Research Article

Optimal Inequalities for Power Means

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We present the best possible power mean bounds for the product $M_p^\alpha(a, b)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(a, b)$ for any $p > 0$, $\alpha \in (0, 1)$, and all $a, b > 0$ with $a \neq b$. Here, $M_p(a, b)$ is the p th power mean of two positive numbers a and b .

1. Introduction

For $p \in \mathbb{R}$, the p th power mean $M_p(a, b)$ of two positive numbers a and b is defined by

$$M_p(a, b) = \begin{cases} \left(\frac{a^p + b^p}{2} \right)^{1/p}, & p \neq 0, \\ \sqrt{ab}, & p = 0. \end{cases} \quad (1.1)$$

It is well known that $M_p(a, b)$ is continuous and strictly increasing with respect to $p \in \mathbb{R}$ for fixed $a, b > 0$ with $a \neq b$. Many classical means are special cases of the power mean, for example, $M_{-1}(a, b) = H(a, b) = 2ab/(a + b)$, $M_0(a, b) = G(a, b) = \sqrt{ab}$ and $M_1(a, b) = A(a, b) = (a + b)/2$ are the harmonic, geometric and arithmetic means of a and b , respectively. Recently, the power mean has been the subject of intensive research. In particular, many remarkable inequalities and properties for the power mean can be found in literature [1–22].

Let $L(a, b) = (a - b) / (\log a - \log b)$, $P(a, b) = (a - b) / [4 \arctan(\sqrt{a/b}) - \pi]$ and $I(a, b) = 1 / e(a^a / b^b)^{1/(a-b)}$ be the logarithmic, Seiffert and identric means of two positive numbers a and b with $a \neq b$, respectively. Then it is well known that

$$\min\{a, b\} < H(a, b) < G(a, b) < L(a, b) < P(a, b) < I(a, b) < A(a, b) < \max\{a, b\}, \quad (1.2)$$

for all $a, b > 0$ with $a \neq b$.

In [23–29], the authors presented the sharp power mean bounds for L , I , $(IL)^{1/2}$ and $(L + I)/2$ as follows:

$$\begin{aligned} M_0(a, b) < L(a, b) < M_{1/3}(a, b), \quad M_{2/3}(a, b) < I(a, b) < M_{\log 2}(a, b), \\ M_0(a, b) < \sqrt{L(a, b)I(a, b)} < M_{1/2}(a, b), \quad \frac{1}{2}(L(a, b) + I(a, b)) < M_{1/2}(a, b), \end{aligned} \quad (1.3)$$

for all $a, b > 0$ with $a \neq b$.

Alzer and Qiu [12] proved that the inequality

$$\frac{1}{2}(L(a, b) + I(a, b)) > M_p(a, b) \quad (1.4)$$

holds for all $a, b > 0$ with $a \neq b$ if and only if $p \leq (\log 2) / (1 + \log 2) = 0.40938 \dots$

The following sharp bounds for the sum $\alpha A(a, b) + (1 - \alpha)L(a, b)$, and the products $A^\alpha(a, b)L^{1-\alpha}(a, b)$ and $G^\alpha(a, b)L^{1-\alpha}(a, b)$ in terms of power means were proved in [5, 8]:

$$\begin{aligned} M_{\log 2 / (\log 2 - \log \alpha)}(a, b) &< \alpha A(a, b) + (1 - \alpha)L(a, b) < M_{(1+2\alpha)/3}(a, b), \\ M_0(a, b) &< A^\alpha(a, b)L^{1-\alpha}(a, b) < M_{(1+2\alpha)/3}(a, b), \\ M_0(a, b) &< G^\alpha(a, b)L^{1-\alpha}(a, b) < M_{(1-\alpha)/3}(a, b), \end{aligned} \quad (1.5)$$

for any $\alpha \in (0, 1)$ and all $a, b > 0$ with $a \neq b$.

