

# **Computing and Listing of Number of Possible m-sequence Generators of Order n**

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## **Abstract**

Design of maximal length sequence (m-sequence) generators of order n has many controlling parameters. In the design process of the generators it is essential to ensure that the generator characteristic polynomial corresponds to a primitive polynomial. The complexity of the search problem of primitive polynomials of order n grows as n increases and hence restricts the listing of all parameters of m-sequence generators of order n. This paper presents a computational procedure to determine the number of possible generators of order n. The paper provides a list of all possible m-sequence generators for up to  $n = 100$ .

Keywords: m-Sequence, LFSR, Primitive Polynomial, Prime Factors, Mersenne Numbers, MATLAB.

# **1. Introduction and Problem Definition**

Maximal length sequences (m-sequence) are also known as Pseudorandom Noise (PN) sequences. Maximal length sequences are of great importance in a variety of applications such as Direct Sequence Spread Spectrum (DSSS), Built-in Self-Test (BIST), Decryption – Encryption System (DES) and error detection, just to mention a few [1–12].

Systems in these applications typically use the basic hardware named Linear Feedback Shift Register (LFSR) to generate m-sequences [1–13]. A simple explanation of the LFSR structure and operation is given with respect to the structure shown in Figure 1 as follows. As shown in Figure 1 an LFSR is made up of two parts. These parts are a shift register and a feedback function. The shift registers, which can store one bit, are D – type Flip-Flops (FFs) that are connected as a chain. Moreover, each D-FF is also connected

to a clock. At each clock cycle, a new bit is loaded into the first shift register,  $D$ -FF<sub>1</sub>, of the D-FF chain. Considering that  $D$ -FF<sub>1</sub> is the leftmost register then the remaining bits within all other shift registers are shifted to the neighboring right register at every clock cycle. Furthermore, there exists a feedback function, which is simply the Exclusive-OR (XOR) logic operation of a number of bits that are held within a prescribed number of registers. Registers that are involved in the feedback operation are all connected to the XOR operator. Alternatively, the sequence of connections which are involved in the XOR operation logic is referred to a sequence of feedback taps  $(C_0 C_1 C_2 \ldots C_1 C_1 \ldots C_{n-1} C_n)$ . The updated left most bit state of  $\text{D-FF}_1$  is computed as a function of the existing feedback taps of the LFSR. The output of the LFSR is then read out at the output of rightmost shift register, one bit every clock cycle. Finally, the period of a shift register, p, is the length of the output sequence before it starts repeating [1–17].

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**Definition 1:** An LFSR is a special type of Serial-In Serial-Out (SISO) shift register that, when clocked, propagates bits from the least significant to the most significant bit position through its constituent neighbouring registers, one bit every clock cycle.

Figure 1 shows an *n*-bit SISO shift register. The key element of SISO shift registers is the D-type FFs. The sequence  ${q_1, q_2, ..., q_i, ..., q_{n-1}, q_n}$  represents the states of the FFs {D<sub>1</sub>,  $D_2, ..., D_{i}$ , ...  $D_{n-1}$ ,  $D_n$ } respectively. Table 1 demonstrates an example of how LFSRs operates to generate an m-sequence. The m-sequence generator considered for this demonstration is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2 depicts a 3-bit LFSR, which is constructed using an external XOR functional block. Note how the feedback – which is fed into the input to the first FF - is the result of exclusive-OR operation of the outputs of the second and third FFs. Table 1 visualizes the operation of the LFSR depicted in Figure 2. The table elaborates the next states (FF1\_OUT, FF2\_OUT, and FF3\_OUT) and the output m-sequence  $S_i$ . The initial state of the LFSR is considered to be as follows,  $q_1(0) = 1$ ,  $q_2(0) = 0$ , and  $q_3$  $(0) = 1.$ 

It is this feedback function that causes the LFSR to loop through a repetitive sequence of values. The choice of feedback connections, the initial state and the value of *n*, all determine the number of elements in a given sequence



**Figure 1.** An n-bit SISO shift register.



**Figure 2.** A 3-bit LFSR (External EOR type).

before the sequence repeats. The number of elements, in turn, determines the sequence length. This length is known as the periodicity, *p*, of the LFSR [2, 4, 6, 18–24].

