

**EFFECTS OF SUPPLY VOLTAGE FREQUENCY ON PARTIAL DISCHARGE PATTERNS CONSIDERING DISCHARGE AREA**

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**Abstract**-Partial Discharge is a high frequency discharge phenomenon having a great deal of importance for electrical engineers, especially to those who are working with high voltages. Since last 20-30 years researchers have been working on PD simulation model and consequently different models on PD simulation have been proposed. However, there are areas in which the simulation model could be improved upon. In this paper, a model for Partial Discharge simulation is developed using Finite Difference Method (FDM). This model takes into account not only critical field intensity of PD occurrence ( $E_c$ ) and residual field intensity ( $E_r$ ) but also critical field intensity for discharge propagation along the void surface ( $E_s$ ) considering occurrence of partial discharge, extinction of PD and propagation of PD along void surface to be stochastic in nature. In this paper, a Plane-Plane electrodes system is considered and the void is chosen as rectangular parallelepiped. The novelty of this paper is to show how discharge areas affect the PD patterns with the change of supply voltage frequency.

**Key words**— Partial Discharge Simulation, Stochastic Parameters, Discharge area, Supply voltage frequency and Phase Resolved plot

**I. INTRODUCTION**

Electrical discharges that do not completely bridge the distance between two electrodes are known as partial discharges. An important reason for occurrence of partial discharges within solid insulator is the presence of gaseous voids, which act as weak parts of an insulator and initiate Partial Discharge (PD). Such discharges deposit free charges on the void surface. Depending upon the polarity of the applied field, the electric field produced by these free surface charges either inhibit or promote further discharges. PD causes degradation of insulating material [1,4], which in turn changes the conductivity of the void surface. The effect of such changes on phase resolved plots have been presented in [11]. PD patterns have been observed to be turtle-like [3] and wing-like (or triangle-like) for electrical trees [5-6]. The shape of PD patterns also changes with material aging [7-8]. The turtle-like pattern was found considering the effect of time lag of PD [3]. The PD behavior in an artificial single channel was studied in [9] to show the growth of tree along the channel. Partial discharges within voids under square voltages were also reported in [12]. Effect of discharge area on PD patterns was discussed in [13]. Influence of high voltage harmonics on PD patterns were studied by the authors of [15].

To study PD mechanism, it is essential to accurately compute the electric field distribution within the specimen, which is done by using FDM in this work. Phase resolved plots ( $\phi$ - $q$ ) have been obtained at different supply frequencies and also for different values of critical field for discharge propagation. The changes in the shape of PD pattern (shape of phase resolved plot) and the amount of charge released during PD with the change supply frequency considering variable discharge area are studied in details in this work. A turtle-like PD pattern with periodicity is obtained in which stochastic variation of the PD magnitude is reflected.

**II. CHARGE DISTRIBUTION DUE TO PD AND CONCEPT OF DISCHARGE AREA**

As per [13], [16] & [17], charge released during PD depends on electric field intensity across the two opposite void surfaces ( $E$ ) at the time of discharge, residual field intensity ( $E_r$ ) and discharge area ( $A$ ). The part of void surface area where the discharge channel can propagate at the time of partial discharge occurrence is called discharge area. The surface area of the void plays an important role in the determination of discharge area. If the surface area is large, the probability of discharge area being large is also high. For a particular void surface area if the magnitude of  $E_s$  is low, the discharge channel can cover larger area on the void surface. Thus the effective value of  $A$  (discharge area) increases causing higher instantaneous charge release during PD.

### III. FDM BASED PD MODELING AND SIMULATED MODEL

The model for PD simulation has been developed using FDM. The corresponding equations and boundary conditions are taken from [13-17]. After computing electric potential using those equations, electric field intensity has been calculated across and along the void surface. In this work, a rectangular parallelepiped void has been considered to be placed inside a rectangular parallelepiped insulator with Plane-Plane electrode arrangement. Fig.1 shows the electrode-insulator-void configuration used in this simulation. The mesh used in the simulation is a three-dimensional one of size  $(60 \times 60 \times 10)$  units. The electrode separation is taken as 10 units. One unit in the mesh corresponds to 0.2 mm. The void dimension is  $(10 \times 10 \times 2)$  units. Relative permittivity ( $\epsilon_r$ ) of the dielectric is taken as 4. The peak value of the power frequency sinusoidal applied voltage is 20 kV.

