# A tight bound on the size of certain separating hash families 

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#### Abstract

In this paper, we present a new lower bound on the size of separating hash families of type $\left\{w_{1}^{q-1}, w_{2}\right\}$ where $w_{1}<w_{2}$. Our result extends the paper by Guo, Stinson and Tran on binary frameproof codes [Des. Codes Crypto. 77 (2015), 301-319]. This bound compares well against known general bounds, and is especially useful when trying to bound the size of strong separating hash families. We also show that our new bound is tight by constructing hash families that meet the new bound with equality.


## 1 Introduction

Let $X, Y$ be finite sets of size $n$ and $q$, respectively. Let $\mathcal{F}$ be a family of functions from $X$ to $Y$ with $|\mathcal{F}|=N$. Given positive integers $w_{1}, w_{2}, \ldots, w_{t}$, we say that $\mathcal{F}$ is a $\left\{w_{1}, w_{2}, \ldots, w_{t}\right\}$-separating hash family, denoted $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{w_{1}, w_{2}, \ldots, w_{t}\right\}\right)$, if for every choice of subsets $X_{1}, X_{2}, \ldots, X_{t} \subseteq X$ with $\left|X_{i}\right|=w_{i}$ for $i=1, \ldots, t$ and $X_{i} \cap X_{j}=\emptyset$ for $i \neq j$, there exists some $f \in \mathcal{F}$ such that $f\left(X_{i}\right) \cap f\left(X_{j}\right)=\emptyset$ for $i \neq j$. Such $f$ is said to separate the sets $X_{1}, \ldots, X_{t}$. The parameter multiset $\left\{w_{1}, w_{2}, \ldots, w_{t}\right\}$ is called the type of the SHF.

The notion of separating hash families was introduced by Stinson et al. in [9]. It is a generalization of many other combinatorial structures such as perfect hash families [6], frameproof codes [4], and secure frameproof codes [8]. We would like to study bounds on the size of separating hash families when given the other parameters.

It is often useful to represent separating hash families in matrix form. When given an $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{w_{1}, w_{2}, \ldots, w_{t}\right\}\right)$, construct an $N \times n q$-ary matrix $A$ with $A(i, j)=f_{i}\left(x_{j}\right)$ where $f_{1}, \ldots, f_{N}$ is some fixed ordering of the functions in $\mathcal{F}$ and

[^0]$x_{1}, \ldots, x_{n}$ is some fixed ordering of the elements of $X$. This matrix is called the representation matrix of $\mathcal{F}$. Specializing our definition of an SHF to this form, the equivalent property for when a matrix is the representation matrix of an SHF is as follows.

Theorem 1.1. An $N \times n$-ary matrix $A$ is the representation matrix of an $\operatorname{SHF}(N$; $\left.n, q,\left\{w_{1}, w_{2}, \ldots, w_{t}\right\}\right)$ if and only if, for every choice of $t$ column sets $C_{1}, \ldots, C_{t}$ in A where $C_{i} \cap C_{j}=\emptyset$ for $i \neq j$ and $\left|C_{i}\right|=w_{i}$ for $i=1, \ldots, t$, there exists a row $r$ such that $A\left(r, c_{i}\right) \neq A\left(r, c_{j}\right)$ whenever $c_{i} \in C_{i}$ and $c_{j} \in C_{j}$ where $i \neq j$.

A list of $t$ column sets $\left(C_{1}, \ldots, C_{t}\right)$, as specified in Theorem 1.1, will be termed a column set $t$-tuple.

We will only consider SHFs with $\sum_{i} w_{i} \leq n$ and $q \geq t$ in order to avoid vacuous cases. The following properties regarding SHFs with different parameter sets $\left\{w_{1}, \ldots, w_{t}\right\}$ are easy to prove.
Theorem 1.2. Let $\mathcal{F}$ be an $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{w_{1}, w_{2}, \ldots, w_{t}\right\}\right)$ with $\sum_{i} w_{i} \leq n$ and $q \geq t$.
(i) If $w_{1}^{\prime} \leq w_{1}$ then $\mathcal{F}$ is also an $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{w_{1}^{\prime}, w_{2}, \ldots, w_{t}\right\}\right)$.
(ii) If $w_{1}^{\prime}=w_{1}+w_{2}$ then $\mathcal{F}$ is also an $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{w_{1}^{\prime}, w_{3}, \ldots, w_{t}\right\}\right)$.

