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On identities involving generalized harmonic, hyperharmonic and special numbers with Riordan arrays

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Abstract: In this paper, by means of the summation property to the Riordan array, we derive some identities involving generalized harmonic, hyperharmonic and special numbers. For example, for $n \geq 0$,

$$\sum_{k=0}^n \frac{B_k}{k!} H(n, k, \alpha) = \alpha H(n+1, 1, \alpha) - H(n, 1, \alpha),$$

and for $n > r \geq 0$,

$$\sum_{k=r}^{n-1} (-1)^k \frac{s(k, r) r!}{\alpha^k k!} H_{n-k}(\alpha) = (-1)^r H(n, r, \alpha),$$

where Bernoulli numbers B_n and Stirling numbers of the first kind $s(n, r)$.

Keywords: the generalized harmonic number, Riordan arrays, Stirling number

MSC: 11B99, 11C20, 15A23

1 Introduction

The harmonic numbers $H_n = \sum_{k=1}^n \frac{1}{k}$ frequently arise in combinatorial problems and in various branches of number theory. These numbers have been generalized by several authors. One of them is the generalized harmonic numbers $H_n(\alpha)$ [5] defined by, for every ordered pair $(\alpha, n) \in \mathbb{R}^+ \times \mathbb{N}$,

$$H_0(\alpha) = 0, \quad H_n(\alpha) = \sum_{k=1}^n \frac{1}{k\alpha^k},$$

and the generating function of these numbers is

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} H_n(\alpha) x^n = -\frac{\ln\left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha}\right)}{1-x}. \quad (1.1)$$

In [9], the generalized hyperharmonic numbers of order r , $H_n^r(\alpha)$ are defined by

$$H_n^r(\alpha) = \sum_{k=1}^n H_k^{r-1}(\alpha), \quad n, r \geq 1,$$

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where $H_n^0(\alpha) = \frac{1}{n\alpha^n}$ and $H_n^r(\alpha) = 0$ for $r < 0$ or $n \leq 0$. The generating function of these numbers is

$$\sum_{n=1}^{\infty} H_n^r(\alpha)x^n = -\frac{\ln\left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha}\right)}{(1-x)^r}. \tag{1.2}$$

In [3], the generalized harmonic numbers of rank r , $H(n, r, \alpha)$ are defined as for $n \geq 1$ and $r \geq 0$,

$$H(n, r, \alpha) = \sum_{1 \leq n_0+n_1+\dots+n_r \leq n} \frac{1}{n_0 n_1 \dots n_r \alpha^{n_0+n_1+\dots+n_r}}$$

or equivalently, as

$$H(n, r, \alpha) = \frac{(-1)^{r+1}}{n!} \left(\frac{d^n}{dx^n} \frac{[\ln(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha})]^{r+1}}{1-x} \right) \Big|_{x=0}.$$

The generating function of the generalized harmonic numbers of rank r , $H(n, r, \alpha)$ is given by

$$\sum_{n=r+1}^{\infty} H(n, r, \alpha)x^n = \frac{(-\ln(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha}))^{r+1}}{1-x}. \tag{1.3}$$

For $\alpha = 1$, $H(n, r, 1) = H(n, r)$ were introduced in their works [6, 10].

The Bernoulli numbers B_n are defined as

$$B_0 = 0, \quad (n+1)B_n = -\sum_{k=0}^{n-1} \binom{n+1}{k} B_k,$$

and the generating function of the Bernoulli numbers is

$$\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} B_n \frac{x^n}{n!} = \frac{x}{e^x - 1}. \tag{1.4}$$

The Daehee numbers of order r , showed by D_n^r , are defined by the generating functions to be

$$\left(\frac{\ln(1+x)}{x} \right)^r = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} D_n^r \frac{x^n}{n!}. \tag{1.5}$$

For $r = 1$, $D_n^1 = D_n$ is Daehee numbers. It is clear that

$$D_0 = 1, D_1 = -\frac{1}{2}, \dots, D_n = (-1)^n \frac{n!}{n+1}.$$

$x^{\underline{n}}$ stands for the falling factorial defined by $x^{\underline{n}} = x(x-1)\dots(x-n+1)$ for $n \geq 1$ and $x^{\underline{0}} = 1$.

