

**A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF NATURAL GAS AND
BIOGAS COMBUSTION IN A SWIRLING FLOW GAS
TURBINE COMBUSTOR**

BY

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ABSTRACT

In this study, the non-premixed combustion of a traditional fuel- natural gas, and an alternative fuel- biogas, in a swirl-stabilized gas turbine combustor are simulated. The combustion results are analyzed and compared to evaluate the viability of the alternative fuel, biogas, for use in industrial gas turbine combustors. A comprehensive and exhaustive literature review on topics relating the current work is carried out. Two benchmark experimental cases of swirl-stabilized non-reacting and reacting flows are simulated in 3D and validated against the experiments to select the proper numerical, physical and combustion modeling of such complex flows. A swirling gas turbine combustor is designed to carry out non-premixed combustion of the fuels, using a well-known and recognized combustor design methodology and empirical equations. Investigating the existing literatures, the suitable compositions and stoichiometric air-fuel ratio of the gases are determined. Unlike the combustion works in existing literature, the outer annulus region (between the liner and casing) is considered in the computational domain to obtain more realistic results on the flow physics and chemical reactions during combustion. As the swirling flow is 3D in nature, a full 3D grid is generated to address complex flow physics and turbulent-chemistry interactions. Afterward, the combustion of both gases is numerically simulated, and the combustion performance is evaluated based on the design objectives: combustion efficiency, pollutant CO and NO_x emission, Merit Function, and temperature uniformity of the exhaust gases at the combustor exit (Pattern Factor). The effects of two design parameters, namely: swirl number and fuel injector radius, in achieving best performance in design objectives are examined. It was found that, typically, a combination of higher fuel injector radius (or lower fuel velocity) and higher swirl number (2.0 in current study) produces best performance in achieving the design objectives. The swirling flow should be dominant over the incoming fuel flow to facilitate better and finer mixing of air and fuel, which typically contributes to a better combustion efficiency, pattern factor, and low pollutant emission. It is important to point out that, the empirical swirl number (0.9), achieved through an empirical formulation, does not provide the best performance in any of the design objective for both gases. Lastly, the comparison of the combustion performances of both gases revealed that, despite possessing much lower methane and hence lower heating value (LHV), biogas of a specific composition demonstrates an equal combustion performance to natural gas, although at the expense of higher pollutant emission. Therefore, biogas can potentially be utilized as an alternative fuel in industrial gas turbine combustors and methods for reducing pollutant emission can be devised.

