

Interfacing of PLC with NI-LabVIEW using Modbus Protocol

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Abstract - This paper focuses on interfacing of high end Programmable Logic Controller with NI-LabVIEW using Modbus RTU protocol. The aim behind doing this is to develop a platform to enable real-time process control, data logging, analysis etc. As on today PLC is the most widely used controller in automation, process control etc. In industries, there is a demand of supervisory control and data acquisition along with the PLC based process control. The paper focuses on developing communication between PLC and NI-LabVIEW (evaluation version), so that a low cost SCADA platform can be developed. In order to implement the idea, AB micro 830 PLC is used.

Keywords— NI-Lab VIEW, PLC, Modbus RTU Protocol, SCADA

I. INTRODUCTION

Automation or automatic control refers to an area where different control system components are used to operate machines with minimum or reduced human intervention. Automation is applicable and popular in most of the manufacturing, production industries and is growing rapidly. To automate any process, programmable logic controllers are widely used. As of date, lots of advancement has taken place in the PLC. One of the important is the support of industrial communication standards.

The paper focuses on interfacing of high end Programmable Logic Controller with NI-LabVIEW using Modbus RTU protocol. In order to implement this idea, Allen Bradley PLC is used. AB Micro830 controllers are economical brick style controllers with the number of digital and analog inputs and outputs. Depending on the controller type, it is accommodate from two to five plug-in modules. It support the following communication protocols through the embedded RS-232/RS-485 serial port as well as any installed serial port plug-in modules such as Modbus RTU Master and Slave, CIP Serial Client/Server (RS-232 only) and ASCII [1].

The programming of the PLC is done in Connected Component Workbench (CCW) Software which is freely available provided by Rockwell automation. The IEC 6113 standard supports 6 languages. CCW supports Ladder logic, Functional block diagram and Structure text out of which we are using Structure Text.

LabVIEW (Laboratory Virtual Instrument Engineering Workbench) is a system design platform and development environment for a visual programming language from National Instruments. NI LabVIEW system design software is at the centre of the National Instruments platform providing comprehensive tools that need to build any measurement or control application in dramatically less time, LabVIEW is the ideal development environment for innovation, discovery, and accelerated results. Combine the power of LabVIEW software with modular, reconfigurable hardware to overcome the ever-

increasing complexity involved in delivering measurement and control systems on time and under budget.

Modbus RTU protocol is used for the communication of AB PLC and NI-LabVIEW. Both support Modbus RTU protocol. Modbus is typically used for Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA)-style network communication between devices. For example, a large server may be used to master a programmable logic controller (PLC) or programmable automation controller (PAC), while that PLC/PAC may in turn master a sensor, valve, motor, or any other embedded device.

II. MODBUS PROTOCOL

Modbus is a serial communications protocol originally published by Modicon in 1979 for use with its programmable logic controllers (PLCs). The common language used by all Modicon controllers is the Modbus protocol [2]. The Modbus protocol is used to exchange the data between the PLC and the computers or HMI. This protocol built a message frame that controllers will visualize and use, regardless of the type of networks over which they need to communicate. It describes the process a controller uses to request access to another device, how it will respond to requests from the other devices, and how errors will be detected and reported [2].

The Modicon controllers use an RS-232C compatible serial interface that defines the different parameters like connector pin outs, cabling, signal levels, transmission baud rates, and parity checking. The Controller transit using a technique that is called master-slave technique in which only one device (the master) can initiate any transactions (called 'queries'). The other devices (the slaves) respond by supplying the requested data to the master, or by taking the action requested in the query [2].

A. The Query-Response Cycle

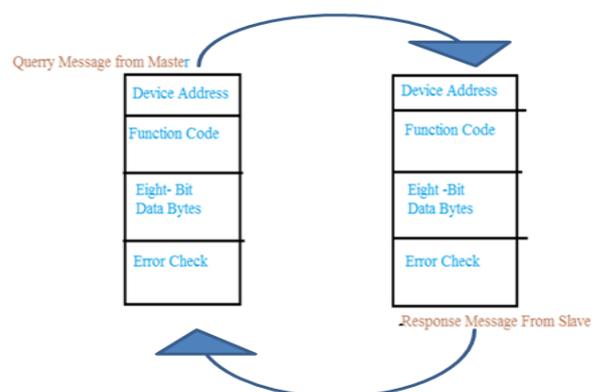


Fig.1 Master-Slave Query-Response Cycle

The Query: The function code in the query informs the addressed slave device what kind of action to be performed. For example, if the function code 03 will query the slave to read holding registers and respond with their contents. The data field must contain the information telling the slave which register to start at and how many registers to read. The error check field provides a method for the slave to validate the integrity of the message contents [2].

