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**Research paper**

## Investigation of natural convection heat transfer of MHD hybrid nanofluid in a triangular enclosure

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**Abstract**

Natural convection heat transfer is studied numerically in a triangular enclosure. The enclosure is isosceles right triangle and its bottom wall is hot, the hypotenuse is cold and the other wall is adiabatic. Also, a vertical magnetic field is applied in the enclosure; and there is hybrid nanofluid inside the enclosure. This study is conducted for Rayleigh numbers of 103-105, the Hartmann numbers between 0-80, and the volume fraction of nanofluid is between 0-2 percent. Based on the obtained results, as the Hartmann number augments, the temperature of the center of the enclosure decreases due to weakening of the heat transfer flow by increasing the magnetic field forces. In addition, as the Hartmann number augments, the streamlines approach to the walls because the horizontal momentum forces decrease when the Hartmann number increases. Furthermore, by increasing the density of nanoparticles, the heat transfer rate increases, and as a result, heat transfer builds up. Finally, heat transfer improves when the hybrid-nanofluid is employed rather than ordinary nanofluid.

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### 1. Introduction

As far as conventional fluids have low thermal conductivity, they limited the heat transfer rate in industry. Therefore, for enhancing the heat transfer, using nanofluid, dilute suspensions of nanoparticles in liquids can be introduced as a practical approach. Quite a few studies have been conducted and devoted to extract empirical models for nanofluids and using these models in practical examples in nature and industry [1-10].

Aghaei et al. [2] considered a trapezoidal enclosure and by employing the the finite volume method they scrutinized the velocity field and temperature distribution in such enclosure. The working fluid was water accompanied by Cu nanoparticles which leads to considering the magnetic field in the enclosure. They found out that volume fraction of nanoparticles has a direct effects on increasing

the Nusselt number and entropy generation, whilst this behaviour is reversed for the Hartmann number; and as the Hartmann number augments, both of the aforementioned numbers would reduce. In another numerical simulation, Abbaszadeh et al. [1] employed KKL model for CuO-water nanofluid in order to consider the effects of the Brownian motions of nanoparticles. The algorithm they used was SIMPLER with the aim of Finite Volume Method in order to solve the set of Navier-Stokes equations (for obtaining the flow field) and energy equation (for measuring the temperature field). As far as their problem geometry was a parallel plate microchannel, they considered the slip boundary condition in their walls, and the magnetic field effects is reflected in their study by the Hartmann number. They demonstrated that by increasing the fluid inertia force, the nanoparticles density and magnetic field effect will cause an increment in total entropy generation and the average Nusselt number. In another study, Ababaei et al. [11] with the aim of finding the optimum location of the impediments for enhancing the heat transfer rate inside a microchannel employed the FVM numerical method. In their study, the working nanofluid was  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ -water whose characteristics have been obtained by Khanafer and Vafaei's model [12] which is a variable properties model. Again, they endorsed that increasing the momentum of the nanofluid results in the enhancement of the heat transfer inside the microchannel. Therefore, it would be beneficial if we keep the Reynolds number high enough to augment the Nusselt number. With the same reason, the total entropy generation will increase. Very recently, Hashim et al. [13] studied the heat transfer enhancement of  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ -water inside a wavy cavity using Finite Element numerical method. They did partial heating from the bottom wall whilst the side wavy walls were isothermal and the top wall was insulated. They used different types of oscillations for the wavy walls to find the optimum case in terms of increasing the Nusselt number. They showed that nanoparticles caused an increase in the heat transfer rate inside the cavity.

Even though adding nanoparticles to the base fluid can enhance the heat transfer rate in many

applications, the desire for improving the heat transfer leads to introducing a new type of nanofluid which is called "hybrid nanofluid" [14, 15]. Actually, the hybrid nanofluid is a composite of single nanoparticle and we want to show how this composition will affect the heat transfer rate in industry and nature. Suresh et al. [16] employed the hybrid nanofluid concept and used  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ -Cu/water hybrid nanofluid. Their working geometry was a circular tube, which is uniformly heated in a laminar flow regime. They showed that the heat transfer rate will increase by 13.56% in  $\text{Re}=1730$  when they applied hybrid nanofluid compared to pure water. In another numerical investigation, Moghadassi et al. [17] considered the forced convection heat transfer of  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ -Cu/water hybrid nanofluid to compare the heat transfer rate and examine if using hybrid nanofluid improves the heat transfer rate or not. For this purpose, they also calculated the average Nusselt number of pure water and  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ -water nanofluid. They demonstrated that the heat transfer rate of hybrid nanofluid is by far higher than other cases.

