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Triplet Arrangement for Gas-on-Liquid Impinging Injectors

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Literature on gas-on-liquid impinging doublet injectors have shown that it is difficult to

get desired spray mass distribution for the required liquid to gas mass ratio. Gas penetration

and spray deflection were often found to be problems even at desired mass ratio which an

be avoided by reconfiguring the orifices. In the present study an attempt is made towards

understanding the effect of reconfiguring the orifices. Reconfiguring the orifices involves using

multiple gas orifices for a given liquid orifice. The possible arrangements could be a triplet,

quadlet or a pentad configuration. In the present study, triplet configuration comprising of

two equally inclined gas orifices impinging on central liquid jet is used with water and air as

simulants in place of actual fuel and oxidizer. As in the case of doublet arrangement normal

gas momentum to liquid mass (NMGL) was found suitable to express the spray characteristics.

The study delineates the operational range of gas pressures before bifurcation is encountered.

The Sauter Mean Diameter (SMD) of triplet spray was found to be comparable to doublet spray

at high mass ratios, though at low mass ratios SMD is small which may be due to gas penetration

problem

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2 Introduction

Impinging jet Configuration is an oft preferred injector geometry for rocket engines that use storable liquid bipropellants. Considering the relative advantages in terms of simplicity in design, quality control and low fabrication

cost, these injectors are also substitute coaxial injectors which are the mainstay for the current gas and liquid propellant

combinations as mentioned by [1]. But the present design principles and performance characteristics of unlike impinging

injectors have not been as well enunciated as for coaxial injectors. Compared to shear coaxial atomizer impinging jet

injectors are easy to manifold and simple to design. In addition they also provide reasonably good mixing. However, the

performance features and operational limitations have to be based on detailed studies, the literature on which is rather

scanty. It is also important that the basic mechanistic features of sprays from such injectors are understood before one

looks into their performance as engine components. The present experimental work aims to resolve some of these issues.

The basic geometric and operational parameters of impinging injectors are the diameter, length and inclination

of the orifices, inter-orifice distance which along with the inclination decides the pre-impingement development

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of the jets, the pressure drop across the orifices and the operating pressure and temperature conditions. While like-impinging configuration with identical conditions on the two jets provides symmetric impinging and the eventual

spray characteristics, the unlike impinging is a little more complex even for liquid-on-liquid jets. One can expect the

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of the orifice.

Most of the published work on impinging injectors deal with liquid-on-liquid type of atomizers, although a few

among them deal with unlike liquid media. Parametric studies on such atomizers as mentioned by [2] have given

insight on the extent of influence that different variables exert with respect to final spray features. The orifice diameter

determines the jet diameter and the mass flow rate of the liquid for a given pressure drop. The influence of orifice on

drop size is described in [3], smaller the jet diameter, smaller the mean drop size. The orifice length to diameter ratio

and the surface finish of the orifice have a role on the jet development. A progressive increase in the L/D tends to

increase the losses by friction and hence to reduce the jet velocity, which in turn will have an effect of increasing drop

size. It was found that (as mentioned in [4]) greater the impingement angle, greater the amount of propellant backflow.

In fact propellant backflow is proportional to the cosine of the impingement angle. The angular distribution and mixing uniformity also depend on the impingement angle as mentioned by [5]. The normal component of momentum of

liquid jet increases with an increase in impingement angle, which is expected to increase the quality of atomization.

As mentioned earlier, the inter-orifice distance and the impingement angle will together decide the preimpingement

length which when increased progressively is likely to introduce disturbance in the velocity profile of the liquid jet

with free boundary, due to interaction with the surrounding gaseous medium. Further, it has been also found that

is-impingement of jets cause rotation of jets and affect mixing uniformity and drop size as cited in [3].