The Response: If the slave responds normally, the function code in the response is an echo of the function code in the query. The data bytes contain the data that is collected by the slave, such as register values. If any error occurs, the function code is modified and also indicates that the response is an error response, and the data bytes contain a code that describes the error. The error check field allows the master to confirm that the message contents are valid [2].

B. The Serial Transmission Modes

Modbus networks using either of two transmission modes: ASCII or RTU. Users select the desired mode, along with the serial port communication parameters (baud rate, parity mode, etc.), during configuration of each controller. The mode and serial parameters must be the same for all devices on a Modbus network [2].

1) *ASCII*: When controllers are setup to communicate on a Modbus network using ASCII (American Standard Code for Information Interchange) mode, each 8-bit byte in a message is sent as two ASCII characters. The main advantage of this mode is that it allows time intervals of up to one second to occur between characters without causing an error [2].

TABLE I
The format for each byte in ASCII mode

Coding System	Hexadecimal, ASCII characters 0-9, A-F One hexadecimal character contained in each ASCII character of the message
Bits Per Byte	1 start bit, 7 data bits, least significant bit sent first 1 bit for even/odd parity; no bit for no parity; 1 stop bit if parity is used; 2 bits if no parity
Error Check	Longitudinal Redundancy Check (LRC)

2) *RTU*: When controllers are setup to communicate on a Modbus network using RTU (Remote Terminal Unit) mode, each 8-bit byte in a message contains two 4-bit hexadecimal characters. The main advantage of this mode is that it's greater

Character density allows better data throughput than ASCII for the same baud rate. Each message must be transmitted in a continuous stream [2].

TABLE II
The format for each byte in RTU mode

Coding System	8-bit binary, hexadecimal 0-9, A-F, Two hexadecimal characters contained in each 8-bit field of the message
Bits Per Byte	1 start bit, 8 data bits, least significant bit sent first 1 bit for even/odd parity; no bit for no parity; 1 stop bit if parity is used; 2 bits if no parity
Error Check	Cyclical Redundancy Check (CRC)

C. Function code used in MODBUS Protocol

TABLE III
Function Code of Modbus

Function code No.(hex)	Function to Perform
01	Read Coil Status
02	Read Input Status
03	Read Holding Registers
04	Read Input Registers
05	Write Single Coil
06	Write Single Register
15	Write Multiple Coils
16	Write Multiple Registers

D. MODBUS Data model

TABLE IV
Modbus data model

Primary Table	Object Type	Type Of	Address
Discrete Input	Single Bit	Read Only	10000
Coils	Single Bit	Read -Write	00001
Input Register	16 -Bit Word	Read Only	30001
Holding Register	16 -Bit Word	Read -Write	40001

III. MODBUS IN PLC

Micro830 controllers support the following communication protocols through the embedded RS-232/RS-

485 serial port as well as any installed serial port plug-in modules:

A. Modbus RTU Master and Slave

Modbus is a half-duplex, master-slave communications protocol. The Modbus network master reads and writes bits and registers. Modbus protocol allows a single master to communicate with a maximum of 247 slave devices. Micro800 controllers support Modbus RTU Master and Modbus RTU Slave protocol [1].

1) Configure Modbus RTU;

1. Open the Connected Components Workbench project. On the device configuration tree, click on Controller properties and then Click Serial Port as shown in Fig. 2.

