

# Impedance Design of 21-kW Quasi-Z-Source H-Bridge Module for MW-Scale Medium-Voltage Cascaded Multilevel Photovoltaic Inverter

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**Abstract**— An impedance parameter design of quasi-Z-source (qZS) H-bridge inverter module applied to megawatt (MW)-scale medium-voltage Photovoltaic (PV) power system is proposed. A double-line-frequency ( $2\omega$ ) voltage and current ripple model of qZS network with PV panel is established. The effects of qZS inductance and capacitance as well as PV panel terminal capacitance on  $2\omega$  voltage and current ripples are investigated by using the built model. Elaborate designed prototype parameters are to buffer those low-frequency ripples. Simulations are carried out on a 21-kW single-phase qZS PV inverter to verify the proposed  $2\omega$ -ripple model and impedance design method.

**Keywords**— Low-frequency ripple; photovoltaic power system; single-phase system; quasi-Z-source inverter.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Currently, the fast increase of world's power demand is motivating large-scale Photovoltaic (PV) power conversion systems stepping into the multi-megawatt (MW) range. There are already over 80 PV plants with capacity of more than 25 MW each, most of which were commissioned during 2011 and 2012 [1]. The medium-voltage (MV) power conversion technology is generally favored for MW-scale PV generation systems in terms of higher power density, reduced current level, and associated losses and costs, etc. For a high-power PV system, the inverter technology will be a big challenge. The existing high power (100 kW-to-MW) PV inverter topologies mainly include the central inverter, DC/DC converter plus inverter, dual inverter, and cascade multilevel inverter (CMI) [2]. Among them, the CMI has been identified as a suitable topology due to transformerless, modular structure, high efficiency, high power density, and low cost [3]. However, since lack of boost function, the traditional CMI will lead to overrating the inverter by a factor of two to cope with wide PV voltage variations.

Recently, quasi-Z-source cascade multilevel inverter (qZS-CMI) based PV power systems were presented to mitigate the defects of conventional CMI by embedding the quasi-Z-source (qZS) topology into CMI [4]-[10]. The quasi-Z-source inverter (qZSI) that can deal with the wide PV voltage variations and improve the inverter reliability as single-stage inverter topology has attracted increasing interests in PV applications [11]-[17]. And the qZS-CMI for PV power conversion presents promising features such as the balanced and constant dc-link peak voltage due to the buck/boost ability of qZS H-bridge inverter (qZS-HBI) module, the distributed maximum power point tracking to always capture the maximum PV power independently, and one-third module reduction compared with the conventional CMI. All of these will improve the reliability, cost, and volume of PV systems.

The inductance and capacitance parameters of qZS network are critical issue. References [12], [16], and [18] presented impedance design for three-phase qZSI, where the inductance and capacitance were used to limit the high-frequency ripples on qZS inductor current and capacitor voltage. However, the qZS-HBI exists low-frequency pulsating power, viz., double-line-frequency ( $2\omega$ ) ripples. Those  $2\omega$  power ripples introduce low-frequency ripples on qZS inductor currents, capacitor voltages, and also dc-link voltage, which can increase ac output harmonics. In the passive ripple reduction way, the impedance of qZS network is critical to buffer those  $2\omega$  ripples. Especially in MW MV qZS-CMI based PV systems, even though the qZS-HBI module's power can be reduced by cascading more modules per phase, there will still be tens of kilowatts in each module. References [19] and [20] proposed impedance design to limit  $2\omega$  ripples of single-phase ZSI/qZSI. However, they are only for low-power systems, less than 1 kW. On the other hand, the ideal DC sources were discussed as power source.

Whereas, the PV panel's internal resistance also affects the module's pulsating power. So far, no literature has investigated the impedance design of high-power qZS-HBI module for PV power conversions.

The novelty of this paper is to investigate the  $2\omega$ -ripple components of the qZS H-bridge PV inverter module in terms of a built small-signal model, and to present an effective impedance design for buffering those ripples in a 21-kW system. The organization of the paper is as follows: Section II analyzes the  $2\omega$  ripples of qZS-HBI PV module; the effects of impedance parameters on  $2\omega$  ripples are discussed in Section III; Section IV presents the impedance design method to limit the  $2\omega$  ripples; simulation investigations on a 21-kW system are addressed in Section V; finally, Section VI concludes this work.

