



SPECTRAL ANALYSIS METHOD FOR TECHNICAL CONDITION ASSESSMENT OF ELECTRIC DRIVES IN PUMP UNITS

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20069706>

Abstract. It is 2 a.m. at the Fergana Valley irrigation station. The night-shift engineer hears it first—a low hum, barely audible over the usual mechanical noise, rising from Pump Unit No. 3. He walks closer. The sound sharpens. Something is wrong, but what? The pressure gauge reads normal. The temperature is within limits. The motor current is stable. By every conventional indicator, the pump is operating perfectly. Yet that hum—the engineer knows from 20 years of experience—means failure is close. But how close? Hours? Days? And which component will fail first: the bearing, the rotor, the coupling? Without answers, he faces an impossible choice: shut down the pump now for unscheduled inspection (risking agricultural water shortages across 12,000 hectares), or wait and hope the failure happens during a planned maintenance window. This is the daily reality of pump unit operation in Uzbekistan, where more than 8,500 large-capacity pump stations deliver irrigation water to 4.3 million hectares of farmland. This article presents a systematic spectral analysis methodology that translates that 'hum' into precise, quantitative diagnostic information, enabling condition-based maintenance decisions that reduce unplanned downtime by 60–75%, extend equipment service life by 30–40%, and prevent catastrophic failures that can cost USD 50,000–150,000 in emergency repairs and lost agricultural production. The method combines accelerometer-based vibration measurement, Fast Fourier Transform (FFT) spectral decomposition, and machine learning classification to detect incipient faults in electric motor bearings, rotor misalignment, stator winding deterioration, and mechanical coupling wear at stages where intervention costs are minimal.

Keywords: *spectral analysis, pump units, electric drives, technical condition assessment, vibration diagnostics, predictive maintenance, fault detection, FFT analysis, condition monitoring, irrigation systems.*

NASOS AGREGATLARINING ELEKTR YURITMALARIDA TEXNIK

HOLATNI BAHOLASHNING SPEKTRAL TAHLIL USULI

Annotatsiya. Farg'ona vodiysi sug'orish stantsiyasida tun soat ikki. Navbatchi muhandis birinchi bo'lib eshitadi—past tovushli shovqin, oddiy mexanik shovqindan zo'rg'a ajralib turadigan, 3-raqamli nasos agregatidan kelayotgan tovush. U yaqinroq boradi. Tovush kuchliroq eshitaladi. Nimadir noto'g'ri, lekin nima? Bosim o'lchagich normal ko'rsatmoqda. Harorat chegarada. Motor toki barqaror. Har bir an'anaviy ko'rsatkichga ko'ra nasos mukammal ishlayapti. Lekin bu shovqin—muhandis 20 yillik tajribadan biladi—nosozlik

yaqinligini bildiradi. Lekin qanchalik yaqin? Soatlarmikan? Kunlarmikan? Va qaysi qism birinchi ishdan chiqadi: podshipnik, rotor, mufta? Javobsiz qolgan holda, u imkonsiz tanlov oldida qoladi: nasos agregatini rejalashtirilmagan tekshiruv uchun hoziroq to'xtatish (12,000 gektar qishloq xo'jalik yerlarida suv tanqisligini xavf ostiga qo'yish), yoki kutish va nosozlik rejalashtirilgan ta'mirlash oynasida sodir bo'lishiga umid qilish. Bu O'zbekistonda nasos agregatlarini ekspluatatsiya qilishning kundalik haqiqati, bu yerda 8,500 dan ortiq katta quvvatli nasos stantsiyalari 4.3 million gektar dehqonchilik yerlariga sug'orish suvini yetkazib beradi. Ushbu maqolada spektral tahlilning tizimli metodologiyasi taqdim etiladi, u 'shovqin'ni aniq, miqdoriy diagnostik ma'lumotga aylantiradi va holatga asoslangan ta'mirlash qarorlarini qabul qilish imkonini beradi, bu rejalashtirilmagan turib qolishlarni 60–75% ga kamaytiradi, uskunaning xizmat muddatini 30–40% ga uzaytiradi va favqulodda ta'mirlash va yo'qotilgan qishloq xo'jaligi mahsulotlariga USD 50,000–150,000 gacha xarajat qilishi mumkin bo'lgan katastrofik nosozliklarning oldini oladi.

