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MAGNETOHYDRODYNAMIC FREE CONVECTION OF NON-NEWTONIAN POWER-LAW FLUIDS OVER A UNIFORMLY HEATED HORIZONTAL PLATE

by

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The MHD free convection flow of non-Newtonian power-law fluids over a horizontal plate subjected to a constant heat flux is studied. The results are presented for various values of the three influential parameters, i. e. the generalized Hartmann number, the generalized Prandtl number, and the non-Newtonian power-law viscosity index. Increasing the Hartmann number increases the thermal boundary-layer thickness and the surface temperature and consequently decreases the wall skin friction and Nusselt number. A lower generalized Prandtl number results in a larger skin friction coefficient and higher wall temperature as well as thicker thermal boundary-layer. The viscosity index is predicted to influence the flow conditions depending on the value of generalized Hartmann number. At high generalized Prandtl number numbers, by decreasing non-Newtonian power-law index, the wall skin friction, temperature scale, and thermal boundary-layer thickness are increased and the Nusselt number is decreased, while the opposite trend is observed for low generalized Prandtl number. A general correlation for the Nusselt number is derived using the numerical results.

Key words: *horizontal plate, MHD, non-Newtonian, natural-convection, power-law fluid, similarity solution*

Introduction

The buoyancy-driven convection has important applications in many engineering and industrial processes such as nuclear reactors, biochemical processes, drying systems, *etc.* The free convective boundary-layer flows over flat surfaces have been extensively investigated [1]. In contrast, the natural-convection flow and heat transfer over horizontal plates had received fewer attentions. The boundary-layer above a heated horizontal plate is formed by an induced pressure gradient resulted from the buoyancy force perpendicular to the plate. Thus, the mechanism of natural-convection flow over horizontal heated surfaces is different from the vertical ones. A numerical and experimental investigation of natural-convection flow above a horizontal plate heated with a constant flux has been reported in [2]. Samie *et al.* [3] analytically analyzed the natural-convection heat transfer below a hot horizontal isothermal flat strip of infinite length. Kozanoglu and Rubio [4] introduced a Nusselt number correlation for the natural-convection from a downward facing horizontal heated plate in which the characteristic length is

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defined based on the thermal boundary-layer thickness. The natural-convection flows over a semi-infinite horizontal plate subjected to variable heat flux or variable wall temperature have been presented in [5, 6]. Guha and Samanta [7] performed an integral analysis to investigate natural-convection heat transfer over a semi-infinite horizontal plate subjected to either a variable wall temperature or variable heat flux.

Many industrial fluids such as petroleum products, polymers, molten plastics, and slurries are known to have non-Newtonian characteristics in which the shear rate is not directly proportional to the shear stress. The non-Newtonian behavior of these fluids mostly exhibits itself by a shear-dependent viscosity. Due to the growing use of such fluids, the phenomenon of natural-convection has been widely investigated for the flow of these types of fluid on vertical [8-12], inclined [13], and horizontal surfaces [14-18]. Different studies have been reported on the steady natural-convection flow of power-law fluids over vertical surfaces with constant temperature [8], constant wall heat flux [9, 10], and under mixed thermal boundary conditions [11]. The problem of unsteady free convection flow over a vertical flat plate at constant temperature immersed in a power-law fluid is analyzed in [12]. The free convection of non-Newtonian fluids over an inclined plate with variable surface temperature is studied in [13], where the effects of power-law viscosity and suction/injection through the surface have been investigated.

A similarity solution of natural-convection of non-Newtonian power-law fluid about a horizontal impermeable surface with a non-uniform heat flux distribution in the porous medium has been reported in [14]. In addition, Gorla and Kumari [15] have investigated free convection problem for the horizontal plate subject to variable wall temperature or heat flux distribution embedded in non-Newtonian power-law fluid-saturated porous media. In their work, the effects of surface mass transfer was studied for different conditions employing finite difference approach to solve the transformed boundary-layer equations. Guha and Pradhan [16] used the finite difference method to study the problem of natural-convection boundary-layer flow of a non-Newtonian power-law fluid over an isothermal horizontal plate. Their results showed that the hydrodynamic boundary-layer is influenced by the non-Newtonian nature of fluid while the thermal boundary-layer remains almost unaffected for a given generalized Prandtl number.