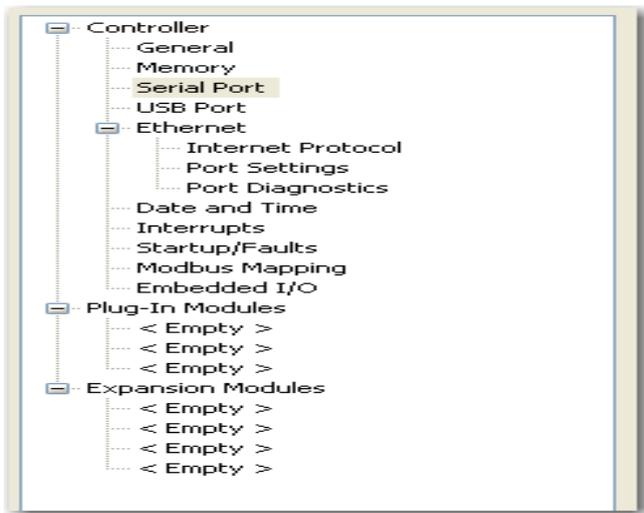


Fig.2 Serial Port Configuration

2. Select Modbus RTU on the Driver field

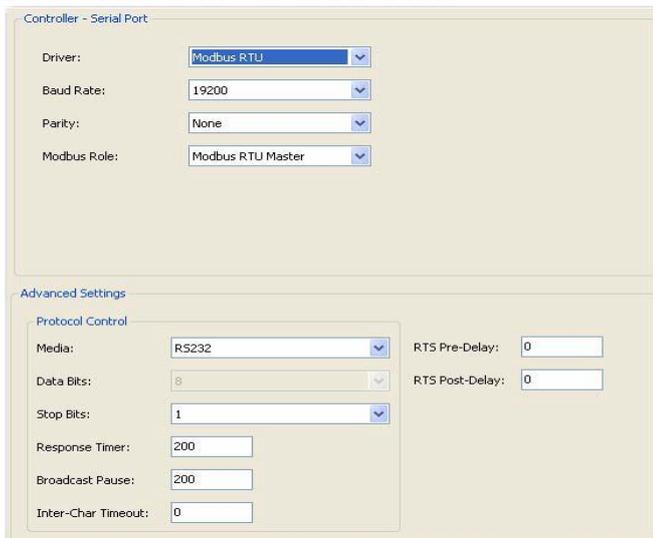


Fig.3 Serial Port Configuration on the Driver Field

- 3. Select the Baud rate by default 19200, parity is none, Modbus role (master, slave).
- 4. Click Advanced Settings to set advanced parameters as shown in Fig. 3.

B. CIP Symbolic Client/Server

This protocol allows HMIs to easily connect to the Micro830/Micro850 controller [1].

1) Configure CIP Serial Driver:

1. Open the Connected Components Workbench project. On the device configuration tree, click on Controller properties and then Click Serial Port as shown in Fig. 4.