Kalit so'zlar: *spektral tahlil, nasos agregatlari, elektr yuritmalari, texnik holat baholash, tebranish diagnostikasi, bashoratli ta'mirlash, nosozliklarni aniqlash, FFT tahlili, holatni monitoring qilish, sug'orish tizimlari.*

МЕТОД СПЕКТРАЛЬНОГО АНАЛИЗА ДЛЯ ОЦЕНКИ ТЕХНИЧЕСКОГО СОСТОЯНИЯ ЭЛЕКТРОПРИВОДОВ НАСОСНЫХ АГРЕГАТОВ

Аннотация. Два часа ночи на ирригационной станции Ферганской долины. Инженер ночной смены слышит это первым—низкий гул, едва различимый на фоне обычного механического шума, исходящий от насосного агрегата № 3. Он подходит ближе. Звук усиливается. Что-то не так, но что? Манометр показывает норму. Температура в пределах допустимого. Ток двигателя стабилен. По всем общепринятым показателям насос работает идеально. Но этот гул—инженер знает из 20-летнего опыта—означает приближение отказа. Но насколько близко? Часы? Дни? И какой компонент выйдет из строя первым: подшипник, ротор, муфта? Без ответов он сталкивается с невозможным выбором: остановить насос сейчас для внеплановой проверки (рискуя нехваткой воды для орошения на 12 000 гектарах), или подождать и надеяться, что отказ произойдет во время планового техобслуживания. Это ежедневная реальность эксплуатации насосных агрегатов в Узбекистане, где более 8 500 мощных насосных станций обеспечивают орошение 4,3 миллиона гектаров сельскохозяйственных земель. В данной статье представлена систематическая методология спектрального анализа, которая преобразует этот 'гул' в точную количественную диагностическую информацию, позволяя принимать решения о техническом обслуживании на основе состояния оборудования, что снижает незапланированные простои на 60–75%, продлевает срок службы оборудования на 30–40% и предотвращает катастрофические отказы, которые могут обойтись в USD 50 000–150 000 в виде аварийного ремонта и потерь сельскохозяйственного производства.

Ключевые слова: *спектральный анализ, насосные агрегаты, электроприводы, оценка технического состояния, вибродиагностика, прогнозное обслуживание, обнаружение неисправностей, FFT-анализ, мониторинг состояния, ирригационные системы.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The 2 a.m. scenario described above is not hypothetical. It is a composite of 47 documented incidents at irrigation pump stations across the Fergana Valley between 2021 and 2024, collected through structured interviews with maintenance engineers. In 31 of these 47 cases, the pump was shut down preemptively based solely on auditory cues from experienced personnel. In 16 cases, operation continued until scheduled maintenance. Of the 16 'wait' decisions, 9 resulted in catastrophic failure requiring emergency intervention. The direct cost of these 9 failures averaged USD 87,000 per incident; the indirect cost—agricultural production losses from irrigation interruption during peak season—averaged an additional USD 215,000 per incident.

Uzbekistan operates one of the world's most intensive irrigation infrastructures. The State Committee on Water Resources (2023) reports 8,547 major pump stations with a combined installed capacity of 12.8 GW, serving 4.32 million hectares of irrigated agriculture—the economic foundation of the nation's cotton, wheat, and horticulture sectors. The electric motors driving these pumps—predominantly 200–800 kW asynchronous machines manufactured between 1985 and 2010—operate under harsh conditions: high ambient temperatures (summer peaks >45°C), dust-laden air, voltage fluctuations of ±15%, and continuous duty cycles during the 6-month irrigation season. Maintenance is conducted on a fixed time-based schedule (quarterly inspections, annual overhauls), a practice inherited from Soviet-era operational protocols.

This time-based maintenance paradigm suffers from two fundamental inefficiencies. First, it is conservative: equipment is serviced whether degradation has occurred or not, leading to unnecessary downtime and parts replacement. Second, it is blind: faults that develop between scheduled maintenance windows go undetected until failure. The engineering community has understood these limitations for decades. What has been missing is a technically viable, economically justified alternative suited to the resource constraints and operational realities of developing-country infrastructure.

Condition-based maintenance (CBM)—where intervention is triggered by measured degradation rather than elapsed time—offers a compelling solution in principle. Its deployment in industrial settings in OECD countries has demonstrated 30–50 % reductions in maintenance costs, 60–80 % reductions in unplanned downtime, and equipment life extensions of 20–40 %. Yet CBM adoption in Uzbekistan's irrigation sector remains minimal. The primary barrier is not conceptual resistance but practical implementation: CBM requires continuous or frequent condition monitoring, which in turn requires sensors, data acquisition systems, diagnostic algorithms, and trained personnel—none of which are trivially available at remote pump stations operating on constrained budgets.

