

# Power Quality Event Classification in Distribution Grids Using Machine Learning

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**Abstract**— With the penetration of non-linear loads, renewables and distributed generation with power electronic converters, solutions for maintaining good power electrical quality have become a major concern for the stakeholders of electrical power systems. In this paper, a machine learning based model for power quality event classification is developed and tested. 16 categories of the most commonly occurring power quality events are classified by means of wavelet transform and select machine learning based methods to evaluate the best performing machine learning model. The outcome of classifications and effectiveness of machine learning methods is evaluated using the ‘Classification Learners’ application in MATLAB. The selected machine learning model is implemented in Simulink for test distribution grid circuits. The results obtained from simulation showed acceptable accuracy and performance and demonstrated the efficiency of the model in different operating conditions.

**Keywords**—power quality, machine learning, wavelet transform, classification.

## I. INTRODUCTION

As the penetration rate of non-linear loads like electric vehicles and renewable based distributed generation integrating power electronic devices increase in modern electricity grids, power quality problems such as voltage violation, dip, swell, flicker and harmonics are increasing becoming common. Such power quality events are a threat to the electrical assets and devices connected along the grid and it may further lead to negatively affect the reliability of power system and the safety of network operators and electricity users [1, 2].

In addition to the existing techniques such as Fast Fourier Transform (FFT), intelligent machine learning techniques are starting to take a prominent role in power quality analysis and monitoring. According to the author of [3], the research outputs concerning the theme of power quality of electricity networks are still low compared to other smart grid themes. This research is aimed at contributing to the addressing of this research gap. The aim of this work is to demonstrate and evaluate the effectiveness of intelligent machine learning algorithms in classifying power quality events and monitoring power quality at distribution grids.

## II. METHODOLOGY

This research is mainly composed of four main stages, namely: (i) Data preparation: selection of power quality events (event selection) and feature extraction; (ii) selecting suitable machine learning algorithms, their testing and validation; and (iii) testing the efficiency of the machine learning algorithm in monitoring power quality events by simulating it in test Simulink distribution grid models. The machine learning method selection approach of the work is summarised in Fig.

1. The overall research methodology of this work is summarised in Fig 2.

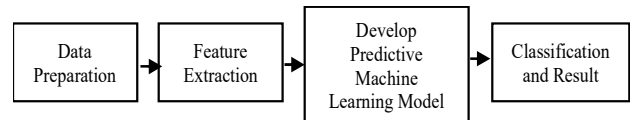


Fig. 1. Machine learning method selection approach

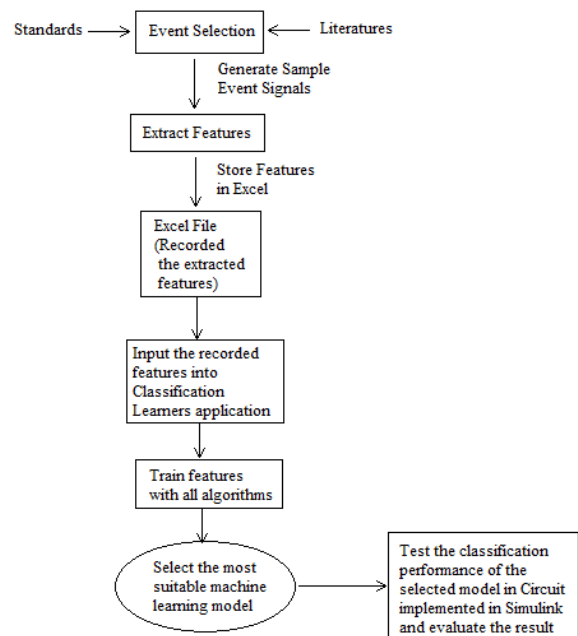


Fig. 2. Flowchart summarising the overall research methodology.

The IEEE standard on monitoring power quality [4] and available literature [5-7] were reviewed to select power quality events that is studied in this work. Table I provides the lists of events selected. Datasets with synthetic signals of individual events were then created in MATLAB for training and validation of machine learning algorithms.

