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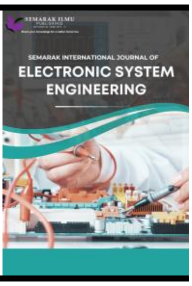

Optimizing the Pump Power and Frequencies of Raman Amplifiers for Gain Flatness

Danny Tan Ling Choon[1], Azura Hamzah[1,*], Ahmad Haziq Aiman Rosol[1], Mahroof Mohamed Mafroos[2]

[1] Department of Electronic Systems Engineering Malaysia-Japan International Institute of Technology (MJIIT) Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) Jalan Sultan Yahya Petra, 54100 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
[2] Division of Electrical, Electronics and Telecommunication Engineering Technology, Institute of Technology University of Moratuwa, Sri Lanka, India

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ABSTRACT

The Internet has become an indispensable part of daily life, accessible to anyone with coverage via smartphones or computers. Extending internet coverage to remote areas necessitates long-distance transmission, which requires optical amplifiers to combat signal degradation and dispersion between the transmitter and receiver. This challenge restricts the reach and bandwidth of long-distance telecommunications. Among optical amplifiers, the Raman amplifier (RA) stands out due to its lower noise gain advantage compared to other amplifiers. The RA shows promise in overcoming the limitations of long-distance telecommunications. Its gain can be controlled by adjusting the pump power or wavelength. This paper investigates the performance optimization of RA with the objective of enhancing its effectiveness in long-distance telecommunication systems. Using the Optiwave simulation tool, we conducted a series of experiments to optimize RA performance by varying pump power and frequency. The results, analyzed through a spectrum analyzer, demonstrate significant improvements in gain flatness post-optimization, with an observed enhancement of 1-1.5 dB. A comparative analysis of gain flatness before and after optimization highlights the RA's potential in mitigating long-distance communication limitations. These findings suggest that optimized RA can significantly improve bandwidth and signal quality, offering a viable solution for current and future telecommunication challenges.

1. Introduction

The Internet has become an essential medium for connecting people worldwide. Daily, individuals use the Internet in various forms, including mobile cellular data, wireless networks, or wired connections through their smartphones, personal computers, tablets, and smart televisions. Today, the Internet serves as a primary source of entertainment and convenience, facilitating activities such as streaming, online gaming, shopping, and virtual meetings [1-3]. With the transition from copper

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[*] *Corresponding author.*
E-mail address: azurahamzah@utm.my

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cables to fiber optics, the method of data transfer has evolved to accommodate the increasing demand for higher transmission capacities, exemplified by the need for 500 Gbps internet speeds [4-6]. As the world advances towards the Internet of Things (IoT), technological progress accelerates, enabling faster electronic data processing and necessitating higher transmission capacities or faster internet speeds. IoT aims to achieve real-time updates with minimal delay, yet several challenges hinder its widespread adoption. One significant challenge is ensuring internet connectivity in remote or poorly infrastructure areas, where constructing transmission links is often difficult [7].

A telecommunication system transmits information over distances, and optical fiber transmission has become the preferred method for communication systems due to its high transmission capacity. In optical fiber transmission, an optical transmitter converts electrical input signals into corresponding optical signals, launching them into optical fibers that serve as communication channels. However, signal strength degrades over distance, leading to transmission loss. To address this issue, optoelectronic repeaters are used, but they complicate and increase the cost of wavelength-division multiplexed (WDM) systems. An alternative approach is employing optical amplifiers to amplify the optical signal without converting it to an electrical signal, although this method can introduce higher noise levels [8,9].