خلاصة البحث

في هذه الدراسة، تمت محاكاة الاحتراق غير الممزوج مسبقاً لوقود الغاز الطبيعي التقليدي، وللغاز الحيوي البديل ، في احتراق التوربينات الغازية المستقرة. تم تحليل نتائج الاحتراق ومقارنتها لتقييم جدوى وقود الغاز الحيوي البديل ، لاستخدامه في احتراق التوربينات الغازية الصناعية. تمت إجراء مراجعة كاملة وشاملة لكل الدراسات السابقة حول الموضوعات المتعلقة بالعمل الحالي. يتم محاكاة حالتين تجريبيتين معياريتين للتدفقات غير المتفاعلة والمتفاعلة المستقرة على شكل دوامة في صورة ثلاثية الأبعاد والتحقق من صحتها مقابل التجارب لتحديد النمذجة العددية والفيزيائية والاحتراق المناسبة لمثل هذه التدفقات المعقدة. تم تصميم جهاز احتراق التوربينات الغازية الدوامة لإجراء احتراق غير مخلوط مسبقاً للوقود ، باستخدام منهجية تصميم غرفة الاحتراق والمعادلات التجريبية المعروفة والمعترف بها. بالتحقيق في الدراسات السابقة الموجودة ، فإن التركيبات المناسبة ونسبة الهواء إلى الوقود المتكافئ للغازات تم تحديدها. على عكس أعمال الاحتراق الموجودة في الدراسات السابقة ، يتم اعتبار منطقة الحلقة الخارجية (بين البطانة والغلاف) في المجال الحسابي للحصول على نتائج أكثر واقعية في فيزياء التدفق والتفاعلات الكيميائية أثناء الاحتراق. نظرًا لأن التدفق الدوامي ثلاثي الأبعاد بطبيعته ، يتم إنشاء شبكة ثلاثية الأبعاد كاملة لمعالجة فيزياء التدفق المعقدة والتفاعلات الكيميائية المضطربة. بعد ذلك ، يتم محاكاة احتراق كلا الغازين عددًا ، ويتم تقييم أداء الاحتراق بناءً على أهداف التصميم: كفاءة الاحتراق ، وانبعاثات ثاني أكسيد الكربون وأكاسيد النيتروجين ، ووظيفة الاستحقاق ، وتوحيد درجة حرارة غازات العادم عند مخرج الاحتراق (عامل النمط). يتم فحص تأثير اثنين من معاملات التصميم ، وهما: رقم الدوران ونصف قطر حاقن الوقود ، في تحقيق أفضل أداء في أهداف التصميم. وقد وجد أنه ، بشكل نموذجي ، مزيج من نصف قطر حاقن الوقود الأعلى (أو سرعة وقود أقل) ورقم دوامة أعلى (2.0) في الدراسة الحالية) ينتج أفضل أداء في تحقيق أهداف التصميم. يجب أن يكون التدفق الدوامي هو المسيطر على تدفق الوقود الوارد لتسهيل الخلط الأفضل والأكثر دقة بين الهواء والوقود ، والذي يساهم عادةً في كفاءة احتراق أفضل ، وعامل نمط أفضل ، وانبعاثات منخفضة للملوثات. من المهم الإشارة إلى أن رقم الدوامة التجريبية (0.9) ، الذي تم تحقيقه من خلال صياغة تجريبية، لا يوفر أفضل أداء في أي من أهداف التصميم لكلا الغازين. أخيرًا ، كشفت المقارنة بين أداء الاحتراق لكلا الغازين أنه على الرغم من احتوائه على كمية أقل بكثير من الميثان وبالتالي قيمة تسخين أقل (LHV)، فإن الغاز الحيوي لتركيبته معينة يوضح أداء احتراق متساوٍ للغاز الطبيعي ، على الرغم من احتوائه على انبعاثات ملوثة أعلى.

لذلك ، يمكن استخدام الغاز الحيوي كوقود بديل في محارق التوربينات الغازية الصناعية ويمكن إبتكار طرق لتقليل انبعاث الملوثات.



APPROVAL PAGE

I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion; it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Science (Mechanical Engineering).

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DECLARATION

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To Sümeyye

For her empathy, love, and her faith. Because she always understood.

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All praise is due to Allah. We praise Him, seek His help, ask His forgiveness, and we repent unto Him. We seek refuge in Allah from the evils of ourselves and our bad actions. Whomever Allah guides none can lead astray, and whomever He leads astray has no one to guide him.

