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Load Estimation for Microgrid Planning based on a Self-Organizing Map Methodology

Jacqueline Llanos¹, Raúl Morales¹, Alfredo Núñez², Doris Sáez¹, Matías Lacalle¹, Luis Gabriel Marín¹, Roberto Hernández³, and Fernando Lanos¹

¹ Electrical Engineering Department, University of Chile, Santiago, Chile

² Section of Railway Engineering, Delft University of Technology, Delft, the Netherlands

³ Energy Center, Faculty of Physical and Mathematical Sciences, University of Chile, Santiago, Chile

Abstract— This study presents a novel load estimation method for isolated communities that do not receive energy or only receive it for a limited time each day. These profiles have been used to determine the installed capacity of generating units for microgrid electrification projects. The social characteristics and lifestyles of isolated communities differ from those in urban areas; therefore, the load profiles of microgrids are sensitive to minor variations in generation and/or consumption. The proposed methodology for obtaining the residential profiles is based on clustering algorithms such as k-means, a self-organizing map (SOM) or others. In this work, SOM clustering is considered because it allows a better interpretation of results that can be contrasted with social aspects. The proposed methodology includes the following components. First, the inputs are processed based on surveys of residents that live in each socio-economic level of housing and the community. Second, family types are clustered using an SOM, from which relevant information is derived that distinguishes one family from another. Third, the load profiles of each cluster are selected from a database. Additionally, social aspects and relevant energy supply information from communities with similar characteristics are used to generate the required database. The SOM for the clustering of families of the community with available energy measurements is used as an initial guess for the clustering of the families in the community with unknown energy measurements.

The methodology is applied and tested in the community of El Romeral, Chile, where a microgrid will be installed. The SOM technique compares favorably with a benchmark method that uses the average load profile of a community; furthermore, the SOM clustering algorithm for the methodology is favorably compared with the k-means algorithm because the results obtained by SOM are consistent with the social aspects.

Keywords: planning, microgrid, Self-Organizing Map (SOM), load profile.

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I. INTRODUCTION

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When designing and developing renewable energy projects that can provide power to an area, information should be obtained on the available energy resources and required power supply. Because of the uncertainties surrounding the availability of resources and their consumption, ensuring a sufficient capacity and availability of electricity to supply peak demand and daily energy consumption levels must be prioritized [1].

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The planning and operation of traditional low-voltage electrical networks require the use of load models. Most power companies implement systems that can automatically read electricity consumption (AMR, automatic meter reading) and determine consumption profiles. Records of these measurements have been used to determine electricity consumption classes and behavioral patterns of energy consumers and provide significant improvements in electricity demand forecasting. However, there are a number of nAMR customers (users without automated meters) for whom the consumption profile is not known [2]. This study focuses on consumers that live in isolated communities without an energy supply or only a partial supply and for whom historical records of total consumption or housing are not available to use as references when measuring microgrid generating units and increasing the efficiency of providing electricity to these areas.

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Residential demand accounts for most of the system load in isolated electrical systems. These loads are currently modeled with generalized profiles defined by statistical distributions, such as load profiles based on Gaussian functions that capture residential customer behaviors, which have been traditionally assumed to be homogeneous [3]. In small systems, simply turning on and off several appliances may generate significant disturbances to the overall power consumption profile, and several projects have focused on residential demand and proposed algorithms that track the behavior of small loads indicative of changes in the profile through the use of Bayesian change points to identify loads that may appear unpredictable [4].

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Demand profiles have traditionally been generated according to consumption measurements, although techniques have been used to identify characteristic patterns of electrical appliance use, particularly in Canadian households [5]. Similarly, the energy consumption profiles for one or more families can be generated by combining the electricity demand of each appliance with a probabilistic approach [6]. In Dickert and Schegner [7], a load curve model based on a probabilistic time series was presented along with measurements of different types of apparatuses used to determine individual load curves and analyze the sequence and timing of operations to generate probabilistic profiles for each appliance according to the appliance power, use frequency, ignition time, and operation times to obtain a load curve per customer or group.

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Surveys are also useful tools for generating electrical profiles in domestic buildings as shown by work recently conducted in the UK and reported in [8]. Simulation profiles have also achieved a good approximation of electrical energy usage based on measurements at a substation [9]. Estimating electricity demand is an insufficient approach in cogeneration systems; thus, per-hour thermal profiles must be generated to optimize electricity usage [10].

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58 Generating load profiles without measurements is a more difficult task, and limited developments have been achieved in this
59 area. In [2], the authors proposed a method for generating TLPs (typical load profiles) for smart grids by using AMR customer
60 data to analyze loads and generate a virtual load profile (VLP) for nAMR customers, with the data subsequently clustered and
61 classified.

62 A number of studies have considered stages of classification for load profiles generated in their models, and these stages
63 include clustering residential customers according to their appliances, identifying customer groups based on the number of
64 residents [7], and classifying users according to the type of electronics they own and times at which the electronics are operated
65 [6]. In Kim et al. [2], the authors evaluated several classification techniques for classifying AMR user profiles, such as k-means
66 and fuzzy c-means, which were later used to generate nAMR user profiles.

67 Self-organizing map (SOM) methodologies have been proposed in several studies. For short-term load forecasting, [11]
68 proposed the use of an input data classifier based on Kohonen neural networks. In Valero et al. [12], two methods were proposed
69 for short-term load forecasting using SOMs for classifying and memorizing historical data. According to [13], one of the major
70 advantages of using SOM for short-term load demand forecasting is its ability to display an intuitive visualization to compare
71 similar data. In [14], SOMs were used to automatically classify electricity customers based on their domestic energy
72 consumption demand patterns using a measurement database. In [15], SOMs were used for segmentation and demand pattern
73 classification for electrical customers. For short-term load forecasting, a neural model containing up to two hierarchical SOMs
74 was proposed in [16]. In [17] SOMs were used to cluster the data and support vector machine (SVM) to fit the testing data for
75 predicting the daily peak load for mid-term load forecasting purposes. In [18] a soft computing system was proposed for day-
76 ahead electricity price based on SOMs, SVM and particle swarm optimization (PSO), improving the forecasting accuracy. In
77 [19], the authors presented three of the most used clustering methods, k-means, k-medoid and SOMs, for clustering domestic
78 electricity load profile using smart metering data, in Ireland. SOM proved to be the most suitable and was therefore used to
79 segment the data; a Davies-Bouldin (DB) validity index was used to identify the most suitable clustering method and an
80 appropriate number of clusters.

81 However, these methods are applicable to only traditional power systems. In the case of microgrids, generating profile results
82 is more difficult because of the high variation and uncertainty of load behavior with regard to domestic energy consumption. A
83 load profile generation method for isolated microgrid projects was presented in [20], in which the information is obtained from a
84 socio-economic survey that is conducted in a community, and an SOM classification stage is used to generate a characteristic
85 load profile for each class. However, the load profiles are based on limited measurements from other grid-connected
86 communities, whose load behavior could differ from that of an isolated community, such as not including electricity
87 consumption measurements.

88 In this paper, an SOM algorithm is used as a clustering method for generating both the clusters and a representative for each
89 cluster. Several clustering techniques exist; a notable example is the k-means technique, in which each cluster is represented by
90 the most centrally located object in the cluster [21]. The k-means algorithm has also been used for power systems applications
91 such as in [22] for identifying similar types of profiles of a practical system for demand variation analysis and energy loss
92 estimation, and in [23] for classifying and recognizing the voltage sag from the measured historical data of a large-scale grid in
93 China.

94 According to [21], there are three main approaches for clustering times series: raw-data-based, feature-based, and model-
95 based. Among them, SOM and k-means are raw-data-based methods that allow the user to work with raw data directly. In this
96 paper, a methodology for obtaining the residential profiles is proposed considering clustering algorithms such as k-means,
97 SOMs, or others. In particular, SOM clustering is considered because it allows a better interpretation of results that can be
98 contrasted with social aspects. Thus, the implementation of an SOM is described for estimating load profiles that can be used to
99 plan microgrids according to the unit sizes. The proposed methodology includes the socio-economic characteristics of the grid
100 users (by surveys) as well as the effect of the consumption behavior of the entire community. In addition, this methodology
101 allows new load profiles with the features of each family to be added. The load profiles are obtained from another community
102 with similar characteristics and with available energy supply measurements. The characteristics of this community are clustering
103 by another SOM, which is used to estimate the electrical demand of the families in the community that lacks measurements. In
104 this study, SOMs are employed because they are suitable for representing the utilized surveys. Using SOMs, the survey
105 properties are visualized and analyzed. They correctly represent the similarities among families, which corresponds with
106 expectations from reality and a practical point of view. Thus, a SOM enables a suitable interpretation of the inputs and results
107 and identifies the similarities and differences in the prototypes. Unlike the K-means, the SOMs do not require the cluster
108 number.