Erbium-doped fiber amplifiers (EDFAs) are a cornerstone technology for long-distance optical fiber transmission systems. EDFAs use a length of optical fiber doped with erbium ions as the gain medium. When this fiber is pumped with light from a laser, typically at wavelengths of 980 nm or 1480 nm, the erbium ions are excited to a higher energy state [10,11]. As the signal to be amplified passes through the doped fiber, it stimulates the erbium ions to release their stored energy as additional signal photons, thus amplifying the signal. EDFAs are favoured because of their high gain, low noise, and the fact that they can amplify light in the 1550 nm wavelength region, which is the standard for long-haul telecommunications. This makes EDFAs particularly suitable for use in dense wavelength-division multiplexing (DWDM) systems, where multiple signal wavelengths are transmitted simultaneously through a single fiber [12-14].

However, EDFAs have limitations. As the signal travels through the amplifier, spontaneous emission from the erbium ions can add noise, degrading the signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) [15]. Moreover, the concentration of erbium ions in the fiber directly affects the amplification process [16]. High ion concentration can result in pair-induced quenching effects, reducing amplifier efficiency and limiting achievable gain. Additionally, the interaction between different modes in erbium-doped fibers can influence EDFA performance. Investigations on amplification sharing of non-degenerate modes in few-mode erbium-doped fibers have shown potential energy savings by using a single amplifier supporting multiple modes [17]. In terms of operational bandwidth, EDFAs can effectively amplify signals over a range of approximately 1530 nm to 1565 nm, known as the C-band. However, for applications requiring broader bandwidths, other types of amplifiers, such as Raman amplifiers, are considered due to their ability to amplify signals over a wider range of wavelengths.

Raman amplifiers (RAs) offer a compelling alternative to traditional Erbium-doped fiber amplifiers (EDFAs) due to several advantages [18]. One key advantage of RAs is that every fiber inherently possesses Raman gain, allowing for cost-effective upgrades and scalability within optical communication systems [19]. This intrinsic Raman gain feature eliminates the need for additional doping or complex structures, simplifying the amplification process and reducing associated costs. This inherent gain also enables flexibility in system design and expansion, making RAs a versatile option for evolving network requirements. In contrast to the resonant gain in EDFAs, the gain in Raman amplifiers is non-resonant and available across the fiber's transparency range 5. This non-resonant nature of Raman gain allows for amplification of signals at various wavelengths without the limitations imposed by resonant peaks, enhancing the versatility and applicability of RAs in diverse optical communication scenarios [20]. The broad transparency range of Raman gain contributes to the potential for wavelength-agnostic amplification, accommodating different signal wavelengths within a single amplifier setup. Furthermore, the gain spectrum of RAs can be easily adjusted by modifying the pump wavelengths, offering a high degree of tunability and control over the amplification process. By selecting specific pump wavelengths, operators can tailor the gain spectrum to match the system requirements, enabling customized amplification profiles for different signal channels. This flexibility in adjusting the gain spectrum allows for the optimization of optical bandwidth and the achievement of improved gain flatness through strategic pump distribution, enhancing overall system performance and signal quality [21].

This project aims to investigate the performance optimization of Raman amplifiers (RAs) to enhance long-distance telecommunications. By utilizing the Optiwave simulation tool, the study will explore various parameters, including pump power and frequency, to optimize RA performance. The anticipated outcomes include significant improvements in gain flatness and reduced noise levels, potentially mitigating the limitations of current long-distance communication systems. This research seeks to contribute to the development of more efficient and cost-effective telecommunication infrastructures, aligning with the increasing demands of IoT and future technological advancements.

2. Methodology

The primary tool used in this project is the OptiSystem simulation software, a comprehensive design suite for optical communication systems. OptiSystem is well-suited for this study on Raman amplifiers due to its extensive range of tools and components for modeling and simulating fiber optics, free space optics, and integrated optics systems. The simulation setup began with selecting OptiSystem for its robust simulation capabilities and its ability to model complex optical systems with high precision. The software includes a library of components necessary for designing and simulating Raman amplifiers, such as optical fibers, pump lasers, and signal sources. The Raman amplifier design aimed to achieve gain flattening through multi-wavelength pumping, which is critical for ensuring consistent amplification across different signal wavelengths, minimizing signal distortion, and improving overall system performance.