This article addresses that implementation gap. We present a spectral analysis-based diagnostic methodology designed explicitly for the Uzbekistan irrigation pump context: low-cost accelerometer sensors (USD 80–150 per unit), portable data acquisition using standard laptops, open-source FFT analysis software, and fault classification algorithms calibrated to the specific failure modes observed in Soviet-era asynchronous motors and centrifugal pumps. The methodology was developed and validated through a 24-month field deployment across 18 pump stations in the Andijan and Fergana regions, encompassing 62 pump units with installed motor capacities ranging from 250 kW to 630 kW.



The research questions are: (1) Which spectral features—frequency bands, harmonic amplitudes, modulation patterns—most reliably distinguish between normal operation and the four most common pre-failure degradation modes (bearing wear, rotor eccentricity, stator winding degradation, mechanical misalignment)? (2) What diagnostic accuracy can be achieved with minimal sensor infrastructure (single-point vibration measurement on motor housing), and how does this compare with laboratory-grade multi-sensor installations? (3) At what stage of fault progression does spectral analysis provide actionable early warning—weeks, days, or hours before functional failure—and how does this translate into maintenance cost savings and downtime reduction?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Vibration-based diagnostics: physical foundations

Mechanical faults in rotating machinery manifest as deviations from ideal kinematic and dynamic behavior, which in turn generate characteristic vibration signatures. The physical mechanisms are well-understood. Bearing defects—localized spalls, distributed roughness, cage wear—produce periodic impulsive forces at frequencies determined by bearing geometry and shaft speed. For a ball bearing with outer race defect, the defect frequency f_{BPFO} (ball-pass frequency, outer race) is given by: $f_{BPFO} = (n/2) \times f_s \times (1 - (d/D) \times \cos\alpha)$, where n is the number of rolling elements, f_s is shaft rotational frequency, d is ball diameter, D is pitch diameter, and α is contact angle. Similar equations govern inner race, ball, and cage defect frequencies.

Rotor eccentricity—static (geometric center offset from rotation center) or dynamic (mass imbalance)—generates once-per-revolution sinusoidal forces at f_s and its harmonics. Stator winding faults (turn-to-turn shorts, ground faults, phase imbalance) modulate the air-gap magnetic flux distribution, producing vibration at twice the supply frequency ($2f_e$, typically 100 Hz for 50 Hz systems) and sidebands at $f_e \pm f_s$. Misalignment (parallel, angular, or combined) between motor and pump shafts excites axial and radial vibration at 1, 2, and 3 shaft speed.

These fault-frequency relationships have been extensively documented. Randall and Antoni (2011) provide a comprehensive theoretical treatment in their review of rolling element bearing diagnostics. Nandi et al. (2005) catalogue the spectral signatures of induction motor faults, including rotor bar breakage, air-gap eccentricity, and winding asymmetry. Scheffer and Girdhar (2004) offer practical guidance on machinery vibration analysis for field practitioners. The challenge is not theoretical—the physics is settled science—but practical: translating laboratory-demonstrated diagnostic methods into reliable field deployment under the operational constraints of irrigation pump stations.

2.2. Spectral analysis methods: FFT and beyond

The Fourier transform decomposes a time-domain vibration signal into its frequency-domain components, revealing the underlying periodic structures that correspond to specific fault mechanisms. The discrete Fast Fourier Transform (FFT), introduced by Cooley and Tukey (1965), made spectral analysis computationally feasible for real-time or near-real-time applications. For a sampled vibration signal $x[n]$ of length N , the FFT computes the frequency spectrum $X[k]$ in $O(N \log N)$ operations, enabling analysis of signals with sampling rates of tens of kilohertz on standard computing hardware.

The diagnostic power of FFT lies in its ability to isolate fault-specific frequency components from the broadband mechanical noise background. A healthy pump-motor system exhibits vibration energy concentrated at shaft rotational frequency f_s , blade-pass frequency (number of impeller blades $\times f_s$), and motor supply frequency harmonics. Faults introduce additional spectral peaks or elevate existing peaks. Bearing spalling adds sharp peaks at f_{BPFO} , f_{BPFI} , or f_{BSF} (ball spin frequency). Rotor imbalance amplifies the $1 \times f_s$ component. Stator faults create sidebands around $2f_e$.

Advanced spectral methods extend basic FFT. Wavelet transform (Yan et al, 2014) provides time-frequency localization, useful for detecting transient faults or faults with time-varying characteristics. Envelope analysis (Randall and Antoni, 2011) demodulates high-frequency bearing resonances (typically 1–10 kHz) to reveal low-frequency defect modulation, significantly improving signal-to-noise ratio for incipient bearing faults. Cepstrum analysis (Randall, 1987) detects families of harmonically related sidebands characteristic of gear faults and modulation phenomena. Order tracking (Bonnardot et al, 2005) resamples vibration data to shaft-angle domain rather than time domain, eliminating spectral smearing caused by speed fluctuations.

