 1$ . We claim that  $A_1$  is faithful on  $S$ . For any  $y \in \Gamma_2(1)$ , let  $\{a_{i_1}, \dots, a_{i_h}\} = \{x \in S \mid y \in \Gamma(x)\}$ . Then  $y$  is the unique element of  $\Gamma^*(a_{i_1}, \dots, a_{i_h})$ . If  $\alpha \in A_1$  such that  $x^\alpha = x$  for all  $x \in S$ , then  $\alpha$  fixes  $a_{i_1}, \dots, a_{i_h}$ . Thus  $\alpha$  fixes  $\Gamma^*(a_{i_1}, \dots, a_{i_h})$ , and so  $\alpha$  fixes  $y$ . Hence  $x^\alpha = x$  for all  $x \in \Gamma_2(1)$ . Since  $\langle S \rangle = G$ ,  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$  is connected, and it follows that  $x^\alpha = x$  for all  $x \in V\Gamma$ . Hence  $\alpha = 1$  and  $A_1$  is faithful on  $S$ .

Assume now that there are some  $h$  vertices  $a_{i_1}, \dots, a_{i_h}$  such that  $|\Gamma^*(a_{i_1}, \dots, a_{i_h})| \geq 2$ . Let  $w, y \in \Gamma^*(a_{i_1}, \dots, a_{i_h})$ . Without loss of generality, we may assume that  $\{i_1, \dots, i_h\} = \{1, \dots, h\}$ . By the definition of  $\Gamma^*(a_1, \dots, a_h)$ , there exist  $u_1, \dots, u_h, v_1, \dots, v_h \in \{a_1, \dots, a_h\}$  such that

$$\begin{cases} a_1 u_1 = a_2 u_2 = \dots = a_h u_h = w, \\ a_1 v_1 = a_2 v_2 = \dots = a_h v_h = y, \end{cases}$$

where  $u_i \neq v_i$  and  $\{u_1, \dots, u_h\} = \{v_1, \dots, v_h\} = \{a_1, \dots, a_h\}$ . Since  $\{u_1, \dots, u_h\} = \{v_1, \dots, v_h\}$ , there exist  $i_1 \neq 1, i_2 \neq i_1, \dots, i_k \neq i_{k-1}$  for some  $k \leq h$  such that  $v_1 = u_{i_1}, v_{i_1} = u_{i_2}, \dots, v_{i_{k-1}} = u_{i_k}$  and  $v_{i_k} = u_1$ . Thus

$$\begin{cases} a_1 u_1 = a_{i_1} u_{i_1} = \dots = a_{i_k} u_{i_k}, \\ a_1 u_{i_1} = a_{i_1} u_{i_2} = \dots = a_{i_k} u_1. \end{cases}$$

For convenience, without loss of generality, we may assume that  $i_1 = 2, i_2 = 3, \dots, i_k = k + 1$ . Then we have

$$\begin{cases} a_1 u_1 = a_2 u_2 = \dots = a_{k+1} u_{k+1}, \\ a_1 u_2 = a_2 u_3 = \dots = a_{k+1} u_1. \end{cases}$$

Thus  $a_1 u_1 a_i u_{i+1} = a_1 u_2 a_i u_i$  for  $i \leq k$  and  $a_1 u_1 a_{k+1} u_1 = a_1 u_2 a_{k+1} u_{k+1}$ . Therefore,  $u_1 u_{i+1} = u_2 u_i$  for  $i \leq k$  and  $u_1^2 = u_2 u_{k+1}$ . Let  $U = \{u_1, \dots, u_{k+1}\}$ . Then  $u_1 U = u_2 U$ . Similarly, we have  $u_1 U = \dots = u_{k+1} U$ . We claim that  $u_1^{-1} U$  is a subgroup of  $G$ . In fact, for any  $i, j$  with  $1 \leq i, j \leq k + 1$ , there exists an integer  $l$  such that  $u_1 u_i = u_j u_l$  because  $u_1 U = u_j U$ . Thus  $u_i u_j^{-1} = u_1^{-1} u_l$  and so

$$u_1^{-1} u_i \cdot (u_1^{-1} u_j)^{-1} = u_i u_j^{-1} = u_1^{-1} u_l \in u_1^{-1} U.$$

Therefore,  $u_1^{-1} U$  is a subgroup of  $G$  and  $U$  is a coset of the subgroup  $u_1^{-1} U$ . Now  $\text{Cay}(\langle U \rangle, U) \cong C_l[\bar{K}_{|U|}]$  is a subgraph of  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$  as in the theorem. This completes the proof of the theorem.  $\square$

Next we are going to characterize Cayley graphs  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$  for which  $A_1^S$  is the alternating group or the symmetric group of degree  $|S|$ . To do this, we first prove the following lemma.