109 The proposed methodology is applied to the community of El Romeral, which is located 21 kilometers from La Serena, Chile.
110 This area lacks basic electricity services and potable drinking water [24], and a microgrid is currently being planned for the
111 energy supply; therefore, an estimate of the load profile is required. The required profiles of a similar community are collected
112 from measurements of Huatacondo village, which is located 230 kilometers from Iquique, Chile, and has a microgrid that
113 operates in standalone mode [25]. The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section II describes the proposed load
114 estimation method that is based on an SOM, Section III provides the case study of the El Romeral community, and Section IV
115 presents the conclusions and suggestions for further research.

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II. LOAD ESTIMATION METHODOLOGY BASED ON SOM

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This section describes the proposed methodology in detail. The problem statement is explained, the basic concepts of the SOM are described, and the load estimation method that is based on SOMs is presented. Finally, the methodology is formulated for a specific community.

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A. Problem Statement

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One of the main concerns associated with the design and planning of microgrids for isolated communities, where energy is not always available, is how to determine the load for sizing the generation units. Classical load estimation for bulk power systems is not directly applied to microgrids. The large consumption of cities, where the electricity demand is traditionally measured, cannot be scaled to a microgrid because the way of life, economic activity, consumer habits, and appliances vary between isolated communities and large cities. Unlike bulk power systems, the microgrid load has greater variability, and small changes in consumption can significantly affect the electric demand profile. Based on these concerns, methodological tools to support the estimation of the demand for isolated localities are needed because measurements are not available.

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The proposed methodology based on computational intelligence is flexible and intuitive for demand estimation in isolated communities that do not have an electricity supply or partial electricity supply. The methodology seeks to solve the problem of the lack of consumption measurements in the study community.

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The methodology requires structured surveys for each dwelling and general information from the study community. Electricity measurements from other similar communities are needed. Thus, this methodology is useful for electrification projects, specifically for the design and sizing of the generating units of microgrids that operate in island mode.

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The problem statement includes the main objective of estimating the load profiles for families without permanent electricity supply and meters. In the proposed methodology, the measurements and surveys from a similar community that has permanent electricity supply are employed to generate the load profile for other communities without electricity supply.

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Thus, a methodology-based SOM for estimating load profiles that can be used to plan microgrids according to the unit size is described.

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B. Self-Organizing Map (SOM)

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SOMs were originally proposed by Kohonen [26] [27], and the principal characteristic of the SOM applied here is its ability to recognize patterns in complex sets via an unsupervised methodology [12]. In this method, a measure is used to determine the distribution of an input space V_i over an output space V_o (generally of a lower dimension). This measure is defined by a group of neurons distributed over a line, rectangular, or hexagonal plane, thus preserving the properties of the patterns in the input space.

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146 In Fig. 1, the input space is represented by a vector of inputs x_i , while the output space is given by the values of the diagram of
 147 $X \times Y$ nodes that are activated with different colors (from white to red) depending on the input.

148 The most important feature of SOMs is the possibility of comparing clusters that summarize data. The self-organized network
 149 must extract the patterns, regularities, correlations, categories, or important features of each observation and assign them to a
 150 cluster, which is then projected onto a node of the output map. The projections derived from different observations are then
 151 compared to estimate the proximity of their respective clusters because similar observations are projected on the same node.

152 Conversely, dissimilarity increases with the distance between two projections. Therefore, the space cluster is identified with
 153 the map so that the projections can be used to simultaneously interpret cluster space (output) and observe space (input) [28], as
 154 illustrated in Fig. 1.

155 The basic SOM training algorithm employs the following steps [29]:

- 156 1. Network weights are initialized, which is usually performed at random, although other methods can be employed, such as
 157 random entry selection. The weight vector of the neuron j is defined as $\vec{w}_j = (\omega_{j1}, \dots, \omega_{jn})$, where the weights ω_{ji} is
 158 related to the input x_i .
- 159 2. Input vector \vec{x} is considered.
- 160 3. Active neurons are determined that have weights closest (Euclidean distances) to the vector \vec{x} .
- 161 4. Weight vectors of the active neuron and those of the neighboring neurons are modified using the following equation:

$$\vec{w}_j(t+1) = \vec{w}_j(t) + l_r h_{jv}(\vec{x} - \vec{w}_j(t)) \quad (1)$$

162 where \vec{w}_j is the weight vector of the neuron j , l_r is the learning rate, and $h_{jv}()$ is a neighboring function.

163 The neighborhood size and learning rate are changed (or updated) dynamically during the learning process according to the
 164 following equation:

$$l_r(t) = \frac{l_{r0}}{\left(1 + \frac{c \cdot t}{n}\right)} \quad (2)$$

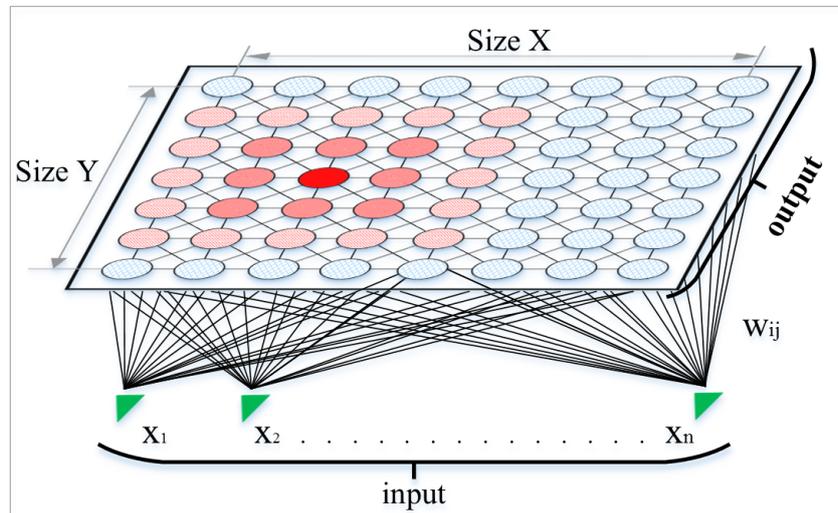
165 where l_{r0} is the learning rate at the beginning of the iterations; c is a constant, which is usually equal to 0.2; t is the iteration
 166 counter; and n is the number of neurons in the network.

- 167 5. The procedure is repeated from step 2 with new input vectors \vec{x} until the total number of determined iterations is
 168 completed.

169 After performing the learning process, an input vector $\vec{x} = (x_1, \dots, x_n)$ activates neuron j of the output space if the weight
 170 vector $\vec{w}_j = (\omega_{j1}, \dots, \omega_{jn})$ has the least distance from the input vector \vec{x} . Thus, each neuron \vec{w}_j corresponds to a prototype
 171 vector (an average) of the region of input vectors that trigger neuron j . Thus, two vectors with similar inputs, according to the
 172 relationships defined in V_i , activate the same neuron (or two different but nearby neurons) in the output space.

173 Visualizing SOMs is difficult (see Fig. 1) because the clustering process can be conducted in high-dimensional spaces;
174 however, one of the most popular methods utilizes a unified distance matrix U that provides a global view of proximity
175 relationships of the reference vectors in the SOM [30].

176



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Fig. 1 SOM Diagram

180 C. Load Estimation Method

181 This paper proposes a methodology for estimating the load profiles of residential electricity demand in isolated communities
182 where energy is not always available. In this method, the electricity demand profiles are calculated using information that is
183 obtained from a socio-economic survey that is conducted in the community and do not include measurements of past electricity
184 demand.

185 In this study, the data are derived from two sources and are employed as the inputs of the clustering algorithms:

- 186 • Data 1 includes the survey information for all dwellings of the study communities, i.e., families without permanent electrical
187 supply and unknown past consumption and families with electricity supply. The individual surveys (Table I) conducted in
188 each community household focus on obtaining information, including household size, age, occupation and income, as well as
189 the number and type of electrical appliances in the household and the number of hours for which they are operated.
- 190 • Data 2 is obtained from the electrical meters of families with permanent electrical supply, including the electricity
191 measurements for each family.

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Table I Information Obtained from the Survey

Type	Characteristics
Specifics	Number of Members
	Ages
	Activities
	Economic Incomes
Appliances	Existing Appliances
	Future Electrical Equipment
	Hours of Use of Current Equipment
	Hours of Use of Future Equipment
Increase in the Demand	Number of Members that Increase on Holidays

195

196 The proposed method for obtaining the residential load profile is divided into five main components (Fig. 2). The first **Input**
 197 **Module** includes information about each family in the studied community that is obtained through surveys and site visits to their
 198 homes. The second **Clustering Module** of the electricity user incorporates the survey information into a first SOM (named
 199 **SOM₁**) with the following categories: numbers of clusters, elements of each cluster, types of families, and features that
 200 differentiate each cluster. The **Update Database Module** that is based on a second SOM (named **SOM₂**) allows new load
 201 profiles to be added with their socio-economic features, which are obtained from both measurements and surveys of other
 202 communities that have uninterruptible supplies of electrical energy. The latter component includes a **Database** and a **Search**
 203 **Profile Module**. The **Database** contains profiles of each family type's typical consumption as well as characteristics that
 204 differentiate each cluster (these are described in more detail in the next section). The **Search Profile Module** uses a heuristic
 205 search method that analyzes the characteristics of each cluster from the previous module and identifies similarities in the
 206 database to generate a profile for each cluster that permits the load profile to be estimated. Each module is explained in detail
 207 below.