We now present some known results on general separating hash families.
Theorem 1.3 ([3]). If there exists an $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{w_{1}, \ldots, w_{t}\right\}\right)$ with $w_{1}, w_{2} \leq w_{i}$ for $i=3, \ldots$, then

$$
n \leq \gamma q^{\left\lceil\frac{N}{u-1}\right\rceil}
$$

where $u=\sum_{i} w_{i}$ and $\gamma=\left(w_{1} w_{2}+u-w_{1}-w_{2}\right)$.
Theorem 1.4 ([1]). If there exists an $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{w_{1}, \ldots, w_{t}\right\}\right)$, then

$$
n \leq(u-1) q^{\left\lceil\frac{N}{u-1}\right\rceil}
$$

where $u=\sum_{i} w_{i}$.
Theorem 1.5 ([2]). If there exists an $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{w_{1}, \ldots, w_{t}\right\}\right)$ with $t \geq 3$ and $u=\sum_{i} w_{i} \geq 4$, then

$$
n \leq(u-1) q^{\left\lceil\frac{N}{u-1}\right\rceil}+2-2 \sqrt{3 q^{\left\lceil\frac{N}{u-1}\right\rceil}+1}
$$

In the remainder of this paper, we will present a construction and a new bound on the size of an SHF of the type $\left\{w_{1}^{q-1}, w_{2}\right\}$, where $w_{1}^{q-1}$ denotes the multiset consisting of $q-1$ copies of $w_{1}$ and $w_{1}<w_{2}$. Using Theorem 1.2 , one can extend this result to bounds for more general types of SHF, such as strong separating hash families [7].

## 2 A construction for SHF of type $\left\{w_{1}^{q-1}, w_{2}\right\}$

We first give a construction for SHF of type $\left\{w_{1}^{q-1}, w_{2}\right\}$.
Construction 2.1. Fix positive integers $n, q, w_{1}, w_{2}$ with $w_{2}+(q-1) w_{1} \leq n$. Let $\mathcal{S}=$
$\left\{\left(C_{1}, \ldots, C_{q-1}\right): C_{i} \subseteq\{1, \ldots, n\}\right.$ with $\left|C_{i}\right|=w_{1}$ for all $i$ and $C_{i} \cap C_{j}=\emptyset$ if $\left.i \neq j\right\}$, and let $\mathcal{T}=$
$\left\{\left(C_{1}, \ldots, C_{q-1}\right) \in \mathcal{S}: c_{1}<c_{2}<\ldots<c_{q-1}\right.$ where $c_{i}$ is the smallest element of $\left.C_{i}\right\}$.
Now for $\left(C_{1}, \ldots, C_{q-1}\right) \in \mathcal{T}$, let $r_{\left(C_{1}, \ldots, C_{q-1}\right)}$ be the vector

$$
r_{\left(C_{1}, \ldots, C_{q-1}\right)}(i)= \begin{cases}j & \text { if } i \in C_{j} \\ 0 & \text { otherwise } .\end{cases}
$$

Let $A$ be the matrix that contains all rows $r_{\left(C_{1}, \ldots, C_{q-1}\right)}$ for every $\left(C_{1}, \ldots, C_{q-1}\right) \in \mathcal{T}$.
Theorem 2.1. The matrix A from Construction 2.1 is an $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{w_{1}^{q-1}, w_{2}\right\}\right)$ where

$$
N=\frac{1}{(q-1)!}\binom{n}{w_{1}}\binom{n-w_{1}}{w_{1}} \cdots\binom{n-(q-2) w_{1}}{w_{1}}
$$