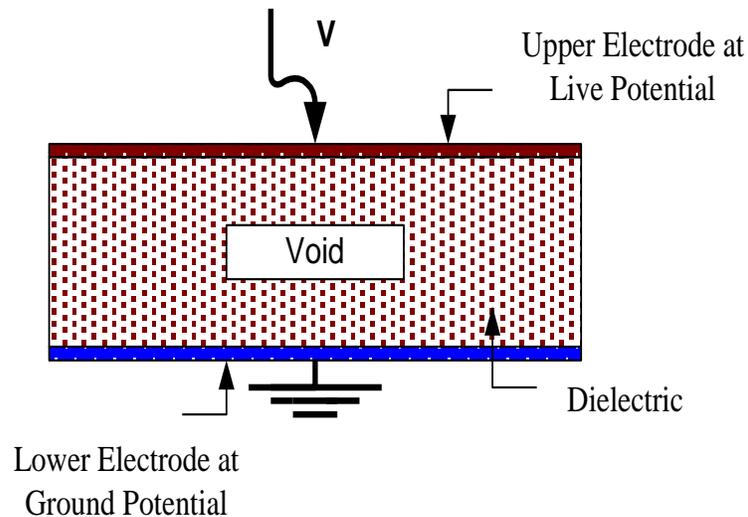


Figure 1. Electrode-insulator configurations considered for PD simulation

### IV. INTRODUCTION OF STOCHASTIC PROPERTIES TO THE MODEL

The stochastic features of PD occurrence and extinction have been introduced to this model by few equations mentioned in [18], where probability of PD occurrence has been considered to be a sigmoid function of over voltage across the void surface. The nature of the sigmoid function can be controlled by two parameters  $K_{sig}$  and  $K$ . In this work the values of those two parameters have been considered to be 100 and 1.5 respectively. The stochastic nature of discharge propagation along the void surface is introduced in this model by Eqn. 1. Once the conditions for discharge are satisfied, a discharge channel initiates from one surface of the void and moves towards the opposite surface of the void in the direction of the applied field. After reaching the opposite surface of the void, it is assumed that, the discharge channel can propagate along the void surface in any direction according to the field at those directions. This process is assumed to be instantaneous and the propagation of the discharge channel along the void surface is restricted by the parameter  $E_s$  (critical field intensity for discharge propagation along the void surface). In this work,  $E_s$  is the magnitude of the electric field in the directions normal to the applied field along the void surface, above which discharge can propagate along the void surface. This propagation of the discharge channel along the void surface is also assumed to be probabilistic in nature. The probability of discharge propagation along the void surface between any node  $(x, y, z)$  and  $(x+1, y, z)$  is given by Eqn.1, where  $E_{x+1, y, z}$  is the field between the nodes  $(x, y, z)$  and  $(x+1, y, z)$ , and  $p_s(E)$  is the probability of discharge propagation between these two nodes. The value of  $x$  and  $y$  in this equation varies within the perimeter of the top and bottom surface of the void. This equation is valid only when field intensities in all the four directions are greater than  $E_s$ . Fig.2 shows how discretisation of the total dielectric material has been done to develop FDM equations. Apart from the direction in which this probability has to be calculated, if the field intensities in any one or more of the remaining three directions are less than  $E_s$ , then those field intensity terms should be assumed to be zero in the denominator of the Eqn.1. From the expression it is evident that for a particular value of  $E_s$ , the probability of discharge to propagate along any direction along the void surface is high when the field in that direction is much higher than  $E_s$  compared to that in all other directions. In other words, when the value of  $E_s$  is much below the magnitude of field intensity along the void surface then  $p_s(E)$  becomes high and therefore majority of the discharges can

propagate far away from the discharge site causing release of charge of comparatively higher amplitude. It is just the opposite when  $E_s$  is close to the value of field intensity along the void surface. For any moderate value of  $E_s$ , some of the discharge channels can propagate and some are not, therefore during such discharges smaller to moderate amount of charges are released. In other words, larger variation in the released charge magnitudes is possible during such discharges.

