A Comparative Study of Multi‑objective Metaheuristics for Solving Hyperparameter Tuning of Terminal Sliding Mode Controller

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*Abstract*—Multi-objective optimization plays a vital role in many applications of control and engineering problems. One of them is tuning the hyperparameters of the controller system, which is focused on identifying the best hyperparameters to satisfy desired aims such as reducing error, efficient energy consumption, and so on. These setting are included in a multi-objective optimization problem to find the proper controller hyperparameters. In this paper, we first develop a new terminal sliding mode controller schema for a single-input single-output system in presence of external disturbances and provide the Lyapunov proof to guarantee the stability of the system. Then, we study the hyperparameter optimization of the proposed controller with different maximum function evaluation numbers. Finally, the simulation results for a pendulum-driven spherical robot are presented to illustrate the effectiveness and superiority of the proposed control technique.

Keywords—Terminal Sliding mode, Hyperparameter Tuning, Metaheuristics algorithms, Multi-Objective Optimization

# Introduction

Tuning the hyperparameters of controllers is one of the challenging problems for engineers when it is required to deal with complex plants. Therefore, there are several strategies to overcome this problem [1]. One of them is the application of multi-objective optimization to solve the problem of hyperparameter selection for terminal sliding mode controllers.

The application of Metaheuristic Optimization for tuning parameters of controllers has been widely popular. Janprom et al. [2] present an optimization-based approach for tuning gains of proportional integral derivative (PID) controller to control the temperature and relative humidity of a comfortable room. In this study, the ant colony optimization (ACO), and symbiotic organism search (SOS) are used to identify the gains of the PID controller. Chaib et al. [3] propose a novel fractional order PID controller tuned by a metaheuristic Bat algorithm to stabilize the power system. Roeva et al. [4] present a metaheuristic-based optimal tuning of a PID controller. In this research, Genetic Algorithms (GA), Simulated Annealing (SA), and Tabu Search (TS) are provided and it is shown that the proposed metaheuristic algorithms can improve the result and performance of traditional methods significantly.

This article is organized as follows. Section II presents the terminal sliding mode control with a disturbance observer and the stability of the controller schema is proven by the Lyapunov method. Then, the multi-objective optimization problem is introduced in Section III. Also, four different multi-objective optimizations are presented in this section. Section IV presents the simulation of the proposed algorithm and discusses the experimental tests. Finally, Section V concludes this paper.

# Controller Design

Let us consider SISO nonlinear dynamical system

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| , | (1) |
|  | (2) |
|  | (3) |

where denotes the vector of measurable state of the nonlinear system, and are nonlinear functions and are considered as known functions, is the input controller, denotes the output of the system. In this system, the external disturbances are imposed through .

*Lemma 1:* Consider the continuous function which is positive definite and satisfies the following inequality:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (4) |

for . Therefore, one can conclude that converges to its equilibrium point infinite time which can be derived as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (5) |

where and are positive and .

In this paper, the aim is to design the chatter-free disturbance-observer-based terminal sliding mode, tracking controller. In this regard, the proposed controller should ensure that the system output will converge to the desired system output in finite time.

*Assumption 1* (Man and Yu [1])*:* the desired system output is bounded such that

To design the terminal sliding mode observer with finite time convergency, the auxiliary variable is defined such that:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (6) |

where and , which are odds, and Design parameters , and are positive and . Therefore, the disturbance observer can be designed as follow:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (7) |

Instead of using , the Is employed to reduce the fast-changing of input controller through time. Therefore, this smoothness in function can reduce the chattering phenomenon for the input controller. By differentiating , and (2), can be given

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (8) |

*Theorem 1* (Tee and Ge [5])*.* Assuming that the uncertain SISO nonlinear system (1)-(3), the terminal sliding mode disturbance observer is determined as (6)-(8). Hence, the disturbance approximation error of the proposed terminal sliding mode disturbance observer is convergent in finite time.

*Proof.* Let us consider the Lyapunov function as follow

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (9) |

Differentiating from (9) yields

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (10) |

Using (1)-(3) and (6)-(8), one can obtain

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (11) |

Due to *Lemma 1* and (10), one can obtain that the variable converges to the equilibrium point in the ﬁnite time. According to the finite time convergency of the , it can be concluded that the disturbance observer converges to the external disturbance and the error of disturbance estimation converges to zero in finite time. This can prove the statement.

