

同心圆形应力区辅助的熊猫型保偏少模光纤

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摘要 提出一种具有同心圆形应力区的熊猫型保偏少模光纤结构,该结构可以稳定支持10个传输模式。通过引入低折 射率应力区,高阶模式之间的有效折射率差提升了近一个数量级,相邻模式之间的最小有效折射率差在1550 nm 处达到 2×10⁻⁴,在C波段不低于1.8×10⁻⁴。模式色散不高于|-55.0219| ps/(nm•km),最大弯曲损耗在10⁻⁷ dB/m 量级(弯曲半 径≥9.5 cm)。该研究成果为短距离大容量的光纤设计提供了思路。

关键词 光纤光学;少模光纤;空分复用;保偏;简并模

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1 引 言

新型数据业务层出不穷以及云计算技术的快速发展,对光互连网络中传输容量的提升提出了迫切需求。 传统单模光纤受非线性香农极限的限制,容量难以提升。为此,时分复用、波分复用以及空分复用等技术被 应用到光纤设计中,其中空分复用技术因具有达到最 大容量的能力而受到广泛关注^[13]。少模光纤是运用 空分复用技术的典型器件,但少模光纤传输过程中发 生的模式串扰是重大问题。为解决该问题,通常会在 接收端引入多输入多输出(MIMO)数字信号处理技 术^[4],但随着传输模式数量的增多,系统的复杂性会呈 非线性增长,产生较大的功耗^[5]。为此,要从根源上抑 制模式耦合,最大限度分离本征模式,实现光纤导模间 低串扰,简化通信系统。

理论研究表明,模式有效折射率差(Δn_{eff})大于 10⁻⁴时,导模之间可视为无简并,能量耦合被有效减 小^[6-7]。为达到提高导模间 Δn_{eff} 和扩大传输容量的目 的,所使用的光纤通常包括椭圆芯光纤^[8-9]、环形芯光 纤^[10-11]、熊猫型保偏少模光纤^[12-14]等。Zhao等^[15]提出一 种由中心圆孔和椭圆环形芯组成的保偏少模光纤,能 够传输 10个模式,在C+L 波段 Δn_{eff} >1.32×10⁻⁴; Xiao等^[16]提出一种在纤芯周围引入4个气孔的保偏少 模光纤,为分离高阶简并模式提供了思路,在1550 nm 波长处最小 Δn_{eff} 达到1.65×10⁻⁴,之后又提出一种纤 芯中心具有椭圆气孔的保偏少模光纤^[17],在1550 nm 波长处相邻模式间 Δn_{eff} >1.93×10⁻⁴;Chen等^[18]提出 一种在纤芯中心和四周引入气孔的少模光纤,模式数量增加,光纤在1520~1580 nm 波段的 Δn_{eff} >1.25×10⁻⁴。上述结构均衡了模式数量与简并模式分离,在一定程度上改善了最小 Δn_{eff} 。值得注意的是,基模分离与高阶模分离存在矛盾,平衡低阶和高阶简并模式的分离程度有望进一步提升最小 Δn_{eff} 。

本文提出一种具有同心圆形应力区的熊猫型保偏 少模光纤,其突出特征为椭圆环形芯周围设置了同心 圆形应力区。在合适的光学参数和结构尺寸下,该光 纤结构能够在C波段稳定传输10个模式,且所有模式 均不再简并,并保持良好的偏振特性。此外,该光纤的 抗弯曲性能较好,模式色散相对较小,在制作上具有良 好的工艺鲁棒性。与相同参数无同心圆形应力区的光 纤相比,所设计光纤的应力区具有优异的分离高阶简 并模式能力和模式约束能力。因此,该结构在短距离 大容量传输的光互连网络中有重要的研究价值。