The literature on spectral diagnostics is vast and mature. What remains less developed is guidance on method selection and parameter tuning for specific industrial contexts—particularly for aging equipment operating in resource-constrained environments.

2.3. Machine learning for fault classification

Spectral analysis generates diagnostic information; the next step is decision-making: normal operation, early-stage fault requiring monitoring, or advanced-stage fault requiring immediate intervention. Manual interpretation by trained analysts is effective but does not scale. Automated fault classification using machine learning has emerged as the standard approach in industrial CBM systems.

Support Vector Machines (SVM), introduced to vibration diagnostics by Widodo and Yang (2007), map spectral features to a high-dimensional space where fault classes become linearly separable. Random Forests (Breiman, 2001), applied to bearing diagnostics by Cerrada et al. (2016), build ensembles of decision trees trained on different feature subsets, achieving robust classification with minimal hyperparameter tuning. Artificial Neural Networks (ANN), reviewed by Lei et al. (2016) in the context of intelligent fault diagnosis, learn complex nonlinear mappings from vibration features to fault labels.

Recent developments emphasize deep learning. Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN) applied directly to raw vibration time series or spectrograms eliminate hand-crafted feature engineering (Zhang et al, 2017). Recurrent Neural Networks (RNN) with Long Short-Term Memory (LSTM) units model temporal fault progression (Zhao et al., 2017). Transfer learning enables diagnostic models trained on one machine type to be fine-tuned for another with limited new training data (Wen et al., 2019).

For the Uzbekistan irrigation pump application, we prioritize simplicity and interpretability. SVM and Random Forest classifiers trained on manually selected spectral features (peak amplitudes at known fault frequencies) provide transparent diagnostic logic that maintenance engineers can understand and trust—a critical requirement for field adoption.

2.4. Field deployment and practical considerations

Laboratory diagnostic accuracy does not guarantee field performance. Harsh environmental conditions (temperature, humidity, dust, electromagnetic interference), sensor mounting variability, and equipment-to-equipment variation all degrade real-world diagnostic reliability. Jardine et al. (2006), in their comprehensive review of CBM and diagnostic techniques, emphasize the importance of validation under actual operating conditions.

Irrigation pump stations present specific challenges. Pumps are often located in open-air installations with minimal weather protection. Ambient temperatures range from $-15\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ in winter to $+48\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ in summer. Dust concentration during agricultural field preparation can exceed 10 mg/m^3 . Electrical supply voltage varies by $\pm 10\text{--}15\%$ due to grid instability. Sensor mounting surfaces are often painted, rusted, or geometrically irregular. Maintenance personnel may have limited technical training. Any diagnostic system must accommodate these realities or fail in deployment.

This article contributes a field-validated spectral diagnostic methodology explicitly designed for robustness under irrigation station conditions. The validation dataset comprises 24 months of continuous monitoring across 62 pump units, encompassing all four seasons, multiple fault types at various progression stages, and both planned and unplanned maintenance interventions. The diagnostic performance reported here is not laboratory best-case—it is field median-case.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.

The research was conducted in three sequential phases: (1) instrumentation and data collection protocol development; (2) fault signature library construction through controlled fault seeding and natural fault progression monitoring; (3) diagnostic algorithm development and field validation.

3.1. Study sites and equipment.

Eighteen irrigation pump stations in Andijan and Fergana regions were selected for the study, chosen to represent the diversity of equipment types, operating regimes, and maintenance practices in the national irrigation fleet. The stations operate centrifugal pumps driven by 3-phase asynchronous motors with the following specifications: rated power 250–630 kW, rated voltage 6 kV or 10 kV, rated speed 1,485 rpm (4-pole) or 980 rpm (6-pole), manufactured 1988–2008 primarily by Tashkent Electromechanical Plant and imported Russian manufacturers (Electrosila, Uralelectrotyazhmash). A total of 62 pump units were instrumented.

Each pump unit was equipped with a triaxial accelerometer (model: PCB 356A15, measurement range $\pm 50\text{ g}$, frequency range 0.5–10,000 Hz, sensitivity 100 mV/g) mounted on the motor drive-end bearing housing using magnetic base attachment. Vibration data were acquired using a portable 4-channel DAQ system (National Instruments USB-6212, 16-bit resolution, maximum sampling rate 400 kS/s per channel) connected to a ruggedized laptop (Panasonic Toughbook CF-33). Measurements were conducted at 25.6 kHz sampling rate for 60 seconds per measurement session, yielding 1,536,000 samples per channel. This sampling rate provides usable frequency content up to 10 kHz, sufficient to capture motor supply harmonics, bearing resonances, and mechanical fault signatures.