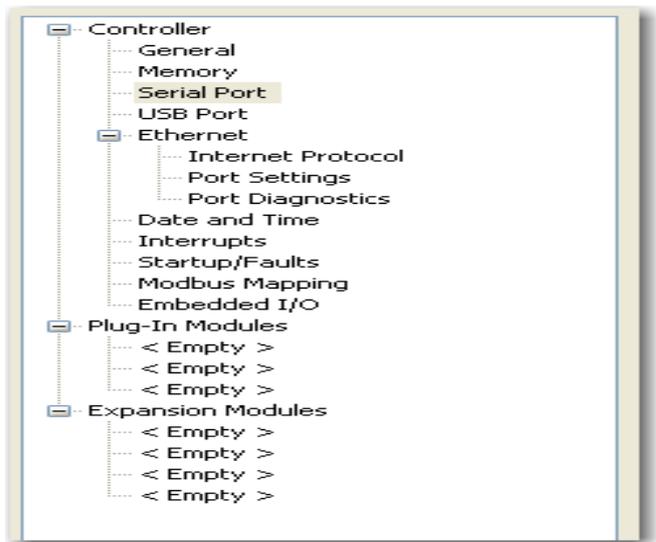


Fig.4 Serial Port Configuration of CIP Serial Driver

2. Select CIP Serial from the Driver field.

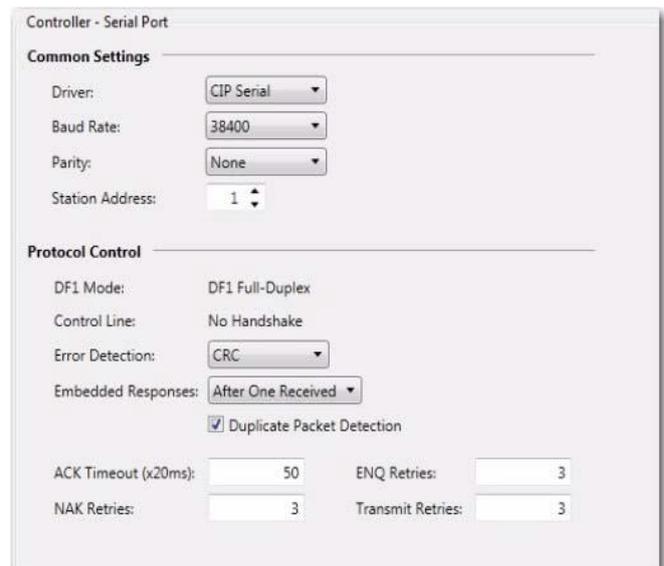


Fig.5 CIP Serial Driver

3. Specify a baud rate. Select a communication rate that the devices in the system will support. Configure all devices in the system for the same communication rate. The Default baud rate is set at 38400 bps.

4. In most cases, parity and station address should be left at default settings.

5. Click Advanced Settings and set advanced parameters as shown in Fig. 5.

C. ASCII

ASCII provides connection to other ASCII devices, such as bar code readers, weigh scales, serial printers, and other intelligent devices. You can use ASCII by configuring the embedded or any plug-in serial RS232/RS485 port for the ASCII driver [1].

1) Configure ASCII:

1. Open the Connected Components Workbench project. On the device configuration tree, click on Controller properties and then Click Serial Port.

2. Select ASCII on the Driver field.

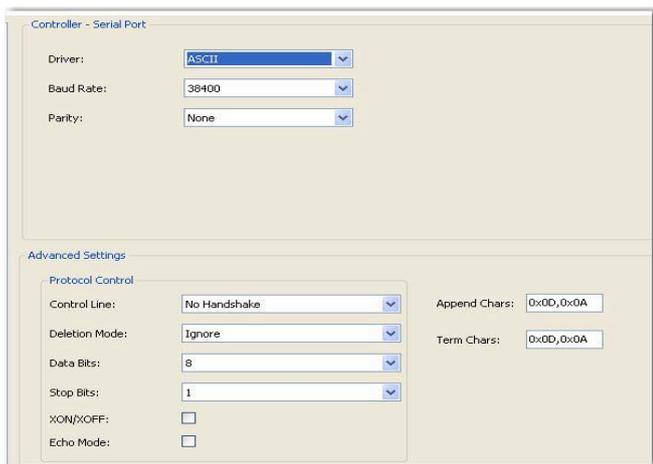


Fig.6 Configuration of ASCII

3. Specify baud rate and parity, by default baud rate is 19200 and parity is none.

4. Click Advanced Settings to configure advanced parameters as shown in Fig. 7.

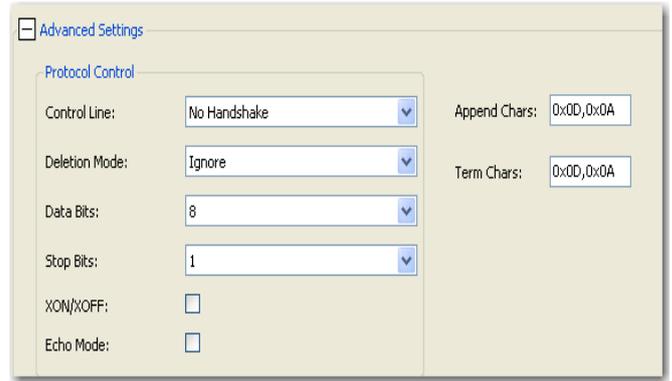


Fig.7 Advanced configuration setting

IV. MODBUS IN NI-LABVIEW

Lab VIEW (Laboratory Virtual Instrument Engineering Workbench) is a system-design platform and development environment for a visual programming language from National Instruments. Lab VIEW was extensively used in the laboratory sessions, which better prepared students for the course projects [3]. Many researchers and engineers use Lab VIEW for testing and rapid prototyping in the product development process [4]. Lab VIEW has been used to teach dynamic systems and controls [5].

