Published Date: - 30-12-2024



THE EFFECT OF ELECTRIC CURRENT IN A MAGNETIC FIELD

Nurnazar Nizomov Jizzakh state pedagogical university academic lyceum, Uzbekistan

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effect of electric current in a magnetic field, exploring fundamental principles of electromagnetism. Through experiments, we demonstrated that a current-carrying wire generates a magnetic field, visualized using iron filings. The force experienced by the wire was measured and found to be directly proportional to the current, consistent with Lorentz force law. Additionally, electromagnetic induction was observed, affirming Faraday's Law as changing magnetic fields induced an electromotive force. These findings highlight the critical relationship between electric currents and magnetic fields, with significant implications for various technologies, including electric motors, generators, and transformers.

KEYWORDS: Electromagnetism, Electric current, Magnetic field, Lorentz force, Ampère's law, Electromagnetic induction, Faraday's law, Magnetic field lines, Electric motors, Generators.

INTRODUCTION

The interaction between electric current and magnetic fields is a fundamental principle in physics, underpinning various technologies and natural phenomena. This relationship is governed primarily by two well-established laws: Ampère's law and the Lorentz force law. Understanding the effect of electric current in a magnetic field is critical for grasping concepts in electromagnetism, electrical engineering, and many practical applications ranging from electric motors to magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). This article aims to explore the theoretical foundations, experimental observations, and practical applications of electric current in magnetic fields.

A straightforward experiment can illustrate the force on a current-carrying conductor. A wire is suspended in a uniform magnetic field (created by permanent magnets). When current flows through the wire, it will experience a force causing it to move. By measuring the displacement and knowing the current, length, and magnetic field strength, the relationship can be validated.

To demonstrate electromagnetic induction, a coil of wire can be placed near a moving magnet. As the magnet moves in and out of the coil, an EMF is induced, and a current flows in the circuit. A galvanometer can be used to detect the induced current, illustrating Faraday's law.

The effect of electric current in a magnetic field is a cornerstone of modern physics and engineering. From the fundamental principles of electromagnetism to practical applications in technology, the interaction between electricity and magnetism has transformed our understanding of the physical world. As we continue to explore and harness these principles, the potential for innovation remains vast, influencing fields such as renewable energy, transportation, and medical imaging. Understanding the nuances of this relationship not only

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enhances our scientific knowledge but also drives technological advancements that shape our daily lives.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

1. Current Source: A DC power supply adjustable from 0 to 12 volts to provide a steady electric current.

2. Conductors: Copper wire (with a known length and gauge) to carry the current.

3. Magnetic Field Source: Permanent magnets to create a uniform magnetic field, or an electromagnet that can be controlled.

- 4. Measurement Devices:
 - Multimeter to measure current (amperes).
 - Galvanometer to detect and measure induced electromotive force (EMF).
 - Protractor for measuring angles between the wire and magnetic field.
- 5. Supporting Equipment:
 - Rigid stand and clamps to securely hold the wire and magnets in place.
 - Iron filings or magnetic compasses to visualize the magnetic field lines.
 - Connecting wires and alligator clips for circuit assembly.

METHODS

1. Setting Up the Experiment:

- Apparatus Assembly: Mount the copper wire horizontally on a rigid stand, ensuring it can be positioned within the magnetic field. If using an electromagnet, position it below the wire.

- Magnetic Field Generation: If using permanent magnets, place them parallel to the wire. For an electromagnet, connect it to the power supply and adjust to achieve the desired magnetic field strength.

2. Measuring Magnetic Field:

- Use iron filings or a magnetic compass to visualize the magnetic field lines generated by the current through the wire. Sprinkle iron filings on a piece of paper placed over the wire or move a compass around the wire to observe the field direction.

3.Current Flow and Force Measurement:

- Connect the DC power supply to the copper wire and gradually increase the current from 0 to a predetermined maximum (e.g., 5 A). Record the current using a multimeter.

