3. Describe The Level Curves Of The Function. Sketch The Level Curves For The Given Z-values. F(x, Y)=xy:

3. Describe The Level Curves Of The Function. Sketch The Level Curves For The Given Z-values. F(x, Y)=xy:

Understanding the level curves of a mathematical function provides deep insights into its behavior and geometric representation. In this article, we explore the level curves of the function $f(x, y) = xy$, elucidate their properties, and provide guidance on sketching these curves for specific z-values. This comprehensive analysis is essential for students, educators, and professionals working in calculus, multivariable analysis, and related fields.

Introduction to Level Curves

Before diving into the specifics of the function $f(x, y) = xy$, it's important to understand what level curves are and why they are significant.

What Are Level Curves?

Level curves, also known as contour lines, are curves along which a multivariate function maintains a constant value. For a function $f(x, y)$, a level curve corresponding to a constant c (or z-value) is defined by the set:

$$
\{ (x, y) \mid f(x, y) = c \}
$$

Graphically, these curves help visualize the surface $z = f(x, y)$ by projecting it onto the xy-plane, providing insight into the function's topology, maxima, minima, saddle points, and symmetry.

Analyzing the Function $f(x, y) = xy$

The function under consideration is:

$$
f(x, y) = xy
$$

This is a classic example of a bilinear function, and its geometric features are well-studied in multivariable calculus.

Basic Properties

- Domain: All real numbers $x, y \in \mathbb{R}$
- Range: All real numbers $z \in \mathbb{R}$, since xy can be positive, negative, or zero depending on the signs of x and y.
- Symmetry: The function is symmetric with respect to the origin: $f(-x, -y) = xy$.

Critical Points and Behavior

- The function has a saddle point at the origin $(0, 0)$.
- The level curves reveal hyperbolic shapes, which change depending on the value of z.

Deriving the Level Curves of $f(x, y) = xy$

To find the level curves for a specific z-value, we set:

$$
xy = z
$$

This equation describes the locus of points (x, y) in the plane where the product of x and y equals z.

General Equation of the Level Curves

$$
xy = z
$$

This is a family of rectangular hyperbolas, with the nature dependent on the sign and magnitude of z.

Analyzing the Level Curves for Different z-Values

The shape and position of the level curves depend on whether z is positive, negative, or zero.

Case 1: $z = 0$

$$
xy = 0
$$

This equation represents the union of the coordinate axes:

- The x-axis: $y = 0$
- The y-axis: $x = 0$

Interpretation: The level curve for $z = 0$ consists of two lines crossing at the origin. These lines divide the plane into four quadrants and serve as the asymptotes for the hyperbolas at other z-values.

Case 2: $z > 0$

$$
xy = z > 0
$$

In this case, x and y must have the same sign (both positive or both negative).

- Quadrants: I ($x > 0, y > 0$) and III ($x < 0, y < 0$)
- Shape: Hyperbolas opening along the axes in quadrants I and III.

Rearranged as:

$$
y = \frac{z}{x}
$$
which indicates that for each fixed $z > 0$, the level curve is a rectangular hyperbola with branches in quadrants I and III.

Case 3: $z < 0$

$$
xy = z < 0
$$
Here, x and y have opposite signs.

- Quadrants: II ($x < 0, y > 0$) and IV ($x > 0, y < 0$)
- Shape: Hyperbolas opening in quadrants II and IV.

Again, the equation is:
$$
y = \frac{z}{x}
$$
but with $z < 0$, indicating hyperbolas in the other two quadrants.

Sketching the Level Curves

Visualizing these curves enhances understanding. Here's a step-by-step guide to sketching the level curves for selected z-values.

Tools Needed

- Graph paper or plotting software (e.g., Desmos, GeoGebra)
- A ruler and compass for manual sketches
- Understanding of hyperbolic shapes and asymptotes

Step-by-Step Procedure for Sketching

1. Draw the coordinate axes x and y.

2. Identify the z-value for which you want to sketch the level curve.

3. Write down the equation $xy = z$ for that z.

4. Determine the signs of x and y based on the z-value (positive or negative).

5. Plot key points: For example, choose x-values, then compute $y = z/x$.

6. Draw the hyperbolic branches in the appropriate quadrants, approaching the axes asymptotically.

7. Repeat for various z-values to see how the hyperbolas shift and change shape.

Examples of Specific Level Curves

Let's consider specific z-values and describe their curves.

Example 1: $z = 1$

Equation:

$$
xy = 1
$$

- In quadrants I and III.
- Points: (x, y) such that $y = 1/x$.
- When $x = 1$, $y = 1$.
- When $x = 2$, $y = 0.5$.
- When $x = 0.5$, $y = 2$.

Plot these points and sketch the hyperbola branches in quadrants I and III accordingly.

Example 2: $z = -1$

Equation:

$$
xy = -1
$$

- In quadrants II and IV.
- Points: (x, y) with $y = -1/x$.
- When $x = 1$, $y = -1$.
- When $x = -1$, $y = 1$.

Sketch hyperbolas in quadrants II and IV.

Example 3: $z = 0$

Equation:

$$
xy = 0
$$

- The coordinate axes.
- The x-axis ($y=0$) and the y-axis ($x=0$).