We have used two function blocks from NI-LABVIEW namely MB Serial INT and MB Serial Master Query for establishing communication between PLC and NI-LABVIEW. In MB Serial INT block, specify the visa resource name, baud rate, parity, flow control, timeout mode as shown in Fig. 8.

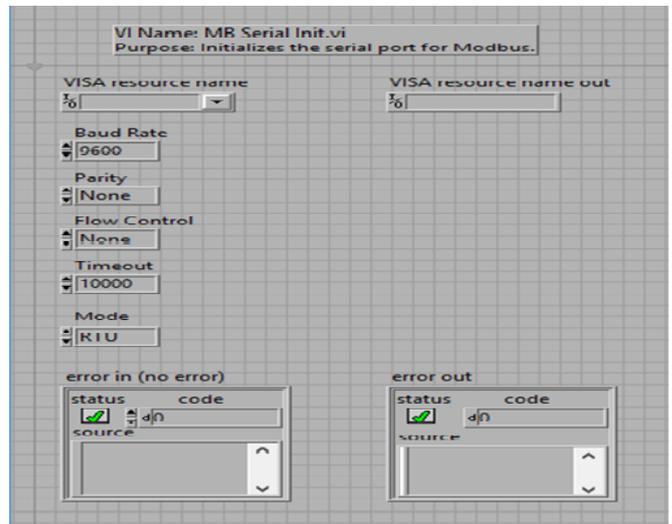


Fig.8 MB Serial Initialization

In MB Serial Master Query block, the following parameters are shown in Fig. 9. A GUI designed in Lab VIEW makes the real-time monitoring as well as data logging possible. In Fig.

10 the NI-LabVIEW based SCADA is developed for MODBUS READ and WRITE.