By a closer look at the literature, we can realize that little attention has been paid to using hybrid nanofluid in cavities and enclosures. Thus, in the current study, the natural convection of  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ -Cu/water hybrid nanofluid is examined in a right-angled enclosure. Moreover, there is a magnetic field in flow field and the effects of magnetic field is also investigated. The governing equations are solved using the Finite Volume (FV) method for the Rayleigh numbers of  $10^3$ ,  $10^4$ , and  $10^5$ , the Hartmann numbers of 0-40-80, and the volume fraction of nanoparticles of 0-2 percent.

## 2. Mathematical formulation

The geometrical configuration of the microchannel is depicted in Fig. 1. The vertical wall is insulated, the horizontal wall is hot, and the hypotenuse is cold. Also, there is an upward magnetic field in the enclosure and the enclosure is filled with  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ -Cu/water hybrid nanofluid. The nanofluid is considered to be Newtonian and incompressible. The effect of density variation is neglected except for the buoyancy term, where it is approximated by the well-known Boussinesq correlation. The viscous dissipation effect is

neglected as well. The working nanoparticles are Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> and Cu nanoparticles (see Table 1). The range of nanoparticles volume fraction (90% Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub> and 10% Cu by volume) is between 0% and 2%. The hybrid nanofluid density [18], heat capacity [19] and electrical conductivity [20], viscosity and thermal conductivity [14] are given by the following relations respectively:

$$\rho_{nf} = (1 - \phi)\rho_f + \phi\rho_s \tag{1}$$

$$\rho_{nf}c_{p,nf} = (1 - \phi)c_{p,f}\rho_f + \phi c_{p,s}\rho_s \tag{2}$$

$$\frac{\sigma_{nf}}{\sigma_f} = 1 + \frac{3\left(\frac{\sigma_p}{\sigma_f} - 1\right)\phi}{\left(\frac{\sigma_p}{\sigma_f} + 2\right) - \left(\frac{\sigma_p}{\sigma_f} - 1\right)\phi} \tag{3}$$

$$\frac{\mu_{nf}}{\mu_f} = -1283\phi^2 + 8431\phi + 0.9454 \tag{4}$$

$$\frac{k_{nf}}{k_f} = -151.5\phi^2 + 8.916\phi + 1.004 \tag{5}$$

It is worth mentioning that the Eqs. (4 and 5) are derived from an experimental model [14] which are correlated by Mollamahdi et al. [21].

The Navier-Stokes equations accompanied by energy equations for laminar and natural convection of the hybrid nanofluid flow are given by:

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial x}(u) + \frac{\partial}{\partial y}(v) = 0 \tag{6}$$

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial x}(uu) + \frac{\partial}{\partial y}(vu) = \frac{1}{\rho_{nf}} \left[ -\frac{\partial p}{\partial x} \right. \tag{7}$$

$$\left. + \frac{\partial}{\partial x} \left( \mu_{nf} \frac{\partial u}{\partial x} \right) + \frac{\partial}{\partial y} \left( \mu_{nf} \frac{\partial u}{\partial y} \right) + \sigma_{nf} B_0^2 u \right] \tag{8}$$

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial x}(uv) + \frac{\partial}{\partial y}(vv) = \frac{1}{\rho_{nf}} \left[ -\frac{\partial p}{\partial y} \right. \tag{9}$$

$$\left. + \frac{\partial}{\partial x} \left( \mu_{nf} \frac{\partial v}{\partial x} \right) + \frac{\partial}{\partial y} \left( \mu_{nf} \frac{\partial v}{\partial y} \right) + (\rho\beta)_{nf} g(T - T_c) \right]$$

$u$  and  $v$  are representative of velocity fields in this 2D environment in  $x$  and  $y$  directions

respectively. Dynamic viscosity is  $\mu$ , electrical conductivity is  $\sigma$ , fluid density is  $\rho$ ,  $c_p$  is heat capacity at constant pressure, and  $k$  is the thermal conductivity.

The dimensionless parameters for casting the mentioned equations into the non-dimensional form is as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} (X, Y) &= \frac{(x, y)}{L}, \quad (U, V) = (u, v) \frac{L}{\alpha_{bf}}, \\ P &= \frac{pL^2}{\rho_{nf}\alpha_{bf}^2}, \quad \theta = \frac{T - T_c}{\Delta T} \\ \text{Pr} &= \frac{\nu_{bf}}{\alpha_{bf}}; \quad \text{Ha} = B_0 L \sqrt{\frac{\sigma_{bf}}{\mu_{bf}}}; \\ \text{Ra} &= \frac{g\beta_{bf}\Delta TL^3}{\nu_{bf}\alpha_{bf}} \end{aligned} \tag{10}$$

where  $\Delta T = T_h - T_c$ . Hence, the representation of the non-dimensionalized equations are:

$$\frac{\partial U}{\partial X} + \frac{\partial V}{\partial Y} = 0 \tag{11}$$

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial X}(UU) + \frac{\partial}{\partial Y}(VU) = -\frac{\partial P}{\partial X} + \frac{\rho_{bf}}{\rho_{nf}\mu_{bf}} \text{Pr} \left[ \frac{\partial}{\partial X} \right. \tag{12}$$

$$\left. \left( \mu_{nf} \frac{\partial U}{\partial X} \right) + \frac{\partial}{\partial Y} \left( \mu_{nf} \frac{\partial U}{\partial Y} \right) \right] - \frac{\sigma_{nf}}{\sigma_{bf}} \frac{\rho_{bf}}{\rho_{nf}} \text{Ha}^2 \text{Pr} U \tag{13}$$

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial X}(UV) + \frac{\partial}{\partial Y}(VV) = -\frac{\partial P}{\partial Y} + \frac{\rho_{bf}}{\rho_{nf}\mu_{bf}} \text{Pr} \left[ \frac{\partial}{\partial X} \right. \tag{14}$$

$$\left. \left( \mu_{nf} \frac{\partial V}{\partial X} \right) + \frac{\partial}{\partial Y} \left( \mu_{nf} \frac{\partial V}{\partial Y} \right) \right] + \frac{(\rho\beta)_{nf}}{\rho_{nf}\beta_{bf}} \text{RaPr}\theta \tag{14}$$

$$\frac{\partial}{\partial X}(U\theta) + \frac{\partial}{\partial Y}(V\theta) = \frac{(\rho c_p)_{bf}}{k_{bf}(\rho c_p)_{nf}} \left[ \frac{\partial}{\partial X} \left( k_{nf} \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial X} \right) + \frac{\partial}{\partial Y} \left( k_{nf} \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial Y} \right) \right]$$

The local Nusselt number is obtained from the following relation:

$$\text{Nu} = - \left( \frac{k_{nf}}{k_{bf}} \right) \frac{\partial \theta}{\partial n} \Big|_{\text{hot walls}} \tag{15}$$

where  $n$  is the normal direction from the hot obstacle. Thus, the average Nusselt number can

be calculated by integrating from Eq. (15) along the hot surface:

$$Nu_{av} = \frac{\int_L Nu dL}{\int_L dL} \tag{16}$$

where  $L$  is the length of the hot surface.

### 3. Numerical implementation

The numerical method which has been used in this study is called SIMPLER algorithm and Finite Volume Method (FVM). In this method, initially, a fine grid should be defined over the problem domain and around each node, a volume should be considered. Then, after integrating and discretizing equations, the PDEs will be simplified. Then, with the help of line-by-line TDMA solver, the discretized equations are solved.

#### 3.1. Mesh independence test

If the results of a numerical simulation depends on the grids size, the accuracy of the results will be overshadowed. Thus, we run a grid independency test to ensure the accuracy of the results for natural-convection flow of  $Al_2O_3$ -Cu/water hybrid nanofluid in the right-angled triangle enclosure at  $Ha = 40$ ,  $Ra = 10^4$  and  $\phi = 0.02$ . The obtained average Nusselt number for different grids is presented in Table 2. As evidenced by this table, 5101 is an appropriate grid size which guarantees proper numerical modeling.

#### 3.2. Computer program verification

In order to ascertain the validity of the computer used in this study, some cases of Kaluri et al. [22] and Yesiloz and Aydin [23] studies are modeled with the current program and their results are evaluated in Fig. 2 and Table 3. In Fig. 2 the streamlines and isotherms are depicted; and in Table 3 the stream function difference is compared. As can be observed, an excellent conformance exists between our simulation and those of Kaluri et al. [22] and Yesiloz and Aydin [23], which certifies modeling results accuracy.

## 4. Results and discussion

Fluid field and heat transfer of MHD  $Al_2O_3$ -Cu/water hybrid nanofluid are investigated in a right-angled triangle. The effect of different parameters such as Rayleigh number, magnetic field intensity and nanoparticles density on average Nusselt number is evaluated. This study was conducted for the Rayleigh numbers of  $10^3$ ,  $10^4$ , and  $10^5$ , the Hartmann numbers of 0-40-80, and the volume fraction of nanoparticles of 0-2 percent.

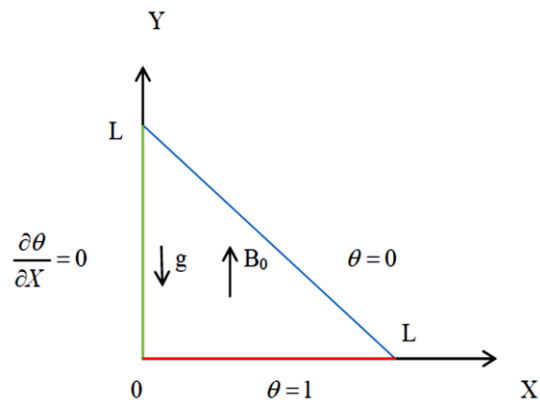


Fig. 1. Schematic of the problem.

