

## THE SOLUTION OF BLASIUS EQUATION BY DIAGONAL PADE' APPROXIMANT AND COMPARISON WITH VARIATIONAL ITERATION METHOD

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**Abstract:** The Blasius differential equation is a well-known ordinary differential equation of 3rd order, which is the mother of all boundary layer equation in fluid dynamics. This equation is discussed in many articles by analytical and numerical ways. The current paper is aimed to propose an approximate method for solving the Blasius boundary layer problem. Approximate solution is derived by Diagonal Pade' [3/3] approximant and compared to the results obtained from Variational Iteration Method (VIM) & R-K 4th order method (Numerical Method). Results reveal that the proposed method (Diagonal Pade' approximant) leads to a nearly accurate solution which is in agreement with VIM and R-K 4th order method. An efficient algorithm is also programmed using MATLAB which make the solution of Blasius equation relatively simple and quick. The accuracy of the proposed method is higher than other approximation analytical solution, hence suggest that proposed method is efficient and practical.

**Keywords:** Blasius equation, Boundary layer, Diagonal Pade' approximation method, ordinary differential equation, Variational Iteration method (VIM).

### I. INTRODUCTION

In Fluid Dynamics, the Blasius equation is of 3<sup>rd</sup> order ordinary differential equation describes by Paul Richard Heinrich Blasius which arises in certain boundary layer problems. Blasius himself solved the equation by using a power series expansion method in 1908 [1]. Falkner and Skan later generalized Blasius's solution to wedge flow (Falkner-Skan boundary layer), i.e. flows in which the plate is not parallel to the flow. We consider the generalized Blasius equation is

$$u'''(t) + \alpha u(t) u''(t) = 0, \quad 0 \leq t < \infty, \quad (1)$$

Where  $\alpha = 1$  or  $\alpha = 1/2$ , with boundary conditions

$$u(0) = 0, u'(0) = \delta, u'(\infty) = 1$$

For special case of  $\alpha = 1/2$  and  $\delta = 0$ , the Blasius equation is

$$u'''(t) + \frac{1}{2} u(t) u''(t) = 0 \text{ with } u(0) = u'(0) = 0, u'(\infty) = 1 \quad (2)$$

where  $u(t)$  is the free stream velocity function,  $t$  stands for thickness of boundary layer and  $u''(t)$  denotes the  $n$ th order derivative.

The Blasius equation have been solved by several analytical and numerical methods. Chen and Yu [2] used the differential transformation method for solution. Lin [3] employed the parameter iteration method for the solution of Blasius equation. Parand and Taghavi [4] used collocation method to solve this equation. Liao [5] solved the Blasius equation using Homotopy Analysis method(HAM). Wang [6] used the Adomian Decomposition Method (ADM) to solve the Blasius equation. Wazwaz [7.] applied the modified ADM to obtained analytical solution of Blasius equation.

## II. DIAGONAL PADE' APPROXIMANTS

A Pade' approximant is the ratio of two polynomials constructed from the coefficients of the Taylor series expansion of a function  $u(t)$ . The technique was developed around 1890 by Henri Pade'. The Padé approximant often gives better closed form approximation of the function and it may still work where the Taylor series does not converge. For these reasons Padé approximants are used extensively in computer calculation. The  $[L/M]$  Pade' approximants to a function  $u(t)$  are given by [8,9]. Recently Kaur & Garg [10, 11] investigate the acceleration motion of a single vertically falling non-spherically particle in incompressible Newtonian fluid and Radiation effect on velocity of a vertically falling non-spherical particle in incompressible Newtonian fluid by Diagonal Pade'[3/3]. A Pade' approximant is the ratio of two polynomials constructed from the coefficients of the Taylor series expansion of a function  $u(t)$ . The  $[L/M]$  Pade' approximants to a function  $u(t)$  are given by

$$\left[ \frac{L}{M} \right] = \frac{P_L(t)}{Q_M(t)} \quad (3)$$

Where  $P_L(t)$  is a polynomial of the degree of at most  $L$  and  $Q_M(t)$  is a polynomial of the degree of at most  $M$ . The formal power series is given

$$u(t) = \sum_{i=0}^{\infty} a_i t^i$$

$$i.e. u(t) = a_0 + a_1 t^1 + a_2 t^2 + a_3 t^3 + \dots \dots \dots \quad (3a)$$

Find the coefficients  $a_0, a_1, a_2, a_3, \dots$

The given equation is

$$u'''(t) = -\frac{1}{2} u u'', \text{ with conditions } u(0) = u'(0) = 0, u'(\infty) = 1 \quad (3b)$$