Once the data samples created above are ready, features from those data samples are extracted. In this case, the statistical features described in Table II (see section below on Data Preparation) are selected by reviewing Wavelet Analyzer Toolbox and related literature such as [5], [8] and [9]. After the feature extraction is done, those features are imported into ‘Classification Learners’ application in MATLAB using which the most suitable machine learning model is selected as shown below in the flow chart of Fig 3.

The optimal machine learning model is obtained is then tested using IEEE-5 bus system and electric arc furnace [10] test distribution grid circuits implemented in Simulink. In

testing phase, the scenarios of power quality events are created based on the methods proposed by [10].

TABLE I. SELECTED POWER QUALITY EVENTS

Event Index	Event Description
S1	Normal Condition
S2	Voltage Sag
S3	Voltage Swell
S4	Voltage with Harmonics
S5	Voltage Flicker
S6	Voltage Interruption
S7	Oscillatory Transient
S8	Impulsive Transient
S9	Voltage Sag with Flicker
S10	Voltage Swell with Flicker
S11	Voltage Flicker with Harmonics
S12	Voltage Sag with Harmonics
S13	Voltage Swell with Harmonics
S14	Voltage Interruption with Harmonics
S15	Voltage Sag with Transient
S16	Voltage Swell with Transient

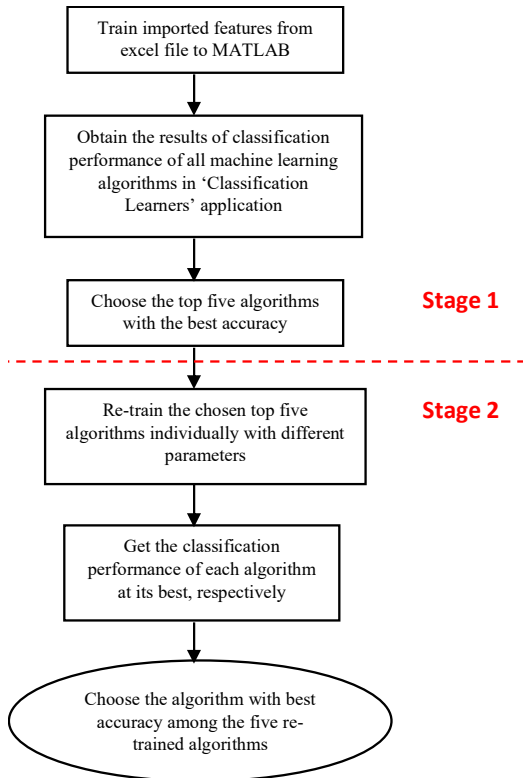


Fig. 3. Processing of Choosing Machine Learning Algorithm

### III. DATA PREPARATION

Data Preparation Relevant groups of sample data are required to input into the machine learning model for training.

Fig. 4 summarises the overall process of data preparation.

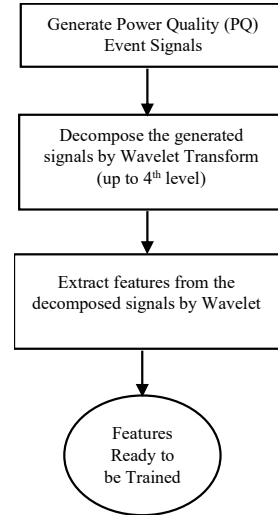


Fig. 4. Process flow of Data Preparation

#### A. Power Quality Signal Generation

180 samples were generated per event for all 16 individual power quality events categories described in Table I. The power quality events were created in MATLAB with a sampling frequency of 512 samples per cycle which is equivalent to 25.6kHz as recommended by IEEE 1159-2019 [4] to cover higher frequency events like oscillatory transients.

#### B. Signal Decomposition

The samples generated above are decomposed by being band-passed in a discrete wavelet transform for up to level-4 decomposition. Because of the lower frequency, a higher level of decomposition does not lead to a significant difference in the features utilised for classification. According to [5], the Daubechies 4 (DB4) wavelet performs much better than other types of wavelets. Hence, it was used in this study.