Table 1. Thermo-physical properties of  $Al_2O_3$  and Cu nanoparticles; and water as a base fluid [1, 18].

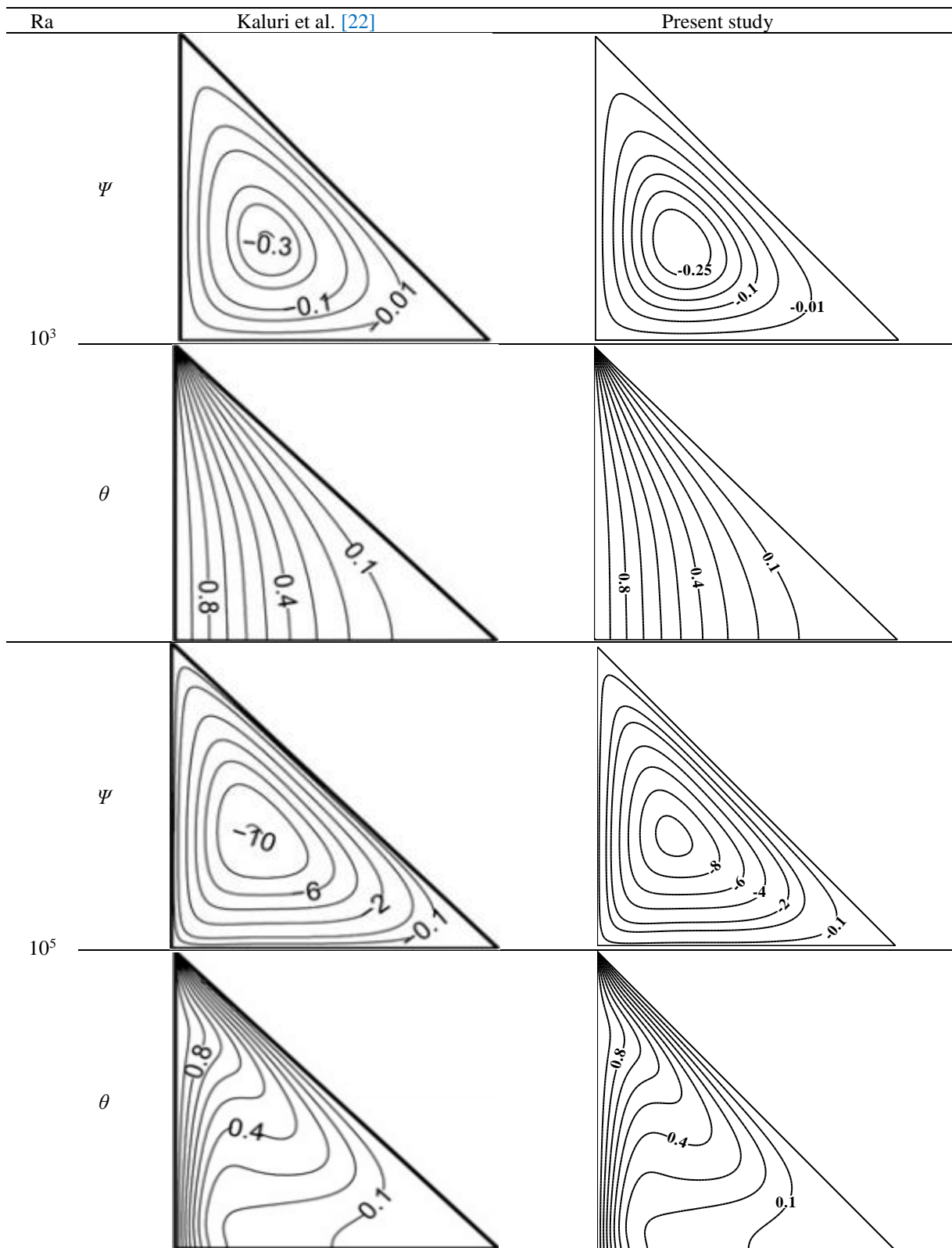
	$\rho$ (kg/m <sup>3</sup> )	$c_p$ (j/kg K)	$K$ (W/ m K)	$\sigma$ ( $\Omega.m$ ) <sup>-1</sup>	Pr
$Al_2O_3$	3970	765	25	$1 \times 10^{-10}$	-
Cu	3954	383	400	$5.96 \times 10^7$	-
Pure Water	997.1	4179	0.613	0.05	6.2

Table 2.  $Nu_{av}$  in different grid size at  $Ha = 40$  and  $Ra = 10^4$   $\phi = 0.02$ .

