



Uniqueness of a meromorphic function sharing two values CM with its difference operator

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Received: 16 March 2018 / Accepted: 11 October 2021 / Published online: 7 January 2022
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Abstract This research investigates the uniqueness of meromorphic function $f(z)$ and its n^{th} order difference operator with two shared values counting multiplicities. It generalizes the results of Yeyang Jiang and Zongxuan Chen [5] and for the case $n \geq 2$, it admits a very special generalization. Moreover, we give an example to illustrate the validity of our main result.

Keywords Meromorphic functions · Difference operators · Sharing values · Small functions

Mathematics Subject Classification 30D35 · 39A10

1 Introduction, definitions and results

For a meromorphic function f in the complex plane $\mathbb{C}$, we shall use the standard notations, definitions and basic results of Nevanlinna theory of meromorphic functions (see [10, 11]). A meromorphic function $a(z)$ is said to be small function of $f(z)$, if $T(r, a) = S(r, f)$, as $r \rightarrow \infty$, without restriction if $f(z)$ is of finite order and otherwise except possibly for a set of values of r of finite linear measure.

Two meromorphic functions f and g share a CM (counting multiplicity) or IM (ignoring multiplicity), if $f - a$ and $g - a$ have the same set of zeros counting multiplicities or ignoring multiplicities, respectively.

In 1926, Nevanlinna [14] investigated the following two theorems for shared values.

Theorem A *If two meromorphic functions f and g share five distinct values IM, then $f \equiv g$.*

Theorem B *If two meromorphic functions f and g share four distinct values CM, then $f \equiv g$ or $f \equiv T \cdot g$, where T is a mobius transformation.*

In 1977, Rubel and Yang [15], investigated uniqueness of entire function f sharing values with its derivatives f' . Mues and Steinmetz [9, 12] and Gunder Sen [2] improved their results.

Communicated by Kaushal Verma.

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Recently Nevanlinna theory has been established for difference operators [3, 4, 13, 16]. Many authors [7, 8, 13] have considered shared values of meromorphic function with their difference operators or shifts.

The following two theorems, due to Heittokangas et al. [8, 13] give the idea of shared values of meromorphic function with their shifts.

Theorem C Let f be a meromorphic function of finite order and let $c \in \mathbb{C}$. If $f(z)$ and $f(z+c)$ share three distinct periodic functions $a_1, a_2, a_3 \in \hat{S}(f) = S(f) \cup \infty$ with period c CM, then $f(z) = f(z+c)$ for all $z \in \mathbb{C}$.

Theorem D Let f be a meromorphic function of finite order and let $c \in \mathbb{C}$ and let $a_1, a_2, a_3 \in \hat{S}(f)$ be three distinct periodic functions with period c . If $f(z)$ and $f(z+c)$ share a_1, a_2 CM and a_3 IM, then $f(z) = f(z+c)$ for all $z \in \mathbb{C}$.

In 2013, Jiang and Chen [5], proved the following theorem for two distinct shared CM with some conditions.

Theorem E Let f be a non constant meromorphic function of finite order such that $N(r, f) = S(r, f)$, let η be a constant such that $f(z+\eta) - f(z) \not\equiv 0$ and let a, b be two non zero distinct finite complex constants. If $\Delta_c f(z) = f(z+\eta) - f(z)$ and $f(z)$ share a, b CM then $f(z+\eta) = 2f(z)$.

For a meromorphic function $f(z)$ and a nonzero complex constant c , for $n \in \mathbb{N}$ we define its Shift by $f(z+c)$ and its n^{th} order difference operator by

$$\Delta_c^n f(z) = \sum_{j=0}^n \binom{n}{j} (-1)^{n-j} f(z+jc),$$

where

$$\binom{n}{j} = \frac{n!}{j!(n-j)!}$$

In this article we generalize Theorem E to the case of higher order difference operators defined above.

Theorem 1.1 Let f be a non constant meromorphic function of finite order such that $N(r, f) = S(r, f)$, let $c \in \mathbb{C}$ be a constant such that $\Delta_c^n f(z) \not\equiv 0$ and let a, b be two non zero distinct finite complex constants. If $\Delta_c^n f(z)$ and $f(z)$ share a, b CM then $\Delta_c^n f(z) \equiv f(z)$.