Proof. Let $C_{0}, \ldots, C_{q-1}$ be pairwise disjoint subsets of $\{1, \ldots, n\}$ such that $\left|C_{0}\right|=w_{2}$ and $\left|C_{i}\right|=w_{1}$ for $i=1, \ldots, q-1$. By construction, there exists a unique permutation $\pi$ over $\{1, \ldots, q-1\}$ such that the $(q-1)$-tuple $\left(C_{\pi(1)}, \ldots, C_{\pi(q-1)}\right)$ is contained in $\mathcal{T}$. The column set $q$-tuple is separated by the row $r_{\left(C_{\pi(1)}, \ldots, C_{\pi(q-1)}\right)}$ in $A$. Thus $A$ is the representation matrix of an SHF of type $\left\{w_{1}^{q-1}, w_{2}\right\}$.

Clearly $A$ has $n$ columns and $|\mathcal{T}|$ rows. For any $\left(C_{1}, \ldots, C_{q-1}\right) \in \mathcal{T}$, every permutation $\pi$ over $\{1, \ldots, q-1\}$ gives a unique element $\left(C_{\pi(1)}, \ldots, C_{\pi(q-1)}\right) \in \mathcal{S}$. Since there are

$$
\binom{n}{w_{1}}\binom{n-w_{1}}{w_{1}} \cdots\binom{n-(q-2) w_{1}}{w_{1}}
$$

elements in $\mathcal{S}$, we have that

$$
|\mathcal{T}|=\frac{1}{(q-1)!}\binom{n}{w_{1}}\binom{n-w_{1}}{w_{1}} \cdots\binom{n-(q-2) w_{1}}{w_{1}}
$$

as desired.

## 3 A bound for the SHF of type $\left\{w_{1}^{q-1}, w_{2}\right\}$

In this section, for a certain range of values $n$, we prove a lower bound on $N$ for existence of an $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{w_{1}^{q-1}, w_{2}\right\}\right)$. Whenever it is applicable, this lower bound is tight, in view of Theorem 2.1.

Our bound is in fact a generalization of Theorem 2.2.3 in [5], which we provide here for reference.

Theorem 3.1 ([5]). Let $w, N$ be positive integers such that $w \geq 3$ and $w+1 \leq N \leq$ $2 w+1$. Suppose there exists an $\operatorname{SHF}(N ; n, 2,\{1, w\})$. Then $n \leq N$.

We will extend the idea of the proof of Theorem 2.2.3 in [5] by counting the total number of column set $q$-tuples separated in an SHF versus the number of column set $q$-tuples separated by a single row in the SHF. We can then give a lower bound on the number of rows required by dividing these two quantities. The following definition will be used throughout this section.

Definition 3.1. Let $x \in Q^{n}$ where $Q=\{0,1, \ldots, q-1\}$. We say that $x$ is of weight $\left(i_{1}, i_{2}, \ldots, i_{q-1}\right)$ if the number of entries equal to $k$ in $x$ is exactly $i_{k}$, for each $k=1, \ldots, q-1$. The number of entries equal to 0 is thus $i_{0}=n-\sum_{k=1}^{q-1} i_{k}$.

The next definition gives a simplified notation for counting the number of column set $q$-tuples separated by a row of weight $\left(i_{1}, i_{2}, \ldots, i_{q-1}\right)$. The correctness of this fact will be proven in Lemma 3.2.