$$P_s(E) = \frac{(E_{x+1,y,z} - E_s)}{(E_{x+1,y,z} + E_{x-1,y,z} + E_{x,y+1,z} + E_{x,y-1,z})} \quad (1)$$

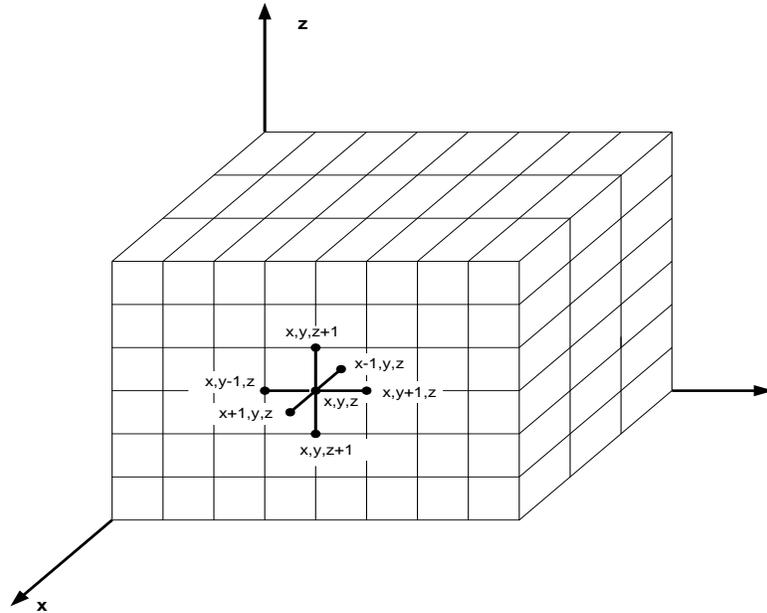


Figure 2. Discretisation of the total dielectric material into three dimensional meshes

#### IV. ANALYSIS OF SIMULATED RESULTS

The time period corresponding to 50 Hz frequency of the applied sinusoidal voltage is divided into 2000 discretetime intervals. Results in the form of phaseresolved plots ( $\phi$ - $q$ ) have been obtained, which show the effects of  $E_s$  and supply frequency on PD patterns.

The effect of different values of  $E_s$  can be observed from Fig.3-6. The corresponding variation in the average number of discharge taking place per half cycle is presented in Table 1, where average number of discharge per half cycle is equal to total number of discharge in a half cycle divided by 180 degree. With the decrease in the value of  $E_s$ , discharge can propagate far away from the discharge channel along the void surface, which would increase the discharge area. Conversely, with the increase in the value of  $E_s$ , the probability of discharge propagation along the surface of the void decreases and hence the average number of discharge per half cycle increases. That is why with increase of  $E_s$ , the denseness of the phaseresolved plots increases and the magnitude of released charge pulses decreases, which can also be observed from the phaseresolved plots in Fig.3-6. All those phaseresolved plots obtained by varying  $E_s$  are almost like turtle and closely resemble the experimental results of [3],[8] & [11] in terms of shape of PD pattern. The phaseresolved plot in Fig.5 & 6, which show comparatively lesser amount of instantaneous released charge magnitude compared to that in Fig.3&4, which is almost identical to the phase resolved obtained by the authors of [8], which is referred as swarming pulsive micro discharge (SPMD). From the density of the points on the phase resolved plots, it may be observed that for a particular size of void the number of discharge increases and released charge magnitude decreases with increase of  $E_s$ . Consequently, the time lag between two consecutive discharges decreases and as a result average number of discharge over half cycle increases, which may also be observed from Table 1.

