

Network Satisfaction Problems Solved by k-Consistency

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Abstract: We show that the problem of deciding for a given finite relation algebra A whether the network satisfaction problem for A can be solved by the k -consistency procedure, for some k , is undecidable. For the important class of finite relation algebras A with a normal representation, however, the decidability of this problem remains open. We show that if A is symmetric and has a flexible atom, then the question whether $\text{NSP}(A)$ can be solved by k -consistency, for some k , is decidable (even in polynomial time in the number of atoms of A). This result follows from a more general sufficient condition for the correctness of the k -consistency procedure for finite symmetric relation algebras. In our proof we make use of a result of Alexandr Kazda about finite binary conservative structures.

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