**Lemma 3.3** *Let  $G$  be an Abelian group, and let  $S, T$  be two Cayley subsets of  $G$  such that  $G = \langle S \rangle$  and  $\text{Cay}(G, S) \cong \text{Cay}(G, T)$ . If  $\Gamma^*(x, y) = \{xy\}$  for all  $x, y \in S$  and  $\Gamma^*(u, v) = \{uv\}$  for all  $u, v \in T$ , then every isomorphism preserving 1 between  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$  and  $\text{Cay}(G, T)$  induces an automorphism of  $G$ .*

**Proof:** Let  $S = \{a_1, a_2, \dots, a_m\}$  and  $T = \{b_1, b_2, \dots, b_m\}$ . Without loss of generality, assume that  $\rho$  is an isomorphism from  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$  to  $\text{Cay}(G, T)$  such that  $1 \rightarrow 1, a_i \rightarrow b_i$  for  $i = 1, 2, \dots, m$ . Then for any  $i \neq j$ ,

$$\rho : \{a_i a_j\} = \Gamma^*(a_i, a_j) \mapsto \Gamma^*(b_i, b_j) = \{b_i b_j\}.$$

We claim that  $\rho$  is an automorphism of  $G$ . To prove this, we need only verify that for all integers  $n_1, n_2, \dots, n_m \geq 0$ ,

$$(a_1^{n_1} a_2^{n_2} \dots a_m^{n_m})^\rho = b_1^{n_1} b_2^{n_2} \dots b_m^{n_m}, \tag{1}$$

by induction on  $n_1 + n_2 + \dots + n_m$ . Since

$$\rho : \begin{cases} a_i \rightarrow b_i, & \text{for } 1 \leq i \leq m, \\ a_i a_j \rightarrow b_i b_j, & \text{for } i \neq j, \end{cases}$$

we have  $\rho$ :

$$\{a_i^2\} = \Gamma(a_i) \setminus \{a_i a_j \mid j \neq i\} \mapsto \Gamma(b_i) \setminus \{b_i b_j \mid j \neq i\} = \{b_i^2\}$$

for all  $i = 1, 2, \dots, m$ . In other words, (1) holds for  $n_1 + n_2 + \dots + n_m \leq 2$ . Now assume inductively that the equality (1) holds for  $n_1 + n_2 + \dots + n_m \leq N$ , where  $N \geq 2$ . Let

$$a = \prod_{j=1}^m a_j^{n'_j}, \quad \text{where } \sum_{j=1}^m n'_j = N - 1.$$

By the induction assumption, we have

$$\rho : \begin{cases} a \rightarrow b = \prod_{j=1}^m b_j^{n'_j}, \\ a a_i \rightarrow b b_i, & \text{for } 1 \leq i \leq m. \end{cases}$$

Since  $G$  is Abelian, for any  $x \in \langle S \rangle, y \in \langle T \rangle$  and any  $i \neq j$ , we have  $\Gamma^*(x a_i, x a_j) = \{x a_i a_j\}$  and  $\Gamma^*(y b_i, y b_j) = \{y b_i b_j\}$ . Hence  $\rho$ :

$$\begin{cases} \{a a_i a_j\} = \Gamma^*(a a_i, a a_j) \mapsto \Gamma^*(b b_i, b b_j) = \{b b_i b_j\}, & \text{for } 1 \leq i \neq j \leq m, \\ \{a_i^2\} = \Gamma(a a_i) \setminus \{a a_i a_j \mid j \neq i\} \mapsto \Gamma(b b_i) \setminus \{b b_i b_j \mid j \neq i\} = \{b b_i^2\}. \end{cases}$$

Therefore, the equality (1) holds for  $n_1 + n_2 + \dots + n_m = N + 1$ . By induction, the equality (1) holds for all  $n_1, n_2, \dots, n_m \geq 0$ . Hence  $\rho$  is an automorphism of  $G$  sending  $S$  to  $T$ .  $\square$

To prove our next theorem, we need some notation. If  $a, b \in S$  and  $b \neq a^{-1}$ , then the product  $ab$  (in  $G$ ) is said to be a *word* of length 2 on  $S$ . Let  $w(ab)$  be the number of all words of length 2 on  $S$  which are equal to  $ab$ , that is,  $w(ab) = |\{uv \mid uv = ab \text{ and } u, v \in S\}|$ . For  $Y \subseteq \Gamma_2(1)$ , let  $w(Y)$  be the number of all words of length 2 on  $S$  which are equal to an element of  $Y$ , that is,  $w(Y) = \sum_{y \in Y} w(y)$ .

**Lemma 3.4** *Using the notation defined above, we have*

- (i) if  $1 \neq ab \in \Gamma^*(u_1, u_2, \dots, u_i)$ , then  $w(ab) = i$  for any  $u_1, u_2, \dots, u_i \in S$ ;
- (ii) if  $|\Gamma^*(u_1, \dots, u_i)| = j$  then

$$w(\Gamma^*(u_1, \dots, u_i)) = \begin{cases} ij & \text{if } 1 \notin \Gamma^*(u_1, \dots, u_i), \\ i(j - 1) & \text{if } 1 \in \Gamma^*(u_1, \dots, u_i); \end{cases}$$

- (iii)  $|\Gamma_2(1)| \leq w(\Gamma_2(1))$  and if  $1 \in \Gamma^*(R)$  then  $w(\Gamma_2(1)) = m^2 - |R|$  for any  $R \subseteq S$ ;
- (iv) if  $A_1^S \geq \text{Alt}(|S|)$ , then  $1 \in \Gamma^*(R)$  for  $R \subseteq S$  implies  $R = S$ .