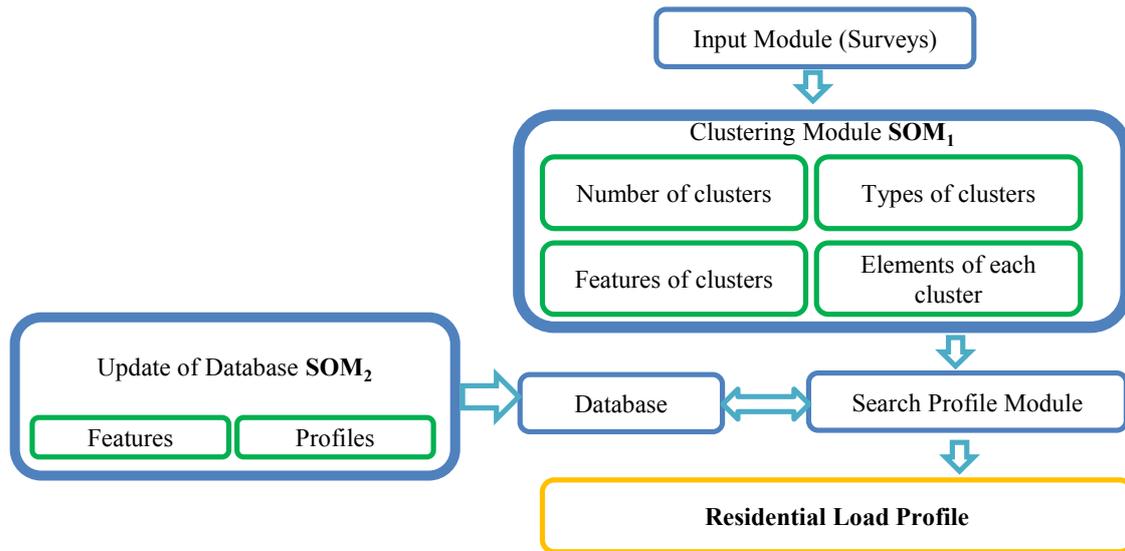


Fig. 2 Method for Residential Load Estimation Based on SOMs

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211 **Input Module:** This module includes relevant information from the community obtained through well-structured surveys, with
 212 the information collected as followed: an analysis is performed of magazines, documents, and statistical data from various
 213 sources, such as population and housing censuses, websites, and reports in libraries or publications by governmental
 214 organizations; and field interviews are performed of representatives of relevant town organizations and members of the
 215 community [31].

216 In this module, Data 1 is employed as inputs for the clustering algorithm and considered as a matrix of the following vectors:
 217 number of members, age of each member, activity of each member and income of each member. A quantification is performed
 218 for the activity of the members by assigning the following codes to each activity: 1 retired, 2 farmer, 3 housewife, 4 student, 5
 219 working day, 6 working half-day (day), 7 working half-day (afternoon), 8 night work, 9 home trade, and none of these activities.

220 The individual surveys (Table 1) conducted in each community household focus on obtaining information that includes
 221 household size, age, occupation and income as well as the number and type of electrical appliance in the household and hours
 222 that each appliance is used. In this module, data processing is performed, and erroneous data are removed, missing numerical
 223 data are estimated, qualitative variables obtained from surveys are assigned, and data are normalized. In this case, the input
 224 normalizations are performed to control the variance of the vector components, that is, a linear transformation that scales the
 225 values such that their variance=1. This method is a convenient use of the Mahalanobis distance measure without changing the
 226 distance calculation procedure.

227

228 **Clustering Module (SOM₁):** The primary objective of this module is to obtain the clusters for the different types of homes in
 229 the community according to *a priori* criteria, such as the number of family members as well as their occupations and income and

230 number of household electrical appliances (Data 1). The module also provides information on the number of families in each
 231 cluster. The clustering of the families is obtained by an SOM_1 in which the neighboring neurons react more strongly to similar
 232 input patterns. Here, the Euclidean distance was selected as a measure of similarity. Home location is not included in the inputs;
 233 however, the methodology is flexible and this input could be considered in the further research.

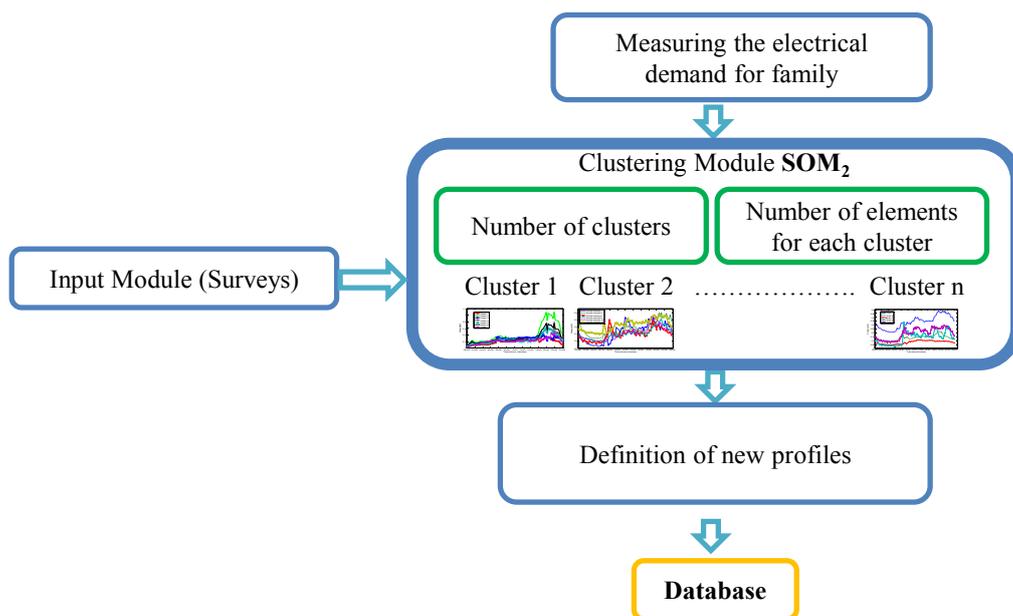
234 SOM_1 does not require labels for each cluster; however, to reduce the complexity of the visualization process, the data can be
 235 labeled with the names of family members to make the results easier to understand.

236 For the families in communities with and without an energy supply, clusters from SOM_1 are established with similar
 237 characteristics to organize families in clusters in accordance with their properties.

238 **Update of the Database (SOM_2):** This module generates load profiles for the required database. Fig. 3 shows the procedure,
 239 which requires another community with a 24-hour energy supply. The first step is to install electrical meters in each house of
 240 this community. The inputs for SOM_2 are represented as a matrix defined by the electricity measurement vectors. In this study,
 241 measurements are taken every 15 minutes, that is, 96 measurements each day. The obtained measurements (Data 2) are clustered
 242 using an SOM_2 to obtain a certain number of clusters with corresponding load profiles. Using this information, the average of
 243 the profiles is calculated as a representative load profile. The socio-economic features of the cluster are then assigned for each
 244 representative load profile. The features are obtained from surveys of the community (Data 1, refer to Table I); this information
 245 (both the classes and the corresponding profiles) is saved in the database.

246 Thus, load demand information clusters from SOM_2 are established for families with similar load profiles; this information is
 247 employed as a database.

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Fig. 3 Update of Database (SOM_2)

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252 **Database:** All of the profiles that are associated with the characteristics of the families are contained in a database that can
253 accommodate additional family types as they are identified and additional profiles using the **Database Update Module**. The
254 database may be designed to be highly generalized for different types of isolated communities, and it may also include a certain
255 number of pre-defined profiles. The clusters included in the database are as follows: elderly couples, elderly individuals living
256 alone, elderly individuals living with an adult, adults living alone, adult couples, adult couples living with a child, adult couples
257 living with a teenager, adult couples living with two young children, adult couples living with two teenagers, adult couples
258 living with more than three children, and a living arrangement that does not correspond to any of the clusters mentioned.

259 The database that is generated by the **Database Update Module** is an important element of the proposed method because it
260 attempts to include the largest number of possible patterns.

261 **Search Profile Module:** A heuristic selection technique is used for the searching process. The module considers the
262 characteristics of all clusters and then searches for the most similar cluster within the database to select an input, at which point
263 the corresponding load profile is assigned.

264 **Residential Load Profile:** The total residential demand d_r is obtained by adding the product of the number of elements in each
265 cluster by the daily load profile assigned to the cluster:

266

$$d_r = \sum_{c=1}^c p_{c_c} \cdot ne_c \quad (3)$$

267 where c is the cluster, p_c is the profile that is assigned to cluster c , which is obtained by the **Search Profile Module**, and ne_c is
268 the number of elements of cluster c .