Definition 3.2. Let $w_{1}$, $w_{2}$ be positive integers with $w_{1}<w_{2}$. For integers $i_{0}, i_{1}, \ldots$, $i_{q-1}$ with $i_{0} \geq w_{2}, i_{k} \geq w_{1}$ for $k=1, \ldots, q-1$ and $n \geq \sum_{k=0}^{q-1} i_{k}$, define

$$
T_{w_{1}, w_{2}, n}^{(q-1)}\left(i_{1}, \ldots, i_{q-1}\right)=\binom{i_{1}}{w_{1}}\binom{i_{2}}{w_{1}} \cdots\binom{i_{q-1}}{w_{1}}\binom{n-\sum_{k=1}^{q-1} i_{k}}{w_{2}} .
$$

Lemma 3.2. Let $w_{1}, w_{2}$ be positive integers with $w_{1}<w_{2}$. For integers $i_{0}, i_{1}, \ldots, i_{q-1}$ with $i_{0} \geq w_{2}, w_{1} \leq i_{k}<w_{2}$ for $k=1, \ldots, q-1$ and $n \geq \sum_{k=0}^{q-1} i_{k}$, the number of column set $q$-tuples separated by a row of weight $\left(i_{1}, \ldots, i_{q-1}\right)$ is

$$
Z=(q-1)!T_{w_{1}, w_{2}, n}^{(q-1)}\left(i_{1}, \ldots, i_{q-1}\right)
$$

Proof. Since $w_{1} \leq i_{k}<w_{2}$ for $k=1, \ldots, q-1$, it is clear that a row $r$ of weight $\left(i_{1}, \ldots, i_{q-1}\right)$ only separates column set $q$-tuples of the form $\left(C_{0}, \ldots, C_{q-1}\right)$ with $\left|C_{k}\right|=w_{1}$ for $k=1, \ldots, q-1$ and $\left|C_{0}\right|=w_{2}$. The columns in $C_{0}$ correspond to entries in $r$ that are equal to 0 . The columns in $C_{k}$ for $k=1, \ldots, q-1$ correspond to distinct entries in $r$ that are equal to $1, \ldots, q-1$. There are $(q-1)$ ! permutations of the set $\{1, \ldots, q-1\}$, thus the total number of columns set $q$-tuples separated by $r$ is

$$
\begin{aligned}
Z & =(q-1)!\binom{i_{0}}{w_{2}}\binom{i_{1}}{w_{1}}\binom{i_{2}}{w_{1}} \cdots\binom{i_{q-1}}{w_{1}} \\
& =(q-1)!T_{w_{1}, w_{2}, n}^{(q-1)}\left(i_{1}, \ldots, i_{q-1}\right) .
\end{aligned}
$$

Using Lemma 3.2, we would like to determine the maximum number of column set $q$-tuples separated by a row of weight $\left(i_{1}, \ldots, i_{q-1}\right)$. The following lemma shows that this maximum is achieved when $i_{1}=\cdots=i_{q-1}=w_{1}$.

Lemma 3.3. Let $w_{1}, w_{2}$ be positive integers such that $w_{1}<w_{2}$, and let $q, n$ be positive integers with $q \geq 2$ and

$$
w_{2}+(q-1) w_{1} \leq n \leq w_{2}+(q-1) w_{1}+\frac{w_{2}}{w_{1}}-1
$$

Then for every $k=1, \ldots, q-1$, we have

$$
T_{w_{1}, w_{2}, n}^{(q-1)}\left(i_{1}, \ldots, i_{q-1}\right)>T_{w_{1}, w_{2}, n}^{(q-1)}\left(i_{1}, \ldots, i_{k-1}, i_{k}+1, i_{k+1}, \ldots, i_{q-1}\right) .
$$

In particular, $T_{w_{1}, w_{2}, n}^{(q-1)}$ obtains its global maximum at $\left(w_{1}, \ldots, w_{1}\right)$ over the domain of integers $\left(i_{1}, \ldots, i_{q-1}\right)$ for which $T_{w_{1}, w_{2}, n}^{(q-1)}$ is defined.