The reports available on gas-on-liquid configuration are scanty. One such study by [6] has shown that the dominant

factors for gas-liquid impingement which influence drop size are the injected momentum ratio of jets, the dynamic

pressure of injected gas and orifice diameter ratio. This configuration does not seem to have attracted much interest

later although it appears to have certain application potential and also involves very interesting physics. The study of

gas-on-liquid doublet configuration has revealed that normal gas momentum to liquid mass as an apt parameter as

cited in [7] describing the spray condition. However gas-on-liquid impinging doublet failed to give the desired

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mass distribution for the mass ratios required for certain applications as mentioned in [Rakesh and Raghunandan,

2013a. Moreover the skewness of the spray towards the combustion chamber walls may cause hotspots damaging the

combustion chamber as cited in [8]. The present study therefore re-examines this configuration by splitting the total

gas mass flow rate into two equal parts impinging on the central liquid mass. The gas used is air and the liquid is water

in proportions which simulate the fuel and oxidizer components of the propellants in rockets. A limitation, however is

that the typical Reynolds number and Weber number of jets encountered in actual rocket engines are higher than the

ones configured in the laboratory conditions. **II. Experimental**

Setup

Figure 1 shows the experimental setup used for studying the Characteristics of gas-on-liquid impinging injectors. It

consists of a two stage reciprocating compressor with an intercooler and an automatic shut off facility and is driven by a

three phase 10 hp motor. The air from the compressor is stored in an air storage tank which is designed for air pressure

up to about 15 atm. From the air storage tank two air lines are taken, one of which is connected to a water storage tank

of about 40 l capacity and the other end to the control board for the impinging injectors. The air line is then connected

to the air injectors on the left side and right side of the injector plate through a valve and a pressure gauge. A water

tapping is taken from the bottom of the water storage and is connected to a filter on the control board. The line from the

water filter is then led to the central injector through a control valve and a pressure gauge.

Fig. 1 Schematic of Experimental Setup

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Figure 2 shows the details of the injector used for the study. It consists of an injector body which is modular in

design so that injectors of different diameters can be inserted with relative ease. The inlet of the injector element is

smoothly converged so as to minimize pressure loss. The arrangement permits variations in orifice sizes, inter-orifice

distance and the inclination of the jets. The orifice size used in the present work is 1 mm for all injectors and the pressure

drop up to 7 atm. Calibration runs have shown that typical orifice discharge coefficient was above the sharp edge value of

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Fig. 2 Schematic of Injector Assembly

A mechanical patternator has been extensively used in the present experiments for finding the spray mass distribution.

The main aspect considered in the design of this patternator was to allow maximum area for sample collection with

minimum blockage. The patternator was designed with 144 metallic tubes lumped together in a 12×12 array. This

provides a square of 144 mm side as the sample collection area. Each metal tube is fitted at the bottom with a wooden

plug through which a plastic tube is inserted in the metallic tube. The other end of the plastic tube goes to the test tube

where sample is collected for measurement. The test tubes are also arranged in a 12 × 12 matrix in a specially designed

tray. The test tubes used for sample collection are of 100 ml capacity that allows to keep collection time of around 15

to 20 s. The schematic of the patternator is shown in Figure 3. Typical spray collection efficiency for the mentioned

patternator is around 80%.

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Fig. 3 Schematic of Patternator used in the study

In addition to some of the direct measurements, photography has been extensively used in the diagnosis of spray

features. A Nikon D-300 SLR camera with strobe light is used to capture the images of the spray at different conditions.

The strobe light used is Strobodriver MSP-120 which is capable of providing pulsed light upto 30,000rpm. The

droplet

diameter and ¹ size distribution are measured using Malvern Mastersizer X particle analyzer which works on the principle

of diffraction of a laser beam in the presence of droplets in a spray. The instrument provides the line of sight averaged

² 0.61 but rarely above 0.9 . Under the operating conditions ⁴ the liquid side Reynolds number works out to be around 30

000 and the Weber number about 10 000 . These are lower than those encountered in rocket motors largely because of

the flow rate vis-a-vis ¹ orifice size limitations in the ² laboratory.

diffraction data. A large number of experiments are conducted to find out the governing parameters that dictates the

characteristics of the gas-on-liquid triplet spray.

III. Results and Discussion

Experiments have been done with triplet with liquid injection through the central injector and gas injection through

the side orifices to verify its suitability as a substitute for gas-on-liquid impinging doublets. Experiments have been done

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A. Visualization of Triplet spray

It has been found that the liquid jet gets flattened as the gas pressure drop ΔP_g is increased and after a particular

² pressure drop (for a constant liquid pressure drop ΔP_l), the liquid jet bifurcates into two. The divergence and bifurcation

of the triplet spray with increasing gas pressure drop is clearly evident from the photographs shown below in Figure 4.

If the gas pressure drop is increased after the liquid jet bifurcation, the gas jets meeting at the axis of the original

liquid jet expands more causing the bifurcated liquid jets to expand further.