Solve the above equation by Taylor series about zero is given by

$$u(t) = u_0 + tu'_0 + \frac{t^2}{2!}u''_0 + \frac{t^3}{3!}u'''_0 + \frac{t^4}{4!}u^{iv}_0 + \frac{t^5}{5!}u^v_0 + \frac{t^6}{6!}u^{vi}_0 + \frac{t^7}{7!}u^{vii}_0 + \frac{t^8}{8!}u^{viii}_0 + \dots$$

$$\text{Solution is } u(t) = (k^1)\frac{t^2}{2} - (k^2)\frac{t^5}{240} + (k^3)\frac{11t^8}{161280} - (k^4)\frac{5t^{11}}{4257792} + \dots \quad (3c)$$

Where  $k = u''_0$

$$\text{So } a_0 = 0, a_1 = 0, a_2 = (k^1)\frac{1}{2}, a_3 = 0, a_4 = 0, a_5 = -(k^2)^2\frac{1}{240}, a_6 = 0, a_7 = 0,$$

$$a_8 = (k^3)\frac{11}{161280}, a_9 = 0, a_{10} = 0, a_{11} = -(k^4)\frac{5}{4257792} \text{ and so on}$$

From previous literature, a highly accurate numerical value of

$$k = u''_0 = u''(0) = 0.332[12,13]$$

$$u(t) - \frac{P_L(t)}{Q_M(t)} = 0 \quad (t^{L+M+1})$$

Determine the coefficient of  $P_L(t)$  and  $Q_M(t)$  by the help of eq. (3.6.2) and take normalization condition  $Q_M(0) = 1$

$$\text{From, } u(t) - \frac{P_L(t)}{Q_M(t)} = 0$$

$$P_L(t) = p_0 + p_1 t^1 + p_2 t^2 + p_3 t^3 + \dots + p_L t^L$$

$$Q_M(t) = q_0 + q_1 t^1 + q_2 t^2 + q_3 t^3 + \dots + q_M t^M$$

To obtain a diagonal pade' approximants of a different order [3/3], the symbolic calculus software MATLAB is used.

**For pade' [3/3]**

$$u(t) - \frac{P_3(t)}{Q_3(t)} = 0$$

$$\text{i.e. } u(t) = a_0 + a_1 t^1 + a_2 t^2 + a_3 t^3 + \dots = \frac{p_0 + p_1 t^1 + p_2 t^2 + p_3 t^3}{q_0 + q_1 t^1 + q_2 t^2 + q_3 t^3}$$

$$(a_0 + a_1 t^1 + a_2 t^2 + a_3 t^3 + \dots) (q_0 + q_1 t^1 + q_2 t^2 + q_3 t^3) = p_0 + p_1 t^1 + p_2 t^2 + p_3 t^3 \quad (3d)$$

From (3d),  $a_0 q_0 = p_0$

$$a_1 q_0 + a_0 q_1 = p_1$$

$$a_2 q_0 + a_1 q_1 + a_0 q_2 = p_2$$

$$a_3 q_0 + a_2 q_1 + a_1 q_2 + a_0 q_3 = p_3$$

$$a_4 q_0 + a_3 q_1 + a_2 q_2 + a_1 q_3 = 0$$

$$a_5 q_0 + a_4 q_1 + a_3 q_2 + a_2 q_3 = 0$$

$$a_6 q_0 + a_5 q_1 + a_4 q_2 + a_3 q_3 = 0$$

Generally,  $p_L = a_{L+} \sum_{i=1}^{\min(L,M)} q_i a_{L-i}$

Solving these non-linear system of equations by Gauss elimination method and using eq

$$p_0 = 0, p_1 = 0, p_2 = \frac{k}{2}, p_3 = 0 \text{ and } q_0 = 1, q_1 = 0, q_2 = 0, q_3 = \frac{k}{120}$$

So, Pade' [3/3]

$$u = \frac{\frac{k}{2}t^2}{1 + \frac{k}{120}t^3} = \frac{60kt^2}{120 + kt^3}$$

$$u1 = u' = \frac{120kt}{120 + kt^3} - \frac{180k^2t^4}{(120 + kt^3)^2}$$

$$u2 = u'' = \frac{120k}{120 + kt^3} - \frac{1080k^2t^3}{(120 + kt^3)^2} - \frac{1080k^3t^6}{(120 + kt^3)^3} \quad (3e)$$