Number of control volume	$Nu_{av}$	Relative (%) error
1301	8.87	-
5101	9.01	1.58
11401	9.02	0.11

Table 3. Comparisons of stream function difference between present study and Yesiloz and Aydin [23].

Rayleigh number	$10^6$	$10^5$	$10^4$	$10^3$
Yesiloz and Aydin [23]	32.92	12.12	2.62	0.215
Present study	$\Delta\Psi$ 33.08	12.02	2.60	0.213
Relative (%) difference	0.48	0.82	0.76	0.93



**Fig. 2.** Comparisons of the streamlines and isotherms in the present study and Kaluri et al. [22] in different Rayleigh numbers.



#### 4.1. Streamlines and isotherms

The variations of the streamlines for  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ -Cu/water hybrid nanofluid and pure water in different Rayleigh and Hartmann numbers are displayed in Fig. 3. Generally, in Rayleigh numbers of  $10^3$  and  $10^4$  there is a clockwise vortex; however, in Rayleigh number of  $10^5$ , by increasing the buoyancy forces and their dominance over the viscosity forces, in some cases a counter clockwise vortex is formed. In this Rayleigh number and in  $\text{Ha}=40$ , there are two vortices for the base fluid and one vortex for hybrid nanofluid. The reason of this phenomenon is that by adding nanoparticles, the viscosity forces augment and they do not allow a second vortex to be created. Generally, as the Hartmann number augments, the streamlines approach to the walls since the horizontal momentum forces decrease when the Hartmann number increase.

Fig. 4 indicates the variations of the isotherms for  $\text{Al}_2\text{O}_3$ -Cu/water hybrid nanofluid and pure water in different Rayleigh and Hartmann numbers. In Rayleigh numbers of  $10^3$  and  $10^4$ , the isotherms are stratified since the conduction heat transfer regime is the dominant regime in the enclosure. Although it is definitely true that the Rayleigh numbers of  $10^3$  and  $10^4$  have one order difference, both of them are in the range of the conduction heat transfer regime physically. Thus, the obtained results for both of them are analogous. Furthermore, by increasing the Hartmann number, the difference between isotherms becomes lower and they coincide with each other more and more since the momentum reduces as the Hartmann number increases. Moreover, in  $\text{Ra}=10^4$  and  $\text{Ha}=0$  and also in  $\text{Ra}=10^5$  and  $\text{Ha}=0$  and 40 the stratified form of isotherms is disturbed for the pure water and these lines approach the cold wall. Hence, in these cases, the temperature gradients on the cold walls build up and as a result, the heat transfer augments. Another astonishing point is that although in  $\text{Ra}=10^5$  the buoyancy forces are strengthen and the convection regime is the dominant regime, in  $\text{Ha}=80$  there is a similar regime (conduction regime) like the aforementioned cases as far as the horizontal

momentum forces reduce by increasing the Hartmann number.

Variations of the dimensionless temperature in the horizontal section of the enclosure in different Hartmann numbers are displayed in Fig. 5. As can be seen in this figure, by increasing the Hartmann number, the temperature of the central section in the enclosure reduces since the flow weakens by increasing the Hartmann number.

Variations of the horizontal components of the dimensionless velocity in the vertical section of the enclosure in different Hartmann numbers are depicted in Fig. 6. In three Hartmann numbers a clockwise vortex is seen in the enclosure. Moreover, by increasing the Hartmann number, the momentum forces decrease.

Fig. 7 shows the variations of the vertical components of the dimensionless velocity in the horizontal section of the enclosure in different Hartmann numbers. Similar to Fig. 6, a clockwise vortex is observed in the enclosure that by increasing the Hartmann number the variation range of this vortex decreases.

The variation of the dimensionless temperature in the horizontal section of the enclosure in different volume fractions of nanoparticles is displayed in Fig. 8. Generally, as the  $\phi$  augments, the dimensionless temperature in the central section reduces.

Variation of the horizontal components of the dimensionless velocity in the vertical section of the enclosure in different volume fractions of nanoparticles is shown in Fig. 9. As can be seen in this figure, by increasing the volume fraction of nanoparticles, the range of the horizontal velocity decreases since the dynamic viscosity of the nanofluid compared to the base fluid augments that results in reducing the velocity gradient all over the enclosure.

Fig. 10 reveals the variation of the vertical components of the dimensionless velocity in the horizontal section of the enclosure in different volume fractions of nanoparticles. Like the foregoing figure, as the volume fraction of nanoparticles increases, the velocity gradient decreases all over the enclosure.

