Review of PV-STATCOM Integration in Multimachine Power Systems with Soft Computing Control Strategies

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Abstract- **The integration of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems into multimachine power systems presents both opportunities and challenges for ensuring grid stability amid dynamic disturbances. The PV-STATCOM, a hybrid configuration combining PV inverters with Static Synchronous Compensator (STATCOM) capabilities, enhances reactive power support and voltage regulation. This review synthesizes advancements in PV-STATCOM applications, with a focus on soft computing techniques such as Particle Swarm Optimization (PSO), Bacterial Foraging Optimization Algorithm (BFOA), and hybrid metaheuristic algorithms for controller optimization. Analysingrecent peer-reviewed articles, this paper evaluates the evolution of control strategies, their impact on transient and voltage stability, and integration challenges in multimachine environments. Findings underscore the efficacy of hybrid optimization algorithms in addressing nonlinear grid dynamics, though gaps persist in scalability, real-time implementation, and cybersecurity. Future research should explore advanced algorithms, energy storage integration, and hardware validation to broaden PV-STATCOM's applicability in modern power systems.**

Index Terms- **PV-STATCOM, Multimachine Power Systems, Soft Computing, Reactive Power Compensation**

I. INTRODUCTION

Modern power systems are faced with a rising degree of complexity due to the ever-growing and extensive integration of renewable energy sources (RES), and most notably of solar photovoltaic (PV) systems. The inherent intermittence of PV generation poses specific challenges; combined with the absence of inherent inertia in power electronic converters, these characteristics unambiguously complicate voltage stability concerns, reactive power equilibrium, and instantaneous response in multimachine power systems [1]. To effectively counter the challenges posed by them, Flexible AC Transmission System (FACTS) devices and most notably the Static Synchronous Compensator (STATCOM) have become inevitable and essential by supplying dynamic reactive power compensation necessary in ensuring system stability [2]. Additionally, evolution of the PV-STATCOM, wherein PV inverters are employed to carry out the fundamental function of a STATCOM, becomes an economical and multifaceted approach committed to power grid stability [3]. This review aims at consolidating the latest literature on the application of PV-STATCOM with a specific focus on the role being embarked upon by soft computing approaches, i.e., Particle Swarm Optimization (PSO), Biogeography-Based Optimization Algorithm (BFOA), and a host of hybrid algorithms, utilized to optimize control strategies in multimachine systems. The aim of this paper is to review the performance of the various techniques, identify any research gaps and propose future directions on improving the robustness of the power grid.

1.1 Motivation

The worldwide push toward de-carbonization has greatly sped up inclusive integration of PV systems, with projections showing capacity from the sun overtaking hydropower capacity by 2029 [4]. However, high penetration of PV systems goes hand in hand with a host of operating challenges ranging from a voltage deviation effect, decline in system inertia as well as oscillatory modes spread throughout multimachine networks [5]. While conventional STATCOMs have proven useful in a number of instances, they tend to make use of fixed-parameter controllers which lack the flexibility and dynamics necessary in dealing with the nonlinear dynamics inherent in grids inserted with sources of renewable energy [6]. In contrast to this, the PV-STATCOM presents a useful double-edged benefit whereby active and reactive power can be generated as well as supplied even during non-power producing stages and hence making it a highly promising approach for today's power grids [7]. The application of soft computational techniques in the form of the integration of PSO and BFOA serves a basic function of enabling adaptive adjustment of the controllers ultimately contributing toward an enhancement in fault-ride-through capacity as well as system stability [8]. This review has an urgency of necessity, aimed at consolidating and bringing together the key developments made in PV-STATCOM system control. It targets the full evaluation of the effects on the multimachine system's stability of the achievements made in this area. Its aim also includes dealing with some areas not previously examined in depth, i.e., scalability and real-time adaptability of the systems.

1.3 Literature Review

The evolution of power system stability and control has been extensively studied, with early work by Kundur et al. [1] providing a foundational framework for classifying stability into rotor angle, voltage, and frequency categories. The authors highlighted the limitations of classical techniques in handling nonlinear dynamics, a challenge exacerbated by renewable integration. Hingorani and Gyugyi [2] introduced FACTS devices, emphasizing STATCOM's rapid reactive power compensation capabilities compared to traditional Static Var Compensators (SVCs). Acha et al. [9] advanced STATCOM modelling for load-flow and stability studies, enabling its integration into system planning tools. Bollen and Hassan [5] identified voltage regulation issues in high-PV-penetration networks, proposing inverter-based reactive power control as a solution, which laid the groundwork for PV-STATCOM concepts.

The PV-STATCOM paradigm was formalized by Varma et al. [3], who demonstrated that PV inverters could provide reactive power support during non-generating periods, enhancing grid stability without additional hardware. Guerrero et al. [10] extended this concept to microgrids, using droop-based control to emulate synchronous machine behaviour. Mukherjee et al. [7] developed a d-q reference frame control for PV-STATCOM, achieving improved voltage recovery during faults. However, these studies noted challenges in controller complexity and inverter thermal limits. Karanki et al. [11] introduced fuzzy logic-based STATCOM control, showing enhanced transient response in distribution systems, though rule-base design remained a limitation.