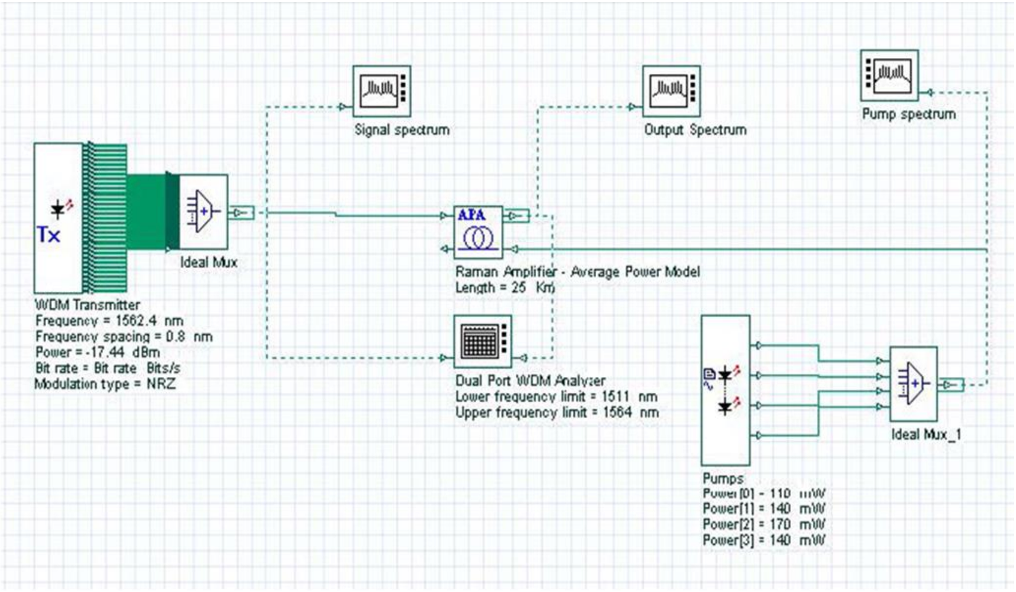
The configuration of the components involved setting up the optical fiber with parameters like length, attenuation, and dispersion to closely match real-world conditions. The intrinsic Raman gain characteristics of the fiber were utilized without additional doping, leveraging the natural properties of the fiber for amplification. Multiple pump lasers with varying wavelengths and power levels were incorporated into the design. The selection of pump wavelengths is crucial as it directly impacts the gain profile of the amplifier. The pump wavelengths were chosen to span the transparency range of the fiber, ensuring broad coverage and effective gain flattening.

The optimization process began with an initial configuration where a set of pump wavelengths and power levels was selected based on theoretical calculations and previous research. These parameters were input into the OptiSystem software to create a baseline simulation. The gain flattening optimization process in OptiSystem was then employed to fine-tune the pump wavelengths and power levels. This process involves iterative simulations where the software adjusts the parameters to achieve the desired gain profile. The optimization aims to produce a flat gain across the target wavelength range, minimizing variations that could degrade signal quality. Multiple simulation runs were conducted to refine the amplifier design, with each run providing feedback on the gain profile, signal-to-noise ratio (SNR), and other performance metrics. The results were analyzed to identify the optimal configuration that meets the amplifier criteria, including required gain, signal level, and the number of permissible pump channels. The performance evaluation involved analyzing the gain profile of the optimized Raman amplifier using a spectrum analyzer within the OptiSystem software.

This analysis helped visualize the gain flattening achieved and identify any residual peaks or troughs. The SNR was measured to evaluate the amplifier's performance in maintaining signal integrity, with a high SNR indicating effective amplification with minimal noise addition. The performance of the optimized Raman amplifier was compared with a standard EDFA configuration to highlight the advantages of Raman amplification, particularly in terms of gain flatness and wavelength versatility.