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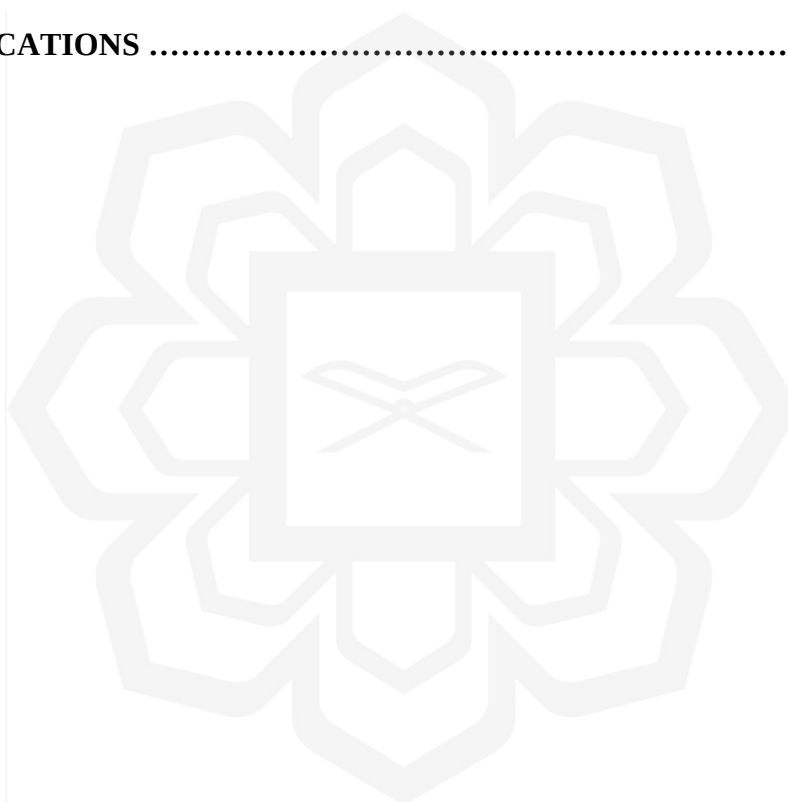
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	ii
Abstract in Arabic	iii
Approval Page	v
Declaration	vi
Copyright	vii
Dedication	viii
Acknowledgements	ix
List of Tables	xiii
List of Figures	xv
List of Symbols	xxiii
List of Abbreviations	xxvi
 CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Motivation	1
1.2 Problem Statement and significance	2
1.3 Research Objectives	3
1.4 Research Methodology	4
1.5 Research Scope	5
1.6 Thesis organization	5
 CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	7
2.1 Introduction	7
2.2 A review of swirl-stabilized non-reacting and reacting flows	8
2.2.1 The Sydney-swirl project	8
2.2.2 Swirl-stabilized non-reacting flows	10
2.2.3 Swirl-stabilized reacting flows	13
2.2.4 Observations	14
2.3 Swirl-stabilized gas turbine combustor development	15
2.4 Gas turbine combustor design	18
2.5 Natural gas and Biogas combustions in swirl-stabilized gas turbine combustors	25
2.6 Summary	28
 CHAPTER THREE: VALIDATION OF SWIRL-STABILIZED NON-REACTING AND REACTING FLOWS	30
3.1 Introduction	30
3.2 Physical domain and boundary conditions	30
3.2.1 Swirling flow and the Swirl Number	31
3.3 Grid generation	32
3.3.1 Mesh Quality	34
3.4 A study of 3D RANS models for non-reacting flow.....	35
3.4.1 Governing equations	35
3.4.2 Numerical method	36
3.4.3 Results and discussions	36
3.4.3.1 Summary of results	49

3.4.4	Concluding remarks for the 3D RANS investigation of non-reacting flow	52
3.5	LES study for non-reacting flow	53
3.5.1	Computational domain and grid generation	53
3.5.2	Governing equations	54
3.5.3	Numerical method	54
3.5.4	Comparison of LES and 3D RANS results	55
3.6	A study of 3D RANS models and LES for reacting flow	58
3.6.1	Governing equations	58
3.6.2	Numerical method	59
3.6.3	Results and discussions	60
3.6.3.1	Evaluation of different reaction-mechanisms	60
3.6.3.2	Grid independence test	64
3.6.3.3	Comparison of LES and 3D RANS results	66
3.7	Summary	68
CHAPTER FOUR: DESIGNING A GAS TURBINE COMBUSTOR		69
4.1	Introduction	69
4.2	Basic combustor configuration.....	70
4.3	Preliminary design methodology	71
4.3.1	Combustor type and design specifications	72
4.3.2	Initial design parameters	74
4.4	Design calculations	74
4.4.1	Reference dimensions	74
4.4.2	Air-flow distribution	77
4.4.3	Diffuser and snout dimensions	81
4.4.4	Swirler dimensions	82
4.4.5	Recirculation zone dimensions	83
4.4.6	Wall film cooling	84
4.4.7	Air admission holes dimensions	85
4.4.8	Calculation summary	87
4.5	Combustor geometry	88
4.5.1	Grid generation	90
4.6	Considerations for natural and biogas combustion in the designed combustor	92
4.6.1	Composition of gases	92
4.6.2	Stoichiometric air-fuel ratio of biogas	94
4.7	Summary	96
CHAPTER FIVE: A STUDY OF NATURAL GAS AND BIOGAS COMBUSTION		97
5.1	Introduction	97
5.2	Combustion performance parameters	97
5.2.1	Swirl number	97
5.2.2	Fuel injector diameter	98
5.2.3	Combustion efficiency	99
5.2.4	Pollutant emission and the Merit Function	100
5.2.5	Pattern factor	102
5.3	Numerical method	103