Proof.

$$
\begin{aligned}
& T_{w_{1}, w_{2}, n}^{(q-1)}\left(i_{1}, \ldots, i_{q-1}\right)>T_{w_{1}, w_{2}, n}^{(q-1)}\left(i_{1}, \ldots, i_{k-1}, i_{k}+1, i_{k+1}, \ldots, i_{q-1}\right) \\
\Leftrightarrow & \binom{i_{k}}{w_{1}}\binom{n-\sum_{l=1}^{q-1} i_{l}}{w_{2}}>\binom{i_{k}+1}{w_{1}}\binom{n-\sum_{l=1}^{q-1} i_{l}-1}{w_{2}} \\
\Leftrightarrow & \frac{i_{k}-w_{1}+1}{i_{k}+1}>\frac{n-\sum_{l=1}^{q-1} i_{l}-w_{2}}{n-\sum_{l=1}^{q-1} i_{l}} .
\end{aligned}
$$

Letting $I=\sum_{l=1}^{q-1} i_{l}$ and rearranging the inequality gives

$$
\begin{aligned}
& \left(i_{k}+1-w_{1}\right)(n-I)>\left(n-I-w_{2}\right)\left(i_{k}+1\right) \\
\Leftrightarrow & -w_{1}(n-I)>-w_{2}\left(i_{k}+1\right) \\
\Leftrightarrow & n \frac{w_{1}}{w_{2}}<i_{k}+1+\frac{w_{1}}{w_{2}} I \\
\Leftrightarrow & n<i_{k} \frac{w_{2}}{w_{1}}+I+\frac{w_{2}}{w_{1}}
\end{aligned}
$$

where the last inequality holds by the assumption $n<w_{2}+(q-1) w_{1}+\frac{w_{2}}{w_{1}}$ since $w_{1} \leq i_{k}$ and $(q-1) w_{1} \leq I$.

Before we prove the main theorem, we need a final lemma that corresponds to a special case.

Lemma 3.4. Let $q, w$ be positive integers with $q \geq 3$ and $w \geq 2$. Let $n=2 w+q-2$. Then

$$
(q-1)!T_{1, w, n}^{(q-1)}(1, \ldots, 1)>2(q-2)!T_{1, w, n}^{(q-1)}(1, \ldots, 1, w)
$$

Proof. Expanding the desired inequality gives

$$
\begin{aligned}
& (q-1)!\binom{1}{1}^{q-1}\binom{n-q+1}{w}>2(q-2)!\binom{1}{1}^{q-2}\binom{w}{1}\binom{w}{w} \\
\Leftrightarrow & (q-1)\binom{2 w-1}{w}>2 w .
\end{aligned}
$$

One can check that $\binom{2 w-1}{w}>w$ for $w \geq 2$, and the proof follows since $q-1 \geq 2$.

Theorem 3.5. Let $w_{1}, w_{2}$ be positive integers with $w_{1}<w_{2}$, and let $q, n$ be positive integers with $q \geq 2$ and

$$
\begin{equation*}
w_{2}+(q-1) w_{1} \leq n \leq w_{2}+(q-1) w_{1}+\frac{w_{2}}{w_{1}}-1 \tag{3.1}
\end{equation*}
$$

If there exists an $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{w_{1}^{q-1}, w_{2}\right\}\right)$ then

$$
N \geq \frac{1}{(q-1)!}\binom{n}{w_{1}}\binom{n-w_{1}}{w_{1}} \cdots\binom{n-(q-2) w_{1}}{w_{1}}
$$

Proof. Let $A$ be the representation matrix of an $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{w_{1}^{q-1}, w_{2}\right\}\right)$. For any row $r$ of $A$ and $k \in\{0,1, \ldots, q-1\}$, let $i_{k}$ be the number of occurrences of symbol $k$ in row $r$. By permuting the alphabet on row $r$ if necessary, we may assume without loss of generality that $i_{1} \leq i_{2} \leq \ldots \leq i_{q-1} \leq i_{0}$. Furthermore, we may assume that $i_{1} \geq w_{1}$ and $i_{0} \geq w_{2}$, since otherwise $r$ cannot separate any column set $q$-tuple $\left(C_{0}, C_{1}, \ldots, C_{q-1}\right)$ with $\left|C_{k}\right|=w_{1}$ for $1 \leq k \leq q-1$ and $\left|C_{0}\right|=w_{2}$ and we may remove $r$ from the matrix. Observe that

$$
\begin{align*}
i_{q-1} & =n-i_{0}-\sum_{k=1}^{q-2} i_{k} \\
& \leq n-w_{2}-(q-2) w_{1} \\
& \leq w_{1}+\frac{w_{2}}{w_{1}}-1  \tag{3.1}\\
& \leq w_{1}+\left(w_{2}-w_{1}\right) \\
& =w_{2}
\end{align*}
$$