In [2, 7] the authors answered the questions: for any $\alpha \in (0, 1)$, what are the greatest values $p_1 = p_1(\alpha)$, $p_2 = p_2(\alpha)$, $p_3 = p_3(\alpha)$, and $p_4 = p_4(\alpha)$, and the least values $q_1 = q_1(\alpha)$, $q_2 = q_2(\alpha)$, $q_3 = q_3(\alpha)$, and $q_4 = q_4(\alpha)$, such that the inequalities

$$\begin{aligned} M_{p_1}(a, b) &< P^\alpha(a, b)L^{1-\alpha}(a, b) < M_{q_1}(a, b), \\ M_{p_2}(a, b) &< A^\alpha(a, b)G^{1-\alpha}(a, b) < M_{q_2}(a, b), \\ M_{p_3}(a, b) &< G^\alpha(a, b)H^{1-\alpha}(a, b) < M_{q_3}(a, b), \\ M_{p_4}(a, b) &< A^\alpha(a, b)H^{1-\alpha}(a, b) < M_{q_4}(a, b), \end{aligned} \quad (1.6)$$

hold for all $a, b > 0$ with $a \neq b$?

It is the aim of this paper to present the best possible power mean bounds for the product $M_p^\alpha(a, b)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(a, b)$ for any $p > 0$, $\alpha \in (0, 1)$ and all $a, b > 0$ with $a \neq b$.

2. Main Result

Theorem 2.1. Let $p > 0$, $\alpha \in (0, 1)$ and $a, b > 0$ with $a \neq b$. Then

- (1) $M_{(2\alpha-1)p}(a, b) = M_p^\alpha(a, b)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(a, b) = M_0(a, b)$ for $\alpha = 1/2$,
- (2) $M_{(2\alpha-1)p}(a, b) > M_p^\alpha(a, b)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(a, b) > M_0(a, b)$ for $\alpha > 1/2$ and $M_{(2\alpha-1)p}(a, b) < M_p^\alpha(a, b)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(a, b) < M_0(a, b)$ for $\alpha < 1/2$, and the bounds $M_{(2\alpha-1)p}(a, b)$ and $M_0(a, b)$ for the product $M_p^\alpha(a, b)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(a, b)$ in either case are best possible.

Proof. From (1.1) we clearly see that $M_p(a, b)$ is symmetric and homogenous of degree 1. Without loss of generality, we assume that $b = 1$, $a = x > 1$.

- (1) If $\alpha = 1/2$, then (1.1) leads to

$$\begin{aligned} M_p^\alpha(x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(x, 1) &= \left(\frac{1+x^p}{2}\right)^{1/p} \left(\frac{1+x^{-p}}{2}\right)^{-1/p} \\ &= \left(\frac{1+x^p}{2}\right)^{1/p} \left(\frac{2x^p}{1+x^p}\right)^{1/p} = x = M_0^2(x, 1) = M_{(2\alpha-1)p}^2(x, 1). \end{aligned} \quad (2.1)$$

- (2) Firstly, we compare the value of $M_{(2\alpha-1)p}(x, 1)$ to the value of $M_p^\alpha(x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(x, 1)$ for $\alpha \in (0, 1/2) \cup (1/2, 1)$. From (1.1) we have

$$\begin{aligned} &\log \left[M_p^\alpha(x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(x, 1) \right] - \log M_{(2\alpha-1)p}(x, 1) \\ &= \frac{\alpha}{p} \log \frac{1+x^p}{2} - \frac{1-\alpha}{p} \log \frac{1+x^{-p}}{2} - \frac{1}{(2\alpha-1)p} \log \frac{1+x^{(2\alpha-1)p}}{2}. \end{aligned} \quad (2.2)$$

Let

$$f(x) = \frac{\alpha}{p} \log \frac{1+x^p}{2} - \frac{1-\alpha}{p} \log \frac{1+x^{-p}}{2} - \frac{1}{(2\alpha-1)p} \log \frac{1+x^{(2\alpha-1)p}}{2}, \quad (2.3)$$

then simple computations lead to

$$f(1) = 0, \quad (2.4)$$

$$f'(x) = \frac{g(x)}{x(1+x^p)(1+x^{(2\alpha-1)p})}, \quad (2.5)$$

where

$$g(x) = (\alpha-1)x^{2\alpha p} + \alpha x^p - \alpha x^{(2\alpha-1)p} + 1 - \alpha, \quad (2.6)$$

$$g(1) = 0,$$

$$g'(x) = \alpha p x^{p-1} h(x), \quad (2.7)$$

where

$$h(x) = 2(\alpha - 1)x^{(2\alpha-1)p} - (2\alpha - 1)x^{2(\alpha-1)p} + 1, \quad (2.8)$$

$$h(1) = 0,$$

$$h'(x) = -2p(1 - \alpha)(2\alpha - 1)x^{2(\alpha-1)p-1}(x^p - 1). \quad (2.9)$$

If $\alpha \in (1/2, 1)$, then (2.9) implies that $h(x)$ is strictly decreasing in $[1, +\infty)$. Therefore, $M_{(2\alpha-1)p}(x, 1) > M_p^\alpha(x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(x, 1)$ follows easily from (2.2)–(2.8) and the monotonicity of $h(x)$.