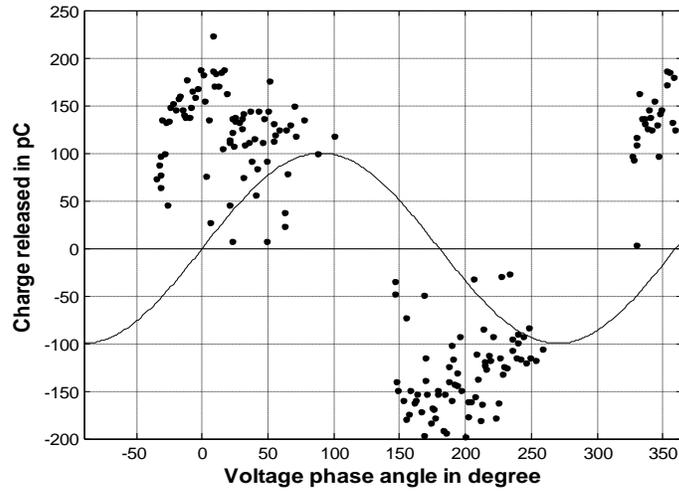


Figure 3. Phaseresolved plot for void dimension (10x10x2) units,  $E_s=0.1\text{kV/mm}$  and relative permittivity:  $\epsilon_{r1}=4$  and applied voltage 20kV peak.

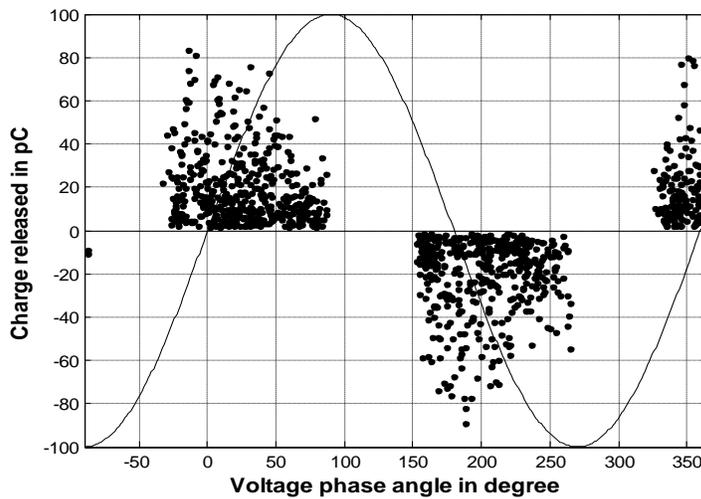


Figure 4. Phaseresolved plot for void dimension (10x10x2) units,  $E_s=0.5\text{kV/mm}$  and relative permittivity:  $\epsilon_{r1}=4$  and applied voltage 20kV peak.

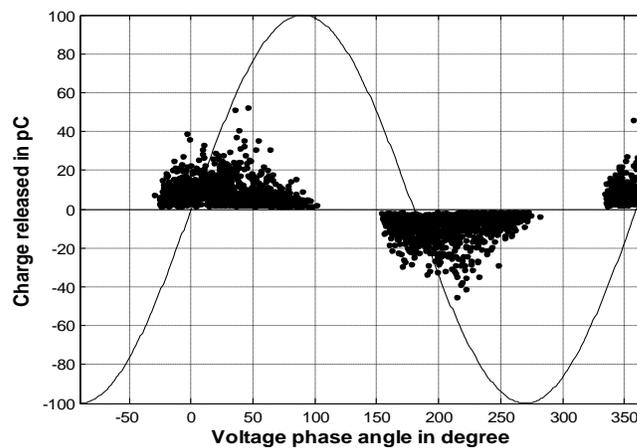


Figure 5. Phaseresolved plot for void dimension (10x10x2) units,  $E_s=1\text{kV/mm}$ , relative permittivity:  $\epsilon_{r1}=4$  and applied voltage 20kV peak.

$\epsilon_r=4$  and applied voltage 20kV peak.