The flow of electrically conducting fluids, *e. g.*, liquid metals, suppress under the influence of magnetic fields. This effect, the MHD phenomenon, is widely used to control the heat transfer processes of electrically conducting fluids [17, 18]. Subsequently, MHD can mitigate or neutralize the development of flow instabilities [19-21]. Many researchers have studied the MHD natural-convection flow and heat transfer on a plate. The effect of magnetic fields on natural-convection flow past vertical or inclined plates are extensively studied [22-26]. The buoyancy-induced flow over horizontal plates embedded in a non-Newtonian fluid saturated porous medium under the action of a transverse magnetic field is investigated in [26, 27]. Samanta and Guha [28] studied the natural-convection of an electrically conducting fluid above a horizontal plate with constant heat flux in the presence of a magnetic field. The results of magnetic field effect in reducing the Nusselt number and skin friction coefficient was presented.

The objective of the present study is to investigate the effects of a transverse magnetic field on natural-convection flow and heat transfer of an electrically conducting non-Newtonian fluid over a semi-infinite horizontal plate heated with constant heat flux. The similarity transformations are applied to the governing boundary-layer equations to reduce them to a set of ODE. A numerical solution using the finite difference method is obtained. The effect of the generalized Hartmann number on the non-dimensional velocity and temperature fields in both shear-thinning and shear-thickening fluids are then presented and discussed. Finally, using the results of numerical solutions, a general correlation for Nusselt number is proposed.

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Mathematical analysis

A semi-infinite horizontal plate situated in a quiescent ambient of non-Newtonian power-law fluid at a uniform temperature, T_∞, and pressure, p_∞, is considered. As shown in fig. 1, the plate is heated with a constant heat flux, q_w, and is subjected to a unidirectional magnetic field, B, normal to the plate. Above the heated plate, a natural-convection boundary-layer is formed due to an induced pressure gradient. The problem under consideration is the steady 2-D laminar incompressible natural-convection boundary-layer flow and heat transfer over the plate.
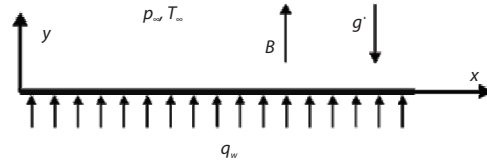

Figure 1. Schematic representation of the problem

The governing equations of MHD natural-convection flow over a horizontal surface are presented in eqs. (1a)-(1d). In addition the previously mentioned assumptions, the Boussinesq and boundary-layer approximations are applied. The x-co-ordinate is aligned along the plate from the leading edge and the y-co-ordinate is directed perpendicular to the plate:

$$\frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + \frac{\partial v}{\partial y} = 0 \tag{1a}$$

$$u\frac{\partial u}{\partial x} + v\frac{\partial u}{\partial y} = -\frac{1}{\rho}\frac{\partial p}{\partial x} + \frac{1}{\rho}\frac{\partial}{\partial y}\left(\mu\frac{\partial u}{\partial y}\right) - \frac{\sigma B^2}{\rho}u \tag{1b}$$

$$0 = -\frac{1}{\rho}\frac{\partial p}{\partial y} + g\beta\left(T - T_\infty\right) \tag{1c}$$

$$u\frac{\partial T}{\partial x} + v\frac{\partial T}{\partial y} = \alpha\frac{\partial^2 T}{\partial y^2} \tag{1d}$$

The third term on the right-hand side of eq. (1b) represents the Lorentz force, $\vec{j} \times \vec{B}$ obtained by the simplification of 1-D magnetic field. The magnetic Reynolds number was assumed small and the induced magnetic field due to the motion of the electrically conducting fluid was neglected. The appropriate boundary conditions for eq. (1):

$$\text{at}\quad y = 0, \quad u = 0, \quad v = 0, \quad \frac{-k\partial T}{\partial y} = q_w \tag{2a}$$

$$\text{at}\quad x = 0, \quad u = 0, \quad v = 0, \quad T = T_\infty \tag{2b}$$

$$\text{as}\quad y \to \infty, \quad u \to 0, \quad T \to T_\infty, \quad P \to p_\infty \tag{2c}$$

In the aforementioned equations, u and v are the velocity components in the x- and y-directions, respectively, p – the hydrostatic pressure, T – the static temperature of the fluid, g – the gravitational acceleration, β – the volumetric coefficient of thermal expansion, and ρ, μ, α, and σ are the density, viscosity, thermal diffusivity, and electrical conductivity of the fluid, respectively.