2 光纤结构和原理分析

光纤结构横截面如图1所示。图1(a)所示为光纤 整体横截面,包层直径为D,设置为125μm,两个气孔 分布在*x*轴上并关于*y*轴对称,气孔半径为*r*、中心偏离 *y*轴的距离为Λ。图1(b)为纤芯部分放大示意图,椭圆 环形纤芯的半长轴和半短轴分别为*b_x*和*b_y*,椭圆形内芯 半长轴和半短轴为*a_x*和*a_y*,同心圆形应力区的半径为 *R*。包层和椭圆形内芯的材料为纯二氧化硅(SiO₂);纤 芯为掺二氧化锗(GeO₂)的二氧化硅材料,参照文献[15 -16,19]设定掺杂率(摩尔分数)为23.75%;同心圆形

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应力区为掺三氧化二硼(B₂O₃)的二氧化硅材料。在 1550 nm 处,以上3个部分的材料折射率分别为 1.444、1.478和1.428,气孔部分折射率为1。同心圆





图1 光纤结构示意图。(a)光纤整体横截面示意图;(b)纤芯放大的几何结构示意图

通过模式分析,少模光纤中模式有效面积(A_{eff})可 表示为

$$A_{\text{eff}} = \left[\iint \left| E(x, y) \right|^2 dx dy \right]^2 / \iint \left| E(x, y) \right|^4 dx dy, (1)$$

式中:*E*(*x*,*y*)为模式强度分布。采用光波束法分析 光纤抗弯曲性能。当光纤弯曲时,可以用等效折射率 分布公式来模拟弯曲的情况,即

$$n'(x, y) = n(x, y) \times \left[1 + (x \times \cos \theta + y \times \sin \theta) / R_{\text{eff}}\right], \qquad (2)$$

式中:n(x, y)为直光纤的折射率; θ 为相对x轴的弯曲 角度; R_{eff} 为等效弯曲半径,在石英光纤中 $R_{eff}/R \approx 1.28^{[20]}$ 。在等效直光纤下,弯曲损耗 (L_b) 与 导模有效折射率 (n_{eff}) 的虚部和波长 (λ) 有关 $^{[21]}$,其计算 公式为

$$L_{\rm b} = 40 \times \pi \times \operatorname{Im}(n_{\rm eff}) / (\lambda \times \ln 10)_{\circ}$$
(3)

3 参数优化设计

椭圆形内芯的结构参数定为 a_x=3.39 μm、a_y= 2.42 μm。气孔半径越大、越靠近 y 轴,对模式的影响 越大,通过初步调整,r和Λ的值分别设定为20 μm 和 26.05 μm。本文纤芯不再是常规的圆形,而是椭圆环 形结构,使得光纤结构从圆对称转变为轴对称,从而导 致光纤中传输模式的电场矢量方向趋向于某一确定方 向,形成类似于线偏振模式的分布,因此本文将讨论的 所有模式以"LP"方式命名。

少模光纤中模式数量过多会导致模间串扰问题严重,数量较少则不利于光纤容量的提升,因此,本实验的光纤模式目标数量为10个。影响模式数量的因素 主要是纤芯面积,为此首先对椭圆环形纤芯的半长轴 (b_x) 和半短轴 (b_y) 进行优化。在 λ =1550 nm、 b_y = 3. 37 µm、R=5. 12 µm的情况下,模式 n_{eff} 和相邻模式 之间的 Δn_{eff} 随 b_x 的变化曲线如图 2 所示。当 b_x <5 µm 时,模式 LP^x_{21b}和 LP^y_{21b}的 n_{eff} 低于包层折射率,模式被截 止。4个最高阶模式的 n_{eff} 在 b_x =5. 2 µm 附近极其接 近,模式之间会发生相互转换,导致其顺次相邻模式之 间的 Δn_{eff} 在 b_x =5. 2 µm 前后出现极小值,如图 2(b)所 示;两个基模间 Δn_{eff} 在 b_x 达到 4. 8 µm 之后,实现 Δn_{eff} >10⁻⁴; LP^x₀₁和 LP^y_{11a}之间的 Δn_{eff} 随 b_x 增加呈现减 小趋势,尤其在 b_x >5. 35 µm 后,两个模式的能量串扰 显著增加。将纤芯半长轴尺寸从 4. 46 µm 扩大到 5. 56 µm,均能解决第二个模群以及 LP^y_{11b}与 LP^x_{21a}之间 偏振简并与空间模式简并的问题。为保证模式数量以 及所有模式有效分离, b_x 可取为 5. 18 µm 或在 5. 04~ 5. 14 µm 和 5. 28~5. 31 µm 范围内选取。