It is well known that Stirling numbers play an important role in combinatorial analysis. The Stirling numbers of the first kind $s(n, k)$ and of the second kind $S(n, k)$ are given by

$$x^{\underline{n}} = \sum_{k=0}^n s(n, k)x^k \quad \text{and} \quad x^n = \sum_{k=0}^n S(n, k)x^{\underline{k}},$$

where for $n \geq 0$, $s(n, 0) = S(n, 0) = \delta_{n0}$, δ_{nk} is the Kronecker delta. Recurrence relations of these numbers are given by

$$\begin{aligned} s(n+1, k) &= s(n, k-1) + ns(n, k), \\ S(n+1, k) &= S(n, k-1) + kS(n, k), \end{aligned}$$

respectively, where $n \geq 0$ and $k > 0$.

The generating functions of these numbers are given by

$$\sum_{n=k}^{\infty} s(n, k) \frac{x^n}{n!} = \frac{(\ln(1+x))^k}{k!} \tag{1.6}$$

and

$$\sum_{n=k}^{\infty} S(n, k) \frac{x^n}{n!} = \frac{(e^x - 1)^k}{k!}, \quad (1.7)$$

respectively.

The signed Stirling numbers of the first kind $|s(n, k)|$ are defined such that the number of permutations of n elements which contain exactly k permutation cycles is the nonnegative number

$$|s(n, k)| = (-1)^{n-k} s(n, k).$$

This means that $s(n, k) = 0$ for $k > n$ and $s(n, n) = 1$ and the generating function of these numbers [1, 7, 15] is given by

$$\sum_{n=k}^{\infty} |s(n, k)| \frac{x^n}{n!} = \frac{(-\ln(1-x))^k}{k!}.$$

The numbers associated with $s(n, k)$ are given as follows: For $n < k$,

$$\rho(n, k) = \frac{|s(k, k-n)|}{\binom{k-1}{n}},$$

and for $n \geq k$,

$$\rho(n, k) = n! k \sigma_n(k),$$

where $\sigma_n(x)$ is Stirling polynomial [7]. The generating function of these numbers is

$$\sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{\rho(n, k)}{n!} x^n = \left(\frac{x}{1-e^{-x}} \right)^k.$$

Recently, by using the concepts of Riordan arrays, there are some identities related to special numbers and binomial coefficients [1, 13, 14].

Let $f(x)$ be a formal power series in the determinate. $f(x)$ has the form

$$f(x) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} f_n x^n.$$

Riordan array is an infinite, lower triangular array $R = (g(x), f(x)) = [r_{n,k}]_{n,k \geq 0}$ defined by a pair of generating functions $g(x)$ and $f(x)$ such that

$$r_{n,k} = [x^n] g(x) (xf(x))^k, \quad (1.8)$$

where $[x^n]$ denotes the coefficient of x^n in $f(x)$. If $g(0) \neq 0$, $f(0) \neq 0$, Riordan array is called proper, otherwise it is called improper. The set of proper Riordan arrays is denoted by \mathcal{R} and the set of improper Riordan arrays is denoted by \mathcal{R}' . It is known [11] that $(\mathcal{R}, *)$ forms a group under matrix multiplication $*$ with the identity $I = (1, 1)$:

$$(g(x), f(x)) * (h(x), l(x)) = (g(x)h(xf(x)), f(x)l(xf(x))). \quad (1.9)$$

Basically, the concept of a Riordan array is used in a constructive way to find the generating function of many combinatorial sums. The summation property for a Riordan array $R = (g(x), f(x)) = [r_{n,k}]_{n,k \geq 0}$ is

$$\sum_{k=0}^n r_{n,k} h_k = [x^n] g(x) h(xf(x)), \quad (1.10)$$

where $h(x) = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} h_n x^n$.