The continuity eq. (1a) is automatically satisfied by introducing a stream function ψ, defined by $u = \partial\psi/\partial y$ and $v = -\partial\psi/\partial x$. Then, the governing equations can be expressed:

$$\frac{\partial\psi}{\partial y}\frac{\partial^2\psi}{\partial x\partial y} - \frac{\partial\psi}{\partial x}\frac{\partial^2\psi}{\partial y^2} = -\frac{1}{\rho}\frac{\partial p}{\partial x} + \frac{\mu_0}{\rho}\frac{\partial}{\partial y}\left(\left|\frac{\partial^2\psi}{\partial y^2}\right|^{n-1}\frac{\partial^2\psi}{\partial y^2}\right) - \frac{\sigma B^2}{\rho}\frac{\partial\psi}{\partial y} \tag{3a}$$

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$$0 = -\frac{1}{\rho}\frac{\partial p}{\partial y} + g\beta(T - T_\infty) \tag{3b}$$

$$\frac{\partial \psi}{\partial y}\frac{\partial T}{\partial x} - \frac{\partial \psi}{\partial x}\frac{\partial T}{\partial y} = \alpha\frac{\partial^2 T}{\partial y^2} \tag{3c}$$

where the power-law model is used to describe the shear dependent viscosity behavior of the fluid. In this non-Newtonian model, the viscosity is assumed to be a function of shear rate as $\mu = \mu_0 |\partial u/\partial y|^{n-1}$, where n is a fluid property and is constant for a given fluid. The shear-thinning fluids ($n < 1$) have lower apparent viscosity at higher shear rates while in shear-thickening fluids ($n > 1$) there is an increase in the apparent viscosity at higher shear rates. In Newtonian fluids, the shear stress is directly proportional to the shear rate (*i. e.*, $n = 1$).

The group theory analysis [29] provides that the following combinations of the variables give the absolute invariants:

$$\frac{y}{x^{1/3}}, \quad \frac{\psi}{x^{2/3}}, \quad \frac{T - T_\infty}{x^{1/3}}, \quad \frac{P - P_\infty}{x^{2/3}}, \quad \frac{B}{x^{-1/3}} \tag{4a}$$

Therefore, the similarity transformations can then be written:

$$\eta = Dyx^{-1/3}, \quad \psi = C_1 x^{2/3} F(\eta), \quad (T - T_\infty) = C_2 x^{1/3} G(\eta)$$
$$(P - P_\infty) = C_3 x^{2/3} H(\eta), \quad B = B_0 x^{-1/3} M(\eta) \tag{4b}$$

where D, C_1, C_2, C_3, and B_0 are constants. Hence, there exist similarity solutions to this problem for a magnetic field with $M = Bx^{1/3}/B_0$ as a η function. As long as the direction of the magnetic field is normal to the plate, the simplified presented form of Lorentz force is valid. By letting $M(\eta) = $ constant, in this paper, a non-uniform magnetic field as $B = B_0 D^{-1/2} x^{1/3}$ is investigated. By using the definition of η, we define a length scale as $L = D^{-3/2}$. Hence, the constant value of $M(\eta)$ is chosen as to maintain the dimension of B as Tesla.

By substituting the similarity transformations eq. (4b) into eq. (3), the boundary-layer equations are transformed into the following set of ordinary differential equations:

$$\frac{C_1^2 D^2}{3}\left[F'^2(\eta) - 2F(\eta)F''(\eta)\right] = -\frac{C_3}{3\rho}\left[2H(\eta) - \eta H'(\eta)\right] +$$

$$+ \frac{n\mu_0 C_1^n D^{2n+1}}{\rho}\left[|F''(\eta)|^{n-1} F'''(\eta)\right] - \frac{C_1 \sigma B_0^2}{\rho}F'(\eta) \tag{5a}$$

$$-\frac{C_3 D}{\rho}H'(\eta) + g\beta C_2 G(\eta) = 0 \tag{5b}$$

$$\frac{C_1 C_2 D}{3}\left[F'(\eta)G(\eta) - 2F(\eta)G'(\eta)\right] = \alpha C_2 D^2 G''(\eta) \tag{5c}$$

where the prime sign denotes differentiation with respect to η. Also, the heat flux boundary condition implies that $-kC_2 DG'(0) = q_w$. The transformed governing equations and the associated transformed boundary conditions may be written:

$$3n|F''|^{n-1} F''' + 2FF'' - F'^2 - \mathrm{Ha}^{*2} F' + \eta H' - 2H = 0 \tag{6a}$$

$$H' - G = 0 \tag{6b}$$

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$$\frac{3}{Pr^*}G'' + 2FG' - F'G = 0 \tag{6c}$$

$$F(0) = F'(0) = G'(0) + 1 = F'(\infty) = G(\infty) = H(\infty) = 0 \tag{6d}$$

with an appropriate choice of constants:

$$D = \left[\frac{g\beta q_w}{kv_0^{2-n}}\right]^{\frac{2-n}{6}}, \quad C_1 = \left[\frac{g\beta q_w}{kv_0^{2n-1}}\right]^{\frac{2n-1}{6}}, \quad C_2 = \frac{q_w}{k}\left[\frac{g\beta q_w}{kv_0^{2-n}}\right]^{\frac{n-2}{6}}, \quad C_3 = \rho\left[\frac{g\beta q_w}{kv_0^{n+1}}\right]^{\frac{n+1}{3}} \tag{7}$$