**Definition 2:** The period *p* of an n-bit LFSR may vary from  $p = 1$  to  $2^{n-1}$ .

**Definition 3**: The sequence having length of  $2^n$ -1 is known as maximal length sequence (m-sequence).

Any binary sequence can be represented in a polynomial form over the Galois Field 2, GF(2). As such, the feedback connection vector of an LFSR can be represented by a polynomial that is technically referred to as a characteristic polynomial. Equations (1) define a general form of a characteristic polynomial which can be denoted as  $D(x)$ .

$$
D(x) = (c_0 \times x^0) + (c_1 \times x^1) + ... + (c_n \times x^n)
$$
 (1)

For any LFSR structure of length n, a list of all characteristic polynomials can be generated to encompass every possible connection. To demonstrate this, Table 2 lists all the characteristic polynomials, NP, for an LFSR of length 3.

**THEOREM 1:** In an n-bit LFSR a sequence generator can be referred to as an m-sequence generator only if its characteristic polynomial is primitive.

**Table 1.** Next state m-sequences for the structure of LFSR of Figure 2

Clock	$q_{2}$	$q_{3}$	Si
		(FF1_OUT) (FF2_OUT) (FF3_OUT)	
3			11101001110
5			
6			
			Repeats

**Table 2.** Number of possible generators (NP) and number of possible m-sequence generators in LFSR of Figure 2



Table 2 also demonstrates that out of the 4 possible characteristic polynomials only 2 can be used to generate m-sequences. It can therefore be assumed that the number of primitive characteristic polynomials, NPP, is a subset of NP, by which the relation NPP < NP should hold.

An interesting relation on the complexity search for primitive characteristic polynomials can also be established. As n increases, the search complexity for primitive characteristic polynomials of order *n* grows exponentially. Consequently, the search success decays similar to the exponential decay of a signal. The nature of this search success decay rate is depicted in Figure 3. The search of primitive polynomials from the list of all possible combinations of generator polynomials can be prohibitive for large n. To this extent, this paper presents a computational efficient procedure of determining *NPP* when n is large.

## **2. Controlling Parameters for m-sequence Generators and Mathematics**

The parameters governing the sequence period of a generator are: 1) the order n, 2) the initial state, and 3) the used characteristic polynomial. Table 1 shows an example where  $n = 3$ , initial state: [ $q_1 = 1$ ,  $q_2 = 0$ , and  $q_3 = 1$ ], and characteristic polynomials:

> $1 + (x^3)$ ,  $1 + (x^2) + (x^3)$ ,  $1 + (x) + (x^3)$ , and  $1 + (x) + (x^2) + (x^3)$ .

The sequence periods (*p*) generated by the characteristic polynomials shown above are 3, 7, 7 and 4, respectively. Note that each of the sequence generators is governed by a different state equation. In general, the state equation of a sequence generator is defined by Equation (2).

$$
q(t+1) = [A]*q(t)
$$
\n<sup>(2)</sup>

where, system matrix of the generator is  $[A]$ , while  $q(t+1)$ and q(*t*) are next and present states of the generator, respectively. The structure of matrix [*A*] for an *n* order can be defined in Equation (3).



where 
$$
c_j = \begin{cases} 0 & \text{or} \ 1, & \text{for} \ 1 \leq j \leq n-1 \\ 1, & \text{for} \ j = n \end{cases}
$$
 (4)

In Equation (4), the values of  $c_j$  show the existence or absence of a feedback connection from the j-th stage of the LFSR. Equation (2) can be written as:

$$
[q(t+1)] = [A][q(t)] \tag{5}
$$

If  $[q] = [q(0)]$  represents a particular initial loading of the LFSR, then the sequence of states through which the LFSR will pass during successive times is given by

$$
[q(t)], [A][q(t)], [A]^2[q(t)], [A]^3[q(t)],...
$$



**Figure 3.** Search success rate for m-sequence generator in an-bit LFSR.

Let the matrix 'period' be the smallest integer p for which  $[A]^p = I$ , where *I* is an identity matrix. Then  $[A]^p$  $[q(t)] = [q(t)]$  for any non-zero initial vector  $[q(0)]$ , indicating the 'cycle length (or period)' of the LFSR is *p*.

The cycle length for  $[q(0)] = 0$  is always 1, independent of matrix [*A*]. Thus, on the basis of this property of periodicity of LFSR and Equation (5), it follows that:

$$
[q(t)] = [q(t + p)] = [A]^p [q(t)] \tag{6}
$$

The following corollaries cover the periodicity properties of an LFSR and its relation with its corresponding primitive characteristic polynomial. These are used in the proposed algorithm.