Analyzing the Geometry of the Level Curves

The hyperbolic shape of the level curves reveals important geometric properties.

Asymptotic Behavior

- The hyperbolas approach the coordinate axes asymptotically.
- As $|x| \to \infty$, $y \to 0$ for fixed $z \neq 0$.
- Similarly, as $y \to \infty$, $x \to 0$.

Symmetry

- The function xy is symmetric with respect to the origin.
- The level curves are symmetric with respect to both axes and the origin.

Implication for Surface Plot

- The surface $z = xy$ resembles a saddle shape.
- The level curves illustrate the saddle's contours at different heights.

Applications of Level Curves in Various Fields

Understanding and sketching level curves of functions like xy has numerous applications across disciplines.

In Topography and Geography

- Contour lines representing elevation in terrain maps.
- Helps visualize the terrain's shape and features.

In Physics and Engineering

- Equipotential lines in electrostatics and gravitational fields.
- Visualize potential energy surfaces.

In Optimization and Economics

- Indifference curves in consumer theory.
- Utility functions and cost surfaces.

Conclusion 0\), the hyperbola lies in quadrants I and III.
- When $z < 0$, it appears in quadrants II and IV.
- When $z = 0$, the level curve reduces to the union of the lines $x=0$ and $y=0$.

Characteristics of the Level Curves

The set of all level curves for $f(x, y) = xy$ can be summarized as follows:

1. Hyperbolas in Opposite Quadrants: For $z \neq 0$, the level curves are rectangular hyperbolas with asymptotes along the coordinate axes. These hyperbolas open towards infinity in their respective quadrants.

2. Asymptotic Behavior: As $|x|$ or $|y|$ approaches infinity, the hyperbolas tend toward the axes, which serve as asymptotes.

3. Zero Level Curve: When $z=0$, the level curve consists of the two coordinate axes, $x=0$ and $y=0$. These axes divide the plane into four quadrants, each containing hyperbolic sections of the level curves.

4. Sign of z: The positive and negative hyperbolas are mirror images across the axes, reflecting the symmetry of the function.

Sketching the Level Curves for Specific z-Values

Visualizing the level curves involves plotting the hyperbolas for selected z-values. Let's consider some representative cases:

Case 1: $z=1$

Equation: $xy=1$

- Hyperbola in quadrants I and III.
- As $x \to \infty$, $y \to 0^+$; as $x \to 0^+$, $y \to \infty$.

- The curve approaches the axes but never touches them.

Case 2: $z=-1$

Equation: $xy=-1$

- Hyperbola in quadrants II and IV.
- Similar asymptotic behavior with the axes.

Case 3: $z=0$

Equation: $xy=0$

- The union of the two lines $x=0$ and $y=0$.
- These lines are the boundary between quadrants and are the asymptotes for hyperbolas.

Case 4: $z=2$

Equation: $xy=2$

- Similar hyperbolas scaled outward compared to $z=1$.

Case 5: $z=-0.5$

Equation: $xy=-0.5$

- Hyperbolas in quadrants II and IV, scaled accordingly.

Visualizing the Level Curves

Creating an accurate sketch involves plotting the hyperbolas for each z-value, emphasizing their asymptotes and the symmetry of the function. Here's a step-by-step approach:

1. Plot the coordinate axes: These are critical as the asymptotes.
2. Draw hyperbolas for positive z-values: For example, $z=1, 2, 4$, noting how they stretch farther from the origin as z increases.
3. Draw hyperbolas for negative z-values: For instance, $z=-1, -2, -4$, symmetric about the axes.
4. Indicate the zero level curve: The two axes, $x=0$ and $y=0$, which serve as asymptotes for all hyperbolas.

Significance and Applications

Understanding these level curves offers insight into the behavior of the function:

- Optimization Problems: Recognizing the hyperbolic contours helps in visualizing regions where the function attains specific values.
- Surface Visualization: When combined with a 3D surface plot, level curves serve as cross-sections that reveal the shape of the surface $z = xy$.
- Physical Interpretations: In contexts like economics or physics, such contours can represent equilibrium states or constant energy levels.

Extending the Analysis: Contour Maps and Further Study

In practice, mathematicians and scientists often use contour maps—plots displaying multiple level curves—to analyze functions thoroughly. For $f(x, y) = xy$:

- Color Coding: Different colors can mark various z-values for clarity.
- Density of Curves: Regions with closely spaced hyperbolas indicate rapid changes in the function's value.
- Applications in Multivariable Calculus: Level curves are instrumental in computing gradients, exploring directional derivatives, and understanding the topology of the surface.

Conclusion

The level curves of the function $f(x, y) = xy$ are elegant hyperbolas that vividly illustrate how the function behaves across the plane. They reveal the function's symmetry, asymptotes, and the transition from positive to negative values, offering a visual gateway into understanding the surface's geometry. By sketching these curves for specific z-values, we gain a deeper appreciation of the interplay between algebraic expressions and their geometric representations—an essential skill in the toolkit of mathematicians, engineers, and scientists alike.

Understanding these curves not only enhances our visual intuition but also lays the groundwork for more advanced topics such as gradient fields, optimization, and surface analysis. Whether in academic research or practical applications, the study of level curves like those of xy remains a cornerstone of multivariable calculus and geometric analysis.

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