To introduce the tracking controller method for this case and by assuming the availability of all states, the terminal sliding mode (TSMC) tracking controller is designed. First, is introduced.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (12) |

The order of differentiating , we have

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (13) |

Let us consider (13), the iterative process of TSMC of the nonlinear systems (1)-(3) can be given as [6]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| … | (14) |

where and are positive and we have which are odd integer numbers. These constraints will be imposed for the optimization problem. By expanding the recursive procedure of (14), one can obtain

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (15) |

Thus, according to (1)-(3) and (13), we obtain

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (16) |

Therefore, the disturbance-observer-based terminal sliding mode tracking control is developed as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (18) |

For the second order system, . Therefore, if we assume that , therefore, the input controller for the second-order system can be derived as follow

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (19) |

where and are positive. The stability proof of this controller is summarized in the following theorem.

*Theorem 2.* Let us consider system (1)-(3), as a general uncertain nonlinear system in the presence of disturbances, and assuming the system is known, the proposed controller with sliding mode disturbance observer is developed as (6) and (7). B considering the proposed controller, the convergency of the input controller in finite time is proved.

*Proof.* Using (17), (18) can be rewritten

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (20) |

Substituting (11) into (20), one can obtain

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (21) |

Assuming the Lyapunov function candidate

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (22) |

Using (10), we have the time derivative of as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (22) |

Due to *Lemma 1* and (10), one can conclude all the closed-loop signals will converge to the equilibrium point in the ﬁnite time. This can prove the statement.

*Remark 1.* In the proposed input controller, several hyperparameters should be designed by the researcher. In this regard, we evaluate four different optimization functions to identify the hyperparameters based on developing different objectives. In the next section, first, the optimization problem is introduced, and the next four benchmarks of multi-objective optimization algorithms are provided.

# Hyperparameter Optimization

In the previous section, the terminal sliding mode tracking control has been presented. In this section, we implement four different multi-objective optimizations to select the hyperparameters of the proposed controller. The optimization problem is designed as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (23) |

where states the chattering measurement based on [7], [8], and shows the difference between the input controller and the nominal value of the input controller. and denote the integration of absolute value of sliding surfaces, respectively. Then, is the integral of time multiplied by squared error [9], [10] and is the integral of the absolute value of the input controller. This fitness function is considered to minimize the absolute value of dissipated energy of actuators. The optimization constraints are obtained based on the limitation of designed controller parameters which is explained in (14). According to (7) and (19), this optimization problem has six hyperparameter variables as follows

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (24) |

Here, the objective functions, constraints, and variables are defined. To optimize these variables, four benchmarking multi-objective optimization algorithms are considered. In this study, we use Platypus [11] library to compare the results of these algorithms summarized as follows:

* Non-dominated Sorting Genetic Algorithm III (NSGA-III) [12].
* Non-dominated Sorting Genetic Algorithm II (NSGA-II) [13].
* Particle swarm optimization-based multi-objective optimization using crowding, mutation, and dominance (OMOPSO) [14].
* Speed-constrained Multi-objective Particle Swarm Optimization (SMPSO) [15].

In what follows, these algorithms are briefly introduced.

## The Non-Dominated Sorting Genetic Algorithm II (NSGA-II)

In this algorithm, the individuals are divided into different classes based on their dominance. Therefore, the first class is assigned to the non-dominated individuals and the second and next classes are determined to the individuals which are dominated by the others. When each iteration finishes, the distances among the individuals are computed. The criteria for these distances are known as crowding distances, for sorting the individuals. The flowchart of the algorithm is illustrated in Fig. 1.

|  |
| --- |
|  |
| 1. Flowchart of NSGA-II Algorithm for multi-objective optimization |

## The Non-Dominated Sorting Genetic Algorithm III (NSGA-III)

NSGA-III is a new version of NSGA-II proposed by Deb and Jain [12]. In this algorithm, there is a hyper-plane to enhance the diversity feature of the population. This hyper-plane is generated by a group of predefined points. In addition, the operator is selected adaptively, therefore, this algorithm has a better performance when it is required to deal with a large number of objective functions.