Riordan arrays have special structure. If $R = (g(x), f(x)) = [r_{n,k}]_{n,k \geq 0}$ is a proper Riordan array, then every element $r_{n+1,k+1}$ of R can be expressed as a linear combination of the elements in preceding row starting

from the preceding column, and every element in column 0 can be expressed as a linear combination of all elements of the preceding row [8]:

$$r_{n+1,k+1} = \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} a_j r_{n,k+j}, \quad n, k = 0, 1, \dots,$$

$$r_{n+1,0} = \sum_{j=0}^{\infty} z_j r_{n,j}, \quad n = 0, 1, \dots$$

The coefficients a_0, a_1, a_2, \dots and z_0, z_1, z_2, \dots are called by the A -sequence and Z -sequence of Riordan array, respectively. If $A(x)$ and $Z(x)$ are the generating functions of corresponding sequences, then it can be proven that $f(x)$ and $g(x)$ are solutions of the functional equations, respectively:

$$f(x) = A(xf(x)),$$

$$g(x) = \frac{g(0)}{1 - xZ(xf(x))}.$$

The relations can be inverted to formulas for the A -sequence and Z -sequence, respectively.

From special cases, it is seen that the Riordan array method is powerful for dealing with harmonic numbers identities.

In [13], the author obtained some identities involving binomial coefficients and harmonic numbers by Riordan arrays. For example, for $n \geq 0$,

$$\sum_{k=0}^n \binom{n}{k}^2 H_k = \binom{2n}{n} (2H_n - H_{2n}),$$

$$\sum_{k=0}^n \binom{n}{k} \binom{m}{k} k H_k = m \binom{n+m-1}{n+1} (H_n - H_{n+m-1} + H_{m-2}).$$

In [14], the author established several general summation formulas, from which series of harmonic number identities are obtained. For example,

$$\sum_{k=0}^n (-1)^k \binom{n}{k} H_{k+r}^2 = \frac{1}{n} (2H_{n-1} - H_{n+r} - H_r) \binom{n+r}{r}^{-1},$$

$$\sum_{k=0}^n \binom{n+r-k-1}{n-k} \binom{k+s}{k} H_{k+s} = \binom{n+r+s}{r+s} (H_{n+r+s} - H_{r+s} + H_s).$$

In [1], the authors obtained many relations between Stirling numbers of both kinds and other generalized harmonic numbers. For example, for any positive integers n and r ,

$$\sum_{k=1}^n \frac{(-1)^{k+1}}{k!} H(n+1, k) = H_n,$$

$$\sum_{k=r}^{n-1} \frac{r!}{k!} s(k, r) H_{n-k}^{k+1} = H(n, r).$$

In [2], the authors established some new identities involving Stirling numbers of both kinds. These identities were obtained via Riordan arrays with nonzero real number x . Some well-known identities were obtained as special cases of the new identities for nonzero real number x . For example, for nonnegative integer r ,

$$\sum_{k=0}^n \binom{n}{k} k^r x^{n-k} = \sum_{k=0}^r k! \binom{n}{k} S(r, k) (1+x)^{n-k},$$

$$S(r, n) = \frac{1}{n!} \sum_{k=0}^n (-1)^{n-k} \binom{n}{k} k^r.$$

2 Some identities with Riordan arrays

In this section, we establish some identities related to generalized harmonic numbers of rank r , $H(n, r, \alpha)$, generalized hyperharmonic numbers $H_n^r(\alpha)$ and Stirling numbers of both kinds via Riordan arrays.

Firstly, by (1.3), we can consider

$$r_{n,k} = H(n, k, \alpha) \text{ and } R = \left(\frac{-\ln(1-\frac{x}{\alpha})}{1-x}, \frac{-\ln(1-\frac{x}{\alpha})}{x} \right) \in \mathcal{R}'. \quad (2.1)$$

Thus, to find the following identities in Theorem 1 and Theorem 2, we will apply the summation property (1.10) to the Riordan array.