在 1550 nm 处,设定 b_x =5.04 µm、R=5.12 µm 情 况下, b_y 不足 3.3 µm,会使 LP_{21b}^x 和 LP_{21b}^y 模式泄漏至包 层。因此,本实验在 3.3~5 µm 范围内探究 b_y 对模式 特性的影响。如图 3 所示,纤芯的半长轴主要影响模 式数量,半短轴对模式分离的影响更显著。随着 b_y 增 加,纤芯 椭圆度减小,光纤双折射效应减弱,在 3.94 µm 处,两对正交偏振模式(LP_{01}^x 和 LP_{01}^x 以及 LP_{21a}^x 和 LP_{21a}^y)的 n_{eff} 分别近似相等, Δn_{eff} 均降低约 95%,产生 了严重的偏振简并问题。此外, LP_{11a}^x 和 LP_{11b}^x 或 LP_{21a}^y 和 LP_{21b}^x 的横向电场分布基本仅有角度相差 $\pi/2$,因此 在纤芯接近圆对称的过程中两对模式之间的 Δn_{eff} 变化 显著,特别是在 b_y =4.2 µm 左右,空间简并加剧。除 上述情况外,其余模式之间的 Δn_{eff} 全部满足大于 10⁻⁴ 的指标要求。为抑制模式能量耦合、保障传输性能, b_y 可在 3.3~3.65 µm 及 4.3~4.58 µm 范围选取。

所提光纤结构在保证基模分离的同时,提升高阶模式之间的△n_{eff},进而提高全部简并模式的分离程度。 在纤芯和包层之间引入折射率较低的同心圆形应力区

Fig. 1 Schematic of fiber structure. (a) Overall cross section of optical fiber; (b) schematic of enlarged geometrical structure of the fiber core





图 2 在 1550 nm 处,模式 n_{eff} 和相邻模式间 $\Delta n_{\text{eff}} = b_x$ 的关系。(a) n_{eff} 随 b_x 的变化;(b) Δn_{eff} 随 b_x 的变化 Fig. 2 At 1550 nm, effective refractive index n_{eff} and effective refractive index difference Δn_{eff} as a function of b_x . (a) Variation of n_{eff} with b_x ; (b) variation of Δn_{eff} with b_x



图 3 在 1550 nm 处,模式 n_{eff} 和相邻模式间 $\Delta n_{\text{eff}} = b_y$ 的关系。(a) n_{eff} 随 b_y 的变化;(b) Δn_{eff} 随 b_y 的变化 Fig. 3 At 1550 nm, effective refractive index n_{eff} and effective refractive index difference Δn_{eff} as a function of b_y . (a) Variation of n_{eff} with b_y ; (b) variation of Δn_{eff} with b_y

能够有效解决该问题。如图 4(a)、(b)所示,在1530~ 1570 nm 波长范围内:无该应力区的常规光纤较高阶 模式的 n_{eff} 曲线几乎完全重叠;在相同参数设定下,引 入半径为5.12 µm 的同心圆形应力区,光纤中高阶模 式的 n_{eff} 曲线被有效分离,达到与较低阶模式分离相似 的效果。对比图 4(c)、(d)发现,LP^x_{11b}-LP^y_{11b}、LP^x_{21a}-LP^y_{21a}、LP^y_{21a}-LP^x_{21b}和 LP^x_{21b}-LP^y_{21b}的 Δn_{eff} 明显提升。出 现以上现象主要是因为 LP^x_{11b}和 LP^x_{21a}和 LP^y_{21a}、 LP^y_{21b}和 LP^y_{21b}专工的面影应力区对以 上模式群的打破重建效果突出。此外,与无同心圆形 应力区的光纤相比,所提光纤模式之间 Δn_{eff} 数值整体 增长,最小 Δn_{eff} 不低于 1.8×10⁻⁴(LP^x_{11a}和 LP^x_{21b})。