**Proof:** By definition, part (i) is clear. It follows that part (ii) holds. Now let  $S = \{a_1, \dots, a_m\}$ . Then  $\Gamma_2(1) = \{a_i a_j \mid 1 \leq i, j \leq m\} \setminus \{1\}$ . It follows that part (iii) is true. Noting that  $A_1^S$  is  $(m - 2)$ -transitive on  $S$ , in particular, transitive and 2-set-transitive on  $S$ , part (iv) is clearly true.  $\square$

Now we can prove our next result.

**Theorem 3.5** *Let  $G$  be an Abelian group, and let  $S$  be a generating subset of  $G$  of size  $m$ . Let  $\Gamma = \text{Cay}(G, S)$ , and let  $A = \text{Aut } \Gamma$  and  $A_1$  the stabilizer of 1 in  $A$ . If  $A_1^S \geq \text{Alt}(m)$ , the alternating group of degree  $m$ , then one of the following holds:*

- (i)  $S = G \setminus \{1\}$  and  $\Gamma \cong K_{m+1}$ ;
- (ii)  $S = aH$  for some  $H \leq G$ , and  $\Gamma \cong K_{m,m}$  or  $C_{|G|/m}[\bar{K}_m]$ ;
- (iii)  $S = bH \setminus \{b\}$  for some  $H \leq G$ ,  $\Gamma \cong C_{|G|/(m+1)}[\bar{K}_{m+1}] - \frac{|G|}{o(b)} C_{o(b)}$ ;
- (iv)  $S = a^L$  for some  $a \in S$  and some  $L \leq \text{Aut}(G, S)$ , and  $G \triangleleft A$ ;
- (v) either  $G$  is cyclic, or  $G = Z_n \times B$ , where  $n$  is odd and  $B$  is a 2-group of exponent 4, and  $\Gamma_2(1) = \bigcup_{u,v \in S} \Gamma^*(u, v) \cup \Gamma^*(S) \setminus \{1\}$ .

**Proof:** First assume that  $m = 2$  and  $S = \{a, b\}$ . If  $b = a^{-1}$  then  $G = \langle a \rangle$  is cyclic and  $\Gamma$  is a cycle of length  $n := o(a)$ . Thus  $A \cong D_{2n}$ , and so part (iv) holds in this case. Suppose that  $b \neq a^{-1}$ . If  $|\Gamma^*(a, b)| = 1$ , then  $a^2 \neq b^2$  and so  $\Gamma^*(a, b) = \{ab\}$ . It follows from Lemma 3.3 that part (iv) holds. If  $|\Gamma^*(a, b)| = 2$  then  $\Gamma^*(a, b) = \{ab = ba, a^2 = b^2\}$ . Thus  $\{1, a^{-1}b\}$  is a subgroup of  $G$  of order 2, and  $S = a\{1, a^{-1}b\}$  as in part (ii). Hence  $\Gamma_i(1) = a^i\{1, a^{-1}b\}$  for all  $i \geq 1$ . Hence  $|\Gamma_i(1)| = 2$ , and it follows that  $\text{Cay}(G, S) \cong C_{|G|/2}[\bar{K}_2]$ .

In the following, assume that  $m \geq 3$  and  $S = \{a_1, a_2, \dots, a_m\}$ . Since  $A_1^S \geq \text{Alt}(m)$ ,  $A_1^S$  is  $(m - 2)$ -transitive on  $S$ , in particular,  $A_1^S$  is 2-set-transitive on  $S$ . By Lemma 3.1(iv),

any element of  $\Gamma_2(1)$  belongs to  $\Gamma^*(R)$  for some  $R \subseteq S$ . Since either  $\Gamma^*(a_i) = \emptyset$  or  $\Gamma^*(a_i) = \{a_i^2\}$  and  $a_i^2 \neq a_j a_k$  for any  $j, k \neq i$ , there is at least one  $n \in \{2, \dots, m\}$  such that  $\Gamma_n^* \geq 1$ .

(1) Assume that there exists an integer  $n$  with  $3 \leq n \leq m - 2$  such that  $\Gamma_n^* = r \geq 1$ . Then there are  $n$  vertices  $c_1, \dots, c_n \in S$  such that  $|\Gamma^*(c_1, \dots, c_n)| = r$ . Thus  $\Gamma^*(c_1, \dots, c_n)$  contains exactly  $r$  elements of  $\Gamma_2(1)$ . By Lemma 3.4(ii) and (iv),  $w(\Gamma^*(c_1, c_2, \dots, c_n)) = rn$ . Since  $A_1$  is  $(m - 2)$ -transitive on  $S$ , for any  $n$  elements  $x_1, \dots, x_n$  of  $S$ ,  $w(\Gamma^*(x_1, \dots, x_n)) = rn$ . Hence

$$m^2 \geq w(\Gamma_2(1)) \geq \sum_{x_1, \dots, x_n \in S} w(\Gamma^*(x_1, \dots, x_n)) = rn \binom{m}{n}.$$

However, it is easy to see that  $rn \binom{m}{n} > m^2$  since  $3 \leq n \leq m - 2$ , a contradiction. Thus  $\Gamma_n^* = 0$  for  $3 \leq n \leq m - 2$ .