Corollary 1.1 Let f be a non constant meromorphic function of finite order such that $N(r, f) = S(r, f)$, let $c \in \mathbb{C}$ be a constant such that $\Delta_c^n f(z) \not\equiv 0$ and let a, b be two non zero distinct finite complex constants. If $\Delta_c^n f(z)$ and $f(z)$ share a, b CM then $f(z+nc) = 2^n f(z)$.

Remark 1.1 The corollary 1.1 generalizes Theorem E.

Example 1.1 Let $Q(z)$ be a periodic function of period 1 such that $\sigma(Q) = 2$ and $f(z) = \frac{Q(z)e^{z \log 2}}{\sin 2\pi z}$. Then $\Delta_c^n f(z) = \sum_{j=0}^n {}^n C_j (-1)^{n-j} f(z+jc)$ and $f(z)$ share 1, 2 CM and $N(r, f) = S(r, f)$, using corollary 1.1, we get $\Delta_c^n f(z) = f(z)$. Also $f(z+nc) = 2^n f(z)$.

2 Some lemmas

We need the following lemmas to prove our main result.

Lemma 2.1 ([11]). Let $f(z)$ be a non constant meromorphic function, $a_j (j = 0, 1, \dots, q)$ be q distinct complex numbers. Then we have

$$m \left(r, \sum_{j=1}^q \frac{1}{f-a_j} \right) = \sum_{j=1}^q m \left(r, \frac{1}{f-a_j} \right) + O(1) \quad (2.1)$$

In 2013, Chen and Feng [3] and in 2006, Halburd and Korhonen [5] studied Value distribution theory of meromorphic function for difference operators. Analogous result of the Lemma on logarithmic derivatives is as follows



Lemma 2.2 ([7]). *Let $f(z)$ be a meromorphic function of finite order and let c be a non-zero complex constant. Then*

$$m\left(r, \frac{f(z+c)}{f(z)}\right) + m\left(r, \frac{f(z)}{f(z+c)}\right) = S(r, f). \quad (2.2)$$

These lemmas help us in establishing the following

Lemma 2.3 *Let $f(z)$ be a non constant meromorphic function in $\mathbb{C}$. Let $a_j (j = 0, 1, \dots, q)$ be q distinct complex numbers. Then we have*

$$\sum_{j=1}^q m\left(r, \frac{1}{f-a_j}\right) \leq m\left(r, \frac{1}{f^{(k)}}\right) + S(r, f) \quad (2.3)$$

$$\sum_{j=1}^q m\left(r, \frac{1}{f-a_j}\right) \leq m\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f(z)}\right) + S(r, f) \quad (2.4)$$

Proof By Lemmas 2.1, 2.2, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{j=1}^q m\left(r, \frac{1}{f-a_j}\right) &= m\left(r, \sum_{j=1}^q \frac{1}{f-a_j}\right) + O(1) \\ &= m\left(r, \sum_{j=1}^q \frac{f^{(k)}}{f^{(k)}(f-a_j)}\right) + O(1) \\ &\leq m\left(r, \frac{1}{f^{(k)}}\right) + m\left(r, \sum_{j=1}^q \frac{f^{(k)}}{f-a_j}\right) + O(1) \\ &= m\left(r, \frac{1}{f^{(k)}}\right) + S(r, f). \end{aligned}$$

Hence

$$\sum_{j=1}^q m\left(r, \frac{1}{f-a_j}\right) \leq m\left(r, \frac{1}{f^{(k)}}\right) + S(r, f).$$

Now by Lemmas 2.1 and 2.2, we have

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{j=1}^q m\left(r, \frac{1}{f-a_j}\right) &= m\left(r, \sum_{j=1}^q \frac{1}{f-a_j}\right) + O(1) \\ &= m\left(r, \sum_{j=1}^q \frac{\Delta_c^n f}{\Delta_c^n f(f-a_j)}\right) + O(1) \\ &\leq m\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f}\right) + m\left(r, \sum_{j=1}^q \frac{\Delta_c^n f}{f-a_j}\right) + O(1) \\ &\leq m\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f}\right) + \sum_{j=1}^q m\left(r, \frac{\Delta_c^n f}{f-a_j}\right) + O(1) \\ &\leq m\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f}\right) + S(r, f). \end{aligned}$$



Hence

$$\sum_{j=1}^q m\left(r, \frac{1}{f-a_j}\right) \leq m\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f}\right) + S(r, f).$$