Then, the generalized Hartmann number and Prandtl number appeared in eqs. (6a) and (6c), respectively, are given:

$$Ha^* = B_0\sqrt{\frac{\sigma}{\rho C_1 D^2}} = B_0\left(\frac{g\beta q_w}{k}\right)^{-1/4}\sqrt{\frac{\sigma}{\rho}} = B_0 L\sqrt{\frac{\sigma}{\rho v^*}}$$

$$Pr^* = \frac{C_1}{\alpha D} = \frac{v^*}{\alpha}, \quad v^* = v_0\left(\frac{g\beta q_w}{k}\right)^{\frac{n-1}{2}} \tag{8}$$

where $L = D^{-3/2}$ is the characteristic length scale. The generalized kinematic viscosity, v^*, reduces to $v_0 = \mu_0/\rho$ for $n = 1$. Here, the parameter v_0 is dimensionless only for $n = 1$, but v^* is dimensionless for all n.

Using eq. (7), the similarity transformations can be determined:

$$\eta = \frac{y}{x}Gr_x^{*\frac{2-n}{6}} \tag{9a}$$

$$\psi = \left(v_0 x^{2-2n}\right)^{\frac{1}{2-n}}Gr_x^{*\frac{2n-1}{6}}F(\eta) \tag{9b}$$

$$(T - T_\infty) = \frac{q_w x}{k}Gr_x^{*\frac{n-2}{6}}G(\eta) \tag{9c}$$

$$(P - P_\infty) = \rho\left(\frac{v_0}{x^n}\right)^{\frac{2}{2-n}}Gr_x^{*\frac{n+1}{3}}H(\eta) \tag{9d}$$

$$B = B_0 Gr_x^{*\frac{n-2}{12}} \tag{9e}$$

where the generalized Grashof number is introduced, $n \neq 2$:

$$Gr_x^* = \frac{g\beta q_w x^{\frac{4}{2-n}}}{kv_0^{\frac{2}{2-n}}} \tag{10}$$

From the similarity transformation of stream function eq. (9b), dimensionless transformed velocities can be obtained:

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$$\frac{u}{\left(\dfrac{v_0}{x^n}\right)^{\frac{1}{2-n}} \mathrm{Gr}_x^{*\frac{n+1}{6}}} = u^* = F'(\eta) \tag{11a}$$

$$\frac{v}{\left(\dfrac{v_0}{x^n}\right)^{\frac{1}{2-n}} \mathrm{Gr}_x^{*\frac{2n-1}{6}}} = v^* = \frac{\eta}{3}F'(\eta) - \frac{2}{3}F(\eta) \tag{11b}$$

Using the similarity transformation of temperature eq. (9c), the normalized local Nusselt number can be expressed:

$$\mathrm{Nu}_x^* = \frac{\mathrm{Nu}_x}{\mathrm{Gr}_x^{*\frac{2-n}{6}}} = \frac{q_w x}{k\left[T_w(x) - T_\infty\right]\mathrm{Gr}_x^{*\frac{2-n}{6}}} = \frac{1}{G(0)} \tag{12}$$

Then, the average Nusselt number over a length of L is $\overline{\mathrm{Nu}}_{0-L}$ where Nu_L is the local Nusselt number at $x = L$.

The wall shear stress is given:

$$\tau_w = \mu_0 \left[\left.\frac{\partial u}{\partial y}\right|_{y=0}\right]^n = \mu_0 \left[\left(\frac{g\beta q_w}{k}\right)^{1/2} F''(0)\right]^n = \rho\left(\frac{v_0}{x^n}\right)^{\frac{2}{2-n}} \mathrm{Gr}_x^{*n/2}\left[F''(0)\right]^n \tag{13}$$
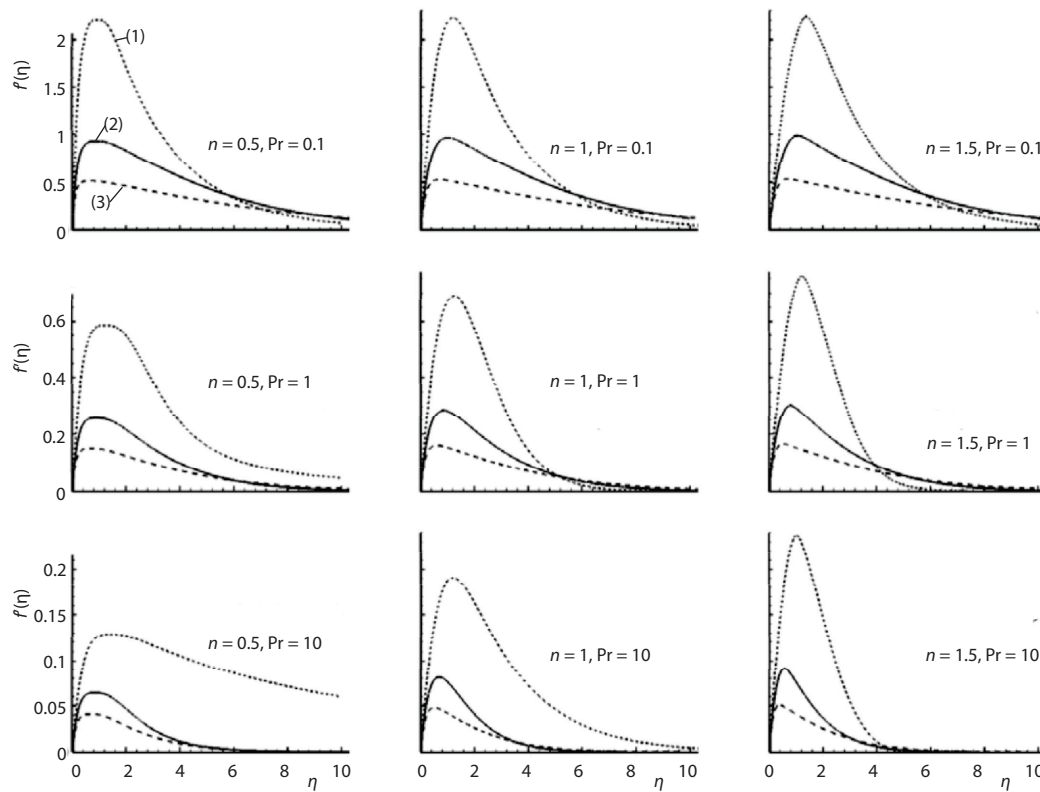
The wall shear stress, τ_w, is constant all over the surface of the plate. Using the u-velocity scale eq. (11a), the normalized skin-friction coefficient c_{fx}^* can be defined:

$$c_{fx}^* = \frac{c_{fx}}{\mathrm{Gr}_x^{*\frac{n-2}{6}}} = \frac{\tau_w}{\rho\left(\dfrac{v_0}{x^n}\right)^{\frac{2}{2-n}} \mathrm{Gr}_x^{*\frac{n+1}{3}} \mathrm{Gr}_x^{*\frac{n-2}{6}}} = \left[F''(0)\right]^n \tag{14}$$

Results and discussion

The system of coupled eqs. (6a)-(6c) subject to boundary conditions eq. (6d) have been solved numerically using finite-difference method. Equations (6a)-(6c) were first reduced to a system of six ODE with appropriate boundary conditions. The central difference discretization scheme was applied to the partial derivatives to obtain the finite difference equations. The algebraic equations have been linearized by employing Newton-Raphson procedure. The iterative Thomas algorithm was used to solve the system of algebraic equations with a convergence criterion of 10^{-10} for relative difference between the current and previous iterations. The far-field asymptotic value of similarity variable η_∞ was increased till the unknown solutions at $\eta = 0$ and $\eta = \eta_\infty$ attained unchanged values within a tolerance of 10^{-8}. In the computational domains associated to each η_∞, the solution was supposed to be independent of the mesh size when the relative changes of the numerical results were less than 10^{-4} when doubling the number of grids.

The effect of magnetic field on the dimensionless u-velocity profiles for three different values of the generalized Prandtl number $\mathrm{Pr}^* = 0.1, 1,$ and 10 is presented in fig. 2 for a pseudo plastic fluid with $n = 0.5$, Newtonian fluids ($n = 1$) and a dilatant fluid with $n = 1.5$. As expected, fig. 2 shows that the maximum value of dimensionless u-velocity decreases with the increase of the generalized Hartmann number or Prandtl number. Furthermore, the location of maximum u-velocity approaches the leading edge with the increase of the generalized Hartmann

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**Figure 2. Dimensionless *u*-velocity distribution for different *n* and Pr* for Ha* = 0, 5, and 10;
(1) – Ha = 0, (2) – Ha = 5, and (3) – Ha = 10**

number. Generally, increasing the Hartmann number increases the boundary-layer thickness but, opposite trend was seen when low Hartmann numbers are applied for the cases with thick boundary-layers at high Pr* and low *n* values.

