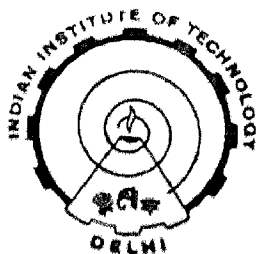


STUDIES ON THE PROPAGATION CHARACTERISTICS OF SINGLE MODE OPTICAL WAVEGUIDES

by
PRASANNA KUMAR MISHRA

Thesis submitted
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY



Department of Physics
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, DELHI
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TO
MY
PARENTS

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled, "STUDIES ON THE PROPAGATION CHARACTERISTICS OF SINGLE-MODE OPTICAL WAVEGUIDES," being submitted by Mr. Prasanna Kumar Mishra to the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi for the award of the degree of DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY, is a record of bonafide research work carried out by him. Mr. Prasanna Kumar Mishra has worked under our guidance and supervision and has fulfilled the requirements which to our knowledge have reached the requisite standard for the submission of this thesis. The results contained in this thesis have not been submitted in part or full to any other University or Institute for the award of any degree or diploma.

J. C. Goyal
(PROF. I.C. GOYAL)
Physics Department,
Indian Institute of
Technology,
New Delhi - 110016,
INDIA

Anurag Sharma
(DR. ANURAG SHARMA)
Lecturer,
Physics Department
Indian Institute of Technology
New Delhi - 110016,
INDIA

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Prasanna K. Mishra

(PRASANNA KUMAR MISHRA)

ABSTRACT

Single-mode optical fibers and integrated optical waveguides are finding increasing applications in optical communication, optical signal processing and optical sensing. As a consequence, a larger number of models and methods have been developed to study the propagation characteristics of optical fibers and optical waveguides. We propose a new model - the cosine-exponential (CE) model-which gives moderate to high accuracy for most of the single-mode optical waveguides. Further, this form of the trial function allows one to define an equivalent guiding structure (EGS), which has propagation characteristics very closely similar to those of the actual waveguide. The EGS comprises of homogeneous slab waveguides and hence the evaluation of splice loss, waveguide excitation efficiency, directional coupling characteristics etc, is greatly simplified.

We describe the model and compare its accuracy with that obtained using other methods and establish the superiority of the present model. The method to use the equivalent guiding structure for analysing other characteristics of the waveguide and devices based on them is also discussed. Next, we show the applicability of this model to different types of single-mode waveguides.

In particular, we consider homogeneous rectangular and channel waveguides; inhomogeneous planar and diffused channel waveguides; elliptical-core and circular-core fibers. The model gives better accuracy than the existing approximate methods and models except for the case of circular-core fibers, for which more accurate models are available. However, even in the case of circular-core fibers, the present model gives better accuracy than the widely used Gaussian approximation. Further, the EGS, as defined by the CE-model, is used to study other related problems. For example, the fundamental vector modes of a waveguide are well approximated by the vector modes of its EGS, which are very easy to obtain. The problem of directional coupling between two fibers or integrated optical waveguides reduces to the problem of two parallel slab waveguides (of the EGS) which is almost analytically solvable.

The above model, though it works extremely well for most of the optical waveguides as far as the field distribution propagation constant of the fundamental mode and other related characteristics are concerned, it does not give sufficient accuracy for studying dispersion characteristics in single-mode fibers. Hence, one either uses numerical techniques or makes use of approximate methods. We have developed a numerical method

of solving the scalar wave equation for W-type fibers. The method is employed to compute the chromatic dispersion of a graded-core W-type fiber exhibiting two zero dispersion wavelengths, and to study the dependence of chromatic dispersion on various fiber parameters which is essential to design such fibers for Wavelength Division Multiplex (WDM) transmission systems. We also discuss the advantages of a graded-core W-type fiber over a homogeneous-core fiber. The numerical method used above does not provide a closed form expression for the transverse modal field of the W-type fiber. Hence, we approximate the fundamental mode of such fibers by the Gaussian - exponential model (which has been successfully used in the past to study the propagation characteristics of single-clad fibers) and evaluate the various propagation parameters with a considerable good accuracy in comparison to the Gaussian model.

Finally, we give a simple method to estimate propagation constants of modes in absorbing waveguides. The method is based on the transformation of the scalar wave equation into a matrix eigenvalue problem and is applicable to waveguides with arbitrary refractive index profiles, in contrast to earlier methods, which were restricted to step index profiles.

CONTENTS

<u>CHAPTER</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
1 INTRODUCTION	1
2 THE COSINE-EXPONENTIAL MODEL FOR SINGLE-MODE WAVEGUIDES	14
2.1 Introduction	14
2.2 Basic Equations	15
2.3 The cosine-exponential (CE) Model	19
2.4 Comparison with Other Models	20
2.5 The Equivalent Guiding Structure (EGS)	24
2.6 Summary	27
3 APPLICATIONS OF THE CE-MODEL : HOMOGENEOUS RECTANGULAR WAVEGUIDES	29
3.1 Introduction	29
3.2 Existing Methods for the Analysis of Rectangular Waveguides	29
3.3 The Scalar Mode and The Equivalent Guiding Structure	31
3.4 The Vector Modes	36
3.5 Directional Coupler	39
3.6 Summary	42
4 APPLICATIONS OF THE CE-MODEL : INHOMO- GENEOUS INTEGRATED OPTICAL WAVEGUIDES	43
4.1 Introduction	43
4.2 Inhomogeneous Planar Waveguides	43
4.2.1 Variational Analysis for TE_0 Mode	46
4.2.2 Equivalent Waveguide and TM_0 Mode	53

4.2.3	Coupling Characteristics of Indiffused Waveguides	56
4.3	Two Dimensional Diffused Channel Waveguides	58
4.4	Summary and Conclusion	62
5	APPLICATIONS OF THE CE-MODEL : ELLIPTICAL AND CIRCULAR-CORE FIBERS	64
5.1	Introduction	64
5.2	Elliptical Fibers	65
5.3	Circular Fibers	69
5.4	Summary	73
6	DISPERSION CALCULATIONS IN SINGLE-MODE GRADED-CORE W-TYPE FIBERS	74
6.1	Introduction	74
6.2	Numerical Solution of the Scalar Wave Equation	76
6.3	Numerical Results and Discussion	80
6.4	Summary	83
7	SCALAR VARIATIONAL ANALYSIS OF SINGLE-MODE GRADED-CORE W-TYPE FIBERS	85
7.1	Introduction	85
7.2	Analysis	87
7.3	Numerical Results and Comparison	92
7.4	Summary	94
8	PROPAGATION CHARACTERISTICS OF ABSORBING WAVEGUIDES BY MATRIX METHOD	95
8.1	Introduction	95

8.2	Theory	96
8.3	Numerical Results and Discussion	100
8.4	Summary	101
APPENDICES		102
REFERENCES		114