## II. LOW-FREQUENCY RIPPLES OF SINGLE-PHASE QUASI-Z-SOURCE PHOTOVOLTAIC INVERTER

Fig. 1 shows the qZS H-bridge inverter based PV module, which couples the qZS impedance network between the PV array and H-bridge inverter dc link. The qZS network combines two inductors  $L_1$  and  $L_2$ , and two capacitors  $C_1$  and  $C_2$ , and one diode  $D_1$ . A MW PV system can be fulfilled by series connection of tens of this basic module [4]-[10].

There is shoot-through and nonshoot-through two working states in the qZS-HBI module, as the equivalent circuits show in Fig. 2. Fig. 2 (a) shows that of the shoot-through state, i.e., the PV array and qZS capacitors charge the inductors and the diode is cut off due to negative voltage. There is

$$\begin{cases} v_{PV} = L_1 \frac{di_{L1}}{dt} - v_{C2} \\ v_{C1} = L_2 \frac{di_{L2}}{dt} \\ C_1 \frac{dv_{C1}}{dt} = -i_{L2} \\ C_2 \frac{dv_{C2}}{dt} = -i_{L1} \\ C_p \frac{dv_{PV}}{dt} = i_{PV} - i_{L1} \end{cases} \quad (1)$$

where  $v_{PV}$  represents output voltage of independent PV arrays;  $v_{L1}$ ,  $v_{L2}$ ,  $i_{L1}$ , and  $i_{L2}$  are voltages and currents of qZS inductors  $L_1$  and  $L_2$ ;  $v_{C1}$ ,  $v_{C2}$  and  $i_{C1}$ ,  $i_{C2}$  are voltages and currents of qZS capacitors  $C_1$  and  $C_2$ , respectively;  $v_{diode}$  and  $i_{diode}$  are voltage and current of qZS diode, respectively;  $v_{DC}$  and  $i_{DC}$  are dc-link voltage and current, respectively.

Fig. 2 (b) shows equivalent circuit of the nonshoot-through state, the PV panel and qZS inductors charge the loads and capacitors, and the diode conducts. There is

$$\begin{cases} v_{PV} = L_1 \frac{di_{L1}}{dt} + v_{C1} \\ v_{C2} = -L_2 \frac{di_{L2}}{dt} \\ C_1 \frac{dv_{C1}}{dt} = i_{L1} - i_{DC} \\ C_2 \frac{dv_{C2}}{dt} = i_{L2} - i_{DC} \\ C_p \frac{dv_{PV}}{dt} = i_{PV} - i_{L1} \end{cases} \quad (2)$$

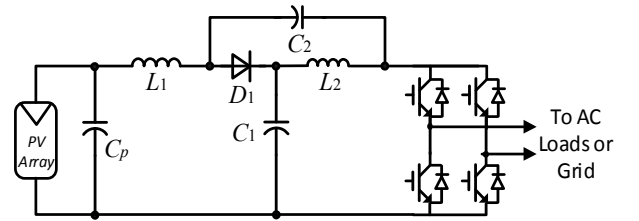


Fig. 1. Discussed qZS H-bridge inverter based PV module.

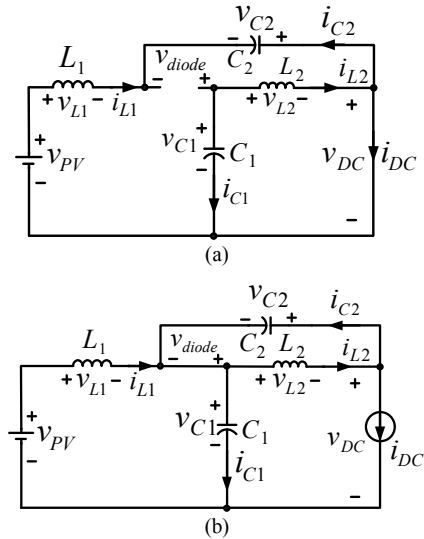


Fig. 2. Equivalent circuits of qZS-HBI in the (a) shoot-through state and (b) nonshoot-through state.