As can be seen in fig. 2, a thicker boundary-layer is resulted for a larger Pr*. It is observed that a larger *n* results in a larger and sharper peak velocity but a thinner boundary-layer thickness. These can be explained by the fact that the effective viscosity decreases in shear-thickening fluids and increases in the shear-thinning fluids by the decrease in the velocity gradient. The low velocity gradients near the point of the maximum velocity produce low effective viscosities for shear-thickening fluids, which result in higher velocities with sharper variations. In comparison with Newtonian fluids, by the decrease in the shear rate starting from the plate surface to the boundary-layer edge, the viscous effects are presented in a thicker boundary-layer for shear-thinning fluids and a thinner boundary-layer for shear-thickening fluids.

The dimensionless wall skin friction is plotted against generalized Hartmann number in fig. 3. As can be seen, increasing the Hartmann number decreases the friction coefficient. This is evident that higher values of generalized Hartmann or Prandtl numbers result in the smaller velocity scales, fig. 2, and thus lower values of normalized skin friction regardless of the value of *n*. Figure 3 shows that for Pr* = 10, the dimensionless skin friction coefficient varies slightly with Hartmann number. Equivalently, the velocity gradient near the surface have a weak functionality of Hartmann number at Pr* = 10.
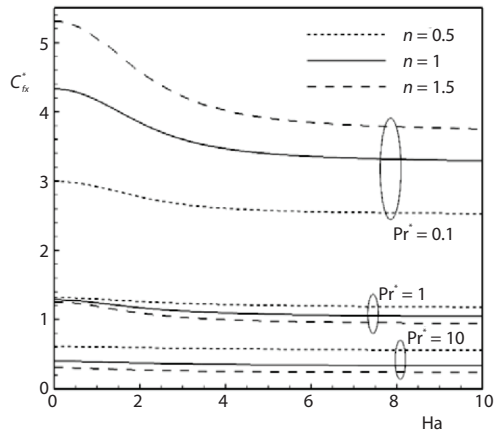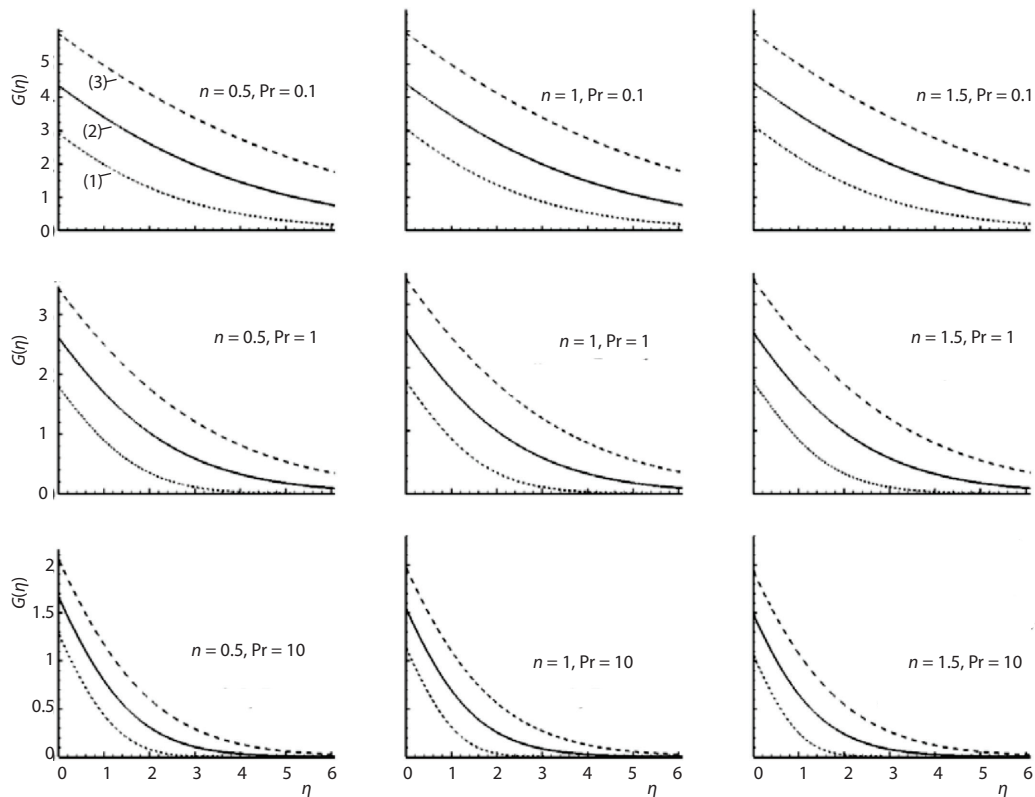
Figure 3. The dimensionless skin friction factor vs. Ha for different values of Pr^* and n