**Table 1**  
Solution of BLASIUS Equation by Diagonal Pade' [3/3] approximant (k=0.3320)

$t$	$u_{\text{Pade}'[3/3]}$	$u1 = u'_{\text{Pade}'[3/3]}$	$u2 = u''_{\text{Pade}'[3/3]}$
0.00	0.0000	0.0000	0.3320
0.25	0.0104	0.0830	0.3319
0.50	0.0415	0.1659	0.3309
0.75	0.0933	0.2483	0.3281
1.00	0.1655	0.3297	0.3229
1.25	0.2580	0.4094	0.3143

*contd. table 1*

$t$	$u_{Pade'[3/3]}$	$u1 = u'_{Pade'[3/3]}$	$u2 = u''_{Pade'[3/3]}$
1.50	0.3700	0.4865	0.3018
1.75	0.5009	0.5600	0.2848
2.00	0.6496	0.6285	0.2629
2.25	0.8147	0.6910	0.2361
2.50	0.9945	0.7462	0.2045
2.75	1.1871	0.7929	0.1686
3.00	1.3902	0.8301	0.1291

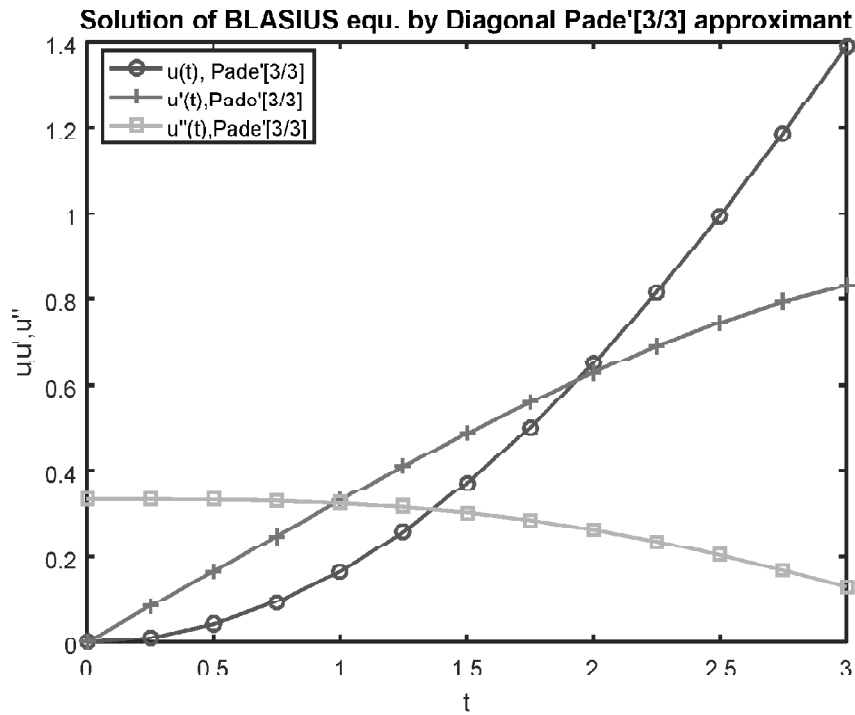


Figure 1: The solution of BLASIUS equation in boundary layer flow of equ. (2) by Diagonal Pade' approximant

### III. VARINATIONAL ITERATION METHOD (VIM)

J. He, was introduced Varinational iteration Method (VIM) to solve the several nonlinear ordinary and partial differential equations in 1997 [14]. He's Varinational iteration method (VIM) has been extensively applied as a power tool for solving various kinds of problems. Very recently it was recognized that the VIM can be an effective procedure for solution of various nonlinear problems without usual restrictive assumptions [15,16]. Application of the method have been enlarged due

to its flexibility, convenience and accuracy. In this section, the concept of VIM is briefly introduced. Consider the non-linear differential equation given in the form

$$Lu(t) + Nu(t) = g(t) \quad (4)$$

where  $L$  is a linear operator,  $N$  is a nonlinear operator and  $g(t)$  is a unknown function. By using the Variational iteration method, a correction functional can be constructed as

$$u_{n+1}(t) = u_n(t) + \int_0^t \lambda \{Lu_n(\zeta) + N\tilde{u}(\zeta) - g(\zeta)\} d\zeta \quad (4a)$$

Where  $\lambda$  is a general Lagrange multiplier, which can be determined, the subscript  $n$  means the  $n$ th approximation;  $u_n$  is restricted variation and  $\delta u_n = 0$ .