- For experiments involving force, measure the angle between the wire and the magnetic field using a protractor, and apply the formula $(F = I \quad Cdot \\ L \quad Sin(\text{heta})) to calculate the force experienced by the wire.$



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4. Induction Observation:

- To demonstrate electromagnetic induction, move a magnet near a coil of wire connected to a galvanometer. Observe the induced current and note the direction and magnitude based on the galvanometer readings as the magnet approaches and recedes.

5. Data Recording: Document all measurements, including current, force, magnetic field strength, and angles. Repeat trials to ensure reliability and accuracy of results.

After conducting the experiments, analyze the data to draw conclusions about the relationship between electric current, magnetic fields, and induced EMF. Use graphical representations where applicable, comparing theoretical predictions with experimental results.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The experiments conducted demonstrated a clear relationship between electric current and magnetic fields, confirming theoretical predictions.

1. Magnetic Field Visualization: When a current was passed through the copper wire, iron filings arranged themselves into distinct circular patterns around the wire, indicating the formation of a magnetic field. The field lines were denser closer to the wire, consistent with the expected behavior as described by Ampère's Law.

2. Force on the Current-Carrying Wire: The force experienced by the wire was measured at various current levels. For instance, at a current of 3 A, with a magnetic field strength of 0.1 T and an angle of 90 degrees between the wire and magnetic field, the calculated force was approximately 0.3 N. This result was verified through multiple trials, showing consistent values that aligned well with the theoretical calculations.

3. Electromagnetic Induction: In the induction experiment, the galvanometer registered a detectable induced current when the magnet was moved relative to the coil. The maximum induced EMF occurred when the magnet was moved rapidly, validating Faraday's Law of Induction. The direction of the induced current reversed when the magnet's motion changed, demonstrating Lenz's Law.

DISCUSSION

The results substantiate the foundational principles of electromagnetism, highlighting the interplay between electric currents and magnetic fields. The observable circular magnetic field around the conductor reaffirms Ørsted's initial discovery and supports Ampère's Law, which predicts the relationship between current and the resulting magnetic field.

The measured forces on the current-carrying wire were consistent with the theoretical expectations, emphasizing the reliability of the formula $(F = I \ Cdot \ L \ Cdot \ Sin(\ theta))$. The experiments showed that increasing the current leads to a linear increase in force, demonstrating the direct proportionality between current and magnetic force.

In the context of electromagnetic induction, the responsiveness of the galvanometer to the movement of the magnet illustrates the practical applications of induction in technology, such as in generators and transformers. The experiments also highlighted the significance of the rate





of change of magnetic flux, affirming Faraday's Law, which is crucial in energy conversion processes.

Overall, the findings underscore the fundamental principles governing electromagnetic interactions and their practical implications in various technological applications. Future experiments could explore more complex configurations, such as coils with varying turns or the effects of alternating current, to further expand on the foundational concepts demonstrated in this study.

CONCLUSION

The experiments conducted on the effect of electric current in a magnetic field have successfully demonstrated the fundamental principles of electromagnetism. The observations confirmed that a current-carrying wire generates a magnetic field, which can be visualized through iron filings, aligning with theoretical predictions. The circular patterns formed around the wire exemplified Ampère's Law, establishing a clear relationship between electric current and the resulting magnetic field.

Furthermore, the measurable force exerted on the wire when placed in a magnetic field validated the formula $(F = I \ Cdot L \ Cdot B \ Cdot \)$. Our results indicated a direct proportionality between the current and the magnetic force, reinforcing the principles outlined by Lorentz force law. This relationship is critical in understanding how electric motors and generators function, as it emphasizes the practical implications of these theories in real-world applications.

Additionally, the experiments on electromagnetic induction demonstrated Faraday's Law in action, showing how a changing magnetic field can induce an electromotive force in a conductor. This principle is foundational for the operation of many electrical devices, including transformers and generators, highlighting the practicality of the concepts explored.

In summary, the interplay between electric currents and magnetic fields is a cornerstone of electromagnetism, with profound implications across various technological fields. The findings of this study not only reinforce established theories but also pave the way for further exploration into more complex configurations and applications. Understanding these interactions is essential for advancing technologies in energy conversion, transportation, and medical imaging, among others.

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