3.2. Data collection protocol

Baseline measurements were collected from all 62 units during a 2-week commissioning phase when motors were confirmed to be in good operational condition (recent overhaul,

bearing replacement, rotor balancing). Subsequently, measurements were repeated monthly during routine station visits and immediately following any reported operational anomaly (unusual noise, vibration, temperature increase). Over the 24-month study period, 1,847 measurement sessions were conducted, averaging 30 sessions per pump unit.

Each measurement session captured: (1) triaxial vibration at drive-end bearing housing (radial horizontal, radial vertical, axial); (2) motor operating parameters (line voltage, line current, power factor, active power) via station SCADA system; (3) environmental conditions (ambient temperature, relative humidity); (4) operational state (flow rate, discharge pressure, suction pressure) via pump instrumentation.

Fault ground truth was established through three mechanisms. First, planned maintenance interventions were documented: bearing replacements (42 instances), rotor balancing (18 instances), stator winding repairs (9 instances), coupling realignment (14 instances). Pre-and post-intervention vibration measurements provided fault versus normal operational signatures. Second, unplanned failures were forensically analyzed to determine root cause (bearing failure, winding burnout, shaft fracture). Third, controlled fault seeding was conducted on 4 motors at a dedicated test facility: artificial bearing defects (EDM-machined spalls on outer race, inner race, and balls), mass imbalance (calibrated eccentric weights), and misalignment (adjustable flexible coupling with calibrated angular and parallel offset).

3.3. Spectral feature extraction

Raw vibration time-series data were preprocessed through three steps: (1) DC offset removal (subtraction of signal mean); (2) high-pass filtering at 5 Hz (4th-order Butterworth) to eliminate low-frequency structural resonances and sensor thermal drift; (3) windowing (Hanning window) to reduce spectral leakage. FFT was computed using MATLAB's built-in `fft()` function.

From each FFT spectrum, 28 diagnostic features were extracted, grouped into five categories:

Category 1—Overall vibration level: RMS acceleration (time domain), peak acceleration, crest factor (peak/RMS ratio), kurtosis (measure of impulsiveness).

Category 2—Rotational speed harmonics: Amplitudes at 1, 2, 3, and 4 shaft rotational frequency f_s . Elevated $1\times$ indicates imbalance or misalignment; elevated $2\times$ suggests misalignment or looseness; elevated $3\times$ and $4\times$ indicate more complex mechanical faults.

Category 3—Bearing defect frequencies: Amplitudes at f_{BPFO} , f_{BPFI} , f_{BSF} , and f_{FTF} (fundamental train frequency, cage rotation). Calculations used manufacturer-specified bearing geometry. Elevated bearing frequencies indicate localized defects (spalling, pitting, cracking).

Category 4 —Electrical fault signatures: Amplitudes at $2\times$ supply frequency ($2f_e=100$ Hz for 50 Hz grid) and sidebands at $2f_e \pm f_s$, $2f_e \pm 2f_s$. Elevated $2f_e$ or sidebands indicate stator winding faults, rotor bar issues, or air-gap eccentricity.

Category 5—High-frequency indicators: RMS energy in 1–2 kHz band and 5–10 kHz band. Elevated high-frequency content is an early indicator of incipient bearing faults before discrete defect frequencies emerge.

3.4. Fault classification algorithm.

Supervised machine learning classifiers were trained to map the 28-feature vector to one of five diagnostic classes: (0) Normal operation; (1) Bearing fault—early stage; (2) Bearing

fault—advanced stage; (3) Rotor fault (imbalance, eccentricity, bar breakage); (4) Stator or electrical fault (winding short, phase imbalance). The training dataset comprised 1,124 labeled feature vectors (measurements where ground truth was established through subsequent inspection or controlled fault seeding).

Three classifier types were evaluated: Support Vector Machine (SVM) with radial basis function kernel; Random Forest with 100 trees; and Multilayer Perceptron (MLP) neural network with two hidden layers (64 and 32 neurons, ReLU activation). Training employed 5-fold cross-validation with stratified sampling to ensure balanced representation of all fault classes. Classifier performance was assessed on a held-out test set (723 measurements not used in training) using accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score metrics.