进一步探究导模各项指标随同心圆形应力区半径

的变化情况,在1550 nm 波长处,固定 b_x =5.04 µm、 b_y =3.37 µm,即纤芯半长轴尺寸为5.04 µm,同心圆 形应力区的半径则从5.04 µm 开始增大。图 5(a)显 示,同心圆形应力区尺寸增大,各个模式 n_{eff} 逐渐减小, 当其半径大于5.6 µm 时,高阶模式开始泄漏至包层。 因此,为维持光纤可传输的模式数量,半径不可超过 5.6 µm。在5.04~5.6 µm 范围以0.019 µm 为步长, 对同心圆形应力区进行半径扫描优化,数据显示,所有 相邻模式之间的 Δn_{eff} 均不低于1.8×10⁻⁴,如图 5(b)所 示(LP^x_{11a}和LP^x_{11b}以及LP^y_{11b}和LP^x_{21a}之间的 Δn_{eff} 数值远 大于 10⁻⁴)。由此说明,该应力区半径可选取的范围为 5.04~5.6 µm。

光纤制作过程中可能会引起结构尺寸的变化,如 上所述,在满足相邻模式有效折射率差大于10⁻⁴的条 件下,该光纤结构在工艺上允许存在一定误差。



图4 模式 n_{eff} 和相邻模式间 $\Delta n_{\text{eff}} = \lambda$ 的关系。(a)无同心圆形应力区时 n_{eff} 随 λ 的变化;(b)有同心圆形应力区时 n_{eff} 随 λ 的变化;(c)无同心圆形应力区时 Δn_{eff} 随 λ 的变化;(d)有同心圆形应力区时 Δn_{eff} 随 λ 的变化

Fig. 4 Effective refractive index n_{eff} and effective refractive index difference Δn_{eff} as a function of λ . (a) Variation of n_{eff} with λ without concentric-circular stress-applying region; (b) variation of n_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ without concentric-circular stress-applying region; (d) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (e) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (f) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of Δn_{eff} with λ with concentric-circular stress-applying region; (c) variation of $\Delta n_{\text{ef$



图 5 在 1550 nm 处,模式 n_{eff} 和相邻模式间 Δn_{eff} 与 R的关系。(a) n_{eff} 随 R的变化;(b) Δn_{eff} 随 R的变化 Fig. 5 At 1550 nm, effective refractive index n_{eff} and effective refractive index difference Δn_{eff} as a function of R. (a) Variation of n_{eff} with R; (b) variation of Δn_{eff} with R

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4 结果与讨论

光 纤 各 部 分 结 构 尺 寸 选 取 为 r=20 μm、 $\Lambda=$ 26.05 μm、 $a_x=3$.39 μm、 $a_y=2$.42 μm、 $b_x=5$.04 μm、 $b_y=3$.37 μm 和 R=5.12 μm。在 1550 nm 处进行模式 分析, 仿真数据显示, 有 10个模式(LP^y₀₁、LP^x₀₁、LP^y_{11a}、 LP^x_{11a}、LP^x_{11b}、LP^y_{21a}、LP^y_{21a}、LP^x_{21b}、LP^y_{21b})的 n_{eff} 符合 沿光纤轴向传输的条件,按 n_{eff} 降序排列得到图 6 所示的 模式电场图。模式电场图中的面上箭头显示各个模式 具有良好的偏振特性。此外,模式有效面积也是光互 连传输系统的重要指标。在上述结构参数下,同心圆 形应力区辅助光纤的模式有效面积(A_{eff})保持在 30~ 50 μ m²范围内,在一定程度上抑制了光纤的非线性效 应,同时可通过增大纤芯面积进一步提高模式有效面 积。表1包含了 A_{eff} 以及有或无同心圆形应力区情况下 各个模式的有效折射率(n'_{eff} 和 n''_{eff})和相邻模式之间的有 效折射率差($\Delta n'_{eff}$ 和 $\Delta n''_{eff}$)的详细数值。通过数据对比 发现,引入同心圆形应力区后 LP₂₁模式群相邻模式之 间的 Δn_{eff} 能够被提升近一个数量级,该结果与第 3节的 分析结果吻合,相邻模式间 Δn_{eff} 不小于 2×10⁻⁴。