269 The residential demand of community d_c is determined as follows:

$$d_c = d_r \cdot inc_f + d_s + d_{cs} \quad (4)$$

270 where d_r is the residential daily demand multiplied by a constant inc_f , which represents a multiplier rate of population growth
271 for holidays; d_s represents the characteristic load profile of the schools; and d_{cs} represents the daily demand profile for
272 commonly used centers such as hospitals. In turn, d_s is calculated according to the product of the profile pattern multiplied by
273 the number of students and number of centers.

274 The daily demand patterns of institutions and common areas, such as schools, medical centers, churches, camping areas, and
275 street lighting, are added to the residential demand profile, and the sum of all of these profiles generates a community profile.
276 The proposed method is flexible and can also incorporate the profiles of centers that are commonly used. Increases in
277 community power consumption that occur on holidays must also be considered and are managed by multiplying the total

278 consumption profile of the community by a factor that represents the increased number of individual consumers on holidays.
279 Note that this generated load profile is vital for sizing the microgrid distributed generation units during the project design stage.

280 *D. Load Estimation for a Community that lacks an Energy Supply*

281 Fig. 4 shows the application of the proposed methodology to the load estimation of a community A (which lacks an energy
282 supply). This estimation is required for optimal microgrid planning. The methodology requires measurements and surveys from
283 another community B, which shares similar characteristics to Community A but has an available electrical energy 24/7.

284 The first block of Fig. 4 is used to determine the residential load profile. The results are analyzed by the **Search Profile**
285 **Module** algorithm to assign characteristic profiles to each cluster, and the residential load profile is then obtained as the sum of
286 the identified load profiles.

287 The surveys include information that is obtained from families of communities A and B (Table I). In addition, general surveys
288 that are based on general inquiries and field interviews and that include the characteristics of the community, such as the
289 population and the number of inhabited houses, schools, and communal areas, are conducted in both communities.

290 The clustering module **SOM₁** of electrical demand uses the survey information of community A as an input and groups the
291 types of families. **SOM₂** is used in the **Update Database** module of community B, and the electricity consumption
292 measurements from the corresponding surveys are clustered.

293 This algorithm uses a database that can be expanded based on the measurements of the other community (B). The database
294 update clustering **SOM₂** of the electrical demand of community B uses the measurements of the electricity consumption of each
295 house as an input. The clustering is performed for community B, and representative load profiles (as the average of the
296 corresponding electricity load profiles for each cluster) are associated with the socio-economic features based on the surveys of
297 the community. Both the clusters and measurements from community B are stored in the database.

298 In the Fig. 4, the residential load profile is considered together with the profile of load in public spaces such as the load
299 required by the public lighting, educational centers and other public spaces. The proposed method also includes a non-clustered
300 load profile for any family that does not belong to a cluster.

301 Finally, the sum of the profiles is completed for the community profile. The output includes a selector with the power to
302 obtain the maximum consumption profile when there are visitors on holidays, which is achieved by multiplying the traditional
303 consumption profile of the community with an index of the growth rate of the population on holidays.

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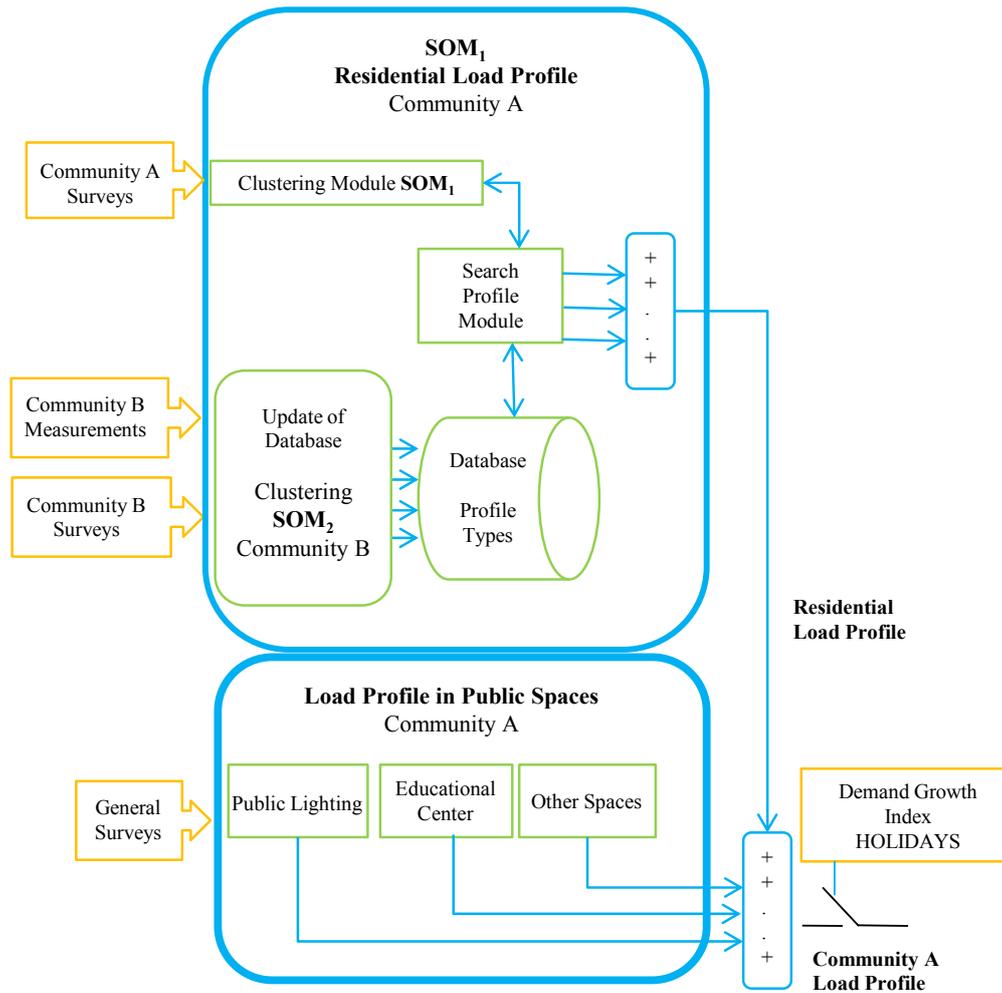


Fig. 4 SOM methodology for Load Profile Generation in an Isolated Community

III. CASE STUDY

This section shows the results that were obtained when the methodology was applied to the community of El Romeral (community A), where a microgrid will be installed in the near future, using a database that was composed of the measurements and characteristics from another community (Huatacondo; community B), where a microgrid currently operates. The electrically isolated community El Romeral has suitable characteristics for the installation of a microgrid as defined in [32], where an intelligent self-managed microgrid based on renewable energy, including solar and wind resources are going to be installed. This community is located 21.1 kilometers north of the city of La Serena, Region of Coquimbo, Chile (29° 42' 53.6" S, 71° 12' 59.24" W) and 70 families living in the area did not have the basic services of electricity supply, potable water, or sewers, which is similar to the current situation. In its first phase, the electrification plan through the microgrid will provide power to approximately half of the population as well as the school, square, neighborhood council, and other common areas. Numerical results of the proposed methodology are presented. A comparison of the k-means and SOM clustering algorithms is also included.

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321 *A. Load Estimation Method Results*

322 The methodology begins with the database update procedure (Fig. 2). In this work, measurements and surveys of the
323 microgrid that currently operates in Huatacondo (community B) are available and can be used to determine the per-family
324 consumption and its features. The installed microgrid in Huatacondo is composed of two photovoltaic systems ($P_{\max}^S = 24$ kW),
325 a wind turbine ($P_{\max}^W = 5$ kW), the existing diesel generator in the village, which is typical of isolated grids, an energy storage
326 system that is composed of a lead-acid battery bank that is connected to the grid through a bidirectional inverter, a water pump,
327 and the loads ($L_{\max} = 28$ kW) [33][34].

328 The database was updated using the profiles from the Huatacondo measurements by determining all of the measurements per
329 family and subjecting them to the clustering stage (**SOM₂**) to obtain profile clusters that were then associated with each family
330 based on the cluster features that were obtained from the surveys to obtain average profiles per cluster. Based on the database
331 update module (see Fig. 3), the measurements of Huatacondo (community B) are gathered and then clustered using clustering
332 module **SOM₂** of the electrical demand. Five clusters of consumer profiles were identified using **SOM₂** (Fig. 5), and the results
333 were studied to establish the coherence. To determine the representative pattern of each cluster, the profiles of each family in
334 every cluster were averaged and then integrated into the database. Fig. 6 shows the profiles of each family that correspond to
335 class 1. This process was used for all of the clusters of identified profiles. Fig. 7 shows the characteristic profiles of each cluster
336 in the database. Note that a profile of the families that could not be surveyed is required and corresponds to the profile with the
337 highest peak demand in the database, which is class 1 in this case (Fig. 7).

338 The profiles are linked to determine the socio-economic characteristics of the families that are obtained by surveys of the
339 houses in which the meters were installed.