If $\alpha \in (0, 1/2)$, then (2.9) leads to the conclusion that $h(x)$ is strictly increasing in $[1, +\infty)$. Therefore, $M_{(2\alpha-1)p}(x, 1) < M_p^\alpha(x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(x, 1)$ follows easily from (2.2)–(2.8) and the monotonicity of $h(x)$.

Secondly, we compare the value of $M_0(x, 1)$ to the value of $M_p^\alpha(x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(x, 1)$. It follows from (1.1) that

$$\begin{aligned} & \log \left[M_p^\alpha(x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(x, 1) \right] - \log M_0(x, 1) \\ &= \frac{\alpha}{p} \log \frac{1+x^p}{2} - \frac{1-\alpha}{p} \log \frac{1+x^{-p}}{2} - \frac{1}{2} \log x. \end{aligned} \quad (2.10)$$

Let

$$F(x) = \frac{\alpha}{p} \log \frac{1+x^p}{2} - \frac{1-\alpha}{p} \log \frac{1+x^{-p}}{2} - \frac{1}{2} \log x, \quad (2.11)$$

then simple computations lead to

$$F(1) = 0, \quad (2.12)$$

$$F'(x) = \frac{(2\alpha - 1)(x^p - 1)}{x(1 + x^p)(1 + x^{(2\alpha-1)p})}. \quad (2.13)$$

If $\alpha \in (1/2, 1)$, then (2.13) implies that $F(x)$ is strictly increasing in $[1, +\infty)$. Therefore, $M_p^\alpha(x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(x, 1) > M_0(x, 1)$ follows easily from (2.10)–(2.12) and the monotonicity of $F(x)$.

If $\alpha \in (0, 1/2)$, then (2.13) leads to the conclusion that $F(x)$ is strictly decreasing in $[1, +\infty)$. Therefore, $M_p^\alpha(x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(x, 1) < M_0(x, 1)$ follows easily from (2.10)–(2.12) and the monotonicity of $F(x)$.

Next, we prove that the bound $M_{(2\alpha-1)p}(a, b)$ for the product $M_p^\alpha(a, b)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(a, b)$ in either case is best possible.

If $\alpha \in (0, 1/2)$, then for any $\epsilon \in (0, (1 - 2\alpha)p)$ and $x > 0$ we have

$$\begin{aligned}
 & M_p^\alpha(1+x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(1+x, 1) - M_{(2\alpha-1)p+\epsilon}(1+x, 1) \\
 &= \left[\frac{1+(1+x)^p}{2} \right]^{\alpha/p} \left[\frac{1+(1+x)^{-p}}{2} \right]^{(\alpha-1)/p} \\
 &\quad - \left[\frac{1+(1+x)^{(2\alpha-1)p+\epsilon}}{2} \right]^{1/[(2\alpha-1)p+\epsilon]}.
 \end{aligned} \tag{2.14}$$

Letting $x \rightarrow 0$ and making use of Taylor's expansion, one has

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \left[\frac{1+(1+x)^p}{2} \right]^{\alpha/p} \left[\frac{1+(1+x)^{-p}}{2} \right]^{(\alpha-1)/p} - \left[\frac{1+(1+x)^{(2\alpha-1)p+\epsilon}}{2} \right]^{1/[(2\alpha-1)p+\epsilon]} \\
 &= \left[1 + \frac{\alpha}{2}x + \frac{\alpha(p+\alpha-2)}{8}x^2 + o(x^2) \right] \\
 &\quad \times \left[1 + \frac{1-\alpha}{2}x - \frac{(1-\alpha)(p+\alpha+1)}{8}x^2 + o(x^2) \right] \\
 &\quad - \left[1 + \frac{1}{2}x + \frac{(2\alpha-1)p+\epsilon-1}{8}x^2 + o(x^2) \right] \\
 &= \left[1 + \frac{1}{2}x + \frac{(2\alpha-1)p-1}{8}x^2 + o(x^2) \right] \\
 &\quad - \left[1 + \frac{1}{2}x + \frac{(2\alpha-1)p+\epsilon-1}{8}x^2 + o(x^2) \right] \\
 &= -\frac{\epsilon}{8}x^2 + o(x^2).
 \end{aligned} \tag{2.15}$$

Equations (2.14) and (2.15) imply that for any $\alpha \in (0, 1/2)$ and $\epsilon \in (0, (1 - 2\alpha)p)$ there exists $\delta_1 = \delta_1(\epsilon) > 0$, such that $M_p^\alpha(1+x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(1+x, 1) < M_{(2\alpha-1)p+\epsilon}(1+x, 1)$ for $x \in (0, \delta_1)$.