□

Lemma 2.4 ([3]) *Let $f(z)$ be a meromorphic function with order $\sigma(f) = \sigma < \infty$, and c be a fixed non-zero complex number, then for each $\epsilon > 0$, we have*

$$T(r, f(z+c)) = T(r, f) + O(r^{\sigma-1+\epsilon}) + S(r, f).$$

Lemma 2.5 ([7]) *Let $c \in \mathbb{C}$, $n \in \mathbb{N}$, and let $f(z)$ be a meromorphic function of finite order. Then for any small periodic function $a(z)$ with period c , with respect to $f(z)$,*

$$m\left(r, \frac{\Delta_c^n f(z)}{f(z)}\right) = o(T(r, f)) = S(r, f),$$

where the exceptional set associated with $S(r, f)$ is of at most finite logarithmic measure.

3 Proof of the Theorem 1.1

Proof The assumption that $\Delta_c^n f(z)$ and $f(z)$ share a, b CM and by Nevanlinna's second fundamental theorem, we have

$$\begin{aligned} T(r, f) &\leq N(r, f) + N\left(r, \frac{1}{f-a}\right) + N\left(r, \frac{1}{f-b}\right) + S(r, f) \\ &= N\left(r, \frac{1}{f-a}\right) + N\left(r, \frac{1}{f-b}\right) + S(r, f) \\ &= N\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - a}\right) + N\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - b}\right) + S(r, f) \\ &\leq N\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - f}\right) + S(r, f), \end{aligned}$$

that is

$$T(r, f) \leq N\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - f}\right) + S(r, f). \quad (3.1)$$

Since $N(r, f) = S(r, f)$ and using first fundamental theorem, we have

$$\begin{aligned} N\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - f}\right) + S(r, f) &= N\left(r, \frac{f}{\Delta_c^n f - f}\right) + S(r, f) \\ &= N\left(r, \frac{1}{\frac{\Delta_c^n f}{f} - 1}\right) + S(r, f) \\ &\leq T\left(r, \frac{1}{\frac{\Delta_c^n f}{f} - 1}\right) + S(r, f) \\ &= T\left(r, \frac{\Delta_c^n f}{f}\right) + S(r, f) \\ &= m\left(r, \frac{\Delta_c^n f}{f}\right) + N\left(r, \frac{\Delta_c^n f}{f}\right) + S(r, f) \\ &= N\left(r, \frac{\Delta_c^n f}{f}\right) + S(r, f) \\ &\leq N\left(r, \frac{1}{f}\right) + N(r, \Delta_c^n f) + S(r, f). \end{aligned}$$

Hence by using the Lemma 2.4, we have

$$\begin{aligned} N\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - f}\right) + S(r, f) &\leq N\left(r, \frac{1}{f}\right) + 2^n N(r, f) + S(r, f) \\ &= N\left(r, \frac{1}{f}\right) + S(r, f) \\ &\leq T\left(r, \frac{1}{f}\right) + S(r, f) \end{aligned}$$

that is

$$N\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - f}\right) + S(r, f) \leq T(r, f) + S(r, f) \quad (3.2)$$

From (3.1) and (3.2), we obtain

$$T(r, f) = N\left(r, \frac{1}{f}\right) + S(r, f) = N\left(r, \frac{1}{f-a}\right) + N\left(r, \frac{1}{f-b}\right) + S(r, f). \quad (3.3)$$

Let $\Phi = \frac{(\Delta_c^n f)'}{\Delta_c^n f - a} - \frac{f'}{f-a}$. Using the logarithmic derivative theorem, we have

$$\begin{aligned} m(r, \Phi) &\leq m\left(r, \frac{(\Delta_c^n f)'}{\Delta_c^n f - a}\right) + m\left(r, \frac{f'}{f-a}\right) + O(1). \\ m(r, \Phi) &\leq S(r, \Delta_c^n f) + S(r, f) \end{aligned} \quad (3.4)$$