Therefore, by the small perturbation method, the ac small-signal model of qZSI can be obtained as

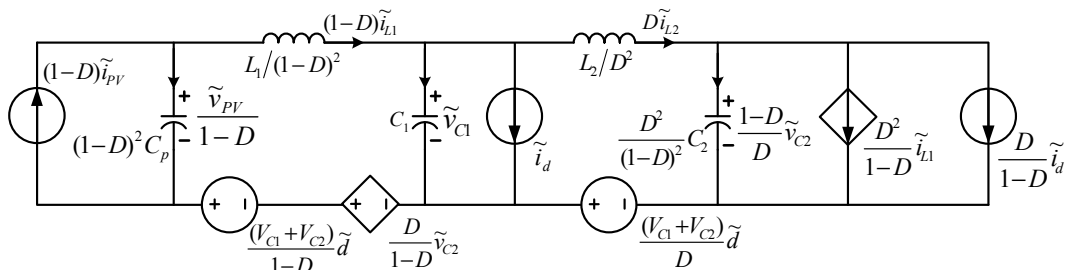


Fig. 3. AC small-signal equivalent circuit of qZSI.

$$\begin{cases} L_1 \tilde{i}_{L1} = -(1-D)\tilde{v}_{C1} + D\tilde{v}_{C2} + \tilde{v}_{pv} + (V_{C1} + V_{C2})\tilde{d} \\ L_2 \tilde{i}_{L2} = D\tilde{v}_{C1} - (1-D)\tilde{v}_{C2} + (V_{C1} + V_{C2})\tilde{d} \\ C_1 \tilde{v}_{C1} = (1-D)\tilde{i}_{L1} - D\tilde{i}_{L2} - (1-D)\tilde{i}_{DC} - (2I_L - I_{DC})\tilde{d} \\ C_2 \tilde{v}_{C2} = -D\tilde{i}_{L1} + (1-D)\tilde{i}_{L2} - (1-D)\tilde{i}_{DC} - (2I_L - I_{DC})\tilde{d} \\ C_p \tilde{v}_{pv} = \tilde{i}_{pv} - \tilde{i}_{L1} \end{cases} \quad (3)$$

where  $\tilde{d}$  is the small-signal perturbation of shoot-through duty ratio;  $\tilde{i}_{DC}$  is the dc-link current ripple. Assuming unit power factor for the PV system, there is

$$i_{DC} = \frac{1}{2} I_m M [1 - \cos(2\alpha)] = I_{DC} + \tilde{i}_{DC} \quad (4)$$

where  $I_m$  is the magnitude of ac load current;  $M$  is the modulation index;  $I_{DC} = \frac{1}{2} I_m M$  represents the dc-link current. And

$$\tilde{i}_{DC} = -\frac{1}{2} I_m M \cos(2\alpha) \quad (5)$$

represents the ripple component of dc-link current, which reveals the  $2\omega$  ripple source of the qZS-HBI module.

Based on the small-signal model of (3), the AC small-signal equivalent circuit of qZSI with PV panel terminal capacitor is obtained in Fig. 3, where  $\tilde{i}_d(t)$  stands for  $(1-D)\tilde{i}_{DC} + (2I_L - I_{DC})\tilde{d}$ .

Moreover, the PV panel voltage has the dynamic relation with its current and internal resistance of  $\tilde{v}_{pv} = -R_s \tilde{i}_{pv}$  [13]. Assuming  $L_1=L_2=L$  and  $C_1=C_2=C$  to simplify the deduction. Therefore, from (3) and Fig. 3, the  $2\omega$ -ripple components of PV voltage, inductor  $L_1$  and  $L_2$  currents, and capacitor  $C_1$  and  $C_2$  voltages can be solved, respectively.

In addition, in steady states there are

$$\begin{aligned} V_{C1} &= \frac{1-D}{1-2D} V_{PV}, \quad V_{C2} = \frac{D}{1-2D} V_{PV}, \\ I_{L1} &= I_{L2} = I_L = \frac{P}{V_{PV}}, \\ B &= \frac{1}{1-2D}, \quad \hat{v}_{DC} = V_{C1} + V_{C2} = B V_{PV} \end{aligned} \quad (6)$$

where  $V_{PV}$  is the average PV voltage;  $V_{C1}$  and  $V_{C2}$  are the average voltages of capacitor  $C_1$  and  $C_2$ , respectively;  $I_{L1}$  and  $I_{L2}$  are the average currents of inductor  $L_1$  and  $L_2$ , respectively;  $D$  and  $B$  are shoot-through duty ratio and boost factor of the qZSI, respectively.