Using VIM to solve the Blasius equation

$$Nu(t) = u'''(t) + 1/2u(t)u''(t) \text{ and } g(t) = 0 \quad (4b)$$

Equation (4b) can be transformed as  $u'''(s) + 1/2u(s)u''(s) = 0$ , with the correction function

$$u_{n+1}(t) = u_n(t) + \int_0^t \lambda \{u_n'''(s) + \frac{1}{2}u_n(s)u_n''(s)\} ds \quad (4c)$$

Where  $\lambda$  is the Lagrange multiplier.

Integrating the above equation by parts

The stationary conditions obtained from equation (4c) are

$$1 + \lambda'' |_{s=t=0} \rightarrow \lambda'' = -1,$$

$$\lambda' |_{s=t=0} \rightarrow \lambda' = 0,$$

$$\lambda |_{s=t=0} \rightarrow \lambda = 0$$

From the above equations, the Lagrange multiplier  $\lambda$  can be derived

$$\lambda = \frac{-(s-t)^2}{2}$$

The correction function can be expressed as

$$u_{n+1}(t) = u_n(t) + \int_0^t \frac{-(s-t)^2}{2} \{u_n'''(s) + \frac{1}{2}u_n(s)u_n''(s)\} ds \quad (4d)$$

In order to start iteration using equ. (4d),  $u_0(t)$  is needed, which is represented McLaurin series with the first three terms

$$u_0(t) = \sum_{m=0}^2 \frac{t^m}{m!} u^{(m)}(0) = u_0 + tu_0' + \frac{t^2}{2!} u_0'' \quad (4e)$$

And assuming  $u''_0 = k = 0.332$  [17], following equation can be obtained from equation (4e)

$$u_0(t) = 0.166t^2 \tag{4f}$$

Solve the equation (4c) by mathematical software MATLAB.

**Table 2**  
Solution of BLASIUS Equation by VIM 4<sup>th</sup> iteration

$t$	$u_{VIM\ 4th\ iteration}$	$uI = u'_{VIM\ 4th\ iteration}$	$u2 = u''_{VIM\ 4th\ iteration}$
0.00	0.0000	0.0000	0.3320
0.25	0.0104	0.0830	0.3319
0.50	0.0415	0.1659	0.3309
0.75	0.0933	0.2483	0.3281
1.00	0.1655	0.3297	0.3230
1.25	0.2580	0.4095	0.3146
1.50	0.3701	0.4867	0.3025
1.75	0.5011	0.5604	0.2866
2.00	0.6499	0.6297	0.2667
2.25	0.8154	0.6935	0.2434
2.50	0.9961	0.7511	0.2174
2.75	1.1904	0.8021	0.1898
3.00	1.3966	0.8460	0.1619

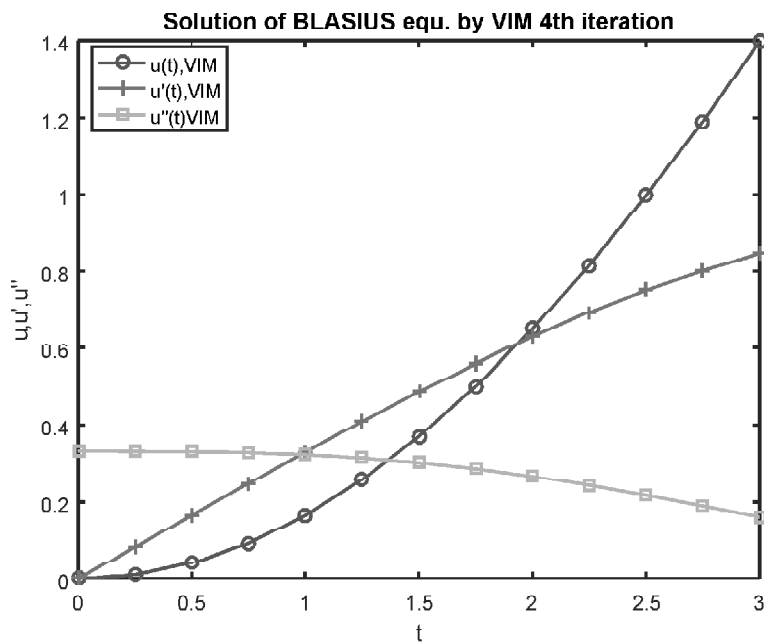


Figure 2: The solution of BLASIUS equation in boundary layer flow of equ. (2) by VIM