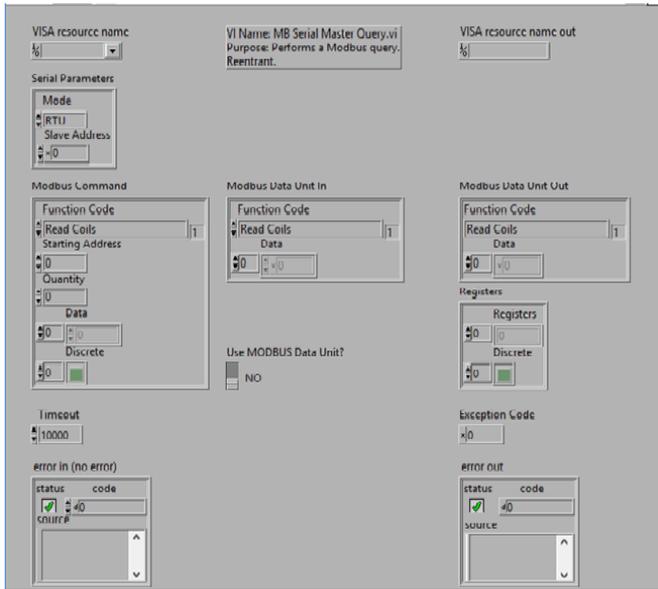


Fig.9 MB Serial Master Query

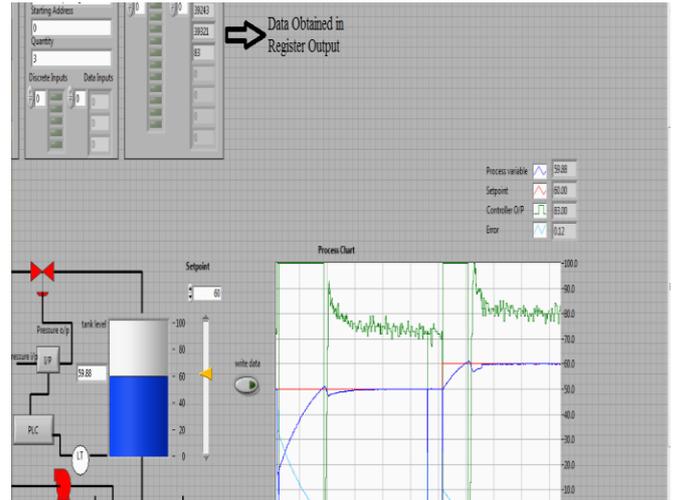


Fig.11 Developed front panel diagram

V. INTERFACING OF PLC WITH NI-LABVIEW

MODBUS defined as the communication protocol for establishing communication between PLC and LabVIEW. It allows the exchange of data between PLCs and computers. So for the interfacing the programming cable is required.

A. Embedded Serial Port Wiring

The embedded serial port is a non-isolated RS232/RS485 serial port which is targeted to be used for short distances (<3m) to devices such as HMIs. For the interfacing 1761-CBL-PM02 cable is typically used to connect the embedded serial port to Panel View Component of Scada using RS232. One end of DB 8 PIN is connected in PLC(as slave) and another end is connected in computer(Master) or HMI[1].

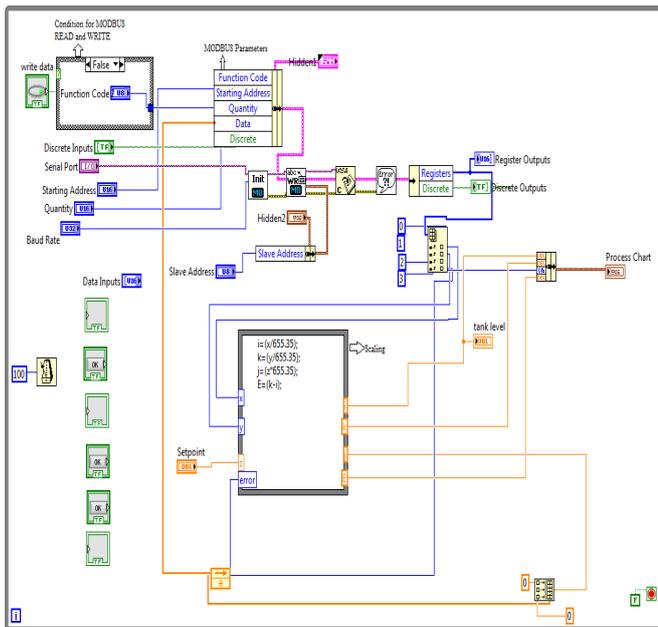


Fig.10 Developed block diagram for MODBUS Read and Write

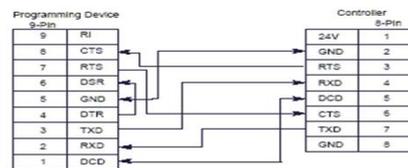
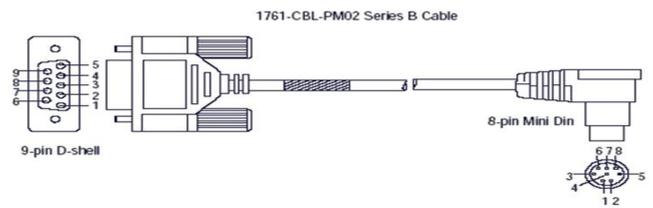


Fig.12 Embedded Serial Port Wiring

VI. TESTING RESULT

A. Digital On-Off

In the Allen Bradley PLC there are 20 digital inputs and 28 digital outputs as shown in Fig. 13. For the digital inputs and outputs assigned in PLC we separate them with different addresses which is given in MODBUS Addressing Frame. For the digital Input the address starts with 10000 and for digital output the address starts with 00001.