Theorem 1. *For any positive integer n , we have*

$$\sum_{k=0}^n \frac{(-1)^k}{k!} H(n, k, \alpha) = H_n(\alpha) - \frac{1}{\alpha} H_{n-1}(\alpha)$$

and

$$\sum_{k=0}^n \frac{B_k}{k!} H(n, k, \alpha) = \alpha H(n+1, 1, \alpha) - H(n, 1, \alpha).$$

Proof. Taking $h(x) = e^{-x}$ in (1.10), we have

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{k=0}^n \frac{(-1)^k}{k!} H(n, k, \alpha) &= [x^n] \frac{-\ln(1-\frac{x}{\alpha})}{1-x} e^{-(-\ln(1-\frac{x}{\alpha}))} \\ &= [x^n] \frac{-\ln(1-\frac{x}{\alpha})}{1-x} \left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha}\right) \\ &= [x^n] \frac{-\ln(1-\frac{x}{\alpha})}{1-x} - \frac{1}{\alpha} [x^{n-1}] \frac{-\ln(1-\frac{x}{\alpha})}{1-x}, \end{aligned}$$

and from (1.1), equals

$$[x^n] \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} H_n(\alpha) x^n - \frac{1}{\alpha} [x^{n-1}] \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} H_n(\alpha) x^n = H_n(\alpha) - \frac{1}{\alpha} H_{n-1}(\alpha).$$

Thus, the proof of the first equality is complete. With the help of (1.4), the other equality is easily given. \square

Theorem 2. *Let n, m be nonnegative integers. For $n \geq m$,*

$$\sum_{k=0}^n \frac{(-1)^k}{k!} S(k, m) H(n, k, \alpha) = \frac{H_{n-m}(\alpha)}{(-\alpha)^m m!},$$

and

$$\sum_{k=0}^n H(n, k, \alpha) \frac{\rho(k, m)}{k!} = \alpha^m H(n+m, m, \alpha).$$

Proof. Considering $h(x) = (e^{-x} - 1)^m$ in (1.10), we get

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{k=0}^n \frac{(-1)^k}{k!} m! S(k, m) H(n, k, \alpha) &= [x^n] \frac{-\ln(1-\frac{x}{\alpha})}{1-x} \left(-\frac{x}{\alpha}\right)^m \\ &= \left(-\frac{1}{\alpha}\right)^m [x^{n-m}] \frac{-\ln(1-\frac{x}{\alpha})}{1-x}. \end{aligned}$$

By (1.1), we have

$$\sum_{k=0}^n \frac{(-1)^k}{k!} m! S(m, k) H(n, k, \alpha) = \left(-\frac{1}{\alpha}\right)^m [x^{n-m}] \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} H_n(\alpha) x^n$$

$$= \frac{H_{n-m}(\alpha)}{(-\alpha)^m}.$$

Thus, the desired result is obtained. For the proof of the other identity, putting $h(x) = \left(\frac{x}{1-e^{-x}}\right)^m$ in (1.10), we get

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{k=0}^n H(n, k, \alpha) \frac{\rho(k, m)}{k!} &= [x^n] \frac{-\ln\left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha}\right)}{1-x} \left(\frac{-\ln\left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha}\right)}{\frac{x}{\alpha}}\right)^m \\ &= \alpha^m [x^{n+m}] \frac{\left(-\ln\left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha}\right)\right)^{m+1}}{1-x}. \end{aligned}$$

By (1.3), we have

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{k=0}^n H(n, k, \alpha) \frac{\rho(k, m)}{k!} &= \alpha^m [x^{n+m}] \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} H(n, m, \alpha) x^n \\ &= \alpha^m H(n+m, m, \alpha), \end{aligned}$$

as claimed result. \square

By (1.6), we have $r_{n,k} = \frac{(-1)^{n-k} s(n,k) k!}{\alpha^n n!}$ and $R = \left(1, \frac{-\ln(1-\frac{x}{\alpha})}{x}\right) \in \mathcal{R}$. Thus, to find the following identities in Theorem 3, we will apply the summation property (1.10) to the Riordan array.