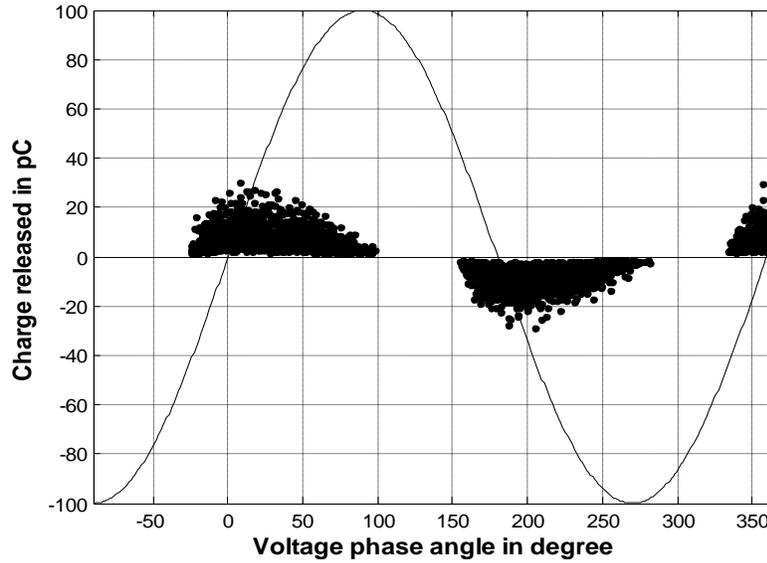


Figure 6. Phase resolved plot for void dimension  $(10 \times 10 \times 2)$  units,  $E_s = 2 \text{ kV/mm}$ , relative permittivity:  $\epsilon_r = 4$  and applied voltage 20kV peak.

Table 1. Average number of discharge vs. critical field intensity for discharge propagation along the void surface ( $E_s$ ) with relative permittivity:  $\epsilon_r = 4$

| $E_s$ in kV/mm | Average number of discharge per half cycle |
|----------------|--|
| 0.5            | 3.38                                       |
| 0.6            | 4.46                                       |
| 0.70           | 4.70                                       |
| 0.80           | 5.20                                       |
| 0.90           | 5.41                                       |
| 1.0            | 5.41                                       |

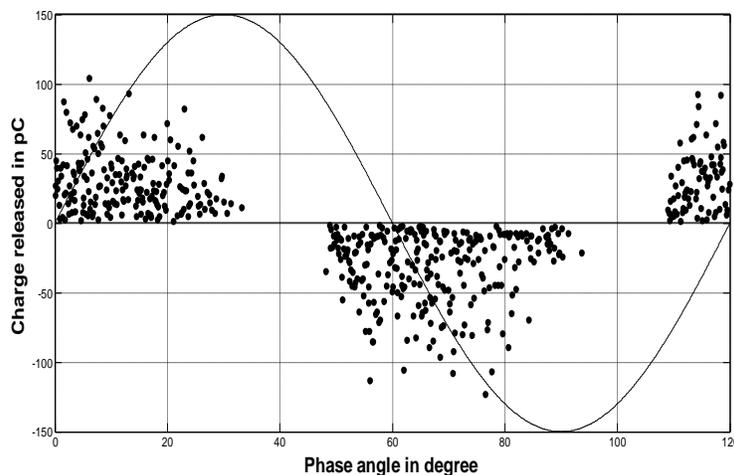


Figure 7. Phase resolved plot for void dimension  $(10 \times 10 \times 2)$  units,  $E_s = 0.5 \text{ kV/mm}$ , relative permittivity:

$\epsilon_r I = 4$  and applied voltage 20kV peak, supply frequency 150 Hz.