5.4 Grid independence test	103
5.5 Combustion analyses	105
5.5.1 Natural gas combustion	105
5.5.2 Biogas combustion	128
5.5.3 Key findings in natural gas and biogas combustion	141
5.5.4 Comparative analysis of natural gas and biogas combustion	143
5.6 Summary	147
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH	148
6.1 Conclusions	148
6.2 Suggestions for future research	149
REFERENCES	150
PUBLICATIONS	164



LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1	Physical parameters of the non-reacting and reacting flow cases.	31
Table 3.2	Configurations of different meshes	32
Table 3.3	Mesh Quality of different meshes. ‘SD’ denotes Standard Deviation.	34
Table 3.4	Physical parameters of the isothermal and reacting flow cases	35
Table 3.5	Upwind schemes for spatial discretization for the standard $k - \epsilon$ model used in current study.	36
Table 3.6	Scaled residuals for various meshes after 7700 iterations.	39
Table 3.7	Upwind schemes for spatial discretization for the Transition-SST model.	48
Table 3.8	Summary of simulations.	50
Table 3.9	Upstream and downstream extent of the VB bubble reported in different studies along with findings in current work. ‘NM’ denotes ‘not mentioned’.	52
Table 4.1	Initial design parameters for combustor design.	74
Table 4.2	Typical pressure loss values in combustion chambers (Melconian & Modak, 1985).	74
Table 4.3	L_{DZ}/D_L as a function of PF for different values of $\Delta P_{3-4}/q_{ref}$ (Melconian & Modak, 1985)	76
Table 4.4	Air-flow distribution in various combustion zones and cooling slots.	80
Table 4.5	Configuration of the air admission holes in different zones.	87
Table 4.6	Summary of combustor design calculations.	88
Table 4.7	Compositions of Natural gas and Biogas used in current study.	94
Table 4.8	Parameters of natural gas and biogas combustion in the designed combustor.	95
Table 5.1	Fuel injectors used as design parameter in current investigation.	98

Table 5.2	Specifications of the empirical case for natural gas combustion.	99
Table 5.3	The best and worst cases for different design objectives with increment or decrement from the empirical case (in percentage). The empirical case ($S_g = 0.9$) is shown in <i>Italic</i> , while best values are bold, and worst values are shaded.	117
Table 5.4	The best and worst cases for different design objectives with increment or decrement from the empirical case (in percentage). The empirical case (INJ-765 with $S_g = 0.9$) is shown in <i>Italic</i> , while best values are bold, and worst values are shaded.	124
Table 5.5	Specifications of biogas combustion.	129
Table 5.6	The best and worst cases for different design objectives with increment or decrement from the biogas's empirical case (in percentage). The empirical case (INJ-765 with $S_g = 0.9$) is shown in <i>Italic</i> , while best values are bold, and worst values are shaded.	140



LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1	Overview of Research Methodology Flow-chart	6
Figure 2.1	The Sydney swirl burner.	9
Figure 3.1	Physical domain of the Sydney swirl-stabilized burner. Left: isometric view. Right: Side view (YZ-plane). All measurements are in millimeter.	30
Figure 3.2	Structures of different meshes at the centerline YZ-plane with zones indicated in red.	33
Figure 3.3	Streamlines at selected locations (indicated by 3D pink-colored spheres) along with contour of axial velocity (m/s) at the centerline YZ-plane for different types of mesh.	37
Figure 3.4	Iso-surfaces of the recirculation zones (drawn at stagnation: 0 m/s) along with contour of axial velocity (m/s) at the centerline YZ-plane for different types of mesh.	38
Figure 3.5	Axial velocity versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using four different resolutions of the 10-zone hexahedron mesh: H10 (3.45M), H102 (1.5M), H103 (1.0M), H104 (0.7M).	40
Figure 3.6	Tangential velocity versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using four different resolutions of the 10-zone hexahedron mesh: H10 (3.45M), H102 (1.5M), H103 (1.0M), H104 (0.7M).	41
Figure 3.7	Streamlines of recirculation zones along with contour of axial velocity (m/s) component at the centerline YZ-plane for different resolutions of the 10-zone hexahedron mesh.	42
Figure 3.8	Axial velocity versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation by different discretization schemes using the H103 mesh.	43
Figure 3.9	Tangential velocity versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation by different discretization schemes using the H103 mesh.	44