**COROLLARY** 1: If  $p = m = 2^n - 1$  is a prime number, then the characteristic polynomial corresponds to that connection of LFSR will be primitive, if and only if  $[A]^m = 1$ .

**COROLLARY 2:** If  $p = m = 2^n - 1$  is not a prime number, and  $[A]^{pi} = 1$ , where  $p_i$  is a divisor of  $p$ , then the characteristic polynomial corresponds to that connection of LFSR cannot be primitive.

The determination of the primitive polynomial comprises of two folds; 1) the use of the Euler phi-function  $\varphi(.)$ , and 2) the search for primes. The Euler function has the property that its value for an integer *m* is the product of the values of the Euler phi-function at the prime powers that occur in the factorization of *m*. The Euler phi-function can be computed on the basis of the prime factorization of *m*. The following theorems and Lemma are embodied in the proposed algorithm for finding primitive polynomials.

**Lemma 1:** There exists (exist) a prime divisor (or divisors) for every positive integer greater than one.

**Theorem 2:**If *m* is a composite integer, then *m* has a prime factor not exceeding the prime integer value of  $\sqrt{m}$ .

**THEOREM 3:** Let  $m = p_i^{a_i} p_i^{a_2} ... p_i^{a_i} ... p_k^{a_k}$  be the prime  $(p_i)$  of power (*ai* ) factorization of the positive integer *m*. Then

$$
\varphi(m) = m(1 - 1/p_1)(1 - 1/p_2)...(1 - 1/p_k)
$$
\n(7)

**THEOREM 4:** The total number of possible primitive polynomials (NPP) of order *n* is given by

$$
NPP = \frac{(m)}{n} \tag{8}
$$

## **3. Computing Factors of** *m***, ((***m***) and**  *NPP* **[25**−**32]**

Two algorithms – designated A.1 and A.2 – are used to compute factors of *m*, φ(*m*), and NPP. These two algorithms are presented in pseudo code format as follows:



*Input: n output: p, prime factors of p* (*pi* ), *number of prime factors* (*k*), *and exponents of each prime factor*(*ei* )

- 1 *Read n and do the following*
- 2 *Compute*  $p = 2<sup>n</sup> 1$ ;
- 3 *check is p prime or not, if yes GOTO step* 8;
- 4 *Find pi ;*
- 5 *Compute k;*
- 6 *Find ei ;*
- *7* Return with p,  $p_i$ , k and  $e_i$
- 8 *Return with p,*  $p_i = p$ *, k = 1, and e<sub>i</sub> = 1*



The factors for  $n = 1$  to 100 are listed in Table 3 and 4; whereas the values of φ(*m*) and *NPP* are shown in Tables 5 and 6. Factorisations are given from smallest to largest factor, with a period  $\degree$  in the table 'f' indicates the number of factors.

### **4. Conclusions**

We developed an algorithm and succeeded in getting the values of *NPP* for large values of *n*. This paper represent our efforts in transforming our observations into algorithms that are capable of determining the values of *NPP* for large *n*. Using these algorithm, we generated NPP lookup tables, which show the factors of *m*-sequence period *m* and *NPP*. As an example let *n* = 4, gives *NP* as 4 while NPP is computed as 2. The factors for  $m = 15$  suggests that the periods of sequence generators of size *n* = 4 may be any value from factors {1, 3, 5, 15}. Only two of the generators are giving m-sequence. These tables offer fruitful information that can be utilized to judge whether A. Ahmad, S. S. Al-Busaidi, A. Al Maashri, M. Awadalla, M. A. K. Rizvi and N. Mohanan **5363**



4.39805E+12 N 8 3×3×7×7×43×127×337×5419 → 3^2.7^2.43.127.337.5419

8.79609E+12 Y 3 431×9719×2099863

 1.75922E+13 N 7 3×5×23×89×397×683×2113 3.51844E+13 N 6 7×31×73×151×631×23311 7.03687E+13 N 4 3×47×178481×2796203

**Table 3.** The Factors of *m* ( for  $n = 1$  to 50)[Exponents are represented with '^']

#### Table 3. (*Continued*)



#### **Table 4.** The Factors of *m* (for  $n = 51$  to 100) [Exponents are represented with '^']



Table 4. (*Continued*)