Theorem 3. For positive integers n, m , we have

$$\sum_{k=0}^n (-1)^k s(n, k) B_k = D_n + n D_{n-1},$$

and

$$\sum_{k=0}^n (-1)^k s(n, k) \rho(k, m) = D_n^m.$$

Proof. With the help of the $h(x) = \frac{x}{e^x-1}$ in (1.10) and the generating function of Daehee numbers, we can get

$$\begin{aligned} &\sum_{k=0}^n \frac{(-1)^{n-k} s(n, k) k! B_k}{\alpha^n n! k!} \\ &= [x^n] \frac{-\ln\left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha}\right)}{\frac{x}{\alpha-x}} = \frac{1}{\alpha} [x^n] \frac{\ln\left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha}\right)}{-\frac{x}{\alpha}} (\alpha - x) \\ &= \frac{1}{\alpha} \left\{ [x^n] \alpha \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^n D_n}{\alpha^n n!} x^n - [x^{n-1}] \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^n D_n}{\alpha^n n!} x^n \right\} \\ &= \frac{(-1)^n D_n}{\alpha^n n!} - \frac{(-1)^{n-1} n D_{n-1}}{\alpha^n n!}, \end{aligned}$$

as claimed. Similarly, if we take $h(x) = \left(\frac{x}{1-e^{-x}}\right)^m$ in (1.10), we have the other proof. \square

From (1.2), we have $r_{n,k} = H_{n-k}^k(\alpha)$ and $R = \left(-\ln\left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha}\right), \frac{1}{1-x}\right) \in \mathcal{R}'$. Hence, the following theorem is clearly given.

Theorem 4. For nonnegative integers n, m , we have

$$\sum_{k=0}^n \binom{m}{k} H_{n-k}^k(\alpha) = H_n^m(\alpha).$$

Proof. Putting $h(x) = (1+x)^m = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \binom{m}{n} x^n$ in (1.10), we can get

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{k=0}^n \binom{m}{k} H_{n-k}^k(\alpha) &= [x^n] \left(-\ln \left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha} \right) \right) \left(1 + \frac{x}{1-x} \right)^m \\ &= [x^n] \frac{-\ln \left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha} \right)}{(1-x)^m} \\ &= H_n^m(\alpha), \end{aligned}$$

as claimed. □

Theorem 5. For any positive integer n , we have

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{k=0}^n \frac{H(n, k, \alpha)}{(k+1)!} &= \frac{\alpha^n - 1}{\alpha^n (\alpha - 1)}, \quad \alpha \neq 1, \\ \sum_{k=0}^n (-1)^k \frac{H(n, k, \alpha)}{(k+1)!} &= \frac{1}{\alpha}, \end{aligned}$$

and

$$\sum_{k=0}^n (-1)^k \frac{H(n+1, k+1, \alpha)}{(k+1)!} = \frac{H_n(\alpha)}{\alpha}.$$

Proof. From $h(x) = \frac{e^x - 1}{x} = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{1}{(n+1)!} x^n$ and using (2.1), we have

$$\begin{aligned} \sum_{k=0}^n \frac{H(n, k, \alpha)}{(k+1)!} &= [x^n] \frac{-\ln \left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha} \right)}{1-x} \frac{x}{(x-\alpha) \ln \left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha} \right)} \\ &= [x^{n-1}] \frac{1}{(x-1)(x-\alpha)} = \frac{\alpha^n - 1}{\alpha^n (\alpha - 1)}, \end{aligned}$$

which proves the first one. Similarly, if we take

$$h(x) = \frac{1 - e^{-x}}{x} = \sum_{n=0}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^n}{(n+1)!} x^n$$