## Optimized Multi-Objective Particle Swarm Optimization (OMOPSO)

One of the efficient versions of multi-objective Particle Swarm Optimization (MOPSO) is OMOPSO which is presented by Reyes-Sierra et al [14]. In this algorithm, to regulate the number of particles, the leaders and crowding distance is identified based on non-dominated particles of the Pareto front. In each iteration, a global leader is identified, then for this generation, the other leaders are excluded from the global leaders. In addition, in this algorithm, there are different mutation operators for each group of population. The flowchart of the algorithm is illustrated in Fig. 2.

|  |
| --- |
|  |
| 1. Flowchart of OMOPSO Algorithm for multi-objective optimization |

## Speed-Constrained Multi-Objective Particle Swarm Optimization (SMPSO)

Another version of MOPSO is SMPSO which is proposed by Nebro et al [15]. In this algorithm, to reduce the acceleration of high-speed particles, a mechanism for speed constraint is utilized [16]. This coefficient is presented as follows

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (25) |

where

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (26) |

In which and denote the control parameters of personal and global best particles. Then, the velocity of the particle in generation can be derived with this formula.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (27) |

In this equation, and are two random variables in the range , and is the inertia weight of the particle for controlling the trade-off between the experience and the new update. Then, the is bounded between upper and lower limits.

# Numerical Simulation

In this section, a simulation study of the proposed algorithm is given to compare different types of Multi-Objective Optimization for parameter tuning of terminal sliding mode controllers.

Consider a pendulum-driven spherical robot [17] system as

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | (28) |

Where denoting the Instantaneous angle of the pendulum and (it means that ). The system's parameters are considered as , , , and .

This system is demonstrated in Fig. 3.

|  |
| --- |
|  |
| 1. A pendulum-driven spherical robot system on a flat surface |

The initial condition for this system is considered and the sampling time is chosen 0.01.

In this simulation, the desired output is taken as and the controller parameters are taken and . For this tracking problem, the input controller and disturbance observer are designed based on (19) and (7). To achieve the best result concerning the minimum in chattering, error, and input controller, the optimization problem (23) is developed to choose the designing parameters in (7) and (19). This optimization problem is solved by four benchmarking algorithms including NSGA-II, NSGA-III, OMOPSO, and SMPSO with different maximum function evaluations.

The initialization of each algorithm is summarized in Table I. In addition, the lower bound and upper bound of the variables are included in Table 2.

1. Parameters Of Optimizarts

| NSGA-II Parameters | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Selection | | Mutation | | | Recombination | | | | Population size |
| Binary tournament | | Polonyminal | | |  | | | | 100 |
| OMOPSO Parameters | | | | | | | | | |
| epsilons | Swarm size | | | Leader size | Mutation probability | | Maximum perturbation | | Maximum iterations |
| 0.05 | 100 | | | 100 | 0.1 | | 0.5 | | 100 |
|  |  | | |  |  | | | | w |
|  |  | | |  |  | | | |  |
| SMPSO Parameters | | | | | | | | | | |
| Swarm size | Leader size | | Mutation probability | | | Maximum perturbation | | Maximum iterations | | |
| 100 | 100 | | 0.1 | | | 0.5 | | 100 | | |
|  |  | |  | | |  | | w | | |
|  |  | |  | | |  | |  | | |
| NSGA-III Parameters | | | | | | | | | |
| Selection | | Mutation | | | Recombination | | | | Divisions outer |
| Binary tournament | | Polonyminal | | |  | | | | 12 |

1. Range of Variables

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lower Bound | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 | 0.1 |
| Upper Bound | 100 | 10 | 100 | 10 | 100 | 10 |

To create a Degree of Freedom for strategy making, this optimization uses no prioritization. Therefore, the non-dominated solution is included in the results and the hyper-plane of the Pareto Front. With this strategy, the algorithm has more options to select the best value of Pareto Front and reach the global optimum.