Figure 3 indicates that the wall skin friction decreases with n for $Pr^* = 10$, while the reverse happens for $Pr^* = 0.1$. As discussed earlier, increasing n at a fixed Pr^* results in a higher peak velocity, fig. 2, but a thinner momentum boundary-layer thickness. The former and the latter both may reveal an increase in the velocity gradient $F''(\eta)$. The aforesaid comment is consistent for $Pr^* = 10$, but considering the effect of the power index n on the effective viscosity, an apparently contradictory result is obtained for $Pr^* = 0.1$, where the velocity gradients has decreasing trends with increase in index n. On the other hand, by raising the values of the dimensionless velocity gradients at the wall to the power of n in order to obtain the skin friction, different trends for variations of $[F''|_{\eta=0}(n)]^{\eta}$ are established depending on the value of $F''|_{\eta=0}$ and n.

The effect of magnetic field on the dimensionless temperature profiles is presented in fig. 4 for three different values of $Pr^* = 0.1$, 1, and 10 for $n = 0.5$, 1, and 1.5. The value of the

Figure 4. Dimensionless temperature distribution for different n and Pr^* for $Ha^* = 0$, 5, and 10; (1) – Ha = 0, (2) – Ha = 5, and (3) – Ha = 10

dimensionless temperature decreases continuously from a maximum value at the surface of the plate to zero at the edge of the thermal boundary-layer.

Figure 4 shows that the surface temperature increases with the increase of the generalized Hartmann number due to the reduced fluid-flow. Subsequently, increasing the Hartmann number increases the thermal boundary-layer thickness and decreases the heat transfer rate, as presented in fig. 5. Also, as expected, with the decrease of the generalized Prandtl number, the dimensionless temperature scale increases while the thermal boundary-layer thickness decreases. However, variations with n depends on the value of Pr^* in which a lower n at $Pr^* = 1$ or 10 results in a larger temperature scale and a thicker thermal boundary-layer, while the contrary result is obtained for $Pr^* = 0.1$. Similar to the variations of skin friction coefficient, the apparently contradictory trend of viscosity index functionality of temperature can be justified by the presence of the effect of the power index n on the velocity field.

As presented in fig. 5, the reverse trends are established for the variations of dimensionless Nusselt number with n, which is given by reciprocal of dimensionless wall temperature. As can be seen in fig. 5, the Nusselt number has a weak decreasing functionality with viscosity index n for $Pr^* = 0.1$ and 1. This is resulted from the consequent effect of the Pr^* value and the magnitude of changes in the effective viscosity with index n. The weak functionality of Nusselt number with n is due to negligible effect of the velocity field at the edge of the thermal layer for low Pr^*.

Figure 5. Variations of dimensionless Nusselt number *vs.* Ha for different values of Pr^* and n

The scale-ups between the viscous force, Lorentz force, and the inertia force propose a general correlation for the normalized Nusselt number in the form presented in eq. (15). The least square method is employed using about 1500 data from different curves of Pr^*-constant, Ha^*-constant, and n-constant. The following correlation for evaluating the Nusselt number is obtained for the ranges of $0.5 \leq n \leq 1.5$, $0.1 \leq Pr \leq 10$, and $0 \leq Ha \leq 10$:

$$4.55\left(\frac{4.81}{Pr^*}\right)^n Nu_x^{*3n+3} + \frac{7.55}{Pr^{*2}} Nu_x^{*6} + 1.63\frac{Ha^2}{Pr^*} Nu_x^{*4} = 1 \tag{15}$$
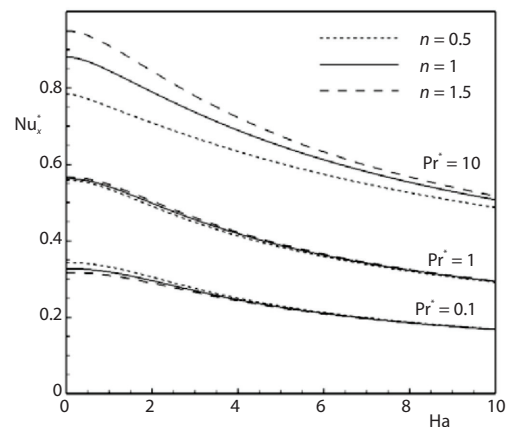
Table 1. Comparison of the results of Nusselt number for Newtonian fluids

Pr	Ha	Present study (for $n = 1$)		[28]	
		Numerical result	Correlation	Numerical result	Correlation
0.01	0	0.169	0.153	0.168	0.161
	3	0.149	0.136	0.148	0.135
0.7	0	0.522	0.527	0.522	0.542
	3	0.421	0.429	0.421	0.453
100	0	1.325	1.287	1.319	1.297
	3	1.157	1.209	1.159	1.083

The correlation eq. (15) calculates the value of the Nusselt number with the relative error up to 7% occurring around the point $Ha^* = 10$, $Pr^* = 0.1$, and $n = 0.5$. A comparison of the values of Nusselt number for Newtonian fluids with the results of Samanta and Guha [28] is presented in tab. 1.