### VI. R-K 4<sup>th</sup> ORDER METHOD (NUMERICAL METHOD)

In numerical analysis, the Runge-Kutta methods are a family of implicit and explicit iterative methods. These methods were developed around 1900 by German mathematicians C. Runge and M. W. Kutta.

$$\text{Let } u = F, u' = F' = G, u'' = F'' = G' = H, u''' = H' \quad (5)$$

The equ. (2) becomes as follows

$$u'''(t) = -\frac{1}{2}u(t)u''(t) \text{ i.e. } H' = -\frac{1}{2}FH \text{ with } F(0) = 0, G(0) = 0 \text{ \& } H(0) = 0.332 \quad (5a)$$

**Table 3**  
**Solution of BLASIUS Equation by R-K 4<sup>th</sup> order (Numerical Method)**

$t$	$u_{R-K \text{ 4th order}}$	$u1 = u'_{R-K \text{ 4th order}}$	$u2 = u''_{R-K \text{ 4th order}}$
0.0	0.0000	0.0000	0.3320
0.5	0.0415	0.1659	0.3309
1.0	0.1656	0.3297	0.3230
1.5	0.3701	0.4867	0.3025
2.0	0.6500	0.6297	0.2667
2.5	0.9962	0.7511	0.2174
3.0	1.3966	0.8459	0.1614
3.5	1.8375	0.9129	0.1078
4.0	2.3054	0.9554	0.0643
4.5	2.7898	0.9793	0.0341
5.0	3.2829	0.9914	0.0160
5.5	3.7801	0.9967	0.0067
6.0	4.2791	0.9988	0.0025
6.5	4.7787	0.9996	0.0008
7.0	5.2786	0.9998	0.0003
7.5	5.7785	0.9999	0.0001
8.0	6.2784	0.9999	0.0000
8.5	6.7784	0.9999	0.0000
9.0	7.2783	0.9999	0.0000
9.5	7.7782	0.9999	0.0000
10	8.2782	0.9999	0.0000
-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-
$\infty$	$\infty$	1	0



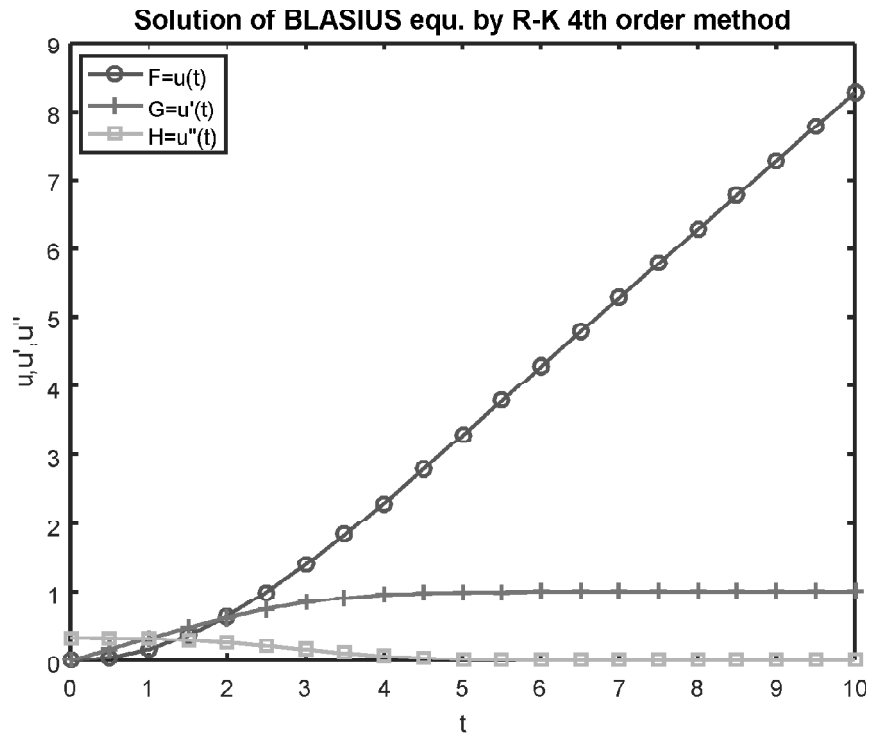


Figure 3: The solution of BLASIUS equation in boundary layer flow of equ. (2) by R-K 4th order method (Numerical Method)