Since

$$\begin{aligned} T(r, \Delta_c^n f) &= m(r, \Delta_c^n f) + N(r, \Delta_c^n f) \\ &\leq m\left(r, f \frac{\Delta_c^n f}{f}\right) + \sum_{j=0}^n \binom{n}{j} N(r, f) + S(r, f) \\ &\leq m(r, f) + m\left(r, \frac{\Delta_c^n f}{f}\right) + 2^n N(r, f) + S(r, f) \\ &= m(r, f) + S(r, f) \\ &\leq T(r, f) + S(r, f) \\ T(r, \Delta_c^n f) &\leq T(r, f) + S(r, f). \end{aligned} \quad (3.5)$$

Since $S(r, \Delta_c^n f) = S(r, f)$, from (3.4), we have $m(r, \Phi) = S(r, f)$. Since Φ is the logarithmic derivative of $\frac{\Delta_c^n f - a}{f - a}$, the poles of Φ derive from the zeros and poles of $\frac{\Delta_c^n f - a}{f - a}$. Since $f, \Delta_c^n f$ share the value a CM, then $\frac{\Delta_c^n f - a}{f - a}$ has no zeros and has at most $N(r, f)$ poles. Thus $N(r, \Phi) = N(r, f) = S(r, f)$. Combining this and (3.4), we have $T(r, \Phi) = S(r, f)$.

Suppose that $\Phi \not\equiv 0$, then from

$$\frac{\Phi}{f-b} = \frac{(\Delta_c^n f)'}{\Delta_c^n f - a} \cdot \frac{\Delta_c^n f}{f-b} - \frac{f'}{(f-a)(f-b)},$$

we obtain

$$\begin{aligned} m\left(r, \frac{1}{f-b}\right) &\leq m\left(r, \frac{1}{\Phi}\right) + m\left(r, \frac{\Phi}{f-b}\right) \\ &\leq m\left(r, \frac{1}{\Phi}\right) + m\left(r, \frac{(\Delta_c^n f)'}{\Delta_c^n f - a}\right) + m\left(r, \frac{\Delta_c^n f}{f-b}\right) \end{aligned}$$



$$\begin{aligned}
& + m\left(r, \frac{f'}{(f-a)(f-b)}\right) + O(1) \\
& \leq m\left(r, \frac{1}{\Phi}\right) + m\left(r, \frac{(\Delta_c^n f)'}{a} \left(\frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - a} - \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f}\right)\right) \\
& + m\left(r, \frac{\Delta_c^n f}{f-b}\right) + m\left(r, \frac{f'}{(a-b)} \left(\frac{1}{(f-a)} - \frac{1}{f-b}\right)\right) + O(1) \\
& \leq T(r, \Phi) + S(r, \Delta_c^n f) + S(r, f) \\
& = S(r, f).
\end{aligned}$$

Hence

$$m\left(r, \frac{1}{f-b}\right) = S(r, f).$$

By the first fundamental theorem we get

$$T(r, f) = N\left(r, \frac{1}{f-b}\right) + S(r, f). \quad (3.6)$$

Thus, by (3.3) and (3.6), we have

$$N\left(r, \frac{1}{f-a}\right) = S(r, f).$$

By the assumption that $\Delta_c^n f(z)$ and $f(z)$ share a CM, we have that

$$N\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - a}\right) = N\left(r, \frac{1}{f-a}\right) = S(r, f).$$

Hence

$$N\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - a}\right) = S(r, f).$$

Since $\Delta_c^n f(z)$ and $f(z)$ share b CM, by equation (3.5) and (3.6) and first fundamental theorem, we have

$$\begin{aligned}
m\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - b}\right) + N\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - b}\right) &= T(r, \Delta_c^n f) + S(r, f) \\
&\leq T(r, f) + S(r, f) \\
&= N\left(r, \frac{1}{f-b}\right) + S(r, f) \\
&= N\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - b}\right) + S(r, f).
\end{aligned}$$

Thus,

$$m\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - b}\right) = S(r, \Delta_c^n f) = S(r, f).$$

By lemma (2.3), we have that

$$m\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f}\right) + m\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - a}\right) + m\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - b}\right) \leq m\left(r, \frac{1}{(\Delta_c^n f)'}\right) + S(r, f) \quad (3.7)$$

$$m\left(r, \frac{1}{f-a}\right) + m\left(r, \frac{1}{f-b}\right) \leq m\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f}\right) + S(r, f) \quad (3.8)$$