(2) Assume that  $\Gamma_2^* = \Gamma_{m-1}^* = 0$ . Then  $\Gamma_2(1) = (\Gamma^*(S) \setminus \{1\}) \cup \Gamma^*(a_1) \cup \dots \cup \Gamma^*(a_m) \subseteq (\Gamma^*(S) \setminus \{1\}) \cup \{a_1^2, \dots, a_m^2\}$ . Thus  $a_i a_j \in \Gamma^*(S)$  for any  $a_i \neq a_j$ . Since no two of  $a_1 a_2, \dots, a_1 a_m$  are equal,  $|\Gamma^*(S)| \geq m - 1 \geq 2$ . Thus for any  $i, j \neq 1$ , there are integers  $h, k$  such that  $a_1 a_i = a_j a_h$  and  $a_1 a_j = a_i a_k$ . It follows that  $a_1^2 = a_h a_k$  and so  $\Gamma^*(a_1) = \emptyset$ . Thus  $\Gamma^*(S) \setminus \{1\} = \Gamma_2(1)$ . Hence every vertex in  $\Gamma_2(1)$  is joined to all vertices in  $\Gamma(1) = S$ . Thus if  $1 \in \Gamma^*(S)$  then  $\text{Cay}(G, S) \cong K_{m,m}$ ; if  $1 \notin \Gamma^*(S)$  then  $\text{Cay}(G, S) \cong C_{\lfloor \frac{m}{2} \rfloor}[\bar{K}_m]$  where  $|G| > 2m$ . It follows that  $a_i S = a_j S$  for any  $a_i, a_j \in S$ . Thus  $H = a_1^{-1} S$  is a subgroup of  $G$  and  $S = a_1 H$ . This case is as in part (ii).

(3) Suppose that  $\Gamma_2^* = r \geq 1$ . By Lemma 3.1(iii),  $r \leq 2$ . If  $r = 2$ , then since  $A_1$  is 2-set-transitive on  $S$ , for any  $u, v \in S$ ,  $|\Gamma^*(u, v)| = 2$  and so  $\Gamma^*(u, v) = \{uv = vu, u^2 = v^2\}$ . It follows that  $a_1^2 = a_2^2$  and  $a_2^2 = a_3^2$ , a contradiction. Thus  $r = 1$ . Since  $A_1$  is 2-set-transitive on  $S$ ,  $|\Gamma^*(u, v)| = 1$  for any  $u, v \in S$ . Hence  $\Gamma^*(u, v) = \{uv = vu\}$  or  $\{u^2 = v^2\}$ . By Lemma 3.4(iv),  $1 \notin \Gamma^*(u, v)$  and so  $w(\Gamma^*(u, v)) = 2$ .

First assume that there are two elements  $a, b \in S$  such that  $\Gamma^*(a, b) = \{a^2 = b^2\}$ . Then  $\Gamma^*(a) = \emptyset$  and  $ab \notin \Gamma^*(a, b)$ , so  $ab = cd$  for some  $c, d \in S \setminus \{a, b\}$ . Thus  $ab \in \Gamma^*(x_1, \dots, x_i)$  for some  $x_1, \dots, x_i \in S$  where  $i > 2$ . Since  $\Gamma_n^* = 0$  for  $3 \leq n \leq m - 2$  shown in (1),  $i \geq m - 1$  and so  $w(ab) \geq m - 1$ . Thus  $\Gamma_{m-1}^* \neq 0$  or  $\Gamma_m^* \neq 0$ . Since  $w(\Gamma^*(u, v)) = 2$  for all  $u, v \in S$  where  $u \neq v$ ,  $\sum_{u, v \in S} w(\Gamma^*(u, v)) = 2 \binom{m}{2} = m(m - 1)$ . If  $\Gamma_{m-1}^* = s \neq 0$  then since  $A_1^S$  is transitive on  $S$ ,  $|\Gamma^*(S \setminus \{u\})| = s$  for all  $u \in S$ . Thus  $w(\Gamma^*(S \setminus \{u\})) = s(m - 1)$  and so  $\sum_{u \in S} w(\Gamma^*(S \setminus \{u\})) = ms(m - 1)$ . Since  $1 \notin \Gamma^*(S \setminus \{u\})$ , we have

$$\begin{aligned} w(\Gamma_2(1)) &\geq \sum_{u, v \in S} w(\Gamma^*(u, v)) + \sum_{u \in S} w(\Gamma^*(S \setminus \{u\})) \\ &= (s + 1)m(m - 1) > m^2 \geq w(\Gamma_2(1)), \end{aligned}$$