Conclusions

The present work studied the MHD natural-convection flow of power-law fluids over a horizontal plate with constant heat flux boundary condition. The flow was considered as steady, 2-D, laminar, and incompressible. The governing boundary-layer equations were transformed to a set of ODE using similarity transformation. The finite difference method was employed to solve the coupled ODE for various values of generalized Hartmann number, generalized Prandtl number, and the non-Newtonian power-law viscosity index. A general correlation has been developed for Nusselt number using the numerical results. The flow and heat transfer characteristics show different behaviors from that of the Newtonian fluids. In summary, the important findings of the presented work are listed as follows.

The maximum value of the dimensionless velocity component along the plate decreases with the increase of the generalized Hartmann number. Moreover, the location of maximum velocity approaches the leading edge with the increase of the generalized Hartmann number. Generally, increasing the Hartmann number increases the boundary-layer thickness but, opposite trend was seen when low Hartmann numbers are applied for the cases with thick boundary-layers at high Pr^* and low n values.

The maximum value of the velocity component along the plate decreases with the increase of the generalized Prandtl number. However, increasing the power-law viscosity index results in a larger and sharper peak velocity but a thinner boundary-layer thickness since the effective viscosity decreases in shear-thickening fluids and increases in the shear-thinning fluids by the decrease in the velocity gradient.

The wall skin friction coefficient decreases with the increase in Hartmann number especially at lower Pr^*. Increasing the Hartmann number increases the wall temperature and thermal boundary-layer thickness and decreases the Nusselt number.

Decreasing the generalized Prandtl number increase the dimensionless skin friction, wall temperature, and thermal boundary-layer thickness. Nevertheless, variations with the viscosity index depends on the value of the generalized Prandtl number in which decreasing the viscosity index at $Pr^* = 10$ increases the wall skin friction, temperature scale, and thermal boundary-layer thickness, while the contrary results are obtained for $Pr^* = 0.1$. The reverse trends are established for the variations of dimensionless Nusselt numbers with n.

Nomenclature

B − magnetic field [$= B_0 Gr_x^{*(n-2/12)}$], [T]

c_f − skin-friction coefficient, [−]

c_f^* − normalized skin-friction coefficient ($= Gr_x^{*(2-n/6)} c_{fx}$), [−]

F − dimensionless stream function, [−]

g   − gravitational acceleration, [ms^{-2}]

G − dimensionless temperature, [−]

Gr^* − generalized Grashof number ($= g\beta q_w x^{4/2-n}/k v_0^{2/2-n}$), [−]

H − dimensionless pressure, [−]

Ha^* − generalized Hartmann number ($= B_0 [g\beta q_w/k]^{-1/4} [\sigma/\rho]^{1/2}$), [−]

k − fluid thermal conductivity, [$Wm^{-1}K^{-1}$]

L − length scale, [m]

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n — non-Newtonian power-law index, [–]
Nu — Nusselt number ($= q_w x/[(kT_w(x) - T_\infty)]$), [–]
Nu^* — normalized Nusselt number ($= \mathrm{Gr}_x^{*(n-2/6)} \mathrm{Nu}_x$), [–]
p — static pressure, [Pa]
Pr^* — generalized Prandtl number ($= [\nu_0/\alpha]$ $[g\beta q_w/k]^{\,n-1/2})$, [–]
q_w — surface heat flux, [Wm^{-2}]
T — temperature, [K]
u, v — velocity components, [ms–1]
x, y — co-ordinates, [m]

Greek symbols

α — thermal diffusivity, [m^{2}s^{-1}]

β — thermal expansion coefficient, [K^{-1}]
η — dimensionless similarity variable, [–]
μ — dynamic viscosity, [Nsm^{-2}]
μ_0 — flow consistency index, [Nsnm^{-2}]
ν_0 — reference kinematic viscosity, [m^{2}sn^{-2}]
ρ — density of fluid, [kgm^{-3}]
σ — electrical conductivity, [A^{2}s^{3}kg^{-1}m^{-3}]
τ_w — wall shear stress, [Pa]
ψ — stream function, [m^{2}s^{-1}]

Subscripts

w — value related to the plate surface
x — local value
∞ — ambient condition

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