图 6 1550 nm 处,各模式的横向电场、幅值和偏振方向。(a)LP^y₀₁;(b)LP^x₀₁;(c)LP^y_{11a};(d)LP^x_{11a};(e)LP^x_{11b};(f)LP^y_{11b};(g)LP^x_{21a};(h)LP^y_{21a}; (i)LP^x_{21b};(j)LP^y_{21b}

Fig. 6 Transverse electrical fields, amplitudes, and polarization directions of each mode at 1550 nm. (a) LP_{01}^{y} ; (b) LP_{01}^{x} ; (c) LP_{11a}^{y} ; (d) LP_{11a}^{x} ; (e) LP_{11b}^{x} ; (f) LP_{21b}^{y} ; (g) LP_{21a}^{y} ; (i) LP_{21b}^{x} ; (j) LP_{21b}^{y}

Mode	$n'_{ m eff}$	$n_{ m eff}''$	$\Delta n'_{ m eff}$ / 10^{-4}	$\Delta n_{ m eff}^{\prime\prime}/10^{-4}$	$A_{ m eff}$ / $\mu{ m m}^2$			
LP_{01}^y	1.45512	1.45669	2.0	1.7	37			
LP_{01}^x	1.45492	1.45652	4.3	6.0	41			
LP_{11a}^y	1.45449	1.45592	3.3	3.2	30			
LP_{11a}^{x}	1.45416	1.45560	57.0	38.6	31			
LP_{11b}^{x}	1.44846	1.45174	4.7	3.2	46			
LP_{11b}^{y}	1.44799	1.45142	28.1	34.6	50			
LP_{21a}^{x}	1.44518	1.44796	2.0	0.3	42			
LP_{21a}^{y}	1.44498	1.44793	2.2	0.2	46			
LP_{21b}^{x}	1.44476	1.44791	2.0	0.9	41			
LP_{21b}^{y}	1.44456	1.44782			42			

表1 $n'_{\text{eff}}, n''_{\text{eff}}, \Delta n'_{\text{eff}}, \Delta n'_{\text{eff}}$ 和 A_{eff} 的具体数据 Table 1 Data of $n'_{\text{eff}}, n''_{\text{eff}}, \Delta n''_{\text{eff}}, \Delta n''_{\text{eff}}$, and A_{eff}

设定上述参数后,在1530~1570 nm波长范围内, 研究波长对模式的影响。图 4(b)显示了作为波长函 数的模式 n_{eff} 的对应曲线,可以看出,各个模式 n_{eff} 的变 化小于0.1%,变化趋势较为平坦。与波长相关的相 邻模式之间 Δn_{eff} 的曲线如图 4(d)所示,最小 Δn_{eff} 在此 波长范围内保持不低于1.8×10⁻⁴。由此可见,光纤特 性相对于波长具有一定的稳定性。在1550 nm 波长 处,运用式(2)、(3)分析光纤的弯曲特性,仿真结果显 示,当沿*x*轴和*y*轴的弯曲半径不小于9.5 cm时,10 个模式均不会泄漏至包层,且弯曲诱导损耗较小(最 大在10⁻⁷ dB/m量级)。可见,同心圆形应力区的引 入在有效分离模式的同时,保证了光纤的抗弯曲性 能。光纤的色散特性如图7所示,在1530~1570 nm 波长范围内,模式色散(D)的数值不超过 |-55.0219| ps/(nm·km),并能够通过增加纤芯半短 轴长度等方式来进一步降低模式色散,以使光纤更适 合于传输应用。