a contradiction. Thus  $\Gamma_{m-1}^* = 0$ , so  $\Gamma_m^* = s \neq 0$  and  $\Gamma_2(1) = \bigcup_{u, v \in S} \Gamma^*(u, v) \cup \Gamma^*(S) \setminus \{1\}$ . Without loss of generality, suppose that  $a = a_1$  and  $b = a_2$ , and let  $a_i = o_i e_i$  such that  $o_i \in G_{2'}$  and  $e_i \in G_2$ , where  $G_2$  is a Sylow 2-subgroup and  $G_{2'}$  is a Hall 2'-subgroup of  $G$ . Since  $a_1^2 = a_2^2$ ,  $o_1 = o_2 =: o$  and  $e_1^2 = e_2^2$ . For any  $a_i \in S$  with  $i \neq 1, 2$ , since  $a_1 a_2 \in \Gamma^*(S)$ ,

there is an  $a_j$  such that  $a_1a_2 = a_ia_j$ . If  $j = i$  then  $o_i^2 = o_1o_2 = o^2$  and  $e_i^2 = e_1e_2$ , so  $o_i = o$ . If  $j \neq i$  then since  $a_ia_j = a_1a_2$ ,  $a_ia_j \notin \Gamma^*(a_i, a_j)$ . Since  $\Gamma^*(a_i, a_j) \neq \emptyset$ , we have  $\Gamma^*(a_i, a_j) = \{a_i^2 = a_j^2\}$ . It follows that  $o_i = o_j$  and  $e_i^2 = e_j^2$ . Since  $a_ia_j = a_1a_2 = o^2e_1e_2$ , we have  $o_i = o$  and  $e_ie_j = e_1e_2$ . Thus, whether  $j=i$  or not, we have  $o_i = o$  and  $e_i^4 = (e_ie_j)^2 = (e_1e_2)^2 = e_1^4$ . Hence  $o_1 = o_2 = \dots = o_m$  and  $e_1^4 = e_2^4 = \dots = e_m^4$ . Note that  $G = \langle S \rangle$ , so  $G_2 = \langle o \rangle$  and  $G_2 = \langle e_1, e_2, \dots, e_m \rangle$ . If  $e_1^4 \neq 1$  then  $G_2$  has only one subgroup of order 2. By [14, p. 59],  $G_2$  is cyclic; if  $e_1^4 = 1$  then  $G_2$  is of exponent 4. This case is as in part (v).

Now assume that  $\Gamma^*(u, v) = \{uv\}$  for any  $u, v \in S$  and that  $G$  is not as in part (v). For any  $T \subseteq S \setminus \{1\}$ , by the previous paragraph,  $\text{Cay}(G, S) \cong \text{Cay}(G, T)$  implies that  $\Gamma^*(u', v') = \{u'v'\}$  for any  $u', v' \in T$  with  $u' \neq v'$ . By Lemma 3.3,  $S$  is conjugate in  $\text{Aut}(G)$  to  $T$  and so  $S$  is a CI-subset. For any  $\rho \in A_1$ , let  $b_i = a_i^\rho$  and  $T = \{b_1, \dots, b_m\}$ . Then  $\text{Cay}(G, S) = \text{Cay}(G, T)$ . By Lemma 3.3,  $\rho$  induces an automorphism of  $G$ . Thus  $A_1 \leq \text{Aut}(G)$ , so  $A_1 = \text{Aut}(G, S)$  and  $A = GA_1 = G \rtimes \text{Aut}(G, S)$ , which is as in part (iv).

(4) Assume that  $\Gamma_2^* = 0$  and  $\Gamma_{m-1}^* = r \geq 1$ . Then  $m \geq 4$ . Since  $A_1$  is transitive on  $S$ , we have  $|\Gamma^*(S \setminus \{x\})| = r$  for every  $x \in S$ . If  $r \geq 2$ , then since  $1 \notin \Gamma^*(S \setminus \{x\})$  for any  $x \in S$ ,

$$w(\Gamma_2(1)) \geq \sum_{x \in S} w(\Gamma^*(S \setminus \{x\})) = rm(m - 1) > m^2 \geq w(\Gamma_2(1)),$$

a contradiction. Thus  $r = 1$ . Let  $v(x)$  be the unique element of  $\Gamma^*(S \setminus \{x\})$ . If  $v(a_1) = a_1$ , then for any  $a_i$ , we have  $v(a_i) = a_i$  because  $A_1$  is transitive on  $S$ . Thus  $\text{Cay}(G, S) \cong K_{m+1}$  as in part (i). Now suppose that  $v(a_1) \neq a_1$ . Then  $v(a_1) \in \Gamma(x)$  for all  $x \in S \setminus \{a_1\}$ . Let  $b = a_1^{-1}v(a_1)$  and  $S^* = S \cup \{b\}$ . We shall prove that  $b^{-1}S^*$  is a subgroup of  $G$ . To do this, we need to prove that  $b^{-1}a_i \cdot (b^{-1}a_j)^{-1} \in b^{-1}S^*$  for any  $i \neq j$ . Since  $i \neq j$ , we may assume that  $j \neq 1$ . Then  $v(a_1) \in \Gamma(a_j)$  and so  $v(a_1) = a_ja_k$  for some  $a_k \in S$ . Thus

$$\begin{aligned} b^{-1}a_i \cdot (b^{-1}a_j)^{-1} &= b^{-1} \cdot b \cdot a_ia_j^{-1} \\ &= b^{-1} \cdot a_1^{-1}v(a_1) \cdot a_ia_j^{-1} \\ &= b^{-1} \cdot a_1^{-1}a_ja_k \cdot a_ia_j^{-1} \\ &= b^{-1}a_1^{-1}a_ia_k. \end{aligned}$$