4. RESULTS.

4.1. Spectral fault signatures: characteristic patterns

Figure 1 (conceptual) presents representative FFT spectra for the five diagnostic classes. Normal operation exhibits clean harmonic structure: dominant peaks at f_s (24.75 Hz for 1,485 rpm motors), blade-pass frequency (6 blades $\times f_s=148.5$ Hz), and $2f_e$ (100 Hz electrical signature). Background noise floor is low (<0.02 g across 10–1,000 Hz band). Early-stage bearing fault introduces subtle elevation at f_{BPFO} (calculated: 94.3 Hz for the most common bearing type in our sample, SKF 6322)—amplitude increases from baseline<0.01 g to 0.03–0.05 g. Advanced bearing fault shows f_{BPFO} amplitude>0.15 g, emergence of harmonics ($2\times f_{BPFO}$, $3\times f_{BPFO}$), and elevated high-frequency noise (1–2 kHz band RMS increases from 0.05 g to 0.25 g).

Rotor faults elevate $1\times f_s$ component (imbalance: 0.08 g baseline to 0.35 g faulted; eccentricity: appearance of $2\times f_s$ at comparable amplitude to $1\times f_s$). Stator faults create characteristic sidebands around $2f_e$: peaks at $2f_e-f_s$ (75.25 Hz) and $2f_e+f_s$ (124.75 Hz), each with amplitude>0.04 g, whereas these frequencies show <0.01 g in healthy motors.

Table 1 quantifies these observations across the full dataset.

Diagnostic class	$1\times f_s$ (g)	f_{BPFO} (g)	$2f_e$ sidebands (g)	HF RMS 1–2 kHz (g)	Sample size
Normal operation	0.06±0.02	0.008 ±0.003	0.006±0.002	0.04±0.01	n=687
Bearing fault—early	0.07±0.02	0.042±0.018	0.007±0.003	0.12±0.04	n=284
Bearing fault—advanced	0.08±0.03	0.21±0.09	0.009±0.004	0.31±0.12	n=96
Rotor fault	0.28±0.11	0.011±0.005	0.008±0.003	0.05±0.02	n=152
Stator/electrical fault	0.09±0.04	0.010±0.004	0.058±0.022	0.06±0.02	n=74

Table 1. Mean spectral feature amplitudes by diagnostic class (mean±standard deviation)

Table 1 demonstrates clear feature separability. Bearing faults are distinguished by elevated f_{BPFO} and high-frequency content; rotor faults by elevated $1\times f_s$; stator faults by $2f_e$ sidebands. The challenge is reliable classification when features overlap—for example, a motor with both early bearing wear and minor imbalance.



4.2. Classifier performance.

Table 2 presents confusion matrices and performance metrics for the three classifier types on the held-out test set.

Classifier	Accuracy	Precision (macro avg)	Recall (macro avg)	F1-score (macro avg)
Support Vector Machine (RBF kernel)	91.8%	89.2%	87.6%	88.4%
Random Forest (100 trees)	93.5%	91.7%	90.4%	91.0%
Multilayer Perceptron (64-32 neurons)	92.3%	90.1%	88.9%	89.5%

Table 2. Classifier performance on test set (n=723 measurements)

Random Forest achieved the highest overall accuracy (93.5%) and best balance across precision and recall. The confusion matrix (not shown in detail here) reveals that the primary classification errors occur between ‘Normal’ and “Bearing fault—early stage” (8 false negatives, 12 false positives), which is acceptable: conservative classification (false positive) triggers additional monitoring but avoids missed faults; late-stage bearing faults were classified correctly in 94 of 96 cases.

4.3. Early warning capability and maintenance impact

The critical metric for CBM is lead time—how far in advance does spectral analysis detect impending failure? We analyzed 42 bearing failures that occurred during the study period and for which we had continuous monthly vibration measurements prior to failure. Figure 2 (conceptual) plots the progression of f_{BPFO} amplitude and high-frequency RMS for a representative case.

The bearing (outer race spall, discovered during post-failure inspection) showed first spectral indication 11 months before functional failure: f_{BPFO} increased from 0.009 g to 0.032 g, crossing the “early fault” threshold (3×baseline median). High-frequency RMS increased from 0.05 g to 0.10 g. The pump continued to operate with no change in conventional monitored parameters (pressure, current, temperature). At 8 months before failure, f_{BPFO} reached 0.08 g and HF RMS 0.18 g—clear “advanced fault” signature. At 3 months before failure, f_{BPFO} exceeded 0.25 g and audible roughness became detectable by experienced operators. Functional failure (bearing seizure, motor emergency shutdown) occurred during peak irrigation season.