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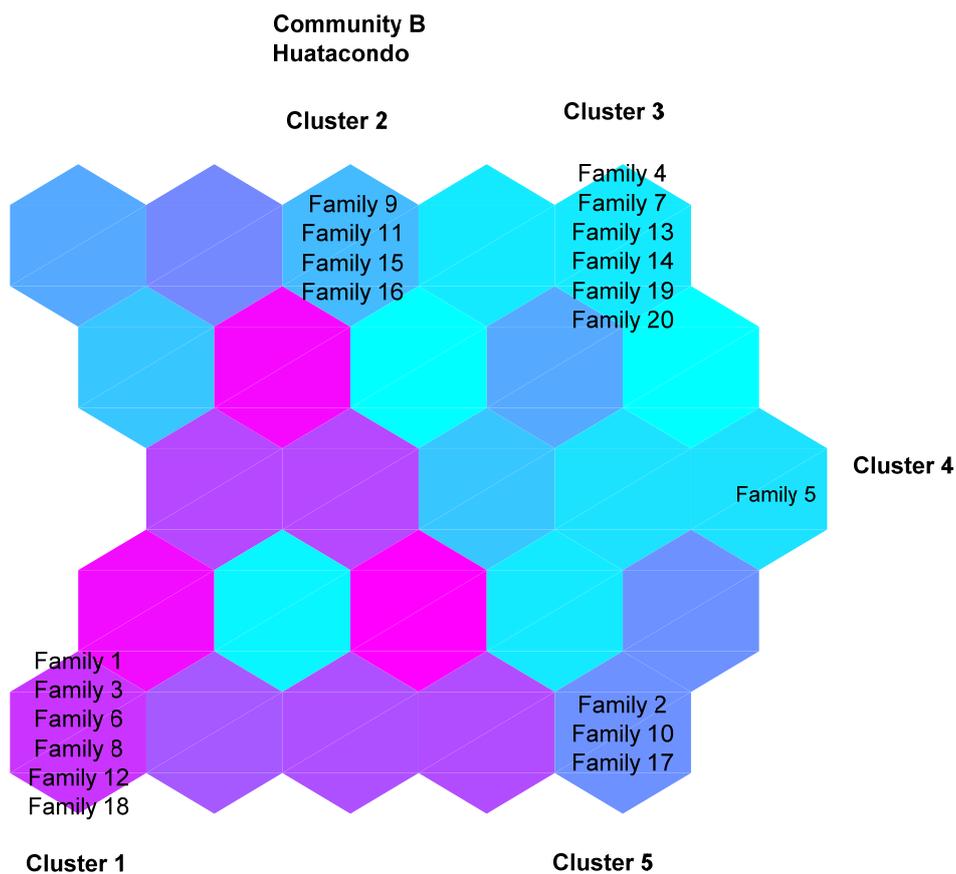


Fig. 5 Huatacondo Consumption Clusters, including Measurements of Consumption for 20 Families

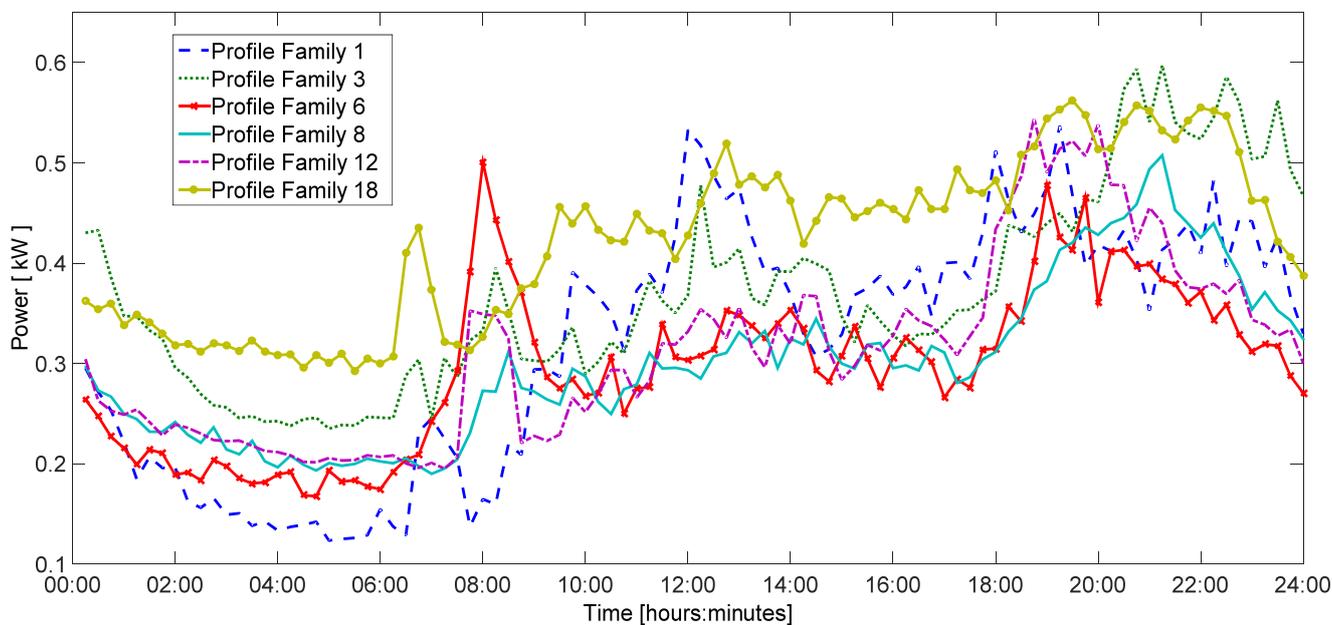


Fig. 6 Load Profiles of Cluster 1

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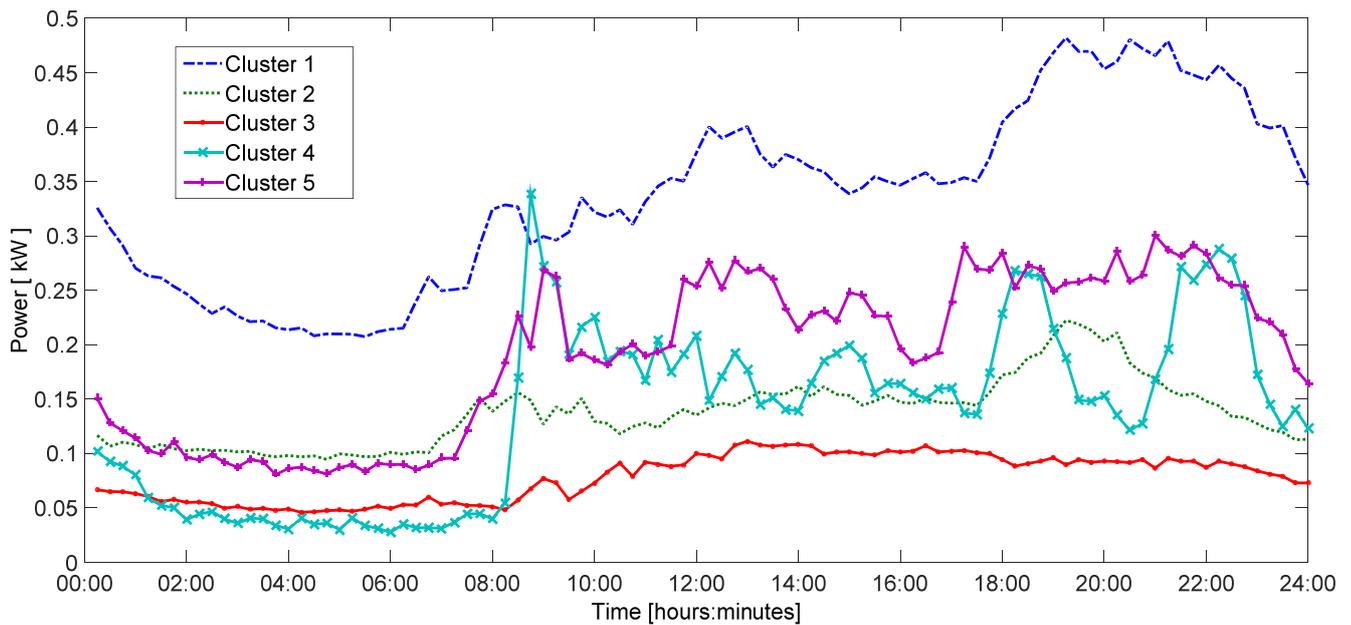


Fig. 7 Electricity Demand Profiles for Each Type of Family assigned in the Database