Normally, abnormal electrical power signals caused by fast electromagnetic transients are non-periodic with high-frequency components [11]. Authors of [12] recommend reconstructing the original signal for fast and reliable performance in power quality analysis applications. By removing noise, the specific signal can be analysed without ambiguity resulting in high performance when used by an intelligence system.

Mathematically, the wavelet signal is expressed as [11]:

$$\psi_{a,b}(t) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{a}} \cdot \psi\left(\frac{t-b}{a}\right) \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

where  $\psi_{a,b}(t)$  = Continuous Wavelet Signal  
 $\frac{1}{\sqrt{a}}$  = Normalizing Constant,  $a$   
= Scaling Parameter,  
 $b$  = Translation Parameter

With  $CWT_{(a,b)}$  continuous wavelet transform =

$$CWT_{(a,b)} = \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} x(t) \cdot \psi_{a,b}(t) = \frac{1}{\sqrt{a}} \cdot \int_{-\infty}^{+\infty} x(t) \cdot \psi\left(\frac{t-b}{a}\right) dt \dots (2)$$

where  $x(t)$   
= signal to be decomposed by wavelet transform

However, the continuous wavelet transform mentioned above can create a burden for computational performance

because of the huge amount of redundant information. Therefore, the discretised wavelet transform (DWT) [11] with the discretised scale and translation factors as described below is used:

$$\psi_{m,p} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{a_0^m}} \cdot \psi\left(\frac{t - pb_0 a_0^m}{a_0^m}\right) \dots \dots \dots (3)$$

$$DWT_{m,k} = \frac{1}{\sqrt{a}} \cdot \sum_n x[n] \cdot g\left(\frac{k - nb_0 a_0^m}{a_0^m}\right) \dots \dots \dots (4)$$

where  $\psi_{m,p}$  = Discrete Wavelet Signal  
 $m$  = Discrete Scaling Parameter  
 $n$  = Discrete Translation Parameter  
 $a_0$  = Discrete Scaling Factor  
 $b_0$  = Discrete Translation Factor  
 $g$  = Mother Wavelet,  $x[n]$  = Discrete Signal

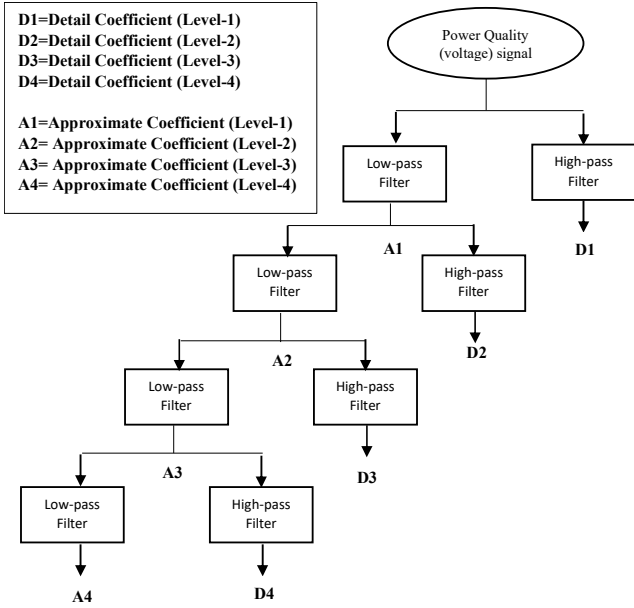


Fig. 5. Wavelet Decomposition up to 4<sup>th</sup> Level

### C. Feature Extraction

After decomposing the total 2880 signal samples of the chosen 16 categories of power quality events, the features of every wavelet-decomposed signal (from level-1 to level-4 of detail coefficients and level-4 of approximate coefficients) must be extracted as described in Table II.