### III. ANALYSIS OF IMPEDANCE PARAMETERS ON $2\Omega$ VOLTAGE AND CURRENT RIPPLES

From the derived ac small-signal model and average values of (6), the peak-to-peak  $2\omega$ -ripple ratios of the variables are defined respectively

$$\begin{aligned} di_{L1} &= \frac{2\hat{i}_{L1}''}{I_{L1}}, \quad di_{L2} = \frac{2\hat{i}_{L2}''}{I_{L2}} \\ dv_{PV} &= \frac{2\hat{v}_{PV}''}{V_{PV}}, \quad dv_{DC} = \frac{2(\hat{v}_{C1}'' + \hat{v}_{C2}'')}{V_{dc}} \end{aligned} \quad (7)$$

where  $di_{L1}$  and  $di_{L2}$  are the peak-to-peak  $2\omega$ -ripple ratios of inductor  $L_1$  and  $L_2$  currents, respectively;  $dv_{PV}$  is that of PV panel voltage; and  $dv_{DC}$  is that of dc-link peak voltage. The variables  $\hat{v}_{PV}''$ ,  $\hat{i}_{L1}''$ ,  $\hat{i}_{L2}''$ ,  $\hat{v}_{C1}''$  and  $\hat{v}_{C2}''$ , with “^” stand for the magnitudes of  $2\omega$  voltage and current ripples.

Fig. 4 shows the  $2\omega$ -ripple ratios versus impedance variations. Fig. 4 (a) is the peak-to-peak  $2\omega$ -ripple ratio of PV panel voltage versus  $C_p$  and  $C$  when  $L$  is 3 mH; Fig. 4 (b) and Fig. 4 (c) are the peak-to-peak  $2\omega$ -ripple ratios of inductor currents versus  $C$  and  $L$  when  $C_p$  is 1.1 mF. Meanwhile, the average PV voltage  $V_{PV}$  is 300 V, and shoot-through duty ratio is 0.286, which achieves 702-V dc-link peak voltage.

From the peak-to-peak  $2\omega$  ripple of PV panel voltage of Fig. 4 (a), it can be seen that  $C_p$  and  $C$  are larger, the  $2\omega$  ripple of PV voltage is smaller. Comparing Fig. 4 (b) and (c), it can be concluded that the ripples of  $i_{L1}$  and  $i_{L2}$  are unequal when considering the PV internal resistance, while they are identical in [19], [20]. Even though  $di_{L1}$  is larger with  $C$  decrease,  $di_{L1}$  is still smaller than  $di_{L2}$  at the same impedance parameters. Meanwhile,  $C$  and  $L$  have combined effects on  $di_{L1}$  and  $di_{L2}$ .

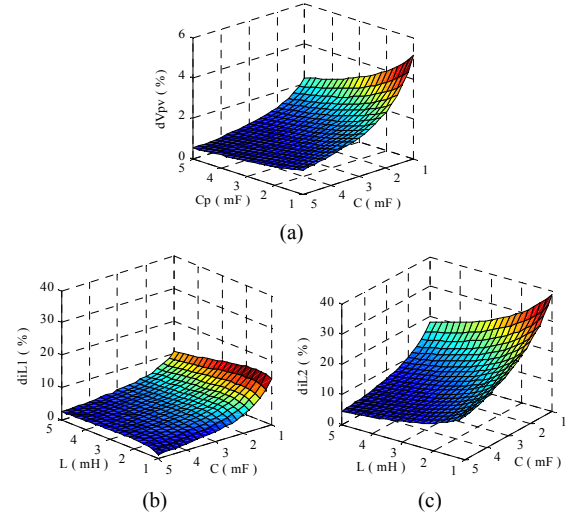


Fig. 4. Peak-to-peak  $2\omega$ -ripple ratios of (a)  $dv_{PV}$  versus  $C_p$  and  $C$  ( $L=3$  mH); (b)  $di_{L1}$  versus  $L$  and  $C$  ( $C_p=1.1$  mF); (c)  $di_{L2}$  versus  $L$  and  $C$  ( $C_p=1.1$  mF).

### IV. PROPOSED IMPEDANCE DESIGN TO BUFFER $2\Omega$ RIPPLES

A design example is illustrated in terms of a qZS-CMI based 1 MW-MV PV power generation system, where 16 qZS-HBI modules are cascaded per phase. In this way, each qZS-HBI module will have nearly 21-kW power. Table I lists

the detailed system operating parameters, in which HF stands for high-frequency.

TABLE I. DESIRED OPERATING PARAMETERS.