The optimization schema is evaluated with the different maximum number of function evaluations. The best result for the optimization problem is demonstrated in Table III-VI and Fig. 4 and 5. As one can see in this figure, first the maximum number of function evaluations is set to 50 and for the best result of tunned hyperparameters, the simulation is repeated, and Figs. 4(A1-A3) are obtained, and different optimization algorithms are compared to each other in Figs. 5(A1-A5) and Table IV. Next, the maximum number of function evaluations is set to 200 for the best result of tunned hyperparameters the simulation is repeated, and Figs. 4(B1-B3) are obtained,

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
| A1 | A2 | A3 |
|  |  |  |
| B1 | B2 | B3 |
|  |  |  |
| C1 | C2 | C3 |
| |  | | --- | | 1. Sliding surfaces and control input of the best-tuned terminal sliding mode controller for a pendulum-driven spherical robot system. The tuning is performed with four optimization algorithms including NSGA-III, NSGA-II, OMOPSO, and SMPSO with maximum function evaluation = 50 (A1-A3), maximum function evaluation = 200 (B1-B3), and maximum function evaluation = 500 (C1-C3) | | | |

different optimization algorithms are compared to each other in Figs. 5(B1-B5) and Table V. Finally, the maximum number of function evaluations is set to 500 for the best result of tunned hyperparameters the simulation is repeated, and Figs. 4(C1-C3) are obtained, and different optimization algorithms are compared to each other in Figs. 5(C1-C5) and Table VI.

The execution time of each algorithm with different maximum number of function evaluation is shown in Table III. Regarding running time, NSGA-II has a better performance in average result. Instead of NSGA-III, all algorithms have a good result in execution time.

In next subsection, we compare the result of each optimization algorithm for each stage.

## Number of function Evaluation = 50

In this stage, chattering is not sorted out in some algorithms and it can be seen in Fig. 4(A3). However, NSGA-III has better performance rather than the others regarding chattering. The superiority of this algorithm is shown in Fig 5(A1-A5) because this algorithm has a better average of objective functions with respect to the others. In addition, this superiority is highlighted in Table IV.

## Number of function Evaluation = 200

As one can see in Fig. 4(B3), the chattering is sorted out but the problem of high value for the input controller has remained. In these plots, the NSGA-III has better performance rather than the others regarding chattering. The superiority of this algorithm is shown in Fig 5(B1-B5) because this algorithm has a better average of objective functions to the others. In addition, this superiority is highlighted in Table V.

## Number of function Evaluation = 500

By increasing the limit, all algorithms can find better results, regarding optimality in input controller and chattering phenomenon. This fact is shown in Fig. 4(C3). In addition, regarding tracking error, the NSGA-II has a better result rather than the others. In addition, NSGA-II could gain a better performance regarding the minimization of objective functions, and this fact is illustrated in Fig. 5(C1-C5) and highlighted in Table VI.

1. execution time of Optimization algorithms

| Algorithm | Running Time (s) | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Function evaluations = 50 | Function evaluations = 200 | Function evaluations = 500 |
| SMPSO | 5.24554880 | 11.7175694 | **27.0013235** |
| **NSGAII** | **4.97656430** | 10.5482522 | 28.6823616 |
| NSGAIII | 118.9245700 | 100.5715414 | 172.6694464 |
| OMOPSO | 5.65093240 | **10.3312371** | 27.8997733 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  |
| A1 | B1 | C1 |
|  |  |  |
| A2 | B2 | C2 |
|  |  |  |
| A3 | B3 | C3 |
|  |  |  |
| A4 | B4 | C4 |
|  |  |  |
| A5 | B5 | C5 |
| 1. Objective functions comparison of four optimization algorithm including SMPSO, NSGA-II, NSGA-III and OMOPSO with maximum function evaluation = 50 (A1-A5), maximum function evaluation = 200 (B1-B5) and maximum function evaluation = 500 (C1-C5) | | |

1. Comparison of Different algorithm for Tunning Hyperparameters of Nonsingular Terminal Sliding Mode Controller with 50 limits for function evaluation