If  $a_ia_k \in \Gamma(a_1)$ , that is,  $a_ia_k = a_1a_{k'}$  for some  $a_{k'} \in S$ , then  $b^{-1}a_i(b^{-1}a_j)^{-1} = b^{-1}a_1^{-1}a_ia_k = b^{-1}a_{k'} \in b^{-1}S^*$ . Hence  $H := b^{-1}S^*$  is a subgroup of  $G$  and  $S^*$  is a coset of  $H$ . Thus  $S = S^* \setminus \{b\} = bH \setminus \{b\}$ , and  $\text{Cay}(G, S) = \text{Cay}(G, S^*) - \text{Cay}(G, \{b\}) \cong C_{\frac{|G|}{m+1}}[\bar{K}_{m+1}] - \frac{|G|}{k}C_k$  where  $k = o(b)$ , which are as in part (iii) of the theorem. Thus, in the following, we only need to prove that  $a_ia_k \in \Gamma(a_1)$ . Since  $i \neq j$ ,  $a_ia_k \neq a_ja_k = v(a_1)$ . If  $i \neq k$ , then since  $\Gamma_n^* = 0$  for  $2 \leq n \leq m - 2$ ,  $a_ia_k \in \Gamma^*(S) \cup \Gamma^*(S \setminus \{x\})$  for some  $x \in S \setminus \{a_1\}$  and so  $a_ia_k \in \Gamma(a_1)$ . Thus we may assume that  $i = k$ , so  $a_ia_k = a_i^2$ . If  $a_k^2 = a_1^2$  then  $a_k^2 \in \Gamma(a_1)$ . Hence suppose that  $a_k^2 \neq a_1^2$ . Since  $a_ja_k = v(a_1) \in \Gamma^*(S \setminus \{a_1\})$ , there exist  $a_h, a_l \in S \setminus \{a_j, a_k\}$  such that  $a_ja_k = a_ha_l$ . If  $l = h$  then  $a_h^2 = a_ja_k$  and so  $\Gamma^*(a_h) = \emptyset$ . Since  $A_1$  is transitive on  $S$ ,  $\Gamma^*(a_k) = \emptyset$  and so  $a_k^2 \in \Gamma^*(S) \cup \Gamma^*(S \setminus \{x\})$  for some  $x \in S$ .



Since  $a_k^2 \neq v(a_1)$ , we have  $a_k^2 \in \Gamma(a_1)$ . If  $l \neq h$ , then at least one of  $a_k a_h$  and  $a_k a_l$  does not belong to  $\Gamma^*(S \setminus \{a_j\})$ , say,  $a_k a_h \notin \Gamma^*(S \setminus \{a_j\})$ . Thus  $a_k a_h \in \Gamma^*(S) \cup \Gamma^*(S \setminus \{x\})$  for some  $x \in S \setminus \{a_j\}$ , and so  $a_k a_h = a_j a_{l'}$  for some  $l'$ , which, together with  $a_j a_k = a_h a_l$ , implies  $a_k^2 = a_l a_{l'}$ . Thus  $\Gamma^*(a_k) = \emptyset$  and so  $a_k^2 \in \Gamma^*(S) \cup \Gamma^*(S \setminus \{x\})$  for some  $x \in S$ . Since  $a_k^2 \neq v(a_1)$ ,  $a_k^2 \notin \Gamma^*(S \setminus \{a_1\})$  and so  $a_k^2 \in \Gamma(a_1)$ . This completes the proof of the theorem.  $\square$

Theorem 3.5 gives an application to Babai and Frankl’s question.

**Corollary 3.6** *Let  $G$  be an elementary Abelian  $p$ -group,  $p$  a prime, and  $S$  a Cayley subset. Let  $A = \text{Aut Cay}(G, S)$ . If  $A_1^S \geq \text{Alt}(S)$ , then  $S$  is a CI-subset of  $G$ .*

**Proof:** Since any subgroup of  $G$  is still elementary Abelian group and each isomorphism between any two subgroups can be extended as an automorphism of  $G$ , we may assume that  $\langle S \rangle = G$ . By Theorem 3.5,  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$  satisfies parts (i)–(iv). It is easy to check that  $S$  is a CI-subset of  $G$ .  $\square$

**Remark** By Theorem 3.5, the graphs in parts (i)–(iii) have been completely characterized. The graphs  $\text{Cay}(G, S)$  in part (iv) satisfies a very strong condition  $\text{Aut Cay}(G, S) \leq G \rtimes \text{Aut}(G)$ ’s.