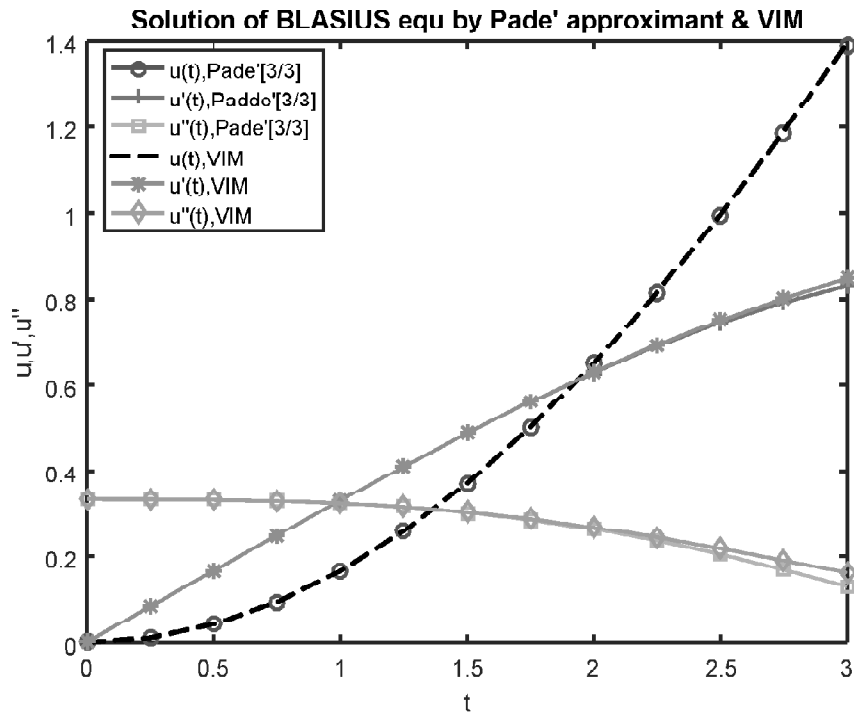
Figs.1, 2, & 3,  $u(t)$ ,  $u'(t)$  and  $u''(t)$  (vertically) denotes the velocity functions of Blasius equation w.r.t.  $t$  (Horizontally) stands for the boundary-layer thickness. These figs. shows the results of Blasius equation by different methods which satisfy the initial and boundary conditions.

**V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The approximate solution of Blasius equation is obtained by proposed method (Diagonal Pade'[3/3]). Also VIM and R-K 4th order methods are employed to examine the effect of approximating of the nonlinear term on accuracy of the solution. The results of proposed approach which are depicted in figs 4 and 5 in comparison with VIM and R-K 4th order method.

**Table 4**  
**Solution of BLASIUS Equation by Pade' [3/3] & VIM 4th iteration**

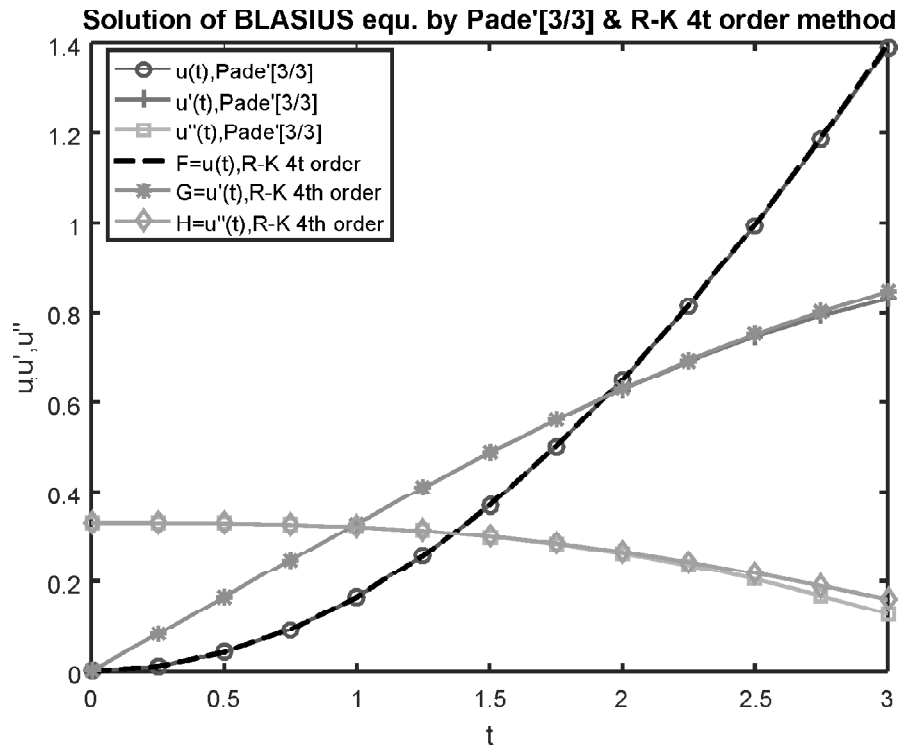
$t$	$u_{Pade'[3/3]}$	$u1=u'_{Pade'[3/3]}$	$u2=u''_{Pade'[3/3]}$	$u_{VIM}$ 4th iteration	$u1=u'_{VIM}$ 4th iteration	$u2=u''_{VIM}$ 4th iteration
0.00	0.0000	0.0000	0.3320	0.0000	0.0000	0.3320
0.25	0.0104	0.0830	0.3319	0.0104	0.0830	0.3319
0.50	0.0415	0.1659	0.3309	0.0415	0.1659	0.3309
0.75	0.0933	0.2483	0.3281	0.0933	0.2483	0.3281
1.00	0.1655	0.3297	0.3229	0.1655	0.3297	0.3230
1.25	0.2580	0.4094	0.3143	0.2580	0.4095	0.3146
1.50	0.3700	0.4865	0.3018	0.3701	0.4867	0.3025
1.75	0.5009	0.5600	0.2848	0.5011	0.5604	0.2866
2.00	0.6496	0.6285	0.2629	0.6499	0.6297	0.2667
2.25	0.8147	0.6910	0.2361	0.8154	0.6935	0.2434
2.50	0.9945	0.7462	0.2045	0.9961	0.7511	0.2174
2.75	1.1871	0.7929	0.1686	1.1904	0.8021	0.1898
3.00	1.3902	0.8301	0.1291	1.3966	0.8460	0.1619