The divergence of the triplet spray is expected to depend on the gas momentum, impingement angle and the central

liquid mass flow rate. The dependence of the triplet spray on these factors are studied independently as shown in

Figure 7. It may be inferred from the Figure 5b) that as the half impingement angle is increased the spray divergence

angle increases for fixed gas and liquid pressure drop in the spray triplet. It may also be observed in Figure 8b that for a

half impingement angle the initial increase of spray divergence angle is more with normal gas momentum and then it

asymptotically approaches a constant value. The dependence of spray divergence angle on central liquid mass flow rate

was studied by keeping the normal gas momentum constant and varying the liquid pressure. It is seen from Figure 5c as

the
liquid

pressure drop increases the spray divergence angle decreases, though at high liquid pressures the variation is small.

Since the spray divergence angle is dependent on the momentum, impingement angle and liquid pressure, efforts were

made to combine all these into a single parameter.

Inspired by the trends seen in Figure 6 and the information on doublet spray characteristics, the ratio of normal gas

momentum to liquid mass flow (NMGL) appears to be the logical unifying parameter. Although this parameter was

used for drop size only in the case of doublets, it is invoked for spray divergence angle here. Figure 6 conclusively

demonstrates this indeed work as a single control parameter dictating divergence angle of triplets

Fig. 4 Evolution of Gas Centered Triplet spray with constant ΔP_l and increasing

ΔP_g

B. Liquid Mass Distribution

The bifurcation of the triplet spray at high gas pressure drop compared to liquid pressure drop was reconfirmed from

the mass distribution study conducted using a mechanical patternator.

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The penetration of the triplet spray is defined as the state when the gas jets breaks the liquid jet into two halves and

expand like a gaseous fan. The penetrated gas jets come to a stagnation region increasing the total pressure. This high

pressure gas jet then expands against the low pressure surroundings, bifurcating the liquid spray. The images in Figure 8

show the bifurcated water jet.

C. Drop Size Measurements

The SMD of a triplet spray depends on many factors like gas pressure drop, liquid mass flow rate, impingement

angle etc. Efforts have also been made to describe the SMD of the spray in terms of a single parameter as earlier. The

global SMD at an axial station of 6 cm from the injector tip at various impingement conditions like impingement

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Normal gas momentum rate (kgm/s²) (a) Variation of Spray divergence angle with Normal gas momentum rate (kgm/s²) (b) Variation of Spray divergence angle with Half normal gas momentum rate (kgm/s²)

Normal gas momentum rate (kgm/s²) (a) Variation of Spray divergence angle with Normal gas momentum rate (kgm/s²) (b) Variation of Spray divergence angle with Half normal gas momentum rate (kgm/s²)

(c) Effect of central liquid mass flow rate on Spray divergence angle

Fig. 5 Variation of Spray divergence angle with different parameters

pressures and angles are plotted against the ratio of normal gas momentum to liquid mass flow rate. The plot shows a

very high value of correlation coefficient indicating once again that it is the appropriate parameter to describe the spray.

The effect of gas pressure on SMD at any particular radial location is shown in the Figure 10. This set of measurements are made at a further downstream location where the laser beam can provide resolution of radial distance .

It can be seen that the spray SMD increases when measured along the width due to the thinning of the inner region.

Moreover it may be observed from the above figure that as the NMGL increases, the SMD at any lateral position decreases.

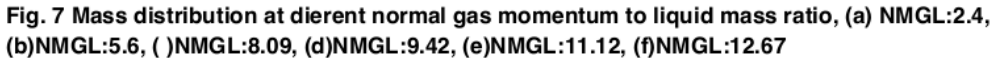
A comparative study of gas-on-liquid impinging injector for triplet and doublet configuration as cited in [[9]] has been performed to understand the effect of configuring the orifices on spray SMD. It has been observed that at high mass

ratios's the SMD are nearly comparable. At low mass ratios the SMD of triplet configuration drops down to very low

value. This may be due to the gas jet penetrating and bifurcating the liquid spray whereas there is no such penetration

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Fig. 6 Spray divergence angle with respect to normal gas momentum to liquid mass



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The motivation for the study was the fact that the triplet configuration was able to give more uniform distribution compared to doublet configuration for certain mass ratios. The bifurcation and separation of the jets dictate the limit for such configuration. Like the doublet gas-on-liquid impinging doublet jets, the normal gas momentum to liquid mass

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