If $\alpha \in (1/2, 1)$, then for any $\epsilon \in (0, (2\alpha - 1)p)$ and $x > 0$ we have

$$\begin{aligned}
 & M_p^\alpha(1+x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(1+x, 1) - M_{(2\alpha-1)p-\epsilon}(1+x, 1) \\
 &= \left[\frac{1+(1+x)^p}{2} \right]^{\alpha/p} \left[\frac{1+(1+x)^{-p}}{2} \right]^{(\alpha-1)/p} \\
 &\quad - \left[\frac{1+(1+x)^{(2\alpha-1)p-\epsilon}}{2} \right]^{1/[(2\alpha-1)p-\epsilon]}.
 \end{aligned} \tag{2.16}$$

Letting $x \rightarrow 0$ and making use of Taylor's expansion, one has

$$\begin{aligned}
& \left[\frac{1 + (1+x)^p}{2} \right]^{\alpha/p} \left[\frac{1 + (1+x)^{-p}}{2} \right]^{(\alpha-1)/p} - \left[\frac{1 + (1+x)^{(2\alpha-1)p-\epsilon}}{2} \right]^{1/[(2\alpha-1)p-\epsilon]} \\
&= \left[1 + \frac{\alpha}{2}x + \frac{\alpha(p+\alpha-2)}{8}x^2 + o(x^2) \right] \\
&\quad \times \left[1 + \frac{1-\alpha}{2}x - \frac{(1-\alpha)(p+\alpha+1)}{8}x^2 + o(x^2) \right] \\
&\quad - \left[1 + \frac{1}{2}x + \frac{(2\alpha-1)p-\epsilon-1}{8}x^2 + o(x^2) \right] \\
&= \left[1 + \frac{1}{2}x + \frac{(2\alpha-1)p-1}{8}x^2 + o(x^2) \right] \\
&\quad - \left[1 + \frac{1}{2}x + \frac{(2\alpha-1)p-\epsilon-1}{8}x^2 + o(x^2) \right] \\
&= \frac{\epsilon}{8}x^2 + o(x^2).
\end{aligned} \tag{2.17}$$

Equations (2.16) and (2.17) imply that for any $\alpha \in (1/2, 1)$ and $\epsilon \in (0, (2\alpha-1)p)$ there exists $\delta_2 = \delta_2(\epsilon) > 0$, such that $M_p^\alpha(1+x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(1+x, 1) > M_{(2\alpha-1)p-\epsilon}(1+x, 1)$ for $x \in (0, \delta_2)$.

Finally, we prove that the bound $M_0(a, b)$ for the product $M_p^\alpha(a, b)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(a, b)$ in either case is best possible.

If $\alpha \in (0, 1/2)$, then for any $\epsilon > 0$ we clearly see that

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow +\infty} \frac{M_p^\alpha(x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(x, 1)}{M_{-\epsilon}(x, 1)} = +\infty. \tag{2.18}$$

Equation (2.18) implies that for any $\alpha \in (0, 1/2)$ and $\epsilon > 0$ there exists $T_1 = T_1(\epsilon) > 1$, such that $M_p^\alpha(x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(x, 1) > M_{-\epsilon}(x, 1)$ for $x \in (T_1, +\infty)$.

If $\alpha \in (1/2, 1)$, then for any $\epsilon > 0$ we have

$$\lim_{x \rightarrow +\infty} \frac{M_p^\alpha(x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(x, 1)}{M_\epsilon(x, 1)} = 0. \tag{2.19}$$

Equation (2.19) implies that for any $\alpha \in (1/2, 1)$ and $\epsilon > 0$ there exists $T_2 = T_2(\epsilon) > 1$, such that $M_p^\alpha(x, 1)M_{-p}^{1-\alpha}(x, 1) < M_\epsilon(x, 1)$ for $x \in (T_2, +\infty)$. $\square$

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