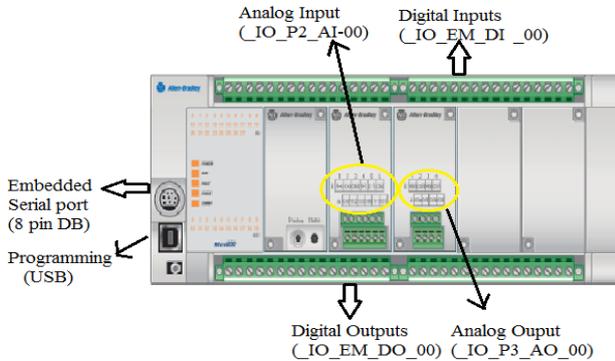


Fig.13 Allen Bradley PLC

1) Discrete Input and Output(Coils)

In the discrete input it is of single bit with only read type and in the coil it is same as Input but both read/write type which is shown in Fig. 14. Here is one examples for on-off.

The Ladder logic programming is done in the PLC and according to that when we apply some input the output will glow and when we remove it the output is zero or off as shown in Fig. 15 and Fig. 16.

Controller - Modbus Mapping				
	Variable Name	Data Type	Address	Addresses Used
	_IO_EM_DI_00	Bool	10001	10001
	_IO_EM_DO_00	Bool	00001	00001
*				

Fig.14 Modbus mapping of discrete input and output in PLC

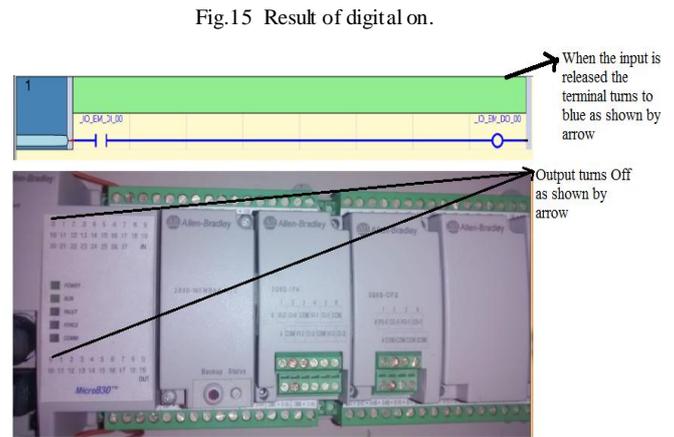


Fig.15 Result of digital on.

Fig.16 Result of digital off.

B. Continuous Data Read and Write

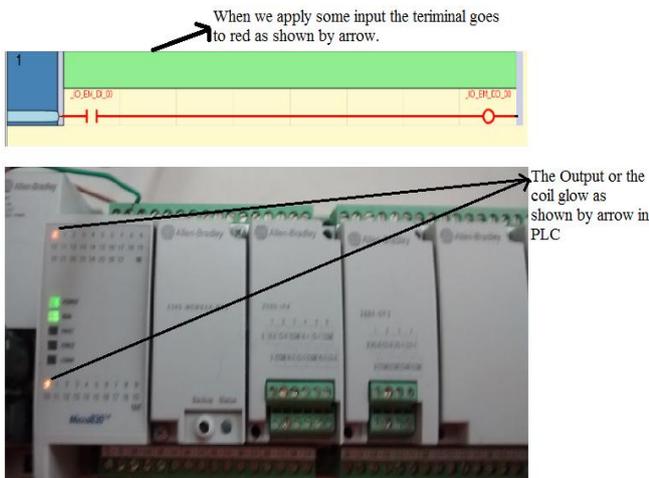
In the Allen Bradley PLC there are 4 analog input and 2 analog output as shown in Fig. 13. The analog input is called as Input register of 16 Bit- Word and only Read type and the analog output is called as Holding Register of 16 Bit-Word and both read and write type.

1) Input Register and Holding Register

The Address assign for Analog Input and output are shown in Fig. 17.

Controller - Modbus Mapping				
	Variable Name	Data Type	Address	Addresses Used
	_IO_P2_AI_00	UInt	30001	30001
	_IO_P3_AO_00	UInt	40001	40001
*				

Fig.17 Modbus mapping of analog input and output in PLC



For the data to be read and write the NI-LABVIEW based Scada is developed in such a way that when the condition is false it starts read the data in Register output and when the condition is true its starts write the data in Register output as shown in Fig. 18 and Fig. 19.