and

$$h(x) = 1 - e^{-x} = \sum_{n=1}^{\infty} \frac{(-1)^{n+1}}{n!} x^n,$$

in (1.10), respectively, from (2.1), we have the proofs of other results. □

Theorem 6. Let n, r be positive integers such that $n > r$. We have

$$\begin{aligned} (-1)^r H(n, r, \alpha) &= \sum_{k=r}^{n-1} (-1)^k \frac{s(k, r) r!}{\alpha^k k!} H_{n-k}(\alpha), \\ H(n, r, \alpha) &= \sum_{k=r}^{n-1} \frac{H(k, r-1, \alpha)}{(n-k) \alpha^{n-k}}, \\ H_{n-r}^{r+1}(\alpha) &= \sum_{k=r}^{n-1} \binom{k}{r} \frac{1}{(n-k) \alpha^{n-k}}. \end{aligned}$$

Proof. From (1.9), we have

$$\left(\frac{-\ln \left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha} \right)}{1-x}, \frac{-\ln \left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha} \right)}{x} \right) = \left(\frac{-\ln \left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha} \right)}{1-x}, 1 \right) * \left(1, \frac{-\ln \left(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha} \right)}{x} \right),$$

and considering Riordan arrays related to $H(n, r, \alpha)$, $H_{n-r}(\alpha)$ and $(-1)^{n-r} s(n, r) \frac{r!}{\alpha^{rn}}$, the first identity is obtained from matrix multiplication. Similarly, by Riordan arrays $(\frac{1}{1-x}, \frac{1}{1-x}) = [(\frac{n}{r})]$ and $(-\ln(1 - \frac{x}{\alpha}), 1) = [\frac{1}{(n-r)\alpha^{n-r}}]$, the other identities are given. □

Theorem 7. For nonnegative integer n , we have

$$H_{n+1}(\alpha) - H_{n+1} = \sum_{k=1}^{n+1} \binom{n+1}{k} \frac{1}{k} \left(\frac{1}{\alpha} - 1\right)^k.$$

Proof. It is known that

$$(n+1) \sum_{k=0}^n \binom{n}{k} \frac{x^k}{k+1} = \frac{(1+x)^{n+1} - 1}{x}.$$

From this, integrating both sides of the above equation from -1 to $(-1 + 1/\alpha)$, we write

$$\begin{aligned} \int_{-1}^{-1+1/\alpha} \frac{(1+x)^{n+1} - 1}{x} dx &= \int_{-1}^{-1+1/\alpha} \sum_{k=0}^n (1+x)^k dx = \sum_{k=0}^n \frac{(1+x)^{k+1}}{k+1} \Big|_{-1}^{-1+1/\alpha} \\ &= \sum_{k=0}^n \frac{1}{(k+1)\alpha^{k+1}} = H_{n+1}(\alpha) \end{aligned}$$

and using $H_{n+1} = \sum_{k=0}^n (-1)^k \binom{n+1}{k+1} \frac{1}{k+1}$ [4, 12],

$$\begin{aligned} &\int_{-1}^{-1+1/\alpha} (n+1) \sum_{k=0}^n \binom{n}{k} \frac{x^k}{k+1} dx \\ &= (n+1) \sum_{k=0}^n \binom{n}{k} \frac{x^{k+1}}{(k+1)^2} \Big|_{-1}^{-1+1/\alpha} \\ &= (n+1) \sum_{k=0}^n \binom{n}{k} \frac{1}{(k+1)^2} \left(\left(-1 + \frac{1}{\alpha}\right)^{k+1} - (-1)^{k+1} \right) \\ &= (n+1) \sum_{k=0}^n \binom{n}{k} \frac{1}{(k+1)^2} \left(-1 + \frac{1}{\alpha}\right)^{k+1} + H_{n+1}. \end{aligned}$$

Thus, from aboving, the proof is complete. □

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