在所提光纤结构的基础上,用正方形、椭圆形以及 矩形应力区分别代替同心圆形应力区。通过模式分析 发现:当引入正方形应力区时,模式数量始终无法达到 10个;当引入椭圆形应力区时,只有椭圆度小于 1.006,光纤在C波段传输的模式数量才能维持在10 个,此时结构接近于圆形;当引入矩形应力区时,在 第 43 卷 第 20 期/2023 年 10 月/光学学报

1550 nm 处最小 Δn_{eff} 不能达到 2×10⁻⁴。因此,引入同 心圆形应力区时所提结构的性能最佳。

表 2 列出了近年报道的少模光纤性能。对比发现,所设计光纤在 1550 nm 处的最小 $\Delta n_{\rm eff}$ 得到显著提升,在C波段的最小 $\Delta n_{\rm eff}$ 也优于绝大部分结构,在短距离大容量通信系统中有巨大应用潜力。

Ref.	Mode number	Min. ∆ <i>n</i> _{eff} /10 ⁻⁴ (at 1550 nm)	Min. $\Delta n_{\rm eff} / 10^{-4}$ (in wide band)	Dispersion / (ps•nm ⁻¹ •km ⁻¹)	Max. $L_{\rm b}/({\rm dB}\cdot{\rm m}^{-1})$
[10]	8	1.19	1.12 (at C-band)	—	10^{-5} (at 1 cm)
[14]	16	1	1 (at C-band)	≪ 25	1 (at 8 mm)
[15]	10	—	1.32 (at C+L-band)	< 60	—
[16]	10	1.65	1.52 (at 1510-1630 nm)	$\leq -36 $	$10^{\scriptscriptstyle -10}$ (at 5 cm)
[17]	10	1.93	1.8 (at 1510-1630 nm)	< -70	10^{-8} (at 3 cm)
[18]	14	1.3	1.25 (at 1520-1580 nm)		—
This paper	10	2	1.8 (at C-band)	< -56	10^{-7} (at 9.5 cm)

表 2 近年报道的少模光纤的研究数据 Table 2 Research data of few-mode fiber reported in recent years

5 结 论

提出一种同心圆形应力区辅助的熊猫型保偏少模 光纤,研究了椭圆环形纤芯尺寸、同心圆形应力区大小 对模式 n_{eff}和 △n_{eff}的影响。结果表明,通过优化参数, 该结构能够有效分离光纤中传输的简并模式。分析了 引入同心圆形应力区前后模式特性的变化,证明该低 折射率应力区具有显著提高高阶模式之间有效折射率 差的作用。光纤的抗弯曲性能较好,同时,模式色散较 小。除此之外,改变纤芯及各部分尺寸,该光纤结构有 望进一步增加导模数量,同心圆形应力区的元素也适 用于其他光纤结构设计。本研究在未来光互连传输系 统中具有重要应用价值,为保偏少模光纤的发展与设 计提供了新思路。

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Concentric-Circular Stress-Applying Region-Assisted Panda Polarization-Maintaining Few-Mode Fiber