Soft computing techniques have transformed power system control by addressing nonlinearities and uncertainties. Kumar and Kothari [12] applied fuzzy logic controllers (FLC) to STATCOM, improving voltage stability under dynamic loads. Ghosh and Ledwich [13] utilized Artificial Neural Networks (ANNs) for STATCOM control, achieving faster signal tracking but facing data dependency issues. Genetic Algorithms (GAs) were explored by Karanki et al. [11] for optimizing fuzzy controller parameters, demonstrating faster convergence. Particle Swarm Optimization (PSO) gained traction for its simplicity, with Panda et al. [14] using PSO to mitigate sub synchronous resonance (SSR) in wind farms. Hybrid approaches, such as PSO-BFOA, were proposed by Mishra et al. [15], combining PSO's global search with BFOA's local chemotaxis for tuning PV-STATCOM controllers, yielding superior damping of oscillations.

Recent advancements include metaheuristic algorithms like Teaching-Learning-Based Optimization (TLBO) [16] and Whale Optimization Algorithm (WOA) [17] for SSR damping and controller tuning. Ant Colony Optimization (ACO) was applied by Roy et al. [18] to regulate STATCOM gate signals, enhancing low-frequency oscillation damping. BFOA-optimized Linear Quadratic Regulators (LQR) were explored by Gupta et al. [19] for wind power plants, showing robust SSR suppression. Hybrid GA-PSO and WOA-PSO algorithms were investigated by Kumar et al. [20] and Patel et al. [21] for load frequency control in PV-integrated grids, demonstrating improved convergence. Varma and Siavashi [22] highlighted PV-STATCOM's role in transmission systems, while Padiyar [8] emphasized coordinated control with energy storage. IEEE standards [23] and IEC guidelines [24] underscore the need for grid-compliant reactive power support, which PV-STATCOM addresses effectively.

II. CONCLUSION OF REVIEW

The reviewed literature underscores the transformative potential of PV-STATCOM in enhancing multimachine power system stability. STATCOM's rapid reactive power compensation, as established by [2], has been significantly augmented by PV integration, enabling active and reactive power support [3]. Soft computing techniques, particularly hybrid PSO-BFOA [15], have proven superior in adapting to nonlinear grid dynamics, reducing settling times, and improving damping ratios compared to traditional PI controllers. Metaheuristic algorithms like WOA, TLBO, and ACO further enhance controller performance, addressing issues like SSR and low-frequency oscillations [17], [16], [18]. However, challenges persist in controller complexity, scalability to larger networks, and real-time implementation, as noted by [6]. The integration of PV-STATCOM with energy storage and compliance with grid codes [23] are critical for practical deployment. Overall, the literature confirms PV-STATCOM's efficacy but highlights the need for further exploration of adaptive control and system-level integration.

III. RESEARCH GAPS IDENTIFIED

Despite significant progress, several research gaps remain:

- **Limited Adaptability of Controllers:** Most STATCOM and PV-STATCOM control strategies rely on PI controllers, which lack adaptability under varying grid conditions [6].
- **Comparative Analysis Deficiency:** Comprehensive comparisons of soft computing techniques (e.g., PSO-BFOA vs. WOA-PSO) for PV-STATCOM are scarce [15].
- **Non-Generating Period Operation:** PV-STATCOM performance during nighttime or low-irradiance conditions is underexplored [3].
- **Scalability to Larger Systems:** Most studies focus on small-scale systems like Kundur's two-area model, with limited evaluation in complex networks like IEEE 39-bus systems [1].
- **Cybersecurity and Communication:** The cybersecurity implications of PV-STATCOM in smart grids, including vulnerabilities in communication protocols, are rarely addressed [8].
- **Economic Feasibility:** Detailed cost-benefit analyses of PV-STATCOM deployment, considering installation and maintenance costs, are lacking [22].

IV. FUTURE SCOPE

To address the identified gaps, future research should focus on:

- **Advanced Optimization Algorithms:** Exploring algorithms like Grey Wolf Optimization (GWO) or Differential Evolution (DE) for faster convergence and robustness in PV-STATCOM controller tuning.
- **Energy Storage Integration:** Combining PV-STATCOM with energy storage systems (e.g., batteries, supercapacitors) to provide continuous support during low-irradiance periods.
- **Scalability Studies:** Validating PV-STATCOM performance in larger benchmark systems (e.g., IEEE 68-bus) to assess scalability and robustness.
- **Real-Time Implementation:** Conducting Hardware-in-the-Loop (HIL) testing to bridge the gap between simulation and practical deployment.
- **Cybersecurity Frameworks:** Developing secure communication protocols to protect PV-STATCOM systems in smart grids.
- **Economic Analysis:** Performing cost-benefit studies to evaluate the financial viability of PV-STATCOM deployment in diverse grid scenarios.
- **Environmental Variability:** Simulating PV-STATCOM under dynamic conditions (e.g., varying irradiance, temperature) to ensure consistent performance.

V. CONCLUSION

The integration of PV-STATCOM into multimachine power systems represents a significant advancement in addressing the stability challenges posed by high PV penetration. This review of 20–25 articles highlight the efficacy of soft computing techniques, particularly hybrid PSO-BFOA, in optimizing PV-STATCOM controllers for enhanced voltage regulation and transient stability. While significant progress has been made, gaps in controller adaptability, scalability, and cybersecurity necessitate further research. Future efforts should prioritize advanced algorithms, energy storage integration, and real-time validation to ensure PV-STATCOM's widespread adoption in modern grids. By addressing these challenges, PV-STATCOM can play a pivotal role in achieving resilient, sustainable, and efficient power systems.

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