#### 4. Finite $m$ -DCI $p$ -groups, $p$ a prime

By definition, a finite group  $G$  is a 1-DCI group if and only if all elements of  $G$  of the same order are conjugate in  $\text{Aut}(G)$ . Suppose that  $G$  is a 1-DCI  $p$ -group. If  $p$  is an odd prime then  $G$  is homocyclic by the result of Shult [13]; if  $p = 2$  then by [7],  $G$  is a homocyclic group or the quaternion group  $Q_8$ , or  $G$  satisfies the following conditions:

- (i)  $G' = \Phi(G)$  is homocyclic of rank  $n$ ;
- (ii)  $G/G'$  is of order  $2^n$  or  $2^{2n}$ ;
- (iii) the centre  $\mathbf{Z}(G)$  of  $G$  consists of the identity and all the involutions of  $G$ ;
- (iv) either  $\mathbf{Z}(G) = G'$ , or  $\mathbf{C}_G(G') = G'$  with  $\mathbf{Z}(G) = \Phi(G')$ .

It is easy to see that homocyclic groups and  $Q_8$  are 1-DCI groups, however, it is still difficult to characterize precisely 1-DCI 2-groups, see [7]. For  $m \geq 2$ , the problem of determining  $m$ -DCI groups is very different from the case  $m = 1$ . By Lemma 2.4, we need to consider mainly Abelian  $p$ -groups. We first prove a property of Cayley graphs of arbitrary Abelian  $p$ -groups.

**Proposition 4.1** *Let  $G$  be an Abelian  $p$ -group,  $S$  a Cayley subset of  $G$  such that  $\langle S \rangle = G$  and  $A = \text{Aut Cay}(G, S)$ . If  $p^2 \nmid |A_1|$  then either  $S$  is a CI-subset, or  $p \parallel |A_1|$  and  $S$  contains a coset of some subgroup of  $G$ , where  $A_1$  is the stabilizer of 1 in  $A$ .*

**Proof:** Suppose that  $|G| = p^d$ . If  $p \nmid |A_1|$ , then  $G$  is a Sylow  $p$ -subgroup of  $A$ . By Sylow Theorem and Theorem 2.1,  $S$  is a CI-subset. Thus assume that  $p \parallel |A_1|$ . Let  $P$  be a Sylow  $p$ -subgroup of  $A$  containing  $G$ . Then  $|P : G| = p$  and  $P_1 \cong Z_p$  where  $P_1$  is the

stabilizer of 1 in  $P$ , and so  $P$  is non-Abelian, see [15, 4.4]. Assume that  $S$  is not a CI-subset of  $G$ . By Theorem 2.1, there is a  $\tau \in \text{Sym}(G)$  such that  $G^\tau < A$  and  $G^\tau$  is not conjugate to  $G$ . Let  $g \in A$  such that  $(G^\tau)^g < P$ . Then  $G^{\tau g} \neq G$  and  $P \geq \langle G^{\tau g}, G \rangle > G$ . Hence  $P = \langle G^{\tau g}, G \rangle = G^{\tau g}G$  as  $|P : G| = p$ . Since any element in  $G^{\tau g} \cap G$  commutes with all elements of  $G^{\tau g}$  and  $G$ , we have  $G^{\tau g} \cap G \leq \mathbf{Z}(\langle G^{\tau g}, G \rangle) = \mathbf{Z}(P)$ . Further

$$|G^{\tau g} \cap G| = \frac{|G^{\tau g}||G|}{|G^{\tau g}G|} = \frac{p^d \cdot p^d}{p^{d+1}} = p^{d-1}.$$

Since  $P$  is non-Abelian,  $G^{\tau g} \cap G = \mathbf{Z}(P)$ . For any  $a \in \mathbf{Z}(P)$ ,  $P_a = P_{1^a} = P_1^a = P_1$ , so  $P_1$  fixes all vertices in  $\mathbf{Z}(P)$ . Now  $\langle \mathbf{Z}(P), P_1 \rangle$  is an Abelian subgroup of index  $p$  in  $P$ . Hence  $\langle \mathbf{Z}(P), P_1 \rangle \triangleleft P$  and  $\langle \mathbf{Z}(P), P_1 \rangle$  has orbits  $\{x\mathbf{Z}(P) \mid x \in G\}$  on  $V\Gamma = G$ . Thus  $P_1$  fixes every  $x\mathbf{Z}(P)$  setwise. Moreover,  $P_1 = \langle \alpha \rangle$  has an orbit  $O$  on  $S$  of length  $p$ . If  $a \in O \subseteq S$ , then since  $P_1$  fixes  $x\mathbf{Z}(P)$  setwise for each  $x \in G$ ,  $a^\alpha \in a\mathbf{Z}(P)$ , so  $a^\alpha = az$  for some  $z \in \mathbf{Z}(P)$ . Thus  $O = a^{(\alpha)} = \{a, az, az^2, \dots, az^{p-1}\} = a\langle z \rangle$ . Thus the proposition holds.  $\square$

This result has been generalized in [8] to general abelian groups under certain conditions. The following lemma enables us to focus our attention on connected graphs.