Parameters	Values
PV array voltage, $v_{PV}$	300~600 V
Power rating of qZS-CMI, $P_m$	1 MW
RMS phase-to-phase voltage of three-phase ac output, $U_{AC}$	6.6 kV
Cascaded qZS-HBI modules per phase, $n$	16
AC load frequency, $f_0$	50 Hz
Switching frequency, $f_s$	5 kHz
Desired HF and $2\omega$ current ripples through the qZS inductors, $di_L^*$	25%
Desired $2\omega$ ripple of PV panel voltage, $dv_{PV}^*$	2%
Desired $2\omega$ ripple of dc-link peak voltage, $dv_{DC}^*$	6%

#### A. qZS Inductance

In shoot-through state, the two qZS inductors  $L_1$  and  $L_2$  discharge and the voltages across them equal to the capacitor- $C_1$  voltage  $v_{C1}$ , seen from (1). Thus to limit the high-frequency (HF) current ripple and to avoid the discontinuous conduction of inductors, from (1) and (6), the qZS inductance should be at least

$$L_{HF} = \frac{v_L \Delta T}{\Delta I_L} = \frac{V_{C1}(T_s D_{\max} / k_{sh})}{(P_{\max} / v_{PV, \min}) di_L^*} = \frac{D_{\max}(1-D_{\max})v_{PV, \min}^2}{k_{sh} f_s P_m (1-2D_{\max}) di_L^*} \quad (8)$$

where  $k_{sh}$  represents the shoot-through times per control period. At the worst operating case, the shoot-through duty ratio reaches its maximum, which can be solved as for simple boost control [12]

$$G_{\max} = \frac{\sqrt{2}U_{AC}}{\sqrt{3}nV_{PV, \min}}, \quad M_{\min} = \frac{G_{\max}}{2G_{\max}-1}, \quad D_{\max} = 1-M_{\min} \quad (9)$$

Meanwhile, from the aforementioned analysis of  $2\omega$  ripples versus impedance parameters, when the  $2\omega$  ripple of PV panel voltage is zero, there is  $\tilde{i}_{L1}'' = \tilde{i}_{L2}'' = \tilde{i}_L'' = di_L^* I_L$ . Then from (6), it can be obtained that

$$\tilde{v}_{DC}'' = \tilde{v}_{C1}'' + \tilde{v}_{C2}'' = \frac{4\omega L}{1-2D} \tilde{i}_L'' + \frac{2}{1-2D} \tilde{v}_{PV}'' \quad (10)$$

Hence, the qZS inductance for buffering  $2\omega$  ripples is at least

$$L_{2\omega} = \frac{(1-2D_{\max})dv_{DC}^* \hat{v}_{DC}}{4\omega di_L^* I_{L, \min}} \quad (11)$$

Through (8) and (11), the qZS inductance should satisfy

$$L \geq \max(L_{HF}, L_{2\omega}) \quad (12)$$

#### B. qZS Capacitance and PV Terminal Capacitance

Two quasi-Z-source capacitors are in series in nonshoot-through states to limit the voltage ripple on the inverter bridge to  $dv_{DC}^*$  of the maximum dc-link voltage so as to keep the output voltage sinusoidal [12]. Therefore, from the

derived AC equivalent model of (3), the dc-link voltage ripple is

$$\tilde{v}_{DC} = \tilde{v}_{C1} + \tilde{v}_{C2} = \frac{1-2D}{\omega C} \tilde{i}_L - \frac{1-D}{\omega C} \tilde{i}_{DC} - \frac{2I_L - I_{DC}}{\omega C} \tilde{d} \quad (13)$$

Then the qZS capacitance for buffering  $2\omega$  ripples needs to satisfy

$$C \geq \frac{(1-2D_{\max})\Delta i_{L, \max} + (1-D_{\max})\Delta i_{DC, \max} - \Delta d_{\min}(2I_L - I_{DC})}{\omega \Delta \tilde{v}_{DC}} \\ = \frac{(1-2D_{\max})\Delta i_{L, \max} + (1-D_{\max})M_{\min} I_m}{\omega \hat{v}_{DC}^* \hat{v}_{DC}} \quad (14)$$

When the PV panel terminal capacitor is used to reduce the  $2\omega$ -ripple ratio of PV panel voltage to  $dv_{PV}^*$ , from (6), there is

$$C_p \geq \left| -\frac{a_4 R_s}{2\omega a_3 \tilde{v}_{PV}''} \tilde{i}_{DC} - \frac{1}{2\omega} + \frac{a_2 C D_{\max} + a_1 C (1-D_{\max})}{a_3} \right| \quad (15)$$

Taking into account of Fig. 4, the requirements in Table I, and (8)-(15), the 3.3 mH qZS inductance, 4.7 mF qZS capacitance, and 1.1 mF PV terminal capacitance are selected.