The simulation results demonstrated significant improvements in gain flatness with the optimized multi-wavelength pumped Raman amplifier. The gain profile closely matched the target, ensuring consistent amplification across the desired wavelength range. The SNR measurements confirmed that the optimization process effectively minimized noise, enhancing the overall performance of the amplifier. The comparative analysis underscored the benefits of Raman amplifiers over EDFAs, particularly their ability to provide non-resonant gain across a broad transparency range. This versatility makes Raman amplifiers a promising solution for next-generation optical communication systems, capable of supporting high-capacity and wavelength-agnostic networks.

By utilizing OptiSystem's advanced simulation and optimization tools, this project successfully designed a Raman amplifier with flattened gain, demonstrating its potential to overcome the limitations of traditional amplification methods and meet the evolving demands of optical networks. The configuration of Raman amplifier setup as shown in the Figure 1.



WDM Transmitter
Frequency = 1562.4 nm
Frequency spacing = 0.8 nm
Power = -17.44 dBm
Bit rate = Bit rate Bits/s
Modulation type = NRZ

Raman Amplifier - Average Power Model
Length = 25 Km

Dual Port WDM Analyzer
Lower frequency limit = 1511 nm
Upper frequency limit = 1564 nm

Pumps
Power[0] - 110 mW
Power[1] = 140 mW
Power[2] = 170 mW
Power[3] = 140 mW

Fig. 1. Configuration of Raman amplifier setup

3. Results

This section presents the results and analysis of the initial setting, optimized setting, and system stability, followed by a comparison of the results obtained.

3.1 Initial Setting

The gain ripples before optimization were observed using an optical spectrum analyzer, as shown in Figure 2.

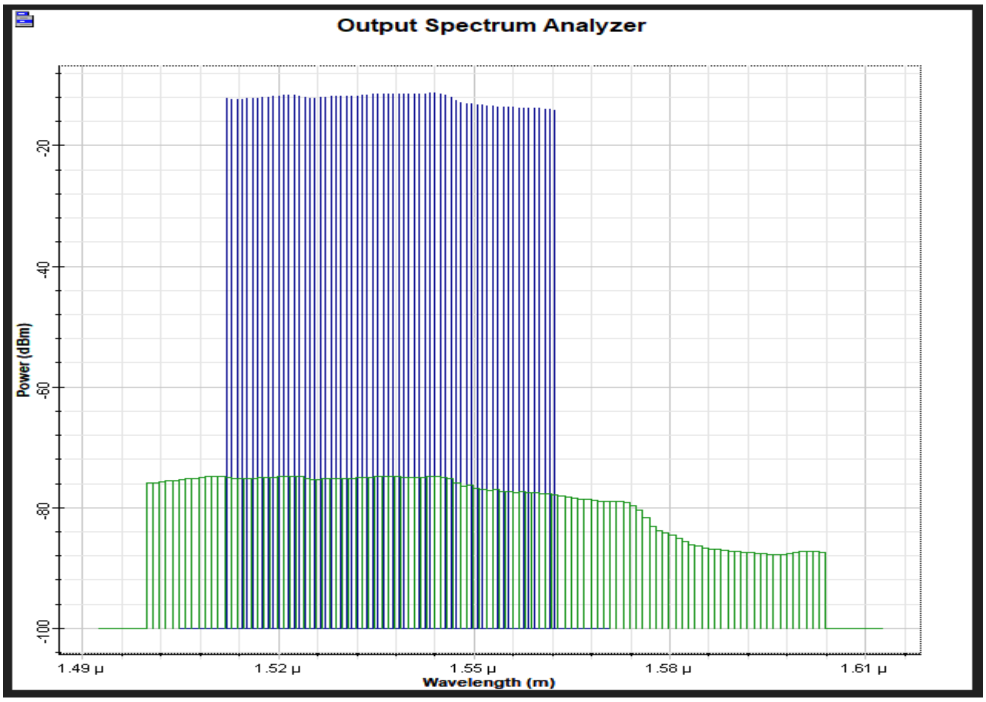


Fig. 2. Output power spectrum for initial configuration

From the dual-port WDM analyzer, the gain was measured, resulting in a gain flatness of about 2.83 dB, obtained from the difference between the highest power gain and the lowest power gain, as shown in Figure 3. The highest gain and the lowest gain obtained from the initial configuration were 8.74 dB and 5.91 dB, respectively. The total gain achieved through the simulation was 7.80 dB.