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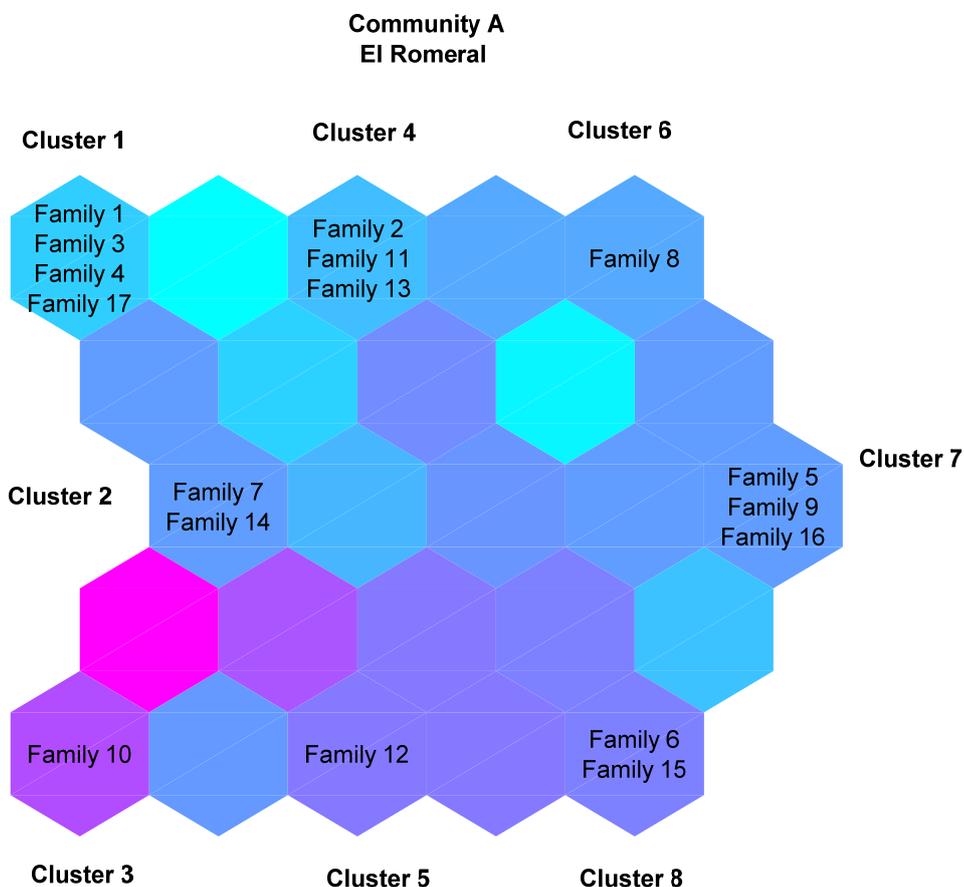
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After the database was updated with the new profiles that were obtained from Huatacondo, the load estimation that is based on SOM_1 is applied to El Romeral (community A). In the *Input Module* (Fig. 2), 150 inhabitants from 70 families were identified, and 39 of these families (80 inhabitants) received benefits from the microgrid. Of these 39 families, 17 have been surveyed to generate electricity consumption profiles. In addition, the community currently does not have streetlights; therefore, based on the geographical distribution of the houses, usage of 15 lights has been estimated. In the *Clustering Module* of electricity users that is based on SOM_1 for El Romeral, eight types of families (Fig. 8) were identified, including retired elderly individuals who live alone, retired elderly couples, families with six members, families with three adults, and adult couples.

Because there are eight clusters, eight profile patterns have been identified by the Search Profile Module in the database. The clusters 3, 4, 6, 7 and 8 generated for El Romeral community (see Fig. 8) are similar to the clusters 1 to 5 of the Huatacondo community (see Fig. 5), respectively. Therefore, the corresponding load profiles for the El Romeral community are assigned as the load profiles of the Huatacondo families. The load profiles for the other classes of the El Romeral community (clusters 1, 2 and 5 of Fig. 8), which are not represented in the database, are associated with the load profile of class 1 of the Huatacondo database.

These load patterns have been multiplied by the number of families corresponding to each cluster to generate the *Residential Load Profile*. After adding this profile to the other profiles of communal locations, the Community Load Profile is obtained. Fig. 9 shows the Community Load Profile of El Romeral generated by applying this methodology; however, it has not been validated with actual data because the microgrid has not been implemented. Nevertheless, it is used to size the generation units. However, this methodology can be verified with a basic technique that consists of obtaining the average consumption of Huatacondo and

369 scaling that consumption based on the number of inhabitants to be supplied with energy in El Romeral. This technique does not
370 consider the increased demand on weekends or holidays, which is typical of isolated communities.
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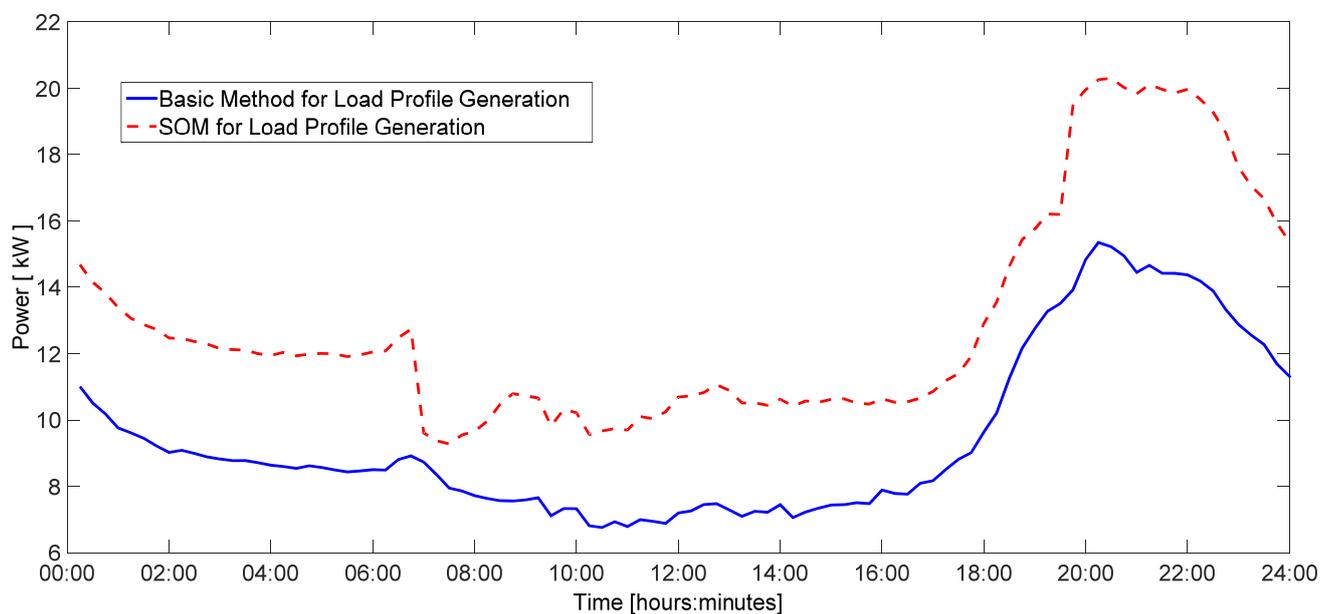
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Fig. 8 Clustering of Families Types in the El Romeral

375 Fig. 9 compares the load profiles of El Romeral that were generated by this methodology and a benchmark method. The
376 benchmark method scales the average consumption of Huatacondo by the number of inhabitants that will be supplied by the
377 planned microgrid in El Romeral. Note that the load profile that is based on the new methodology has a higher consumption than
378 that from the benchmark method because the new method considers uninhabited houses (without surveys) that will be inhabited
379 as well as socio-economic aspects. Thus, the new method can be applied to any community that does not have an electricity
380 supply and where measurements are not available.

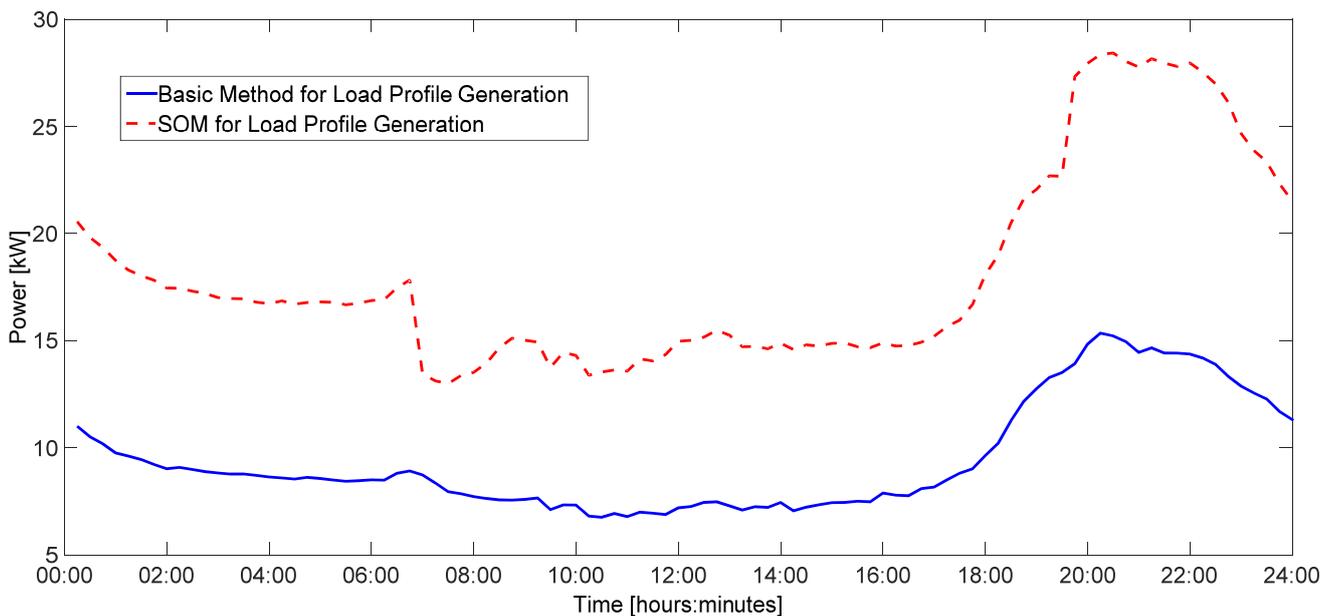
381 A greater influx of people occurs in these communities during holidays; therefore, this work includes an index of population
382 increases for festival dates that scales the generating units according to the maximum community consumption where the
383 microgrid will be installed (Fig. 4). In Fig. 10, the profiles generated in El Romeral for holidays between the two methods are
384 compared.