We consider the following two cases.
(i) $i_{q-1}=w_{2}$. The above inequalities must all be equalities, so we have $w_{1}=1$, $i_{k}=1$ for $k=1, \ldots, q-2, i_{0}=w_{2}$ and

$$
n=w_{2}+(q-1) w_{1}+\frac{w_{2}}{w_{1}}-1=2 w_{2}+q-2 .
$$

Let $w=w_{2}$. We only need to consider the case $q \geq 3$ since $q=2$ is covered by Theorem 3.1. The number of column set $q$-tuples separated by $r$ is exactly $2(q-2)!T_{1, w, n}^{(q-1)}(1, \ldots, 1, w)$, which is less than the number of column set $q$ tuples separated by a row of weight $\left(w_{1}, \ldots, w_{1}\right)=(1, \ldots, 1)$ by Lemma 3.2 and Lemma 3.4.
(ii) $i_{q-1}<w_{2}$ : By Lemma 3.2, the number of column set $q$-tuples separated by $r$ is

$$
Z=(q-1)!T_{w_{1}, w_{2}, n}^{(q-1)}\left(i_{1}, \ldots, i_{q-1}\right)
$$

The number of column set $q$-tuples separated by a row of weight $\left(w_{1}, \ldots, w_{1}\right)$ is greater than $Z$ by Lemma 3.3 unless $i_{k}=w_{1}$ for $k=1, \ldots, q-1$.

In either case, the number of column set $q$-tuples separated by $r$ is maximized only when the row is of weight $\left(w_{1}, \ldots, w_{1}\right)$. The total number of column set $q$-tuples that need to be separated is

$$
T=\binom{n}{w_{1}}\binom{n-w_{1}}{w_{1}} \cdots\binom{n-(q-2) w_{1}}{w_{1}}\binom{n-(q-1) w_{1}}{w_{2}} .
$$

Thus

$$
\begin{aligned}
N & \left.\geq \frac{T}{(q-1)!} \begin{array}{rl}
T_{w_{1}, w_{2}, n}^{(q-1)}\left(w_{1}, \ldots, w_{1}\right) \\
(q-1)! \\
\\
w_{1}
\end{array}\right)\binom{n-w_{1}}{w_{1}} \cdots\binom{n-(q-2) w_{1}}{w_{1}} .
\end{aligned}
$$

The following result is an immediate consequence of Theorems 2.1 and 3.5.
Corollary 3.6. Let $w_{1}, w_{2}$ be positive integers with $w_{1}<w_{2}$, and let $q, n$ be positive integers with $q \geq 2$ and

$$
w_{2}+(q-1) w_{1} \leq n \leq w_{2}+(q-1) w_{1}+\frac{w_{2}}{w_{1}}-1
$$

Then the minimum value of $N$ such that there exists an $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{w_{1}^{q-1}, w_{2}\right\}\right)$ is

$$
N=\frac{1}{(q-1)!}\binom{n}{w_{1}}\binom{n-w_{1}}{w_{1}} \cdots\binom{n-(q-2) w_{1}}{w_{1}}
$$

## 4 Applications

Theorem 3.5 is particularly useful for studying the combinatorial objects known as strong separating hash families (denoted SSHF), introduced by Sarkar and Stinson in [7]. They are equivalent to an SHF of type $\left\{1^{t_{1}}, t_{2}\right\}$ for some positive integers $t_{1}, t_{2}$. We can give a strong bound for the code length of SSHFs as a corollary.