By using (3.3) and the previous inequalities for counting functions, we have

$$N\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - a}\right) + N\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - b}\right) \leq N\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - b}\right) + S(r, f) \quad (3.9)$$

$$N\left(r, \frac{1}{f - a}\right) + N\left(r, \frac{1}{f - b}\right) \leq T(r, f) + S(r, f). \quad (3.10)$$

Using equations (3.7) - (3.10), we get

$$\begin{aligned} T\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - a}\right) + T\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - b}\right) + T\left(r, \frac{1}{f - a}\right) + T\left(r, \frac{1}{f - b}\right) \\ \leq m\left(r, \frac{1}{(\Delta_c^n f)'}\right) + N\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - b}\right) + T(r, f) + S(r, f) \\ \leq T\left(r, \frac{1}{(\Delta_c^n f)'}\right) + T\left(r, \frac{1}{\Delta_c^n f - b}\right) + T(r, f) + S(r, f). \end{aligned} \quad (3.11)$$

Since $N(r, f) = S(r, f)$, we get

$$\begin{aligned} T\left(r, \frac{1}{(\Delta_c^n f)'}\right) &= m\left(r, (\Delta_c^n f)'\right) + N\left(r, (\Delta_c^n f)'\right) + O(1) \\ &= m\left(r, \Delta_c^n f \frac{(\Delta_c^n f)'}{\Delta_c^n f}\right) + N\left(r, \Delta_c^n f\right) + \overline{N}\left(r, \Delta_c^n f\right) + O(1) \\ &\leq m\left(r, \Delta_c^n f\right) + m\left(r, \frac{(\Delta_c^n f)'}{\Delta_c^n f}\right) + S(r, f) \\ &\leq T\left(r, \Delta_c^n f\right) + S(r, f). \end{aligned}$$

Hence

$$T\left(r, \frac{1}{(\Delta_c^n f)'}\right) \leq T\left(r, \Delta_c^n f\right) + S(r, f). \quad (3.12)$$

Considering (3.5), (3.11), (3.12) and first fundamental theorem, we get

$$T(r, f) = S(r, f),$$

which is a contradiction.

Therefore $\Phi \equiv 0$, that is

$$\frac{(\Delta_c^n f)'}{\Delta_c^n f - a} = \frac{f'}{f - a}. \quad (3.13)$$

By integrating (3.13), we obtain

$$\frac{\Delta_c^n f - a}{f - a} \equiv C_1, \quad (3.14)$$

where C_1 is some non-zero constant.

Using the same procedure as above, by the assumption, $\Delta_c^n f$ and $f(z)$ share b CM, we get

$$\frac{\Delta_c^n f - a}{f - a} \equiv C_2, \quad (3.15)$$

where C_2 is some non-zero constant.

If $C_1 \equiv 1$ or $(C_2 \equiv 1)$, then by (3.14) (or (3.15)), we obtain

$$\Delta_c^n f(z) \equiv f(z).$$

Hence conclusion holds.



If $C_1 \neq 1$ and $C_2 \neq 1$, then by (3.14) and (3.15), we get

$$\begin{aligned}(\Delta_c^n f - a) - (\Delta_c^n f - b) &= (C_1 f - C_1 a) - (C_2 f - C_2 b) \\ b - a &= (C_1 - C_2)f + C_2 b - C_1 a \\ (C_1 - C_2)f &= b - a + C_2 b - C_1 a\end{aligned}\tag{3.16}$$

If $C_1 \neq C_2$, then f is a constant.

which is contradiction.

Hence $C_1 = C_2$, thus by (3.16), we have

$$a - b = C_1(a - b)$$

Therefore $C_1 = 1 = C_2$. Which is contradiction.

This completes the proof. $\square$

Proof of the corollary 1.1. Using Theorem 1.1, we have

$$\Delta_c^n f(z) \equiv f(z).$$

This implies that,

$$\begin{aligned}f(z + nc) &= \left[\sum_{j=0}^{n-1} \binom{n}{j} (-1)^{n-j} 2^j + 1 \right] f(z) \\ &= 2^n f(z)\end{aligned}$$

Hence the proof. $\square$

Acknowledgements The authors wish to thank the referee for his/her valuable remarks and suggestions. The first and third authors are supported by the SERB(DST) Project, No: SB/S4/MS/842/2013, dated: 10/12/2015 and the Second author is thankful to the Karnatak University, Dharwad - India for financial support under University Research Seed Grant Policy for research project No.: KU/PMEB/2021-22/76

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