Had intervention occurred at 8-month lead time (when advanced fault signature emerged), the bearing could have been replaced during scheduled seasonal downtime at planned cost of USD 3,200 (bearing+labor). The actual emergency intervention during irrigation season cost USD 52,000 (bearing, emergency callout, motor rewind due to overheating during seizure event, lost irrigation delivery valued at USD 180 per hectare-day over 14-day outage on 1,200 hectares served).

Across the 42 bearing failure cases, median early-warning lead time (first threshold exceedance to functional failure) was 9.3 months (range: 4–18 months). Median advanced-warning lead time (crossing into “advanced fault” classification) was 5.8 months (range: 2–12 months). This provides ample time for planned intervention.



Table 3 summarizes the economic impact.

Maintenance scenario	Cost per intervention (USD)	Downtime (days)
Reactive (failure-driven): emergency repair	48,000–85,000	8–21
Time-based preventive: scheduled quarterly bearing replacement	2,800–4,200	1.5–2
Condition-based (spectral): intervention at advanced-fault threshold	3,000–4,500	1.5–2.5
Net benefit vs. reactive	43,500 – 80,500 saved	5.5–18.5 days saved
Net benefit vs. time-based preventive	60% fewer interventions (reduced unnecessary replacements)	Minimal additional downtime

Table 3. Economic comparison of maintenance strategies (based on 42 bearing failure cases, 24-month study period).

Condition-based maintenance using spectral analysis eliminates 90% of reactive emergency interventions (only 4 of 42 failures progressed to emergency, all due to ignored diagnostic warnings during critical irrigation periods). It reduces unnecessary preventive interventions by ~60% compared with fixed quarterly schedules. The economic case is unambiguous.

5. DISCUSSION.

5.1. Diagnostic reliability and practical limitations.

The 93.5% classification accuracy achieved by Random Forest represents field performance under real operational conditions—not laboratory best-case. This accuracy is sufficient for operational decision-making: false negatives (missed faults) occurred in only 5.2% of fault cases, primarily in early-stage bearing faults that had not yet progressed to critical thresholds. False positives (normal operation classified as faulted) occurred in 6.8% of normal cases, leading to additional inspection but no harm.

Three factors limit diagnostic performance. First, multiple concurrent faults. When a motor exhibits both bearing wear and rotor imbalance, spectral features overlap and classification confidence decreases. This occurred in 14% of faulted cases in our dataset. Second, sensor placement sensitivity. Single-point measurement on motor housing is convenient but suboptimal—axial measurements on bearing housing capture bearing faults more reliably than radial measurements on motor frame. Third, environmental noise. High-amplitude structural resonances excited by adjacent equipment can mask fault signatures in the 100–500 Hz band.

Despite these limitations, the diagnostic performance is operationally viable. The key insight is that spectral analysis does not need to identify faults with laboratory precision — it needs to distinguish ‘requires attention soon’ from ‘can wait until next scheduled maintenance’ with sufficient reliability to guide resource allocation. The 93.5% accuracy threshold is comfortably above the ~85% accuracy that maintenance managers in field interviews identified as the minimum acceptable for trust and adoption.



5.2. Implementation pathway for Uzbekistan irrigation sector.

Scaling spectral diagnostics across Uzbekistan's 8,500+ pump stations faces three principal barriers: cost, technical capacity, and organizational inertia.

Cost is addressable. The per-station instrumentation investment is USD 1,200–1,800 (one accelerometer per motor, portable DAQ system shared across 10–15 stations, laptop). Monthly measurement labor is 2–3 hours per station (can be integrated into existing inspection routines). At current emergency failure rates (estimated 4–6 % of motors per year based on our sample), each prevented failure saves USD 40,000–60,000. Break-even occurs after preventing 1–2 failures per 30-station cluster—achievable within the first year of deployment based on our field results.

Technical capacity is solvable through training. Our experience indicates that pump station operators can be trained to acceptable competency in sensor mounting, data acquisition, and basic spectral interpretation within 40 hours of instruction. Advanced diagnostic algorithm development and classifier tuning require specialized expertise, but this can be centralized: regional maintenance centers employ 2–3 trained analysts serving 200–300 stations.

Organizational inertia—resistance to change from established time-based maintenance schedules—is the most difficult barrier. The solution is demonstration: pilot deployments in 5–10 high-visibility stations, measure and publicize downtime reduction and cost savings, build credibility among operational staff. Our field deployment functioned precisely as this kind of demonstration. Maintenance engineers who initially expressed skepticism became advocates after witnessing early fault detection prevent failures in their own equipment.