84	1.93428E+25	N	14	3×3×5×7×7×13×29×43×113×127×337×1429×5419×14449
				$\rightarrow$ 3^2.5.7^2.13.29.43.113.127.337.1429.5419.14449
85	3.86856E+25	N	3	31×131071×9520972806333758431
86	7.73713E+25	N	5	3×431×9719×2099863×2932031007403
87	$1.54743E + 26$	N	6	7×233×1103×2089×4177×9857737155463
88	$3.09485E+26$	N	10	3x5x17x23x89x353x397x683x2113x2931542417
89	$6.1897E + 26$	Y	$\mathbf{1}$	618970019642690137449562111
90	1.23794E+27	N	13	$3\times3\times3\times7\times11\times19\times31\times73\times151\times331\times631\times23311\times18837001$
				$\rightarrow$ 3^3.7.11.19.31.73.151.331.631.23311.18837001
91	2.47588E+27	N	5	127×911×8191×112901153×23140471537
92	4.95176E+27	N	9	3×5×47×277×1013×1657×30269×178481×2796203
93	$9.90352E+27$	N	3	7×2147483647×658812288653553079
94	$1.9807E + 28$	N	6	3×283×2351×4513×13264529×165768537521
95	$3.96141E + 28$	N	5	$31\times191\times524287\times420778751\times30327152671$
96	7.92282E+28	N	13	3×3×5×7×13×17×97×193×241×257×673×65537×22253377
				$\rightarrow$ 3^2.5.7.13.17.97.193.241.257.673.65537.22253377
97	1.58456E+29	Y	2	11447×13842607235828485645766393
98	$3.16913E + 29$	N	5	3×43×127×4363953127297×4432676798593
99	6.33825E+29	N	8	7x23x73x89x199x153649x599479x33057806959
100	$1.26765E + 30$	N	14	$3\times5\times5\times5\times11\times31\times41\times101\times251\times601\times1801\times4051\times8101\times268501$ $\rightarrow$ 3.5^3.11.31.41.101.251.601.1801.4051.8101.268501

**Table 5.** The Values of *NPP* ( $n=1$  to 50) [Exponents are represented with ' $^{\wedge}$ ']



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#### Table 5. (*Continued*)

21	1048576	1524096	72576
22	2097152	2640704	120032
23	4194304	8210080	356960
24	8388608	4423680	184320
25	16777216	32400000	1296000
26	33554432	44717400	1719900
27	67108864	$1.13E + 08$	4202496
28	134217728	88510464	3161088
29	268435456	$5.34E + 08$	18407808
30	536870912	$3.56E + 08$	11880000
31	1073741824	$2.15E + 09$	69273666
32	2147483648	$2.15E + 09$	67108864
33	4294967296	$6.96E + 09$	$2.11E + 08$
34	8589934592	$1.15E+10$	3.37E+08
35	17179869184	$3.25E+10$	$9.29E + 08$
36	34359738368	$1.16E+10$	$3.22E + 08$
37	68719476736	$1.37E + 11$	$3.7E + 09$
38	1.37439E+11	$1.83E + 11$	$4.82E + 09$
39	2.74878E+11	$4.65E+11$	$1.19E+10$
40	5.49756E+11	$3.79E + 11$	9.47E+09
41	$1.09951E+12$	$2.2E+12$	5.36E+10
42	2.19902E+12	$1.39E+12$	$3.3E+10$
43	4.39805E+12	$8.77E+12$	2.04E+11
44	8.79609E+12	5.52E+12	$1.25E + 11$
45	1.75922E+13	$2.85E+13$	6.34E+11
46	3.51844E+13	$4.59E+13$	$9.98E + 11$
47	7.03687E+13	$1.41E+14$	2.99E+12
48	1.40737E+14	$7.31E+13$	$1.52E+12$
49	2.81475E+14	5.59E+14	$1.14E+13$
50	$5.6295E+14$	$6.56E+14$	$1.31E+13$

Table 6. The Values of *NPP* ( $n = 51$  to 100)[Exponents are represented with '^']



Table 6. (*Continued*)



the generators need to be used or not. Hence these tables are of great help for engineers, scientists and researchers practicing / working their skills in the fields of DSSS, BIST and data security.

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