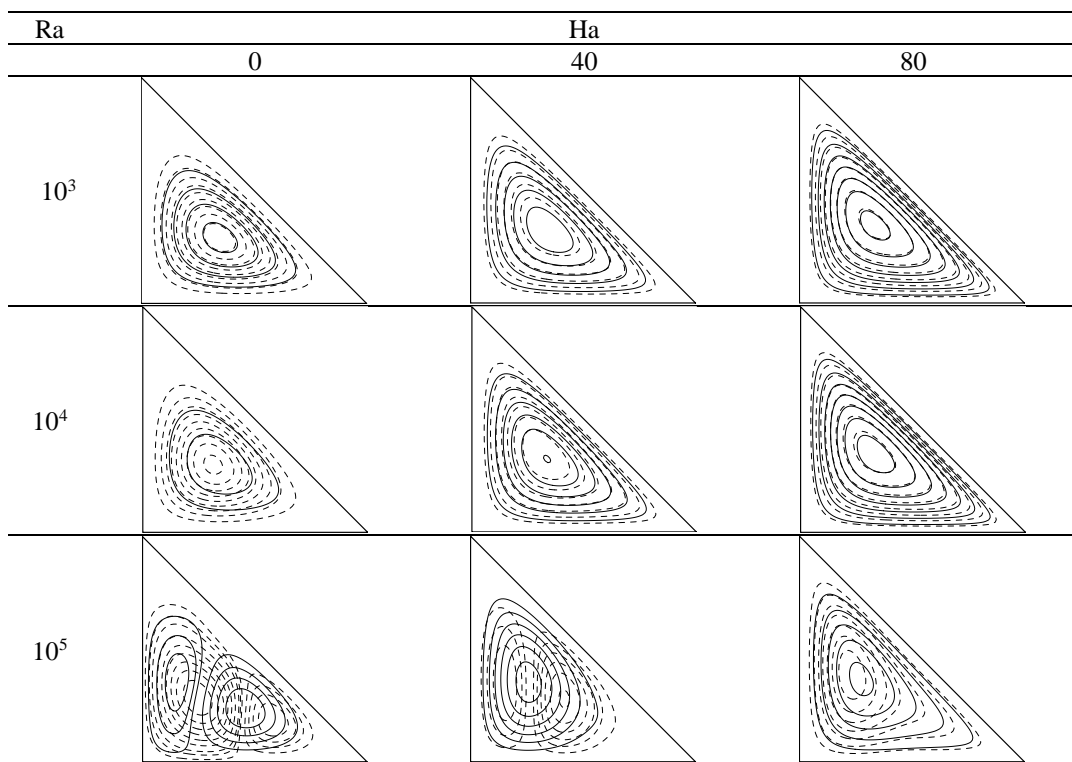


Fig. 3. Variations of the streamlines for Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>-Cu/water hybrid nanofluid (—) and pure water (- -).