385 An analysis of the results presented in Fig. 9 and Fig. 10 show that it is necessary to consider holidays to ensure sufficient
386 power and energy that can manage an occasional influx of visitors.



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Fig. 9 Load Profile Generated by the SOM Method versus the Basic Method in the El Romeral Community.



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Fig. 10 Load Profile Generated by the SOM Method versus the Basic Method in the El Romeral Community for a Holiday Season

392 *B. Comparison between SOM and K-means*

393 As explained in the Section II, two stages of clustering based on SOM are proposed in the methodology. However, there are
394 other clustering algorithms in the literature that can be used at these stages. In this section, a comparison with a well-known

395 clustering method, k-means, is considered for both stages instead of SOM. Other clustering algorithm can be easily tested as
 396 well.

397 To compare the algorithms, a performance index e_k is defined for each cluster k as follows:

$$e_k = \frac{1}{\Omega_H} \sqrt{\sum_{i \in H} (x_{i,k} - x_{c,k})^2} \quad (5)$$

398 where x_i is the element of the cluster k, x_c is the centroid of the cluster k, and Ω_H is the number of elements of the set H
 399 containing the entire data set.

400 In Table II, the performance index e_k is shown for both k-means- and **SOM₂**-based methodologies at the stage of update of
 401 the database using measurements from the Huatacando village (community B). It can be observed that the performance of the
 402 methodologies are similar, with **SOM₂** providing a slightly better result. The **SOM₂**-based methodology for cluster 4 has e_k
 403 equal to 0 because the cluster contains only a single element. In Table III, the elements for each cluster are shown. The elements
 404 of cluster 1 by the k-means algorithm are the same as those of cluster 5 for SOM (Families 2, 10, and 17). Thus, their
 405 performance index and number of elements are the same (Table II). **SOM₂** grouped cluster 2 and 4 of the k-means output in
 406 cluster 1. Fig. 6 shows 6 profiles (Families 1, 3, 6, 8, 12, and 18) that correspond to cluster 1, as output by **SOM₂**. Otherwise,
 407 using k-means, the same 6 families are clustered in two clusters: cluster 2 (Fig. 11) and cluster 4 (Fig. 12). By analyzing the
 408 socio-economic characteristics of these 6 families belonging to cluster 1 of **SOM₂**, their features are similar, mainly considering
 409 their economical incomes and daily activities. Thus, **SOM₂** manages to cluster the families in a more coherent way; the use of
 410 the 6 elements in a single class is preferred for describing the data.

411

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Table II. Clustering performance for Update of Database using K-means and **SOM₂**, Huatacando Community

	Cluster error k-means [W]	Cluster error SOM₂ [W]	Elements per cluster k-means	Elements per cluster SOM₂
Cluster 1	4.782	6.161	3	6
Cluster 2	6.159	2.079	6	4
Cluster 3	3.499	3.013	2	6
Cluster 4	4.472	0	3	1
Cluster 5	2.314	4.783	6	3

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414

415 Table III shows the members of clusters obtained for the update of the database using k-means and **SOM₂** applied to the
 416 Huatacando measurements. From the table, using **SOM₂**, cluster 4 contains only family 5, while cluster 3 obtained by k-means
 417 contains families 4, 5, 9, 11, 15 and 16. In Fig. 13, the families of cluster 3 obtained by k-means are presented; note that family 5

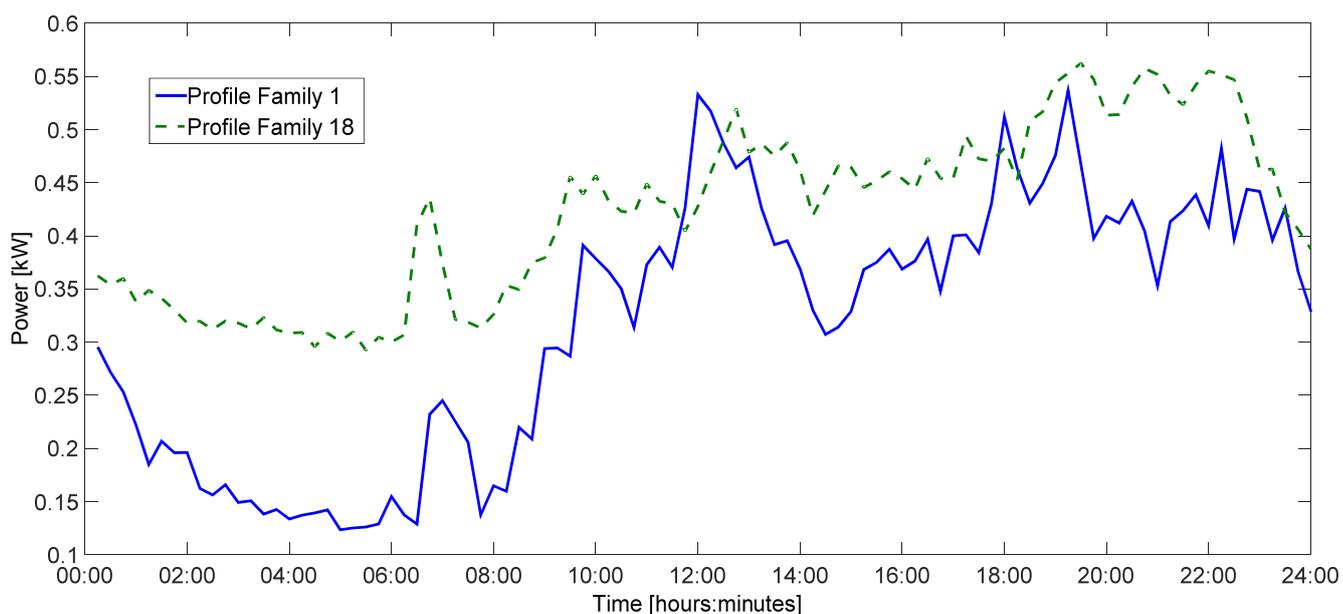
418 shows a different profile from the others mainly during the periods between 8:00 to 10:00 and 18:00 to 23:00. This finding
 419 validates the **SOM₂** method, under which family 5 is assigned as the only element of cluster 4.

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Table III. Members of Clusters for Update of Database Classifier K-means SOM₂, Huatacondo Community