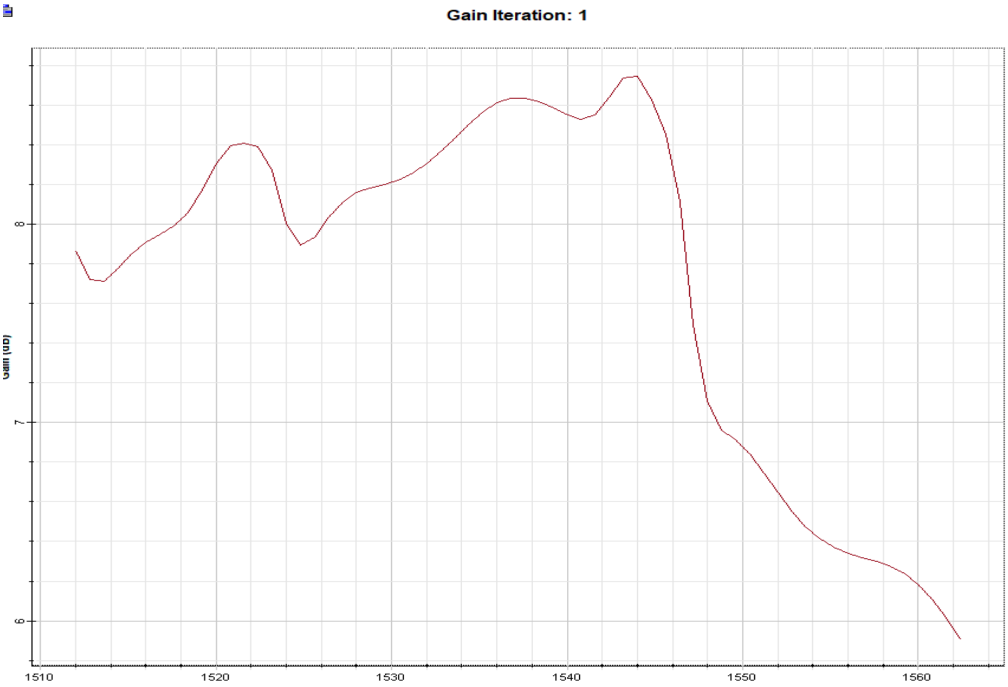


Fig. 3. Output gain for initial configuration

3.2 Optimization Configuration

The aim of the optimization was to reduce the gain ripples from 2.83 dB. To achieve this, Multi-Parameter Optimization (MPO) was applied with a target gain of 10 dB while running the simulation. The gain ripples with the optimized setup, as obtained from the optical spectrum analyzer, are shown in Figure 4.