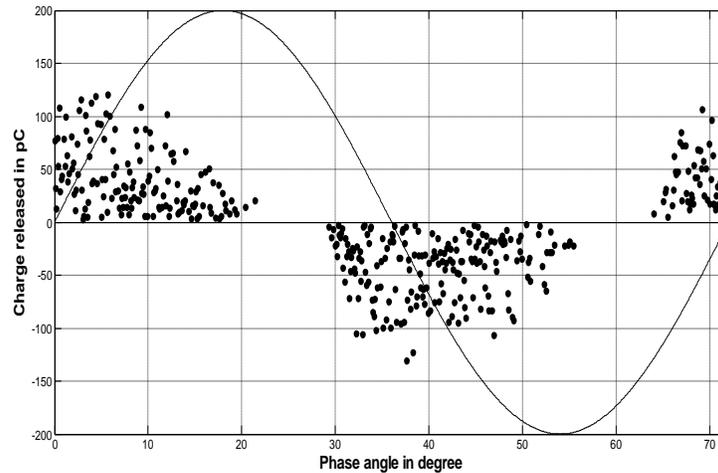


Figure 8. Phaseresolved plot for void dimension  $(10 \times 10 \times 2)$  units,  $E_s = 0.5$  kV/mm, relative permittivity:  $\epsilon_r I = 4$  and applied voltage 20kV peak, supply frequency 250 Hz.

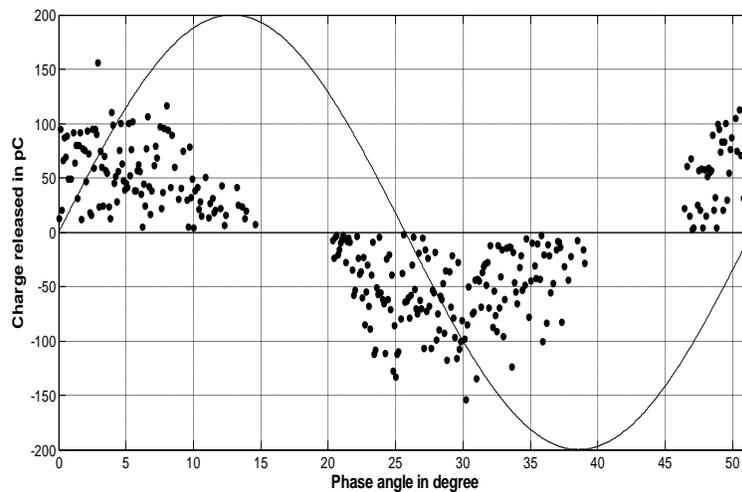


Figure 9. Phaseresolved plot for void dimension  $(10 \times 10 \times 2)$  units,  $E_s = 0.5$  kV/mm, relative permittivity:  $\epsilon_r I = 4$  and applied voltage 20kV peak, supply frequency 350 Hz.

The effect of supply frequency on PD patterns are studied by setting the supply frequency 150, 250 & 350 Hz, respectively, keeping the supply voltage magnitude same. Phase resolved plot at those frequencies are shown in Fig. 7-9. From these three figures, it may be observed that with the increase in supply frequency, number of points on the phase resolved plot with higher magnitude increases and lower magnitude decreases with the increase in the supply frequency. With the increase in the supply frequency the slope of the voltage waveform increases, as a result, the probability of discharge at higher field intensity also increases. In other words, the difference between  $E_c$  and the actual field intensity at which discharge take place increases, which in turn increases the instantaneous magnitude of released charge. Apart from this, for high frequency supply the field along the surface of the void also becomes high during discharge, which enhances the magnitude of the discharge area and as a result, the released charge magnitude gets increased. As a consequence, the time lag between two consecutive discharges increases, which in turn reduces the denseness of the charge pulses. The simulation results presented in this paper for different supply frequencies tally with the results obtained by the previous researchers [12].

The result of the present work clearly indicates the effect of discharge area on PD patterns. In the case of higher supply frequency as the

discharge take place at a comparatively higher electric field, the probability of those discharges to cover more area on the void surface is also high, which in turn causes release of higher magnitudes of charge during PD.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS

This proposed FDM-based model is capable of simulating inception, extinction and shape of PD patterns for different sizes of void embedded in dielectric material. The effects of varying discharge area with supply frequency have been shown in this work. This work is restricted to streamer like discharges with the assumption that the conductivity of the void surface is negligible. The stochastic nature of PD for streamer like discharge is reflected in simulation results, which tally closely with the experimental results of previous researchers. Future aim is to develop this model to study the PD patterns for different types of voltage waveform considering the conductivity of the dielectric material of the void surface.

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