Figure 3.10	Streamlines of recirculation zones along with contour of axial velocity (m/s) component at the centerline YZ-plane for different discretization schemes using the H103 mesh.	45
Figure 3.11	Streamlines of recirculation zones along with contour of axial velocity (m/s) component at the centerline YZ-plane for different turbulence models using the H103 mesh.	46
Figure 3.12	Streamlines of recirculation zones along with contour of axial velocity (m/s) component at the centerline YZ-plane for different mesh resolutions of multi-zone (10-zone) hexahedron mesh using the standard $k - \epsilon$ and Transition-SST model.	47
Figure 3.13	Streamlines of recirculation zones along with contour of axial velocity (m/s) component at the centerline YZ-plane for different discretization schemes for the Transition-SST model using the H103 mesh.	49
Figure 3.14	Streamlines of recirculation zones along with contour of axial velocity (m/s) component at the centerline YZ-plane for standard $k - \epsilon$ model and LES.	55
Figure 3.15	Axial velocity versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using LES and standard $k - \epsilon$ model.	56
Figure 3.16	Tangential velocity versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using LES and standard $k - \epsilon$ model.	57
Figure 3.17	Axial velocity versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using GRI 3.0 and GRI 2.11 reaction-mechanisms using the H103 mesh.	61
Figure 3.18	Tangential velocity versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using GRI 3.0 and GRI 2.11 reaction-mechanisms using the H103 mesh.	61
Figure 3.19	Temperature versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using GRI 3.0 and GRI 2.11 reaction-mechanisms using the H103 mesh.	62
Figure 3.20	Mean mixture fraction versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between	62

	experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using GRI 3.0 and GRI 2.11 reaction-mechanisms using the H103 mesh.	
Figure 3.21	CO ₂ mass fraction versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using GRI 3.0 and GRI 2.11 reaction-mechanisms using the H103 mesh.	63
Figure 3.22	CO mass fraction versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using GRI 3.0 and GRI 2.11 reaction-mechanisms using the H103 mesh.	63
Figure 3.23	NO mass fraction versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using GRI 3.0 and GRI 2.11 reaction-mechanisms using the H103 mesh.	64
Figure 3.24	Axial velocity versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using two different resolutions of the 10-zone hexahedron mesh: H10 (3.45M) and H103 (1.0M).	65
Figure 3.25	Temperature versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using two different resolutions of the 10-zone hexahedron mesh: H10 (3.45M) and H103 (1.0M).	65
Figure 3.26	Mean mixture fraction versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using two different resolutions of the 10-zone hexahedron mesh: H10 (3.45M) and H103 (1.0M).	66
Figure 3.27	Temperature versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using LES and standard $k - \epsilon$ model.	67
Figure 3.28	CO mass fraction versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using LES and standard $k - \epsilon$ model.	67
Figure 3.29	NO mass fraction versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between experimental measurements (LDV) and computation using LES	68

and standard $k - \epsilon$ model.