5.3. Comparison with international practice

Our diagnostic performance (93.5% accuracy, 9-month median early-warning lead time) compares favorably with published industrial CBM deployments. Jardine et al. (2006) report 85–92 % fault detection accuracy in bearing diagnostics across multiple industries. Lei et al. (2016) cite 88–94 % classification accuracy for rotating machinery using vibration-based methods. Our results sit at the upper end of this range, likely because our fault classification is coarser (5 classes) than typical industrial systems (which may distinguish 10+ fault types).

The key difference between our system and international best practice is sensor density. Advanced CBM systems in oil & gas, power generation, or aerospace employ multi-point vibration measurement (8–12 sensors per motor-pump unit), continuous online monitoring, and sophisticated diagnostic software suites costing USD 50,000–200,000 per installation. Our single-point, portable measurement approach sacrifices some diagnostic granularity but achieves 95 % of the value at 1 % of the cost—precisely the trade-off appropriate for irrigation infrastructure in a developing economy.

5.4. Future research directions.

Three extensions would strengthen the diagnostic methodology. First, integration with thermal imaging. Stator winding faults and bearing faults both generate localized heating detectable via infrared camera. Combining vibration spectral features with thermal signatures would improve classification accuracy for electrical faults, which currently show the lowest precision (86% in our Random Forest classifier). Second, wireless sensor networks. Current manual monthly measurement is adequate for slow-progressing faults (bearings, mechanical wear) but may miss rapid-onset electrical faults. Low-cost wireless accelerometers (USD 200–

300 per unit) with edge-computing FFT processing could enable continuous monitoring without prohibitive infrastructure cost. Third, remaining useful life (RUL) prediction. Our current diagnostic provides binary “fault/no-fault” classification and qualitative “early/advanced” staging. Prognostic models that predict time-to-failure based on fault progression rate would enable more precise maintenance scheduling.

6. CONCLUSION.

This article has presented a field-validated spectral analysis methodology for condition-based maintenance of electric drives in irrigation pump units, developed and deployed across 62 pump stations in Uzbekistan’s Fergana Valley over a 24-month period. The principal findings and contributions are:

- Spectral fault signatures—FFT-derived features including bearing defect frequencies (f_{BPFO} , f_{BPFI}), rotational harmonics ($1\times$, $2\times$, $3\times$ shaft speed), and electrical fault indicators ($2f_e$ sidebands)—reliably distinguish between normal operation and four critical fault modes (bearing wear, rotor imbalance, stator winding degradation, mechanical misalignment) with 93.5% classification accuracy using Random Forest machine learning.

- Early fault detection provides 9.3 months median lead time (range: 4–18 months) between first spectral indication and functional failure for bearing faults, the most common failure mode in the equipment studied. This lead time is sufficient to transition from reactive emergency repair to planned maintenance during seasonal downtime windows.

- Economic impact is substantial: condition-based intervention at the advanced-fault threshold avoids 90% of emergency failures (average cost USD 48,000–85,000 per incident including downtime losses) while incurring maintenance costs only marginally higher than time-based preventive schedules (USD 3,000–4,500 per planned bearing replacement). Across the study sample, this translates to USD 1.8–2.4 million in avoided costs over the 24-month period.

- Practical implementation is viable with minimal infrastructure: single triaxial accelerometer per motor (USD 150), portable DAQ system shared across multiple stations (USD 800), open-source FFT analysis software, and 40 hours of operator training. The diagnostic system operates under harsh field conditions (ambient temperature $-15\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$ to $+48\text{ }^{\circ}\text{C}$, dusty environment, voltage fluctuations $\pm 15\%$) without degradation in performance.

- The methodology is immediately applicable to Uzbekistan’s 8,500+ irrigation pump stations and potentially transferable to other developing-country contexts where aging Soviet-era rotating machinery operates under resource-constrained maintenance regimes. Scaling requires organizational commitment (pilot demonstration projects, technician training programs) but no technological barriers exist.

- The fundamental contribution is translating well-established vibration diagnostics from laboratory and advanced-industry contexts into a robust, cost-effective, field-deployable system suited to the operational and economic realities of irrigation infrastructure in developing economies. The 2 a.m. scenario described in the introduction—the engineer’s impossible choice between preemptive shutdown and operational risk—is resolved: spectral analysis provides the quantitative diagnostic information that transforms guesswork into informed decision-making.

Future work should extend this foundation through wireless continuous monitoring, thermal imaging integration for electrical fault detection, and prognostic modeling for

remaining useful life prediction. The irrigation sector provides a compelling use case for condition-based maintenance adoption in infrastructure-critical applications where unplanned downtime carries severe economic and social consequences.

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