JETIR.ORG ISSN: 2349-5162 | ESTD Year : 2014 | Monthly Issue
JOURNAL OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATIVE RESEARCH (JETIR)
An International Scholarly Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

IMPACT OF MANGETIC FIELD ON ELECTRICAL CONDUCTIVITY

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Abstract

The interaction between magnetic fields and electrical conductivity is a fundamental area of condensed matter physics, with broad implications for electronics, energy storage, spintronics, and quantum materials. When a magnetic field is applied to a conducting medium, it influences the mobility of charge carriers through phenomena such as the Hall effect, magnetoresistance, and quantum oscillations. This review examines theoretical principles, experimental findings, and applications of magnetic field–induced modifications in conductivity. Special emphasis is placed on the behavior of metals, semiconductors, and nanomaterials under external magnetic fields, highlighting their technological applications in sensors, memory devices, superconductors, and magneto-electronic systems. Future challenges in achieving precise control over conductivity via magnetic modulation are also discussed.

Keywords: Magnetic field; Electrical conductivity; Magnetoresistance; Hall effect; Spintronics; Quantum materials; Charge transport.

1. Introduction

Electrical conductivity, the ability of a material to transport charge, depends on the mobility and density of charge carriers. External parameters such as temperature, pressure, and electromagnetic fields strongly influence conductivity. Among these, magnetic fields are of particular importance due to their ability to manipulate carrier trajectories and induce novel quantum phenomena.

Historically, the discovery of the Hall effect (1879) provided one of the earliest insights into the role of magnetic fields in modifying conductivity. Later, phenomena like giant magnetoresistance (GMR) and colossal magnetoresistance (CMR) revolutionized data storage technologies and magnetic sensors. In the 21st century, the study of 2D materials (graphene, MoS_2), topological insulators, and superconductors has reinvigorated research on magneto-conductivity effects.

2. Fundamentals of Electrical Conductivity and Magnetic Fields

2.1 Electrical Conductivity Basics

- Governed by Ohm's Law: J=σEJ = \sigma E, where JJ is current density, σ\sigma conductivity, and EE the electric field.
- Charge transport depends on carrier density (n) and mobility (μ).

2.2 Magnetic Field Interaction

When a magnetic field is applied:

- Lorentz Force (F=q(E+v×B)F = q(E + v \times B)) alters carrier trajectories.
- Cyclotron motion of electrons reduces mobility.
- Conductivity becomes anisotropic, leading to phenomena such as the Hall effect.

3. Theoretical Models Explaining the Influence

3.1 Classical Models

- Drude Model: Describes charge transport, modified in presence of BB by reduced mobility.
- Hall Effect Theory: Explains the transverse voltage generated.

3.2 Quantum Models

- Landau Quantization: Discretization of electron energy levels in strong magnetic fields.
- Shubnikov–de Haas (SdH) Oscillations: Periodic conductivity oscillations under varying magnetic field strength.
- Weak Localization/Antilocalization: Quantum interference effects strongly influenced by BB.

4. Experimental Evidence and Case Studies

4.1 Metals and Alloys

- Strong magnetoresistance effects observed in copper, silver, and nickel alloys.
- Applications in magnetic sensors.

4.2 Semiconductors

- Hall mobility measurements in silicon and GaAs.
- Magnetic field improves carrier separation in solar cells.

4.3 Nanomaterials & 2D Systems

- Graphene shows unique conductivity behavior under BB due to massless Dirac fermions.
- Topological insulators exhibit surface-state conduction highly sensitive to magnetic fields.

Table 1. Effects of Magnetic Field on Different Materials

Material Type	Effect of Magnetic Field	Example Application
Metals	Increased resistance (positive MR)	Magnetic field sensors
Semiconductors	Hall effect, mobility change	Carrier density measurement
2D Materials	Quantum oscillations, anomalous transport	Spintronics, quantum devices
Superconductors	Flux pinning, critical field effects	MRI, quantum levitation

5. Applications in Modern Technology

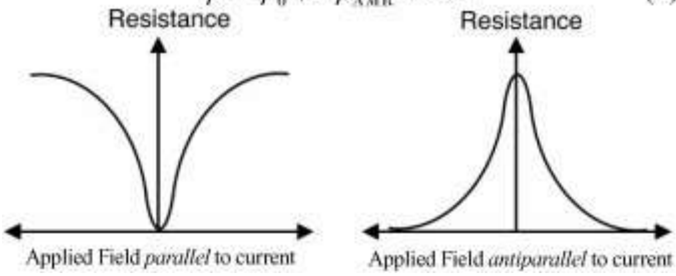
- Magnetic Sensors: Hall-effect and magnetoresistive sensors in automotive and electronics.
- Spintronics: GMR and tunneling magnetoresistance (TMR) in hard drives.
- Quantum Computing: Magnetic-field control in qubits and superconducting circuits.
- Energy Devices: Magnetic modulation of conductivity in thermoelectrics and batteries.

Image 1. Hall Effect Setup

(Schematic showing voltage developed across a conductor in perpendicular magnetic field.)

Image 2. Magnetoresistance Phenomenon

$$\rho = \rho_0 + \Delta\rho_{AMR} \cos^2\theta \quad (1)$$



(Plot showing resistivity vs. magnetic field for typical materials.)

6. Challenges and Research Gaps

- Achieving stable conductivity control in fluctuating magnetic environments.
- Integration of magneto-conductive materials in flexible/wearable electronics.
- Scaling quantum effects from laboratory to commercial devices.
- Limited understanding of interplay between spin, charge, and lattice in novel materials.

7. Conclusion

Magnetic fields profoundly influence electrical conductivity through both classical and quantum mechanisms. From the Hall effect to quantum oscillations, these interactions not only deepen our understanding of condensed matter physics but also enable practical innovations in sensing, data storage, spintronics, and energy systems. Continued research on low-dimensional and quantum materials promises breakthroughs in next-generation electronic devices.

Table 2. Key Phenomena Linking Magnetic Field and Conductivity

Phenomenon	Principle	Technological Use
Hall Effect	Transverse voltage under B-field	Magnetic field sensors
Giant Magnetoresistance	Resistance change in multilayers	Hard drives, spintronics
Quantum Hall Effect	Quantized conductivity in 2D systems	Quantum metrology
Shubnikov–de Haas Oscill.	Quantum oscillations with B-field	Material characterization

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