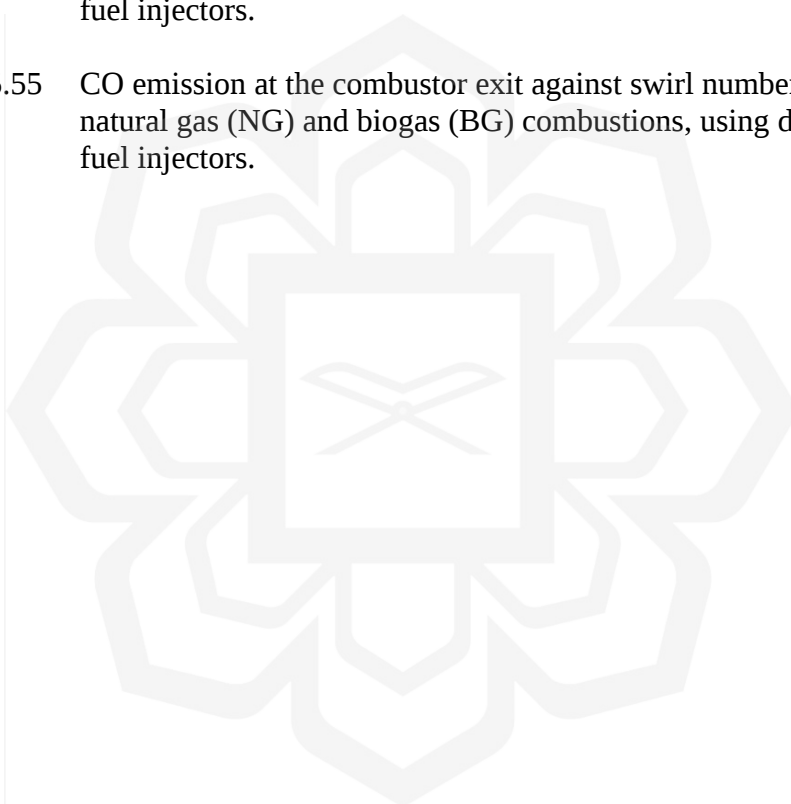
Figure 4.1	Basic combustor features.	70
Figure 4.2	A can-combustor by Rolls-Royce (Rolls-Royce, 1996).	71
Figure 4.3	Preliminary design methodology (Melconian & Modak, 1985).	72
Figure 4.4	Top: Cross-sections of different types of combustors. Bottom: multi-can combustor with eight cans (Rolls-Royce, 1996).	73
Figure 4.5	D_{ref} and D_L for multi-can combustion chambers.	75
Figure 4.6	Top: air-flow distribution in a typical can-combustor, bottom: general air-flow pattern with stable flame (Rolls-Royce, 1996).	78
Figure 4.7	Air-flow pattern at primary-zone (Lefebvre & Ballal, 2010).	79
Figure 4.8	Basic diffuser geometry with other reference lengths (Melconian & Modak, 1985).	81
Figure 4.9	Recirculation zone dimensions (Navia, 2010).	84
Figure 4.10	Configuration of cooling slots for film cooling of liner wall (Navia, 2010).	85
Figure 4.11	Cutout geometry of the combustor.	89
Figure 4.12	Red line indicating the starting line of the computational domain.	89
Figure 4.13	Cross-sectional view of the computational domain of the combustor with different dimensions and flow measurements. All dimensions are in millimeter. The various mass flow rate symbols indicate the air-flow rate through respective inlets or holes as percentage of total air.	89
Figure 4.14	Grid of the combustor. With annulus; bottom: without annulus.	91
Figure 4.15	Grid of the combustor. Left: inlet, dome wall, and liner wall with various holes; right: front view of the combustor.	91
Figure 4.16	Structure of the mesh at the centerline YZ-plane.	92
Figure 5.1	Influence of primary-zone temperature on CO and NO _x emissions (Lefebvre & Ballal, 2010).	100
Figure 5.2	Axial velocity versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between computation using main and finer mesh.	104

Figure 5.3	Temperature versus radial distance at centerline YZ-plane with different distances from inlet. Comparison between computation using main and finer mesh.	105
Figure 5.4	The 2D streamlines for the empirical case ($S_g = 0.9$), with contour of the axial velocity.	106
Figure 5.5	Contour of the swirl velocity for the empirical case ($S_g = 0.9$).	106
Figure 5.6	Iso-surfaces of the swirl velocity along with a translucent slice of the axial velocity contour at the centerline of the 3D domain. Iso-surfaces are also visible at the other side of the contour slice.	107
Figure 5.7	The 3D streamlines along with a translucent slice of the axial velocity contour at the centerline of the 3D domain. Streamlines are also visible at the other side of the contour slice.	107
Figure 5.8	Contour of the turbulent kinetic energy for the empirical case ($S_g = 0.9$).	108
Figure 5.9	Temperature contour for the empirical case ($S_g = 0.9$).	108
Figure 5.10	Contour of the CO mass fraction for the empirical case ($S_g = 0.9$).	110
Figure 5.11	Contour of the NO mass fraction for the empirical case ($S_g = 0.9$).	110
Figure 5.12	The 2D streamlines with axial velocity contours for different swirl numbers.	111
Figure 5.13	Temperature contours for different swirl numbers.	112
Figure 5.14	Pattern factor against swirl number and maximum temperature inside combustor.	113
Figure 5.15	Contours of the CO mass fraction for different swirl numbers.	114
Figure 5.16	CO emission at the combustor exit against swirl number and maximum temperature inside combustor.	114
Figure 5.17	Contours of the NO mass fraction for different swirl numbers.	115
Figure 5.18	NO emission at the combustor exit against swirl number and maximum temperature inside combustor.	115
Figure 5.19	CO and NO emission at the combustor exit against swirl number.	116