## V. SIMULATION INVESTIGATIONS

The deduced  $2\omega$ -ripple components are investigated on a single-phase qZSI based PV system with calculated impedance parameters and system specifications in Table I. The PV panel voltage is 300 V. At the 0.7 modulation index, the 702-V dc-link peak voltage of each qZS-HBI module is required to get the 6.6-kV line voltage; hence, the shoot-through duty ratio is 0.286. From (6), the average inductor current is 70 A, capacitor  $C_1$  voltage is 501 V, and capacitor  $C_2$  voltage is 201 V, theoretically.

Figs. 9 and 10 show the calculated results from established  $2\omega$ -ripple model and simulated results. They are PV panel voltage  $v_{PV}$ , qZSI's dc-link voltage  $v_{DC}$ , inductor currents  $i_{L1}$  and  $i_{L2}$ , and capacitor voltages  $v_{C1}$  and  $v_{C2}$ , respectively.

As seen from Fig. 9 (a) and (b), (c) and (d), as well as Fig. 10 (a) and (b), (c) and (d), respectively, the  $2\omega$  ripples are introduced to the qZSI's dc-link voltage, qZS inductor currents, qZS capacitor voltages, and PV panel's voltage and current. It is noticeable that the theoretical calculation from the built  $2\omega$ -ripple model matches simulation very well.

By the presented parameter design method, the peak-to-peak  $2\omega$ -ripple components are limited within the desired ranges. For example, the  $dv_{PV}$  is 1.33% from Fig. 9 (a) and (b), and  $dv_{DC}$  equals to 5.7% from Fig. 9 (c) and (d);  $di_{L1}$  and  $di_{L2}$  are within 25%, seen from Fig. 10 (a) and (b). Moreover, the results of the built  $2\omega$ -ripple model match the simulation results very well.

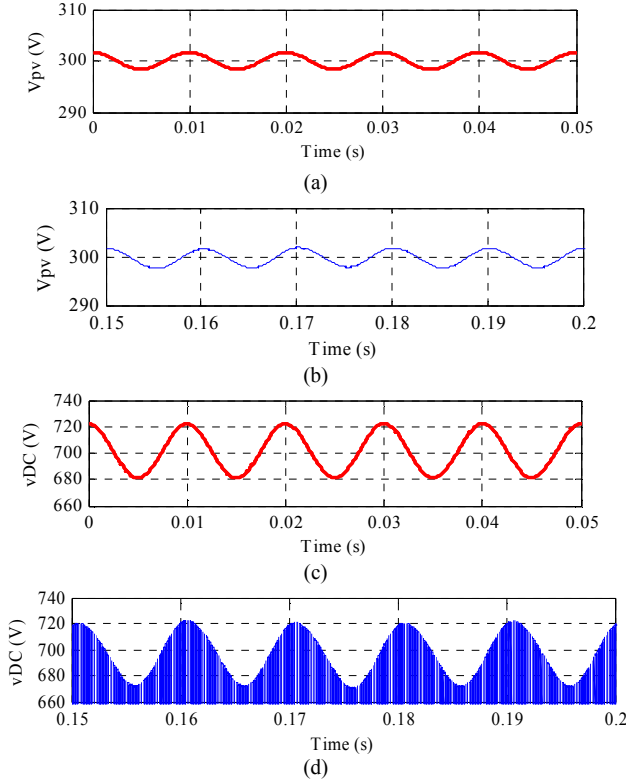


Fig. 9. Calculated and simulated results of PV panel voltage and dc-link voltage in one qZS H-bridge module. (a, b) for PV panel voltage  $v_{pv}$  from  $2\omega$ -ripple model and simulation, respectively; (c, d) for dc-link peak voltage from  $2\omega$ -ripple model and dc-link voltage from simulation, respectively.