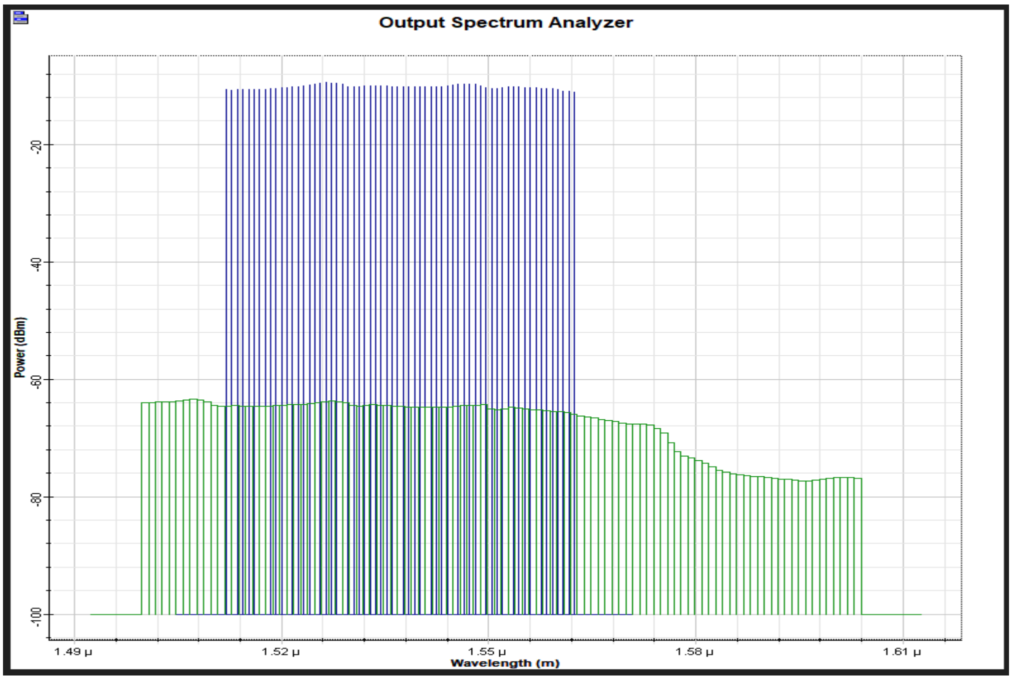


Fig. 4. Output power spectrum for optimize configuration

From the dual-port WDM analyzer, the gain was measured, resulting in a gain flatness of about 1.68 dB, obtained from the difference between the highest power gain and the lowest power gain, as shown in Figure 5. The lowest gain and the highest gain obtained from the optimized configuration were 8.87 dB and 10.55 dB, respectively. The total gain achieved through the simulation was 9.81 dB, which is closer to the target value of 10 dB.

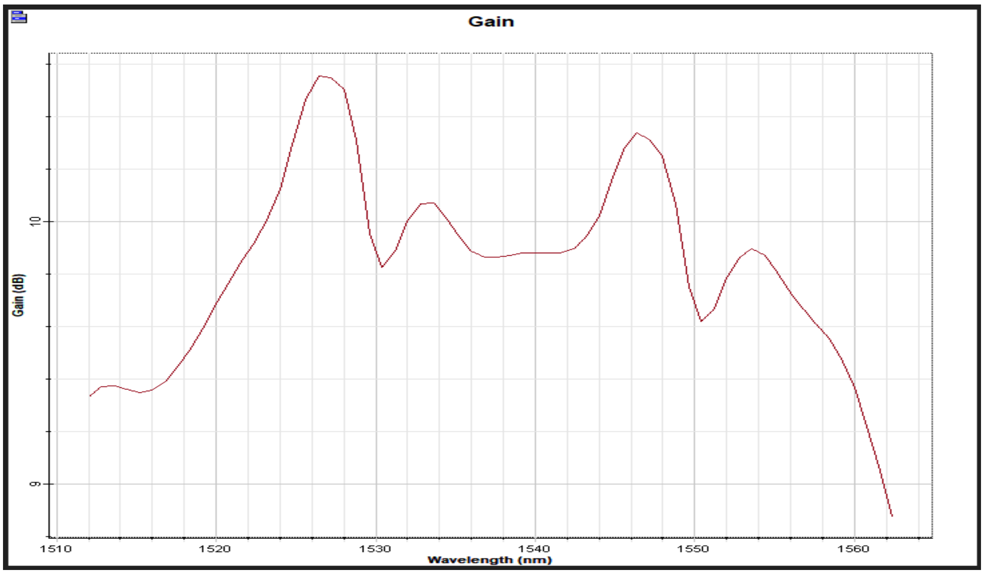


Fig. 5. Output gain for optimize configuration

3.3 Power Sweep Test

In this simulation, the pump power values were varied for 100 iterations while keeping the same frequency values as the initial setting. The purpose of this experiment was to test the system's stability. As shown in Figure 6, the graph demonstrates consistent gain throughout the 100 iterations, proving the system's stability and reducing error possibilities during the simulation.