Figure 5.20	Merit Function against swirl number and maximum temperature inside combustor.	116
Figure 5.21	Combustion efficiency against swirl number and maximum temperature inside combustor.	117
Figure 5.22	The 2D streamlines with axial velocity contours for different fuel injectors with swirl number $S_g = 0.9$.	119
Figure 5.23	Temperature contours for different fuel injectors with swirl number $S_g = 0.9$.	119
Figure 5.24	Contours of the NO mass fraction for different fuel injectors with swirl number $S_g = 0.9$.	120
Figure 5.25	Contours of the CO mass fraction for different fuel injectors with swirl number $S_g = 0.9$.	120
Figure 5.26	CO emission at the combustor exit against swirl number and maximum temperature using different fuel injectors.	121
Figure 5.27	NO emission at the combustor exit against swirl number and maximum temperature using different fuel injectors.	121
Figure 5.28	CO and NO emission at the combustor exit against swirl number using different fuel injectors.	122
Figure 5.29	Merit Function for pollutant emissions against swirl number and maximum temperature using different fuel injectors.	122
Figure 5.30	Pattern Factor against swirl number and maximum temperature using different fuel injectors.	123
Figure 5.31	Combustion efficiency against swirl number and maximum temperature using different fuel injectors.	123
Figure 5.32	Pattern Factor against swirl number. Left: findings in current investigation. Right: Results of Torkzadeh et al. (2016)	127
Figure 5.33	Combustion efficiency against swirl number. Left: findings in current investigation. Right: Results of Torkzadeh et al. (2016)	127
Figure 5.34	Merit Function for pollutant emissions against swirl number. Left: findings in current investigation. Right: Results of Torkzadeh et al. (2016)	127
Figure 5.35	The 2D streamlines with axial velocity contours for different swirl numbers using INJ-765 during biogas combustion.	130

Figure 5.36	Contours of the turbulent kinetic energy for biogas (top) and natural gas (bottom) combustions using INJ-765, for $S_g = 0.5$.	131
Figure 5.37	Temperature contours for different swirl numbers using INJ-765 during biogas combustion.	131
Figure 5.38	Contours of the NO mass fraction for different swirl numbers using INJ-765 during biogas combustion.	132
Figure 5.39	Contours of the CO mass fraction for different swirl numbers using INJ-765 during biogas combustion.	133
Figure 5.40	The 2D streamlines with axial velocity contours for different fuel injectors with swirl number $S_g = 0.9$ during biogas combustion.	135
Figure 5.41	Temperature contours for different fuel injectors with swirl number $S_g = 0.9$ during biogas combustion.	135
Figure 5.42	Contours of the CO mass fraction for different fuel injectors with swirl number $S_g = 0.9$ during biogas combustion.	136
Figure 5.43	Contours of the NO mass fraction for different fuel injectors with swirl number $S_g = 0.9$ during biogas combustion.	136
Figure 5.44	NO emission at the combustor exit against swirl number and maximum temperature inside combustor, using different fuel injectors during biogas combustion.	137
Figure 5.45	CO emission at the combustor exit against swirl number and maximum temperature inside combustor, using different fuel injectors during biogas combustion.	137
Figure 5.46	CO and NO emission at the combustor exit against swirl number, using different fuel injectors during biogas combustion.	138
Figure 5.47	Merit Function for pollutant emissions against swirl number and maximum temperature inside combustor, using different fuel injectors during biogas combustion.	138
Figure 5.48	Combustion efficiency against swirl number and maximum temperature inside combustor, using different fuel injectors during biogas combustion.	139
Figure 5.49	Pattern Factor against swirl number and maximum temperature inside combustor, using different fuel injectors during biogas combustion.	139
Figure 5.50	Combustion efficiency against swirl number for natural gas (NG) and biogas (BG) combustions, using different fuel injectors.	143