**Lemma 4.2** *Assume that  $G$  is a homocyclic  $p$ -group and that  $S$  is a Cayley subset of  $G$ . If  $S$  is a CI-subset of  $\langle S \rangle$  and for any subset  $T$  of  $G$ ,  $\text{Cay}(\langle T \rangle, T) \cong \text{Cay}(\langle S \rangle, S)$  implies  $\langle T \rangle \cong \langle S \rangle$ , then  $S$  is a CI-subset of  $G$ .*

**Proof:** Assume that  $S$  is a CI-subset of  $\langle S \rangle$  and that  $T$  is a Cayley subset of  $G$  such that  $\text{Cay}(\langle T \rangle, T) \cong \text{Cay}(\langle S \rangle, S)$ . Then  $\langle T \rangle \cong^\sigma \langle S \rangle$  for some isomorphism  $\sigma$  from  $\langle T \rangle$  to  $\langle S \rangle$ . Let  $T' = T^\sigma$ . Then  $\text{Cay}(\langle S \rangle, T') \cong \text{Cay}(\langle T \rangle, T) \cong \text{Cay}(\langle S \rangle, S)$ . Since  $S$  is a CI-subset of  $\langle S \rangle$ , there is  $\alpha \in \text{Aut}(\langle S \rangle)$  such that  $T'^\alpha = S$ . Thus  $\beta = \sigma\alpha$  is an isomorphism from  $\langle T \rangle$  to  $\langle S \rangle$  such that  $T^\beta = (T^\sigma)^\alpha = T'^\alpha = S$ . Since  $G$  is a homocyclic  $p$ -group, it is easy to show that every isomorphism between any two isomorphic subgroups of  $G$  can be extended as an automorphism of  $G$ . Let  $\rho \in \text{Aut}(G)$  be an extension of  $\beta$ . Then  $T^\rho = T^\beta = S$ , so  $S$  is a CI-subset of  $G$ .  $\square$

Now we can determine  $m$ -DCI  $p$ -groups for  $2 \leq m \leq p + 1$ .

**Theorem 4.3** *Let  $G$  be a finite  $p$ -group, where  $p$  is prime. Then*

- (1)  $G$  is an  $m$ -DCI group for  $2 \leq m \leq p - 1$  if and only if  $p \geq 3$  and  $G$  is homocyclic;
- (2)  $G$  is a  $p$ -DCI group if and only if  $G$  is elementary Abelian, cyclic, or  $G = Q_8$ ;
- (3)  $G$  is a  $(p + 1)$ -DCI group if and only if  $G$  is elementary Abelian, or  $G = Z_4, Q_8$ .

**Proof:**

- (1) By Lemmas 2.3 and 2.4, we only need to prove that homocyclic  $p$ -groups are  $m$ -DCI groups. Let  $S$  be a Cayley subset of  $G$  of size  $m$ . By [8, Theorem 1.1],  $S$  is a CI-subset of  $\langle S \rangle$ . Thus by Lemma 4.2,  $S$  is a CI-subset of  $G$  and  $G$  is an  $m$ -DCI group.

- (2) By Lemmas 2.4 and 4.2, we only need to prove that elementary Abelian  $p$ -groups and cyclic  $p$ -groups are  $p$ -DCI groups. By [8, Theorem 1.1],  $S$  is a CI-subset of  $\langle S \rangle$ . Thus by Lemma 4.2,  $S$  is a CI-subset of  $G$  and  $G$  is a  $p$ -DCI group.
- (3) By Lemmas 2.4 and 4.2, we only need to prove that elementary Abelian  $p$ -groups are  $(p+1)$ -DCI groups. Let  $G = Z_p^d$  and let  $S$  be a Cayley subset of  $G$  such that  $|S| \leq p+1$ . By parts (1) and (2), we only need to consider the case where  $|S| = p+1$ . Since  $G$  is elementary Abelian, any two subgroups of  $G$  of the same order are isomorphic. Thus, by Lemma 4.2, we may assume that  $\langle S \rangle = G$ .

If  $p = 2$ , then by [3, Theorem 1],  $G$  is a 3-DCI group. Thus assume  $p \geq 3$  in the following. Suppose first that  $S$  contains a coset  $aH$  of some subgroup  $H$  of  $G$  for some  $a \in S$ . Since  $|S| = p+1$ , we have  $|H| = p$  and  $S = aH \cup \{b\}$  for some  $b \in S$ . If  $b \in \langle aH \rangle$  then  $G = \langle a, H \rangle$  is of order  $p^2$ , and thus by [6],  $S$  is a CI-subset. If  $b \notin \langle aH \rangle$  then  $G = \langle aH \rangle \times \langle b \rangle \cong Z_p^3$ , and thus by [4], again  $S$  is a CI-subset. Suppose now that  $S$  does not contain any coset of subgroups of  $G$ . By Theorem 3.2,  $A_1$  is faithful on  $S$ . Since  $|S| = p+1$ , it follows that  $p^2 \nmid |A_1|$ . By Proposition 4.1,  $S$  is a CI-subset and so  $G$  is a  $(p+1)$ -DCI group. This completes the proof of the theorem.  $\square$

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