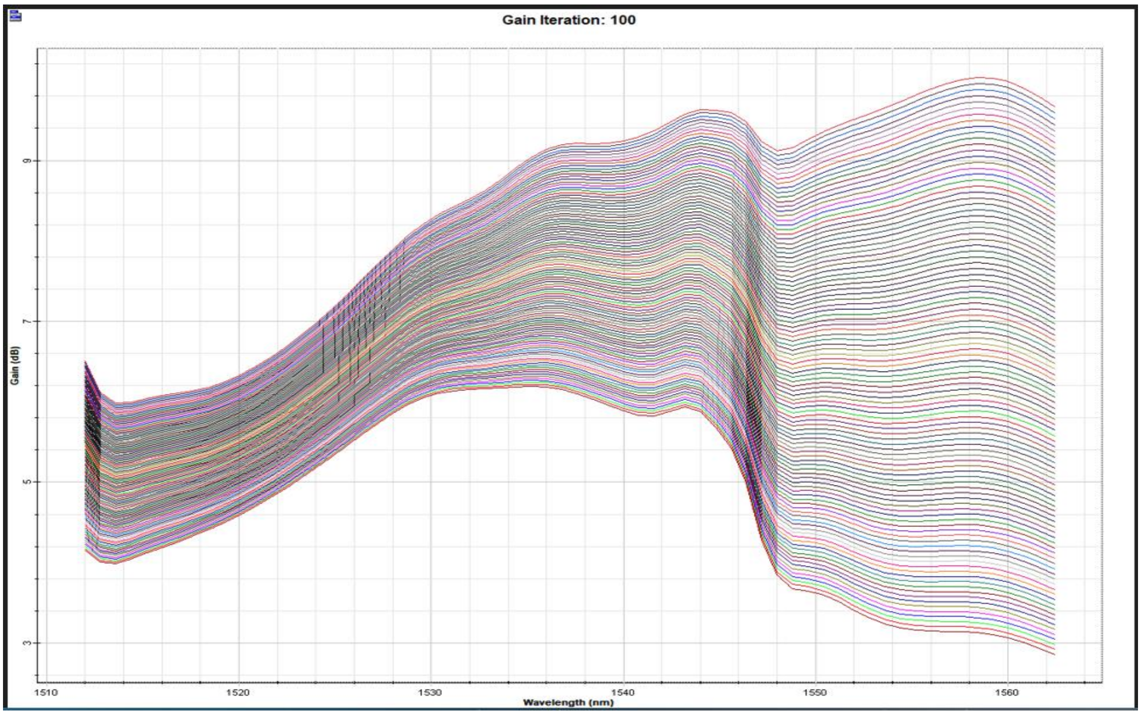


Fig. 6. Output gain for 100 iterations

3.4 Comparison of Initial and Optimized Settings

The results of both the initial and optimized configurations were compared. The gain graph comparison for both configurations is shown in Figure 7. In Figure 7, the blue dotted line represents the initial setup, while the red dotted line represents the optimized setup. The gain flatness for the initial setup was about 2.83 dB, whereas the gain flatness for the optimized setup was about 1.68 dB. The outcome of the Raman gain optimization shown in the above comparison resulted in a flattened gain profile for the Raman optical fiber amplifier, enabling the transmission of more channels and increased bandwidth growth. The optimized setup demonstrated better gain flatness and wavelength power stability, which enhances service stability and overall performance.