TABLE II. LIST OF FEATURES BEING USED

Feature Name	Description of Feature
Mean	$\frac{1}{N} \cdot \sum_{k=1}^N s_k \dots \dots (5)$ where $s_k$ = signal value at kth sample $N$ = total number of samples in a single segment
Median	median $s_k \dots \dots (6)$ where $s_k$ = signal value at kth sample $N$ = total number of samples in a single segment
Mode	mode $s_k \dots \dots (7)$ where $s_k$ = signal value at kth sample $N$ = total number of samples in a single segment

Standard Deviation	$\sqrt{\frac{\sum_{k=1}^N (s_k - \text{Mean}(S))^2}{N-1}} \dots \dots \dots (8)$ where $s_k$ = signal value at kth sample $N$ = total number of samples in a single segment $S$ = Set of sample = $[s_1, s_2, \dots, s_N]$
Mahattan Distance (L1 Norm)	$\sum_{k=1}^N  s_k  \dots \dots \dots (9)$ where $s_k$ = signal value at kth sample $N$ = total number of samples in a single segment
Euclidean Distance (L2 Norm)	$\sqrt{\sum_{k=1}^N  s_k ^2} \dots \dots \dots (10)$ where $s_k$ = signal value at kth sample $N$ = total number of samples in a single segment
Entropy	$-\sum_{k=1}^N p_k \cdot \log(p_k) \dots \dots \dots (11)$ where $p_k$ = probability of occurrence of kth sample $N$ = total number of samples in a single segment
Skewness	$\frac{\sum_{k=1}^N (s_k - \text{Mean}(S))^3}{(N-1) \cdot \sigma} \dots \dots \dots (12)$ where $s_k$ = signal value at kth sample $N$ = total number of samples in a single segment $S$ = Set of sample = $[s_1, s_2, \dots, s_N]$ $\sigma$ = Standard Deviation
Kurtosis	$\frac{1}{N-1} \cdot \sum_{k=1}^N \left(\frac{s_k - \text{Mean}(S)}{\sigma}\right)^4 \dots \dots (13)$ where $s_k$ = signal value at kth sample $N$ = total number of samples in a single segment $S$ = Set of sample = $[s_1, s_2, \dots, s_N]$ $\sigma$ = Standard Deviation
Maximum	$\max_{k=1,2,\dots,N} s_k \dots \dots (14)$ where $s_k$ = signal value at kth sample $N$ = total number of samples in a single segment
Minimum	$\min_{k=1,2,\dots,N} s_k \dots \dots (15)$ where $s_k$ = signal value at kth sample $N$ = total number of samples in a single segment
Mean Absolute Deviation	$\frac{1}{N} \cdot \sum_{k=1}^N  s_k - \text{Mean}(S)  \dots \dots (16)$ where $s_k$ = signal value at kth sample $N$ = total number of samples in a single segment $S$ = Set of sample = $[s_1, s_2, \dots, s_N]$
Median Absolute Deviation	median $ s_k - \text{Median}(S)  \dots \dots (17)$ where $s_k$ = signal value at kth sample $N$ = total number of samples in a single segment $S$ = Set of sample = $[s_1, s_2, \dots, s_N]$

### IV. SELECTING MACHINE LEARNING MODEL AND TRAINING

Following feature extraction, all samples extracted above are then imported into the ‘Classification Learners’ application in MATLAB for training. Fig. 6 shows the algorithm used for model training. In this work, the 5-fold cross-validation method described in Fig. 7 is used to validate the data samples and identify the best performing machine learning methods. The models that performed best for the imported data are based on the methods: (i) Ensemble Bagged Trees, (ii) Support Vector Machine (SVM) with cubic kernel, (iii) SVM with quadratic kernel, (iv) SVM with linear kernel and (v) Fine Tree. These methods are briefly described as below.