**Figure 4: The results of Blasius equation: Comparison between which are obtained from proposed method & VIM**

**Table 5**  
**Solution of BLASIUS Equation for by Pade' [3/3] & R-K 4th order**

$t$	$u_{Pade'[3/3]}$	$u1=u'$	$u2=u''$	$u_{R-K\ 4th\ order}$	$u1=u'$	$u2=u''_{R-K}$
		$Pade'[3/3]$	$Pade'[3/3]$		$R-K\ 4th\ order$	$4th\ order$
0.00	0.0000	0.0000	0.3320	0.0000	0.0000	0.3320
0.25	0.0104	0.0830	0.3319	0.0104	0.0830	0.3319
0.50	0.0415	0.1659	0.3309	0.0415	0.1659	0.3309
0.75	0.0933	0.2483	0.3281	0.0933	0.2483	0.3281
1.00	0.1655	0.3297	0.3229	0.1655	0.3297	0.3230
1.25	0.2580	0.4094	0.3143	0.2580	0.4095	0.3146
1.50	0.3700	0.4865	0.3018	0.3701	0.4867	0.3025
1.75	0.5009	0.5600	0.2848	0.5011	0.5604	0.2866
2.00	0.6496	0.6285	0.2629	0.6499	0.6297	0.2667
2.25	0.8147	0.6910	0.2361	0.8154	0.6935	0.2434
2.50	0.9945	0.7462	0.2045	0.9961	0.7511	0.2174
2.75	1.1871	0.7929	0.1686	1.1904	0.8020	0.1896
3.00	1.3902	0.8301	0.1291	1.3966	0.8459	0.1614

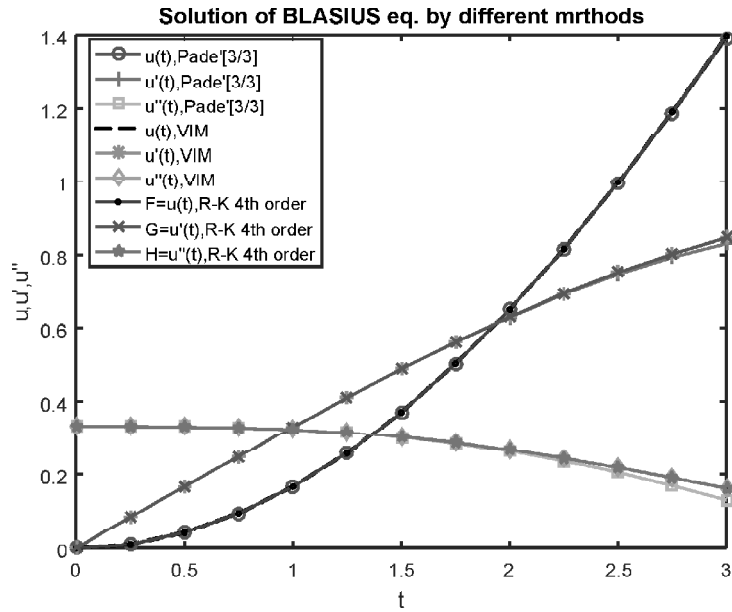


**Figure 5: The results of Blasius equation: Comparison between which are obtained from proposed method & R-K 4th order method**

Also the results of the present analytical scheme as well as the VIM and numerical results are plotted and compared in above figures. According to this, the results obtained by applying the Diagonal Pade' accurately approximate while the results achieved from the VIM and r-k 4th order method.