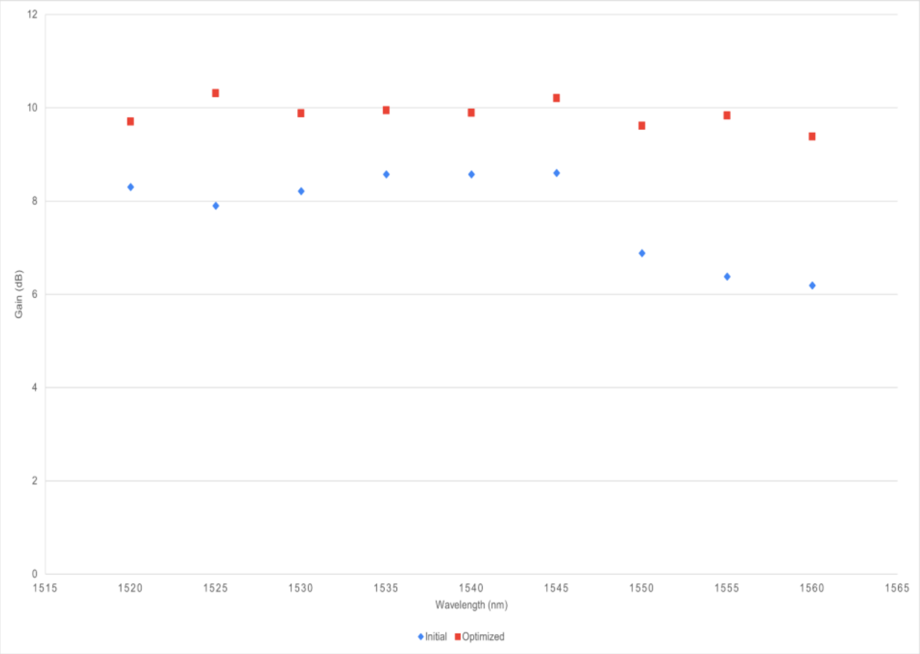


Fig. 7. Comparison of the gain spectrum after and before optimization

4. Conclusions

This technical paper has thoroughly discussed the advantages of the Raman amplifier (RA) and its potential to support long-distance communication links, particularly in reaching isolated or undeveloped areas. As theoretically predicted, signals traveling through optical fiber degrade over certain distances, which limits the reach of long-distance transmission links. The Erbium-Doped Fiber Amplifier (EDFA) is widely used in current telecommunications due to its ability to provide high pump power. However, EDFAs also introduce higher noise levels, which contribute to limitations in achieving high-speed internet over extended distances. In contrast, RAs offer lower noise gain and better power optimization. This makes RAs particularly advantageous for long-distance communications, as they can maintain signal integrity over greater distances without the significant noise issues associated with EDFAs.

The inherent Raman gain of RAs eliminates the need for additional doping or complex structures, simplifying the amplification process and reducing associated costs. Furthermore, the non-resonant nature of Raman gain allows for amplification across a broad range of wavelengths, enhancing system flexibility and scalability. The simulation results demonstrated in this study further underscore the potential of RAs. The optimization of the Raman amplifier led to a significant improvement in gain flatness, with the optimized setup achieving a gain flatness of 1.68 dB compared to 2.83 dB in the initial contableuration. Additionally, the total gain achieved in the optimized setup was 9.81 dB, closely aligning with the target value of 10 dB. The stability test showed consistent gain across 100 iterations, proving the robustness of the system.

These findings suggest that RAs can effectively address the limitations of traditional amplification methods like EDFAs. By providing a more stable and noise-resistant solution, RAs can enhance long-distance communication capabilities, potentially replacing EDFAs in future telecommunication infrastructures. This advancement would facilitate the expansion of high-speed internet access to remote and underserved regions, supporting the ongoing growth and development of global communication networks. Overall, the study highlights the promising role of Raman amplifiers in the future of optical communications, paving the way for more efficient and reliable long-distance transmission systems.

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