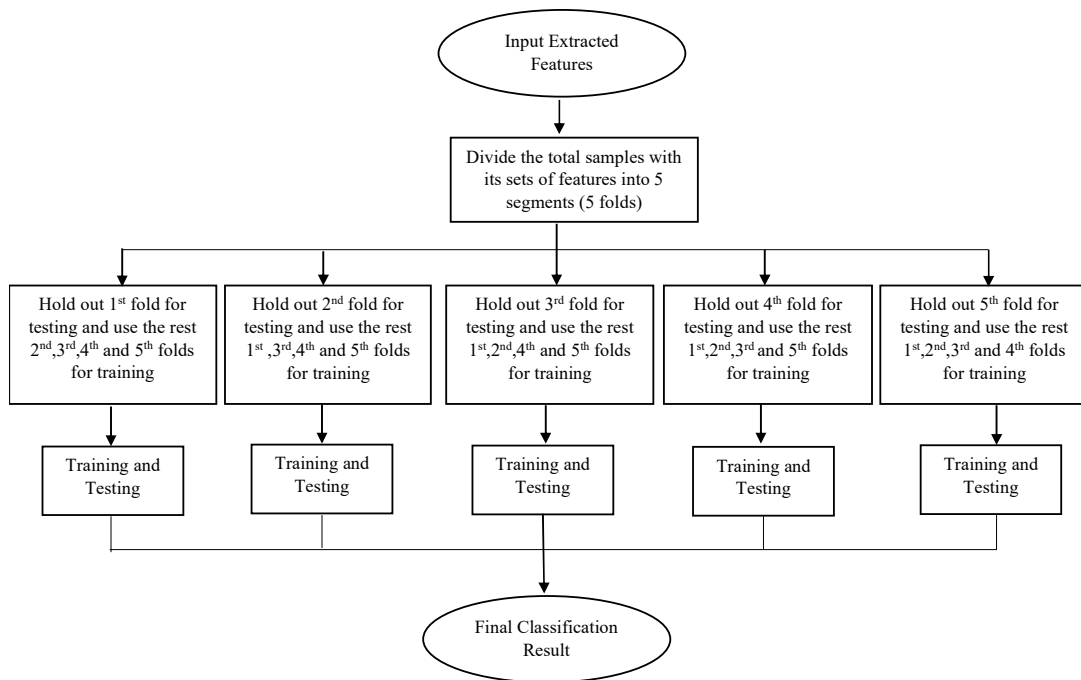


Fig. 6. Algorithm for Training Input Features

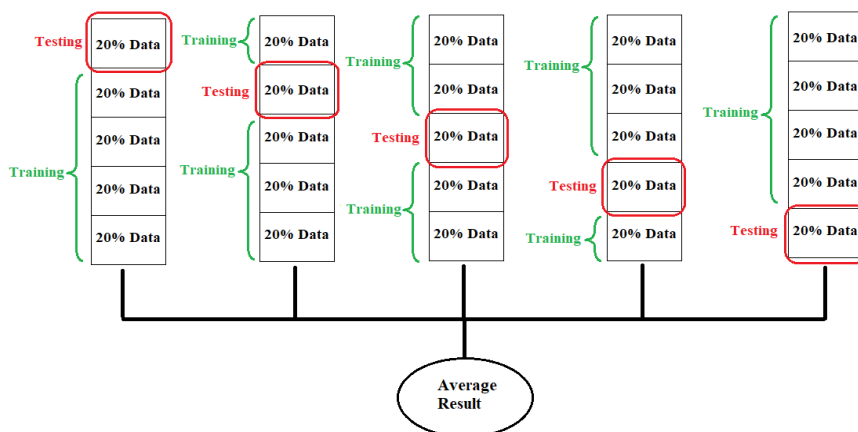


Fig. 7. Five-fold Cross-validation

### A. Ensemble Bagged Trees

Ensemble Bagged Trees is a branch of the ‘Ensemble Bagging’ or ‘Bootstrapping’ method in which the decision tree is applied as a single classification model. The prediction results from all individual learners (trees) are combined and averaged to output the final outcome of classification. A voting system for the overall practically reduces variance and overfitting [13].

Mathematically, the ensemble bagging algorithm can be expressed as:

$$f_{bag} = f_1 + f_2 + \dots + f_b \dots\dots\dots(18)$$

where  $f_{bag}$  = prediction from ensemble bagging learner  
 $f_1, f_2, \dots, f_b$  = prediction from all individual ‘b’ number of learners

### B. Support Vector Machine (SVM)

SVM does the classification function by inserting a hyperplane as the decision boundary separating different classes on the feature dataset. Its key objective is to find the optimal hyperplane with the maximal box constraint margin

among all the classes to be classified while mapping the input data samples to the appropriate output classes. There are different types of kernels available to set up the hyperplane to classify the input data [14].

$$\text{Linear Kernel} \rightarrow W^T x + b, \quad x \in R^d \dots\dots\dots(19)$$

$$\text{Polynomial} \rightarrow (W^T x + b)^d, \quad \sigma > 0 \dots\dots\dots(20)$$

where  $x$  = input data,  
 $W^T$  = dimensional vector  
 $= W_0, W_1, \dots, W_m$  (for  $m$  – dimensional vector)  
 $b$  = biased term  
 $d$  = degree of polynomail = 2,3, ....