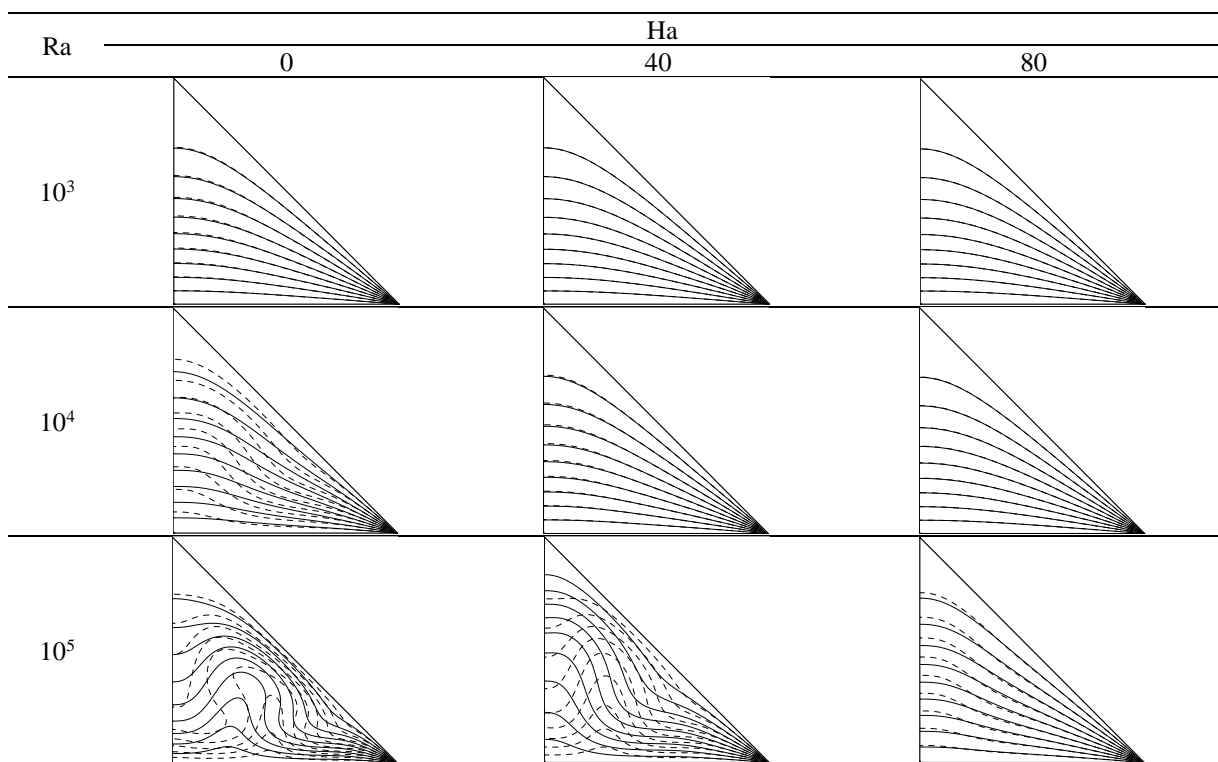
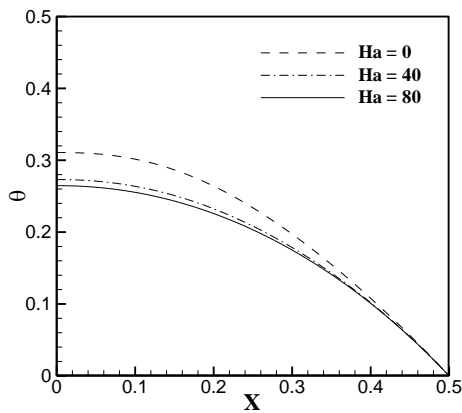
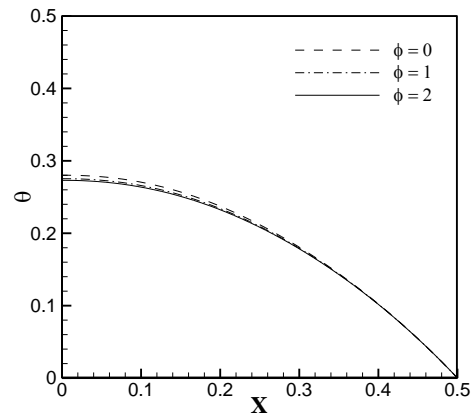


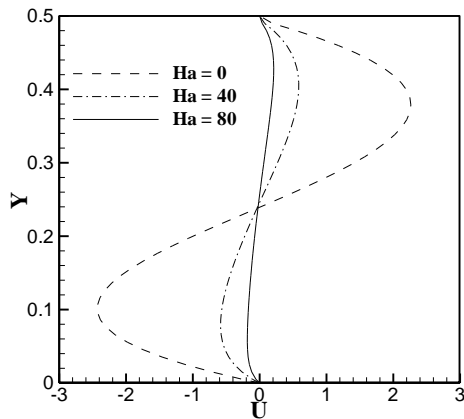
Fig. 4. Variations of the isotherms for pure water (- -) and Al<sub>2</sub>O<sub>3</sub>-Cu/water hybrid nanofluid (—).



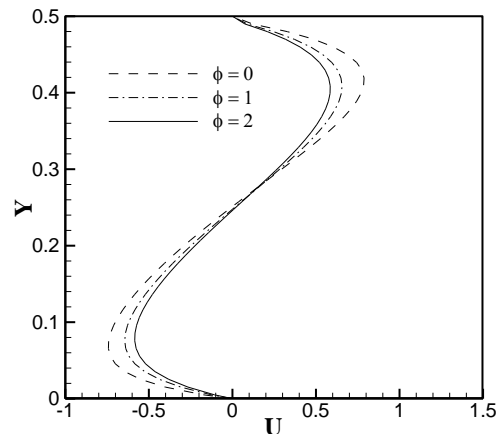
**Fig. 5.** Variations of the dimensionless temperature in the horizontal section of the enclosure in different  $Ha$  and in  $Ra=10^4$  and  $\phi = 0.02$ .



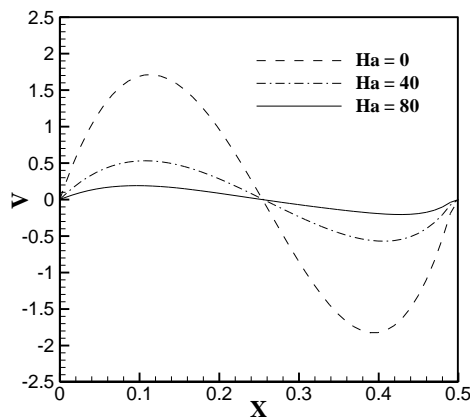
**Fig. 8.** Variation of the dimensionless temperature in the horizontal section of the enclosure in different  $\phi$  and in  $Ra=10^4$  and  $Ha=40$ .