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Abstract

Objective The emergence of new data services and the rapid development of cloud computing have put forward urgent demands for improving transmission capacity in optical interconnection networks. The capacity of traditional single-mode fibers is difficult to enhance due to the nonlinear Shannon limit. Space division multiplexing (SDM) technology has caught extensive attention for its ability to reach maximum capacity. Few-mode fibers are a typical design using SDM, and the mode crosstalk that occurs during the few-mode fiber transmission is a major problem. The multiple-input multiple-output (MIMO) digital signal processing technology is usually introduced at the receiver to solve this problem. However, as the number of guided modes increases, the system complexity will grow nonlinearly, resulting in significant power consumption. Therefore, the communication system should be simplified by suppressing the mode coupling from the root, which is separating the adjacent eigenmodes to the maximum extent. The polarization-maintaining few-mode fibers with special structures can improve the capacity and ensure a higher mode separation degree. However, the previous fiber designs ignore the contradiction between the lower-order mode separation and the higher-order mode separation. Thus, we take this as a breakthrough point to introduce concentric-circular stress-applying region, improving this contradiction relationship and increasing the effective refractive index difference between adjacent modes. Meanwhile, the polarization characteristics, mode effective area, wavelength dependence, mode dispersion, bending resistance, and other indicators are considered to yield better transmission performance and reliability.

Methods To adapt to the development of optical interconnection networks with short-distance and large-capacity transmission, we propose a concentric-circular stress-applying region-assisted panda polarization-maintaining few-mode fiber. The prominent feature of this fiber is that this concentric-circular region is set around the elliptical-ring core. Since the core mainly determines the guided mode number, parameter optimization is first performed on the semi-major axis (b_x) and semi-minor axis (b_y) of the elliptical-ring core. Subsequently, the concentric-circular stress region with a lower refractive index is introduced between the core and the cladding to improve the effective refractive index difference between the higher-order modes and ensure the separation of fundamental modes. Comparison conducted on optical fibers with the same parameters without concentric-circular stress regions or stress regions of other shapes indicates that the concentric-circular stress region has an excellent ability to separate degenerate modes. Additionally, frequency sweeping is conducted at 1530–1570 nm to investigate the modal wavelength dependency and mode dispersion of the fiber. Finally, the beam propagation method (BPM) is adopted to simulate the fiber bending, and the bending resistance is analyzed. Our study provides ideas for the design of short-distance and large-capacity optical fibers.

Results and Discussions Through the design and optimization of the fiber (Fig. 1), the results show that the proposed optical fiber can transmit 10 modes stably (Fig. 6). The introduction of concentric-circular stress-applying region in the structure can enhance the effective refractive index difference between higher-order modes by nearly an order of magnitude, balancing the lower-order mode separation and the higher-order mode separation (Fig. 4). The minimum effective refractive index difference between adjacent modes reaches 2×10^{-4} at 1550 nm (Table 1) and not less than 1.8×10^{-4} over the C-band. At 1530–1570 nm, mode dispersion is not higher than |-55.0219| ps·nm⁻¹·km⁻¹ (Fig. 7) and can be further reduced by increasing the semi-minor axis of the fiber core to better adapt to the short-distance transmission. In addition, the bending resistance of the fiber is analyzed. The results indicate that when the bending radius is no less than 9.5 cm, none of the 10 modes will be leaked into the cladding and the maximum bending-induced loss is in the order of 10^{-7} dB/m.

Conclusions We put forward a panda polarization-maintaining few-mode fiber with concentric-circular stress-applying region. The effects of elliptical-ring core size and concentric-circular stress region size on the effective refractive index of 10 modes and the effective refractive index difference between adjacent modes are studied. Numerical results show that by optimizing the parameters, this structure can separate the degenerate modes transmitted in the fiber. The mode characteristic changes before and after the introduction of the concentric-circular stress region are analyzed. It is proven that this low refractive index stress region can significantly improve the effective refractive index difference between higher-order modes. The bending resistance of the fiber is sound, with small mode dispersion. In addition, the fiber structure is expected to further increase the number of guided modes by changing the size of the core and other parts. The element of the concentric-circular stress-applying region is also suitable for designing other fiber structures. Our research has application value in the future optical interconnection transmission systems to provide a new idea for the development and design of polarization-maintaining few-mode fibers.

Key words fiber optics; few-mode fiber; space division multiplexing; polarization-maintaining; degenerate mode