Corollary 4.1. Let $n, t_{1}, t_{2}$ be positive integers with $t_{1} \geq q-1$ and $t_{1}+t_{2} \leq n \leq$ $2\left(t_{1}+t_{2}\right)-q$. Suppose there exists an $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{1^{t_{1}}, t_{2}\right\}\right)$. Then

$$
N \geq\binom{ n}{q-1}
$$

Proof. By Theorem 1.2, an $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{1^{t_{1}}, t_{2}\right\}\right)$ is also an $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{1^{q-1}, t_{1}+\right.\right.$ $\left.\left.t_{2}-q+1\right\}\right)$. Applying Theorem 3.5, if $t_{1}+t_{2} \leq n \leq 2\left(t_{1}+t_{2}\right)-q$, then we have

$$
N \geq \frac{1}{(q-1)!} n(n-1) \ldots,(n-q+2)
$$

as desired.

Example 4.1. Let $q=3, t_{1}=4$ and $t_{2}=3$. Suppose there exists an $\operatorname{SHF}(N ; 11,3$, $\{1,1,1,1,3\}$ ) (Corollary 4.1 applies to $n=7,8,9,10$ as well). Then $N \geq\binom{ 11}{2}=55$. In other words, for $N \leq 54$, we have that $n \leq 10$.

Compare this with known results: Theorem 1.3 and Theorem 1.4 both give the bound $n \leq 6\left(3^{9}\right)=118098$ for $N=54$; Theorem 1.5 gives the bound

$$
n \leq 6\left(3^{9}\right)+2-2 \sqrt{3\left(3^{9}\right)+1}<118023
$$

for $N=54$.
Finally, Table 1 (overleaf) lists various parameter choices for $q, w_{1}, w_{2}$ and compares the bound in Theorem 3.5 to some known bounds for general SHFs. The symbol $\Omega$ means the computed bound is above the Java double maximum value of $\left(2-2^{-52}\right) 2^{1023}$.

## 5 Conclusion

We have presented a new bound in Theorem 3.5 for SHF of type $\left\{w_{1}^{q-1}, w_{2}\right\}$. As an application, we derived a bound in Corollary 4.1 for SSHFs that compares well against known general bounds. One can also choose other types of SHFs and apply Theorem 3.5 to obtain competitive bounds, since Table 4 demonstrates a large gap between our result and best known general bounds.

There is an inherent difficulty of generalizing Theorem 3.5 to other types. For example, if we relax the type of the SHF to $\left\{w_{1}^{q-2}, w_{2}, w_{3}\right\}$ where $w_{1}<w_{2}<w_{3}$, then a row of weight $\left(w_{1}, \ldots, w_{1}, w_{2}, w_{2}\right)$ could separate the column set consisting of $w_{2}$ columns in multiple ways. This difficulty is even more prevalent when the type set $\left\{w_{1}, \ldots, w_{t}\right\}$ consists of a large number of different values. It would be interesting to develop a counting method that can overcome this difficulty. Another extension of our result could be in the direction of allowing the type multiset $\left\{w_{1}, \ldots, w_{t}\right\}$ to contain more elements than $q$, i.e., $t>q$. Making progress in either direction would allow us to derive more powerful bounds for general SHFs.