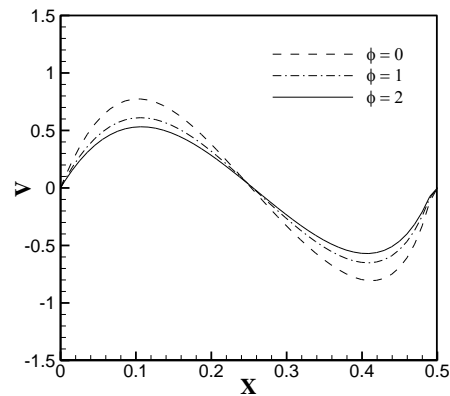
**Fig. 6.** Variations of the horizontal components of the dimensionless velocity in the vertical section of the enclosure in different  $Ha$  and in  $Ra=10^4$  and  $\phi = 0.02$ .



**Fig. 9.** Variation of the horizontal components of the dimensionless velocity in the vertical section of the enclosure in different  $\phi$  in  $Ra=10^4$  and  $Ha=40$ .



**Fig. 7.** Variations of the vertical components of the dimensionless velocity in the horizontal section of the enclosure in different  $Ha$  and in  $Ra=10^4$  and  $\phi = 0.02$ .



**Fig. 10.** Variation of the vertical components of the dimensionless velocity in the horizontal section of the enclosure in different  $\phi$  and in  $Ra=10^4$  and  $Ha=40$ .



4.2. Heat transfer rate

The variations of the  $Nu_{av}$  via  $\phi$  in different Ra is shown in Fig. 11. The results for the  $Ra=10^3$  and  $10^4$  are the same since the heat transfer regimes are the same, but in  $Ra=10^5$  in all the cases the  $Nu_{av}$  is more than other cases since the buoyancy forces become stronger and the convection heat transfer becomes dominant in the enclosure. Moreover, by increasing the  $\phi$  the heat transfer increases.

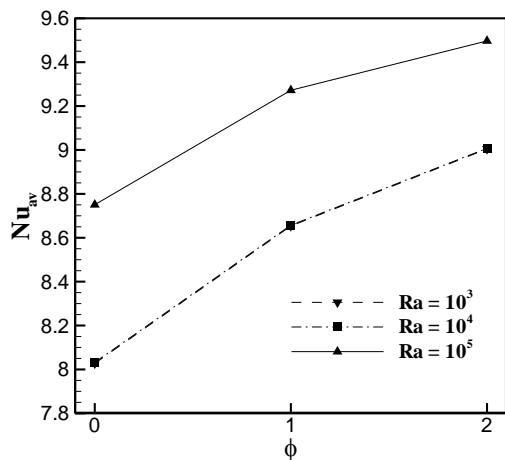


Fig. 11. Variations of the  $Nu_{av}$  via the  $\phi$  in different Ra and in  $Ha=40$ .

The comparisons of the  $Nu_{av}$  on the hot wall between hybrid nanofluid and ordinary water- $Al_2O_3$  nanofluid is indicated in Table 4. As it is obvious in this figure, the hybrid nanofluid has a better thermal characteristic in comparison to ordinary nanofluid. It is noteworthy that for modeling the ordinary nanofluid, the Brinkman [24] and Maxwell-Garnett [25] models have been employed to calculate the viscosity and thermal conductivity of the nanofluid.

Table 4. The comparisons of the  $Nu_{av}$  on the hot wall between hybrid nanofluid and ordinary water- $Al_2O_3$  nanofluid.

Increment (%)	nanofluid		( $\phi$ )
	$Al_2O_3$ -Cu/water	Water- $Al_2O_3$	
0	8.24	8.24	0
3.08	8.70	8.44	1
4.51	9.03	8.64	2

5. Conclusions

Finite Volume numerical method has been employed in the current study to simulate the effects of using  $Al_2O_3$ -Cu/water hybrid nanofluid in a right-angled triangle on improving heat transfer rate. This study was conducted for the Ra of  $10^3$ ,  $10^4$ , and  $10^5$ , the Ha of 0-40-80, and the  $\phi$  of 0-2 percent. The results show that:

- As the Hartmann number augments, the streamlines approach the walls since the horizontal momentum forces decrease when the Hartmann number increases.
- As the  $\phi$  augments, the dimensionless temperature in the central section reduces.
- In  $Ra=10^5$ , the  $Nu_{av}$  is more than other Rayleigh numbers since the buoyancy forces become stronger and the convection heat transfer becomes dominant in the enclosure.
- The hybrid nanofluid has a better thermal characteristic in comparison to ordinary nanofluid.

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