Figure 5.51	Combustion heat generation against swirl number for natural gas (NG) and biogas (BG) combustions, using different fuel injectors.	144
Figure 5.52	Maximum flame temperature against swirl number for natural gas (NG) and biogas (BG) combustions, using different fuel injectors.	144
Figure 5.53	Pattern Factor against swirl number for natural gas (NG) and biogas (BG) combustions, using different fuel injectors.	145
Figure 5.54	NO emission at the combustor exit against swirl number for natural gas (NG) and biogas (BG) combustions, using different fuel injectors.	145
Figure 5.55	CO emission at the combustor exit against swirl number for natural gas (NG) and biogas (BG) combustions, using different fuel injectors.	146



LIST OF SYMBOLS

W_j	Air stream through the jet hole.
W_s	Bulk Axial velocity of air stream through the annulus.
U_s	Bulk Tangential velocity of air stream through the annulus.
W_e	Co-flow velocity of the secondary air stream generated in the wind tunnel.
S_g	Geometric swirl number
S	Swirl number
x, y, z	Cartesian coordinates
r	Radial axis of polar coordinates
k	Turbulent kinetic energy
ϵ	Turbulent dissipation rate
ω	Specific dissipation rate
R	Characteristic length
W	Mean axial component of velocity
U	Mean tangential component of velocity
u_i	Velocity component in the x_i direction
i, j, k	Unit vectors in the direction of the x , y , and z axes
ρ	Density
τ_{ij}^t	Residual stress tensor
p	Pressure
μ	Dynamic viscosity
μ_t	Eddy viscosity
D	Bluff body diameter
R_j	Jet hole radius
z	Axial position/distance
f	Mean mixture fraction
f'^2	Mixture fraction variance
χ_{st}	Mean scalar dissipation
L_S	Subgrid length scale
ΔP_{3-4}	Total pressure-drop across the combustor
q_{ref}	Reference dynamic pressure at the maximum cross-sectional area
A_{ref}	Reference area
R_a	Universal gas constant
D_{ref}	Reference diameter
A_L	Liner area
D_L	Liner diameter
A_{an}	Annulus area
L_{PZ}	Primary zone length
L_{SZ}	Secondary zone length
L_{DZ}	Dilution zone length
L_{RZ}	Recirculation zone length
$\Delta P_{3-4}/q_{ref}$	Pressure-loss factor
T_{max}	Maximum combustor outlet temperature

T_4	Mean combustor outlet temperature
$\dot{m}_3$	Inlet air mass flow rate
P_3	Inlet pressure
T_3	Inlet air temperature
D_3	Diameter of compressor outlet area
R_3	Radius of compressor outlet area
$\dot{m}_f$	Inlet fuel mass flow rate
T_f	Inlet fuel temperature
$\dot{m}_S$	Air-flow rate through snout
$\dot{m}_{SW}$	Air-flow rate through swirler
$\dot{m}_{dome}$	Air-flow rate through dome
$\dot{m}_{an}$	Air-flow rate through annulus
$\dot{m}_h$	Air-flow rate through holes
$\dot{m}_{h,PZ}$	Air-flow rate through primary holes
$\dot{m}_{h,SZ}$	Air-flow rate through secondary holes
$\dot{m}_{cool}$	Air-flow rate through cooling slots
$\dot{m}_{h,DZ}$	Air-flow rate through dilution holes
A_o	Snout outer area
D_o	Snout outer diameter
R_o	Snout outer radius
ψ	Divergence angle of the diffuser
L_{dif}	Diffuser length
A_S	Snout area
D_S	Snout diameter
$D_{O,SW}$	Swirler outer diameter
$D_{I,SW}$	Swirler inner diameter
β_{SW}	Vane angle of blades
θ	Inclination angle of the dome
L_{dome}	Dome length
s	Cooling slot height
t	Cooling slot lip thickness
t_w	Flame tube wall thickness
β	Bleed ratio
$C_{d,h}$	Hole discharge coefficient
A_h	Total hole area
D_h	Hole diameter
$\Delta P_h/P_3$	Pressure-loss through a hole
α	Orifice area ratio
K	Hole pressure loss factor
δ	Momentum loss factor
N_h	Number of holes for each combustion zone
$D_{h,PZ}$	Diameter of primary holes
$D_{h,SZ}$	Diameter of secondary holes
$D_{h,DZ}$	Diameter of dilution holes
$D_{h,dome}$	Diameter of dilution holes at dome
AF_{st}	Stoichiometric air-fuel ratio of fuel
AF_{excess}	Air-fuel ratio at primary zone (with approximately 10% excess air)