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tuned Hyperparameters of Nonsingular Terminal Sliding Mode Controller with 50 limits for function evaluation** | | | | | | |
| SMPSO |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20.45401706 | 9.935067 | 33.941272 | 6.265627 | 80.618261 | 7.99692 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Feasibility |
| 30.12081229 | 92.71826475 | 1843.41556395 | 2751.80613499 | 420.11904768 | Yes |
| NSGAII |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18.255818 | 5.04240 | 24.410746 | 9.363048 | 10.14028878 | 2.66801576 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Feasibility |
| 22.11604159 | 86.96316491 | 1313.96310486 | 2691.31465381 | 425.85018165 | Yes |
| **NSGAIII** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3.622405 | 7.581411 | 90.17417 | 3.624616 | 16.81134 | 4.338987 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Feasibility |
| **5.88461445** | 102.06520512 | **471.50074517** | 3016.27999076 | **471.50074517** | Yes |
| OMOPSO |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 96.96229 | 6.571877 | 79.655665 | 1.514812 | 2.960516 | 4.32181 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Feasibility |
| 24.790992503 | **79.3465581** | 7312.3628212 | **2489.20328043** | 943.97872044 | Yes |

1. Comparison of Different algorithm for Tunning Hyperparameters of Nonsingular Terminal Sliding Mode Controller with 200 limits for function evaluation

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tuned Hyperparameters of Nonsingular Terminal Sliding Mode Controller with 200 limits for function evaluation** | | | | | | |
| SMPSO |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 31.231875 | 6.19709 | 78.347317 | 3.931020 | 43.593004 | 5.682352 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Feasibility |
| 15.220051 | 91.200026 | 2525.966872 | 2632.336478 | 550.856454 | Yes |
| NSGAII |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21.256501 | 3.123190 | 55.48439 | 4.19390 | 17.335351 | 0.274264 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Feasibility |
| 12.852026 | **84.540505** | 1136.86486775 | **2594.73811511** | 520.40654534 | Yes |
| **NSGAIII** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4.243728 | 4.7943222 | 98.806804 | 2.868692 | 37.545664 | 2.215079 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Feasibility |
| **5.23471137** | 115.87156139 | **358.95701638** | 3317.22308 | **197.0117105** | Yes |
| OMOPSO |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 89.556200 | 5.633856 | 98.787780 | 10. | 83.991619 | 3.318196 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Feasibility |
| 15.22005123 | 91.20002608 | 2525.96687235 | 2632.33647888 | 550.85645428 | Yes |

1. Comparison of Different algorithm for Tunning Hyperparameters of Nonsingular Terminal Sliding Mode Controller with 500 limits for function evaluation

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tuned Hyperparameters of Nonsingular Terminal Sliding Mode Controller with 500 limits for function evaluation** | | | | | | |
| SMPSO |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 69.81666 | 9.935067 | 69.81666 | 6.265627 | 69.81666 | 7.99692 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Feasibility |
| 15.17202293 | 92.71826475 | 15.17202293 | 2751.80613499 | 15.17202293 | Yes |
| **NSGAII** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 13.277262 | 5.04240 | 13.277262 | 9.363048 | 13.277262 | 2.66801576 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Feasibility |
| **7.73112307** | 86.96316491 | **7.73112307** | 2691.31465381 | **7.73112307** | Yes |
| NSGAIII |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5.589731 | 7.581411 | 5.589731 | 3.624616 | 5.589731 | 4.338987 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Feasibility |
| 11.91883822 | 102.06520512 | 11.91883822 | 3016.27999076 | 11.91883822 | Yes |
| OMOPSO |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 96.75430 | 6.571877 | 96.75430 | 1.514812 | 96.75430 | 4.32181 |
|  |  |  |  |  | Feasibility |
| 19.29056043 | **79.3465581** | 19.29056043 | **2489.20328043** | 19.29056043 | Yes |

# Conclusion

In this study, a comparison of four benchmarking optimization algorithms including SMPSO, NSGA-II, NSGA-III, and OMOPSO is presented for tuning hyperparameters of the terminal sliding mode controller. This article aims to reduce the chattering phenomenon and find the optimal hyperparameters of the terminal sliding mode controller. Then the best-optimized hyperparameters of each schema are shown and the objective functions of each algorithm are included. Based on the simulation, it can be concluded that NSGA-II and NSGA-III have better performance. However, when the limitation maximum number of function evaluations is strict, it would be better to use NSGA-III, but if the execution time is more important, it would be better to use NSGA-II, because this algorithm can find the best hyperparameters faster than the other algorithms.

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