| $q$ | $w_{1}$ | $w_{2}$ | $N \leq$ | implies $n \leq$ |  |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  |  |  | Theorem 3.5 | Theorem 1.3 Theorem 1.4 | Theorem 1.5 |  |  |
| 3 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 243 | 243 | 213 |  |
| 3 | 1 | 3 | 20 | 6 | 2916 | 2916 | 2824 |  |
| 3 | 1 | 4 | 35 | 8 | 32805 | 32805 | 32526 |  |
| 3 | 1 | 5 | 54 | 10 | 354294 | 354294 | 353454 |  |
| 3 | 1 | 6 | 77 | 12 | 3720087 | 3720087 | 3717563 |  |
| 3 | 2 | 3 | 104 | 6 | $3.09 \times 10^{9}$ | $2.32 \times 10^{9}$ | $2.32 \times 10^{9}$ |  |
| 3 | 2 | 4 | 377 | 8 | $5.81 \times 10^{26}$ | $4.07 \times 10^{26}$ | $4.07 \times 10^{26}$ |  |
| 3 | 2 | 5 | 629 | 9 | $5.91 \times 10^{38}$ | $3.94 \times 10^{38}$ | $3.94 \times 10^{38}$ |  |
| 3 | 2 | 6 | 1484 | 11 | $7.43 \times 10^{79}$ | $4.77 \times 10^{79}$ | $4.77 \times 10^{79}$ |  |
| 3 | 3 | 4 | 2099 | 9 | $6.64 \times 10^{112}$ | $3.98 \times 10^{112}$ | $3.98 \times 10^{112}$ |  |
| 3 | 3 | 5 | 4619 | 10 | $4.84 \times 10^{221}$ | $2.69 \times 10^{221}$ | $2.69 \times 10^{221}$ |  |
| 3 | 3 | 6 | 17159 | 12 | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ |  |
| 4 | 1 | 2 | 19 | 5 | 4096 | 4096 | 3987 |  |
| 4 | 1 | 3 | 54 | 7 | $2.09 \times 10^{7}$ | $2.09 \times 10^{7}$ | $2.09 \times 10^{7}$ |  |
| 4 | 1 | 4 | 118 | 9 | $6.59 \times 10^{12}$ | $6.59 \times 10^{12}$ | $6.59 \times 10^{12}$ |  |
| 4 | 1 | 5 | 219 | 11 | $1.29 \times 10^{20}$ | $1.29 \times 10^{20}$ | $1.29 \times 10^{20}$ |  |
| 4 | 1 | 6 | 362 | 13 | $3.96 \times 10^{28}$ | $3.96 \times 10^{28}$ | $3.96 \times 10^{28}$ |  |
| 4 | 2 | 3 | 1259 | 8 | $1.33 \times 10^{96}$ | $1.06 \times 10^{96}$ | $1.06 \times 10^{96}$ |  |
| 4 | 2 | 4 | 6929 | 10 | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ |  |
| 4 | 2 | 5 | 13859 | 11 | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ |  |
| 4 | 2 | 6 | 45044 | 13 | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ |  |
| 4 | 3 | 4 | 200199 | 12 | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ |  |
| 4 | 3 | 5 | 560559 | 13 | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ |  |
| 4 | 3 | 6 | 3203199 | 15 | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ |  |
| 5 | 1 | 2 | 33 | 6 | 390625 | 390625 | 389658 |  |
| 5 | 1 | 3 | 125 | 8 | $2.86 \times 10^{15}$ | $2.86 \times 10^{15}$ | $2.86 \times 10^{15}$ |  |
| 5 | 1 | 4 | 329 | 10 | $2.48 \times 10^{34}$ | $2.48 \times 10^{34}$ | $2.48 \times 10^{34}$ |  |
| 5 | 1 | 5 | 714 | 12 | $6.46 \times 10^{63}$ | $6.46 \times 10^{63}$ | $6.46 \times 10^{63}$ |  |
| 5 | 1 | 6 | 1364 | 14 | $1.57 \times 10^{107}$ | $1.57 \times 10^{107}$ | $1.57 \times 10^{107}$ |  |
| 5 | 2 | 3 | 17324 | 10 | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ |  |
| 5 | 2 | 4 | 135134 | 12 | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ |  |
| 5 | 2 | 5 | 315314 | 13 | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ |  |
| 5 | 2 | 6 | 1351349 | 15 | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ |  |
| 5 | 3 | 4 | 28027999 | 15 | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ |  |
| 5 | 3 | 5 | 95295198 | 16 | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ |  |
| 5 | 3 | 6 | 775975199 | 18 | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ | $\Omega$ |  |

Table 1: Comparison of Bounds for $\operatorname{SHF}\left(N ; n, q,\left\{w_{1}^{q-1}, w_{2}\right\}\right)$

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