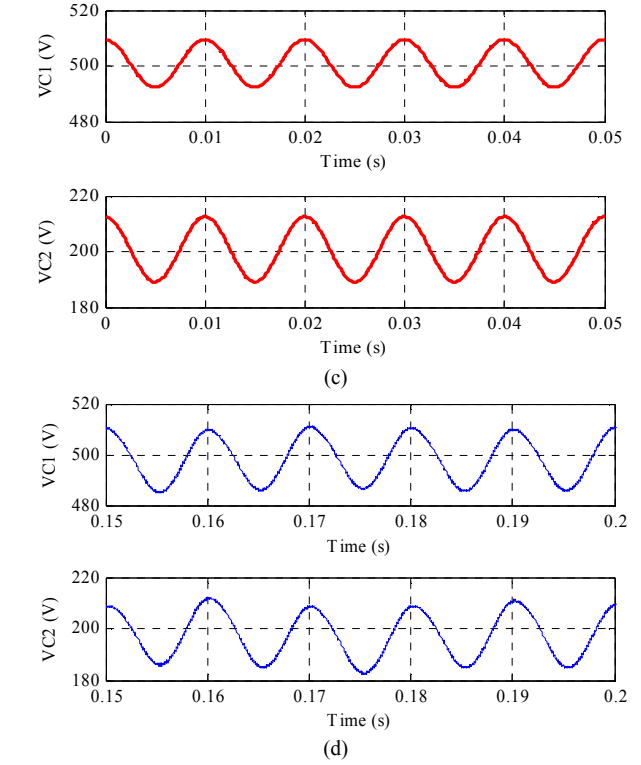
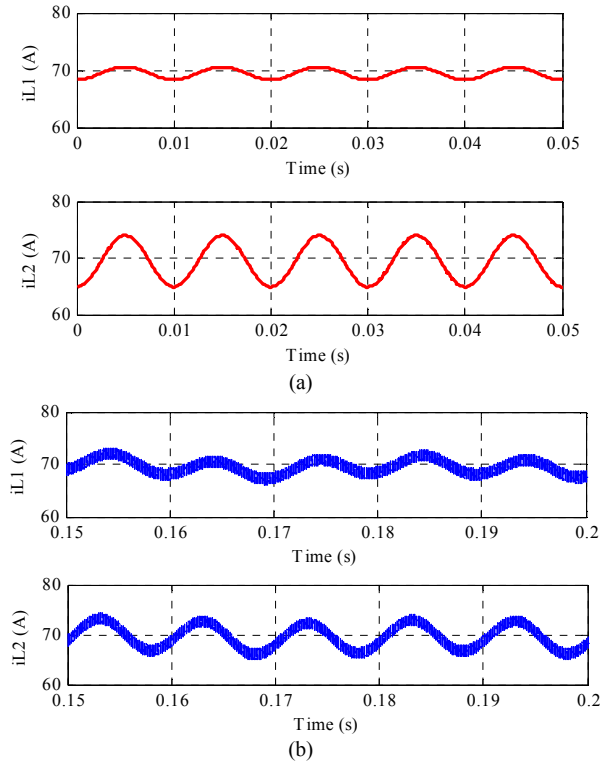


Fig. 10. Calculated and simulated results of inductor currents and capacitor voltages in one qZS H-bridge module. (a) Inductor currents  $i_{L1}$  and  $i_{L2}$  from  $2\omega$ -ripple model; (b) inductor currents  $i_{L1}$  and  $i_{L2}$  from simulation; (c) capacitor voltages  $v_{C1}$  and  $v_{C2}$  from  $2\omega$ -ripple model and (d) capacitor voltages  $v_{C1}$  and  $v_{C2}$  from simulation.

## VI. CONCLUSION

In this paper, an effective impedance design method for reducing the  $2\omega$  voltage and current ripples in qZS H-bridge PV inverter module of qZS-CMI based MW-scale MV PV power system was proposed. A  $2\omega$ -ripple model of qZS network with PV panel terminal capacitance was established. The effects of impedance parameters on  $2\omega$  ripples were discussed, which demonstrated that the  $2\omega$  ripple of qZS inductor- $L_1$  current is smaller than that of inductor- $L_2$  current when considering the PV panel internal resistance; the PV panel terminal capacitance can reduce the  $2\omega$  ripples of PV voltage; meanwhile, the qZS capacitance and inductance have combined effects on  $2\omega$  ripples of qZS inductor currents. And therewith, impedance design of a 21 kW system was presented to limit those ripples passively. Simulation results verified the deduced ripple model and proposed impedance design, offering an effective design method for the future application of such topology.

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