Here is one example for the data Read and write. In this the programming is done in CCW(Component Connected workbench) software in Structure text and Scada is developed using two blocks of Modbus available in NI-LABVIEW that is shown in Fig. 10.

setpoint	0.0	N/A	REAL	Read/Write
err	2178.4	N/A	REAL	Read/Write
setpoint	0.0	N/A	REAL	Read/Write

Fig.18 PLC data status in CCW Software

setpoint	0.0	N/A	REAL	Read/Write
err	-254.43	N/A	REAL	Read/Write
setpoint	0.0	N/A	REAL	Read/Write

Fig.20 PLC data status in CCW

In figure 19 shows the different data's are Read from PLC to NI-LABVIEW

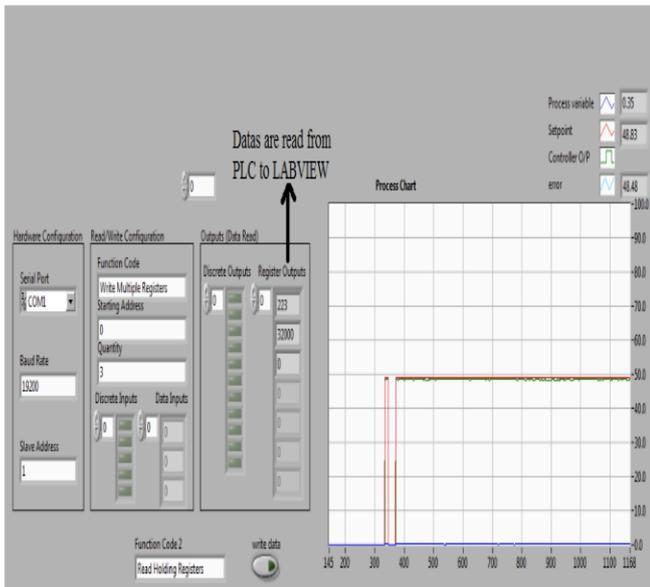


Fig.19 Data read from PLC to NI-LABVIEW

In fig. 20 the data of setpoint in yellow circle is zero initially in the variable monitoring of PLC. After giving command from LABVIEW the Data are write in PLC as shown in Fig. 21 and Fig. 22.

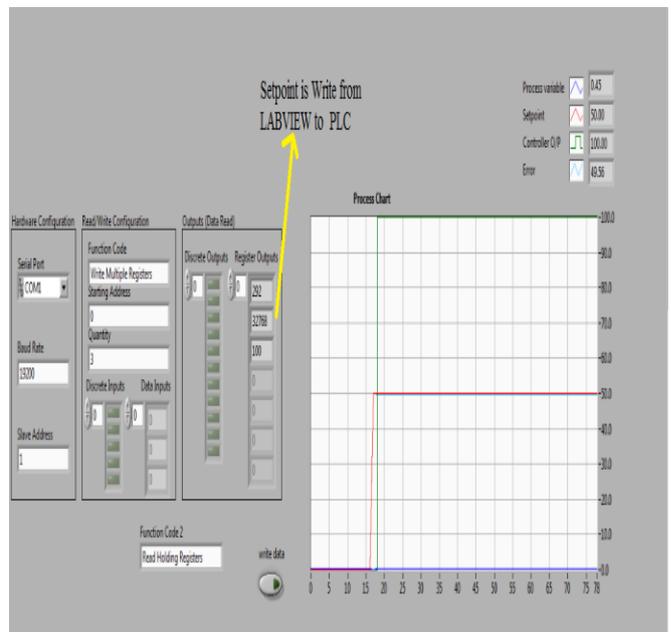


Fig.21 PLC data Write in LabVIEW

setpoint	32768	N/A	REAL	Read/Write
err	13032	N/A	REAL	Read/Write
setpoint	32768	N/A	REAL	Read/Write

Fig.21 Write data from LabVIEW to PLC

VII. CONCLUSIONS

This paper discusses the effectiveness of using LabVIEW to learn the Modbus Rs-232 communication protocol. We have successfully implemented the different modes of Modbus and also develop a low cost Scada in NI-LABVIEW platform. After the implementation we gather the data from PLC and LABVIEW using MODBUS RTU Communication Protocol. Using the low cost SCADA we practically visualize different graphs as shown in different figures.

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