**Table 6**  
**Relative Error % of Pade' [3/3] with VIM 4th iteration and R-K 4th order**

<i>t</i>	Relative Error % <i>(Pade' [3/3] &amp; VIM)</i>			Relative Error % <i>(Pade' [3/3] &amp; R-K 4th order method)</i>			Relative Error % <i>(VIM &amp; R-K 4th order method)</i>		
	<i>u(t)</i>	<i>u1 = u'(t)</i>	<i>u2 = u''(t)</i>	<i>u(t)</i>	<i>u1 = u'(t)</i>	<i>u2 = u''(t)</i>	<i>u(t)</i>	<i>u1 = u'(t)</i>	<i>u2 = u''(t)</i>
0.00	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
0.25	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
0.50	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
0.75	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
1.00	0.0000	0.0000	0.0310	0.0000	0.0000	0.0310	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
1.25	0.0000	0.0244	0.0953	0.0000	0.0244	0.0953	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
1.50	0.0270	0.0411	0.2314	0.0270	0.0411	0.2314	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
1.75	0.0399	0.0713	0.6280	0.0399	0.0713	0.6280	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
2.00	0.0461	0.1906	1.4248	0.0461	0.1906	1.4248	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
2.25	0.0858	0.3604	2.9991	0.0858	0.3604	2.9991	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
2.50	0.1606	0.6524	5.9338	0.1606	0.6524	5.9338	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
2.75	0.2772	1.1470	11.1696	0.2772	1.1345	11.0759	0.0000	0.0125	0.1055
3.00	0.4582	1.8794	20.2594	0.4582	1.8678	20.0124	0.0000	0.0118	0.3098



**Figure 6: Comparison between different methods**

To gain a more sensible comparison among the proposed method, Table. 6 exhibits the comparisons of  $u(t)$ ,  $u'(t)$  and  $u''(t)$  obtained from the present method and those via VIM and R-K method. In Fig. 6, as can be seen, the Diagonal Pade approximant method leads to more accurate solution which gently follows the results of the numerical solutions of Blasius equation. It is apparent from the comparison that the largest relative errors are 20.2594% and 20.0124% which belong to  $u''(t)$  of proposed method and other methods.

## VII. CONCLUSION

The achievement of this work is to apply the current method (Diagonal Pade' [3/3] approximant) in order to study the solution of 3rd order Blasius equation with initial and boundary conditions and results are compared with others methods. The current method is applied without using any linearization, discretization, restrictions or transformations. In comparison, the results of applying the Diagonal Pade'[3/3] method for approximating the nonlinear term, lead to a nearly accurate solution which is capable to effectively approximate  $u$  and  $u'$ . On the other hand, as fig 6 depicted, there is considerable difference between the results of Diagonal Pade' and the solution achieved via VIM and R-K 4th. In addition, this method does not require many iterations like other methods to reach accurate results. The flexibility and adaptation provided by the method have made the method a strong candidate for approximate analytical solution. It can be claimed that here an innovative diagonal Pade approach is developed to approximate the Blasius equation which can be more examined for a wide range of similar flows in the boundary layer theory such as wedge flows.

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## APPENDIX - MATLAB CODE

*Matlab code for Table. 1 and Fig. 1*

```
t=0:0.25:3;
n=length (t)
k=0.332;
for i=1:n;
u(i)=(((60*k*t(i).^2)/(120+k*t(i).^3)));
u1(i)=(((120*k*t(i))/(120+k*t(i).^3))-((180*k.^2*t(i).^4)/(120+k*t(i).^3).^2));
u2(i)=(((120*k)/(120+k*t(i).^3))-((1080*k.^2*t(i).^3)/(120+k*t(i).^3).^2)+((1080*k.^3*t(i).^6)/(120+k*t(i).^3).^3));
end
u(:)
u1(:)
u2(:)
plot(t,u,'-o',t,u1,'-+',t,u2,'-s')
```

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