In this case, the box constraint is a parameter to adjust the fitting of the model to input data.

### C. Fine Tree

Fine Tree is a highly flexible model type of Decision Tree method that has a larger number of leaves compared to other tree sub-categories like ‘Medium Tree’ and ‘Coarse Tree’. A Decision Tree is composed of the main components: root, branch and leaf in which the root nodes contain the input data



phases of voltage at every bus in the network.

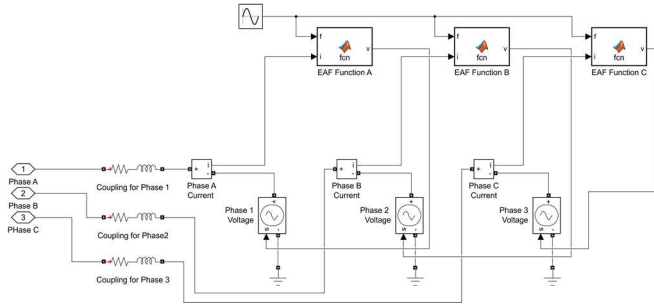


Fig. 10. Electric Arc Furnace Model [10]

TABLE V. ADDITIONAL DISTURBANCES DURING FLICKER CONDITION

Name	Mathematical Expression
Voltage Sag with Flicker	$\{1 - \alpha_1(u(t - t1) - u(t - t2))\} \times V_{flicker} \dots (21)$ where $\alpha_1 = \text{sag magnitude}$
Voltage Swell with Flicker	$\{1 + \alpha_2(u(t - t1) - u(t - t2))\} \times V_{flicker} \dots (22)$ where $\alpha_2 = \text{swell magnitude}$
Voltage Flicker with Harmonics	$\{h_1 \cdot \sin(\omega t) + h_3 \cdot \sin(3\omega t) + h_5 \cdot \sin(5\omega t) + h_7 \cdot \sin(7\omega t)\} \times V_{flicker} \dots (23)$ where $h_1 = \text{fundamental harmonic}$ $h_3 = 3\text{rd harmonic}$ $h_5 = 5\text{th harmonic}$ $h_7 = 7\text{th harmonic}$

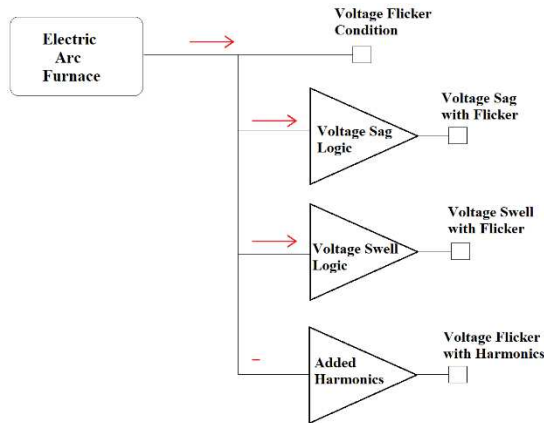


Fig. 11. Outputs of Electric Arc Furnace

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper, 16 categories of most commonly occurring power quality events are classified by means of wavelet transform and machine learning based methods. The outcome of classifications and effectiveness of machine learning methods for the proposed application is evaluated to identify the best performing machine learning method. The 'Classification Learners' application in MATLAB is used for analysing the performance. The selected model namely Ensemble Bagged Trees was then implemented in Simulink for test distribution grid circuits. The results obtained from simulation demonstrated the efficiency of the method and showed acceptable accuracy and performance. Future work will look to implement an intelligent decision-making system for power network operators based on the power quality event classification model developed here.

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