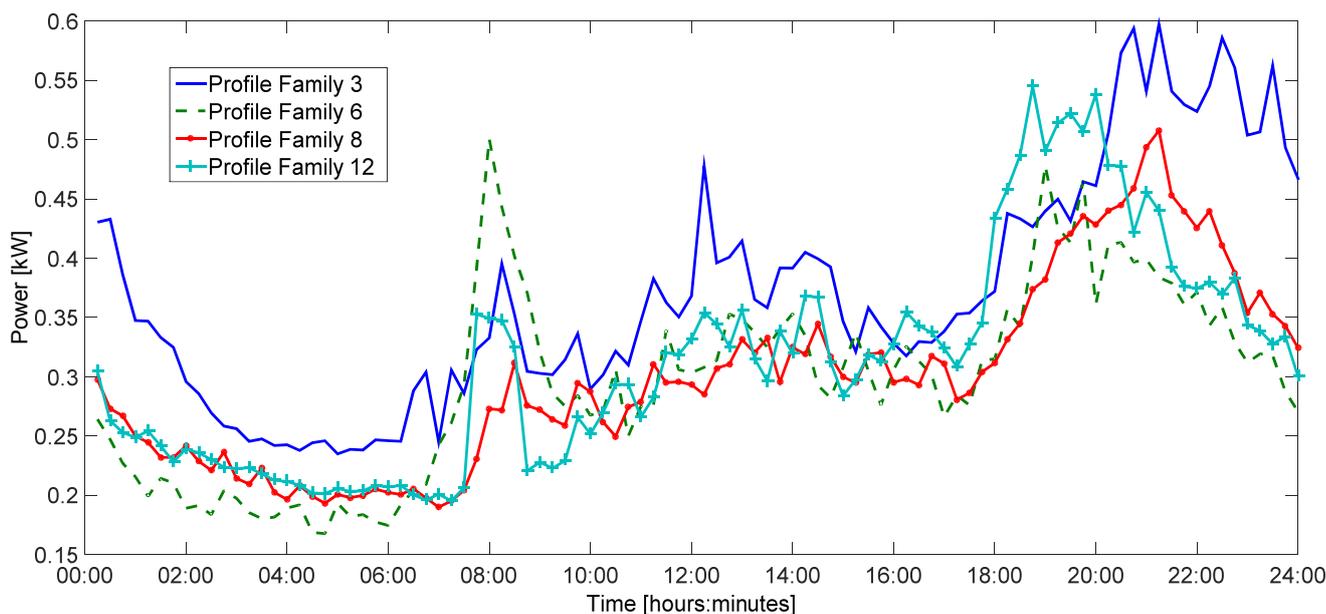
	Members k-means	Members SOM₂
Cluster 1	Family 2, Family 10, Family 17	Family 1, Family 3, Family 6 Family 8, Family 12, Family 18
Cluster 2	Family 1, Family 18	Family 9, Family 11, Family 15 Family 16
Cluster 3	Family 4, Family 5, Family 9 Family 11, Family 15, Family 16	Family 4, Family 7, Family 13 Family 14, Family 19, Family 20
Cluster 4	Family 3, Family 6, Family 8 Family 12	Family 5
Cluster 5	Family 7, Family 13, Family 14 Family 19, Family 20	Family 2, Family 10, Family 17

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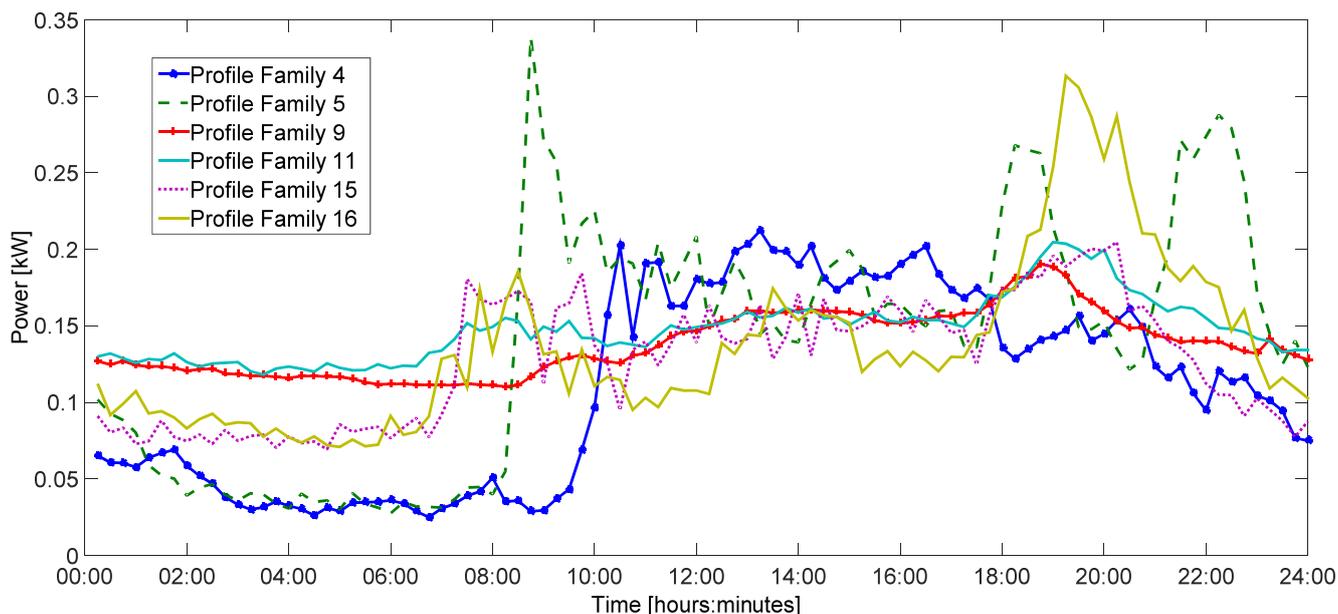
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Fig. 11 Load Profiles of Cluster 2 using K-means



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Fig. 12 Load Profiles of Cluster 4 using K-means



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Fig. 13 Load Profiles of Cluster 3 using K-means

432 Table IV shows the performance at the clustering stage for El Romeral (community A) using both clustering methods, SOM_1
433 and k-means, using the surveys for clustering the families. It can be observed that the performances of the methodologies are
434 similar. In Table V, the elements for each cluster are shown. Three clusters coincide; family 12 is obtained in both cluster 4 with
435 k-means and cluster 5 with SOM_1 ; families 1, 3, 4 and 17 with cluster 5 k-means and cluster 1 SOM_1 ; and family 8 with cluster
436 8 k-means and cluster 6 SOM_1 . Thus, their performance indexes are identical, as shown in Table IV.

437 From Table V using **SOM₁**, family 10 is the only element of cluster 3, while the k-means approach places this family in
 438 cluster 2 with families 6, 7, 14 and 15. By analyzing the surveys, it can be validated that family 10 is properly clustered with
 439 **SOM₁** because it is composed of 6 members, while the others families (considered by k-means) have 3 members each. In
 440 another example, cluster 7 obtained by **SOM₁** is composed of families 5, 9 and 16, while k-means places family 5 in cluster 6
 441 and family 16 in cluster 7. By analyzing the socio-economic characteristics of these three families, their activities, ages and
 442 incomes are very similar; thus, **SOM₁** is validated here as well.

443

Table IV. Clustering Performance for K-means and SOM₁, El Romeral Community

	Cluster error k-means [W]	Cluster error SOM ₁ [W]	Elements per cluster k-means	Elements per cluster SOM ₁
Cluster 1	0.097	0.053	2	4
Cluster 2	0.219	0.173	5	2
Cluster 3	0.093	0	2	1
Cluster 4	0	0.149	1	3
Cluster 5	0.053	0	4	1
Cluster 6	0	0	1	1
Cluster 7	0	0.281	1	3
Cluster 8	0	0.108	1	2

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Table V Members of Clusters for K-means and SOM₁, El Romeral Community

	Members k-means	Members SOM ₁
Cluster 1	Family 9, Family 11	Family 1, Family 3, Family 4 Family 17
Cluster 2	Family 6, Family 7, Family 10 Family 14, Family 15	Family 7, Family 14
Cluster 3	Family 2, Family 13	Family 10
Cluster 4	Family 12	Family 2, Family 11, Family 13
Cluster 5	Family 1, Family 3, Family 4 Family 17	Family 12
Cluster 6	Family 5	Family 8
Cluster 7	Family 16	Family 5, Family 9, Family 16
Cluster 8	Family 8	Family 6, Family 15

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IV. CONCLUSIONS

450 This paper reports on the use of computational intelligence techniques for the planning of microgrids in small and isolated
 451 communities that have not been measured for their electricity consumption. .

452 The main contribution is the proposed methodology based on clustering algorithms that utilize information about similar
453 communities that have a permanent electricity supply to estimate the future load profiles of families without a current permanent
454 supply. The methodology employs two clustering steps (for communities A and B) and two clustering algorithms. In this case,
455 SOM and k-means are employed; the latter is primarily employed for comparison. An SOM is recommended because it is
456 especially suitable for the survey data required in this methodology due to its prominent visualization properties. An SOM
457 enables the automatic presentation of a map in which an intuitive description of the similarities among the data can be observed
458 and the distance between two neighborhoods can be calculated. Unlike K-means, the cluster number does not have to be defined
459 for an SOM; in an SOM, the prototypes that do not represent the number of clusters are defined. However, for k-means, a
460 sensitivity step can be subsequently performed to determine the appropriate cluster number, which requires greater
461 computational effort.

462 The proposed methodology includes real measurements that were collected from a community with an operating microgrid in
463 Huatacondo village. The method was applied to the community of El Romeral, where the inhabitants are not currently supplied
464 with electricity. The estimated profiles were used in the planning of a microgrid that is in the design stages; the results can be
465 validated with actual data when the grid becomes operational. Furthermore, the SOM-proposed methodology was compared
466 with a k-means algorithm and delivered more favorable and consistent results according to social aspects of the community.

467 The proposed methodology based on SOMs is a viable solution for generating load profiles and sizing generating units for
468 microgrids in isolated communities that have either a partial or no power supply. This tool provided information from surveys,
469 and current efforts are focused on enhancing the database with an increased quantity of actual measurements.

470

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476 Experimental Prototype of Microgrid for Mapuche Communities".

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