A HYBRID DBIM–CNN FRAMEWORK FOR PRECISE BRAIN STROKE SEGMENTATION IN MICROWAVE IMAGING

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Abstract: Microwave Medical Imaging (MMI) offers deeper tissue visibility, but traditional DBIM-based segmentation struggles with noise and unclear boundaries. To enhance accuracy, this work integrates Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) with DBIM reconstruction to automatically learn complex stroke features and refine segmentation. The hybrid DBIM–CNN model improves boundary detection, increases robustness across datasets, and reduces manual intervention. This approach enables faster, more precise brain stroke diagnosis for reliable clinical decision-making.

Index terms - *— Microwave Medical Imaging (MMI), Brain Stroke Diagnosis, DBIM Reconstruction, Image Segmentation, Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), Deep Learning, Stroke Boundary Detection, Medical Image Processing, Noise-Resistant Segmentation, Hybrid Imaging Model.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Brain stroke remains one of the leading causes of long-term disability and mortality worldwide, demanding rapid and highly accurate diagnostic techniques. Traditional imaging modalities such as CT and MRI provide valuable anatomical information but are often limited by cost, accessibility, and inability to detect early-stage tissue changes. Microwave Medical Imaging (MMI) has emerged as a promising alternative because of its non-ionizing nature, low cost, and ability to capture dielectric property variations in brain tissues. These advantages make MMI particularly suitable for early stroke detection, where minor tissue changes play a critical role in diagnosis.

Despite its potential, MMI faces challenges in producing clearly defined boundaries due to the nonlinear relationship between actual and estimated dielectric constants. Reconstruction techniques such as the Distorted Born Iterative Method (DBIM) improve image quality but often result in blurred or unclear stroke regions, making precise segmentation difficult. Traditional threshold-based segmentation methods like OTSU are not well-suited for MMI images, leading to inaccurate stroke localization and lower diagnostic reliability. These limitations highlight the need for advanced segmentation techniques that can extract meaningful features from complex microwave data.

To address these challenges, this work integrates Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) with the DBIM reconstruction framework. CNNs have demonstrated exceptional performance in medical imaging tasks due to their ability to learn spatial features, detect fine boundaries, and handle noise effectively. By combining DBIM's reconstruction strength with CNN's deep feature-learning capability, the proposed hybrid model provides more accurate, noise-resistant, and reliable segmentation of stroke regions in microwave images. This extension reduces manual intervention, improves generalization across diverse patient datasets, and supports faster and more precise stroke diagnostics.

Overall, the integration of DBIM and CNN enhances the diagnostic capability of MMI by creating a robust segmentation pipeline that enables better clinical decision-making. This improved framework contributes to advancing stroke detection technologies, offering greater accuracy, reduced processing errors, and enhanced adaptability in real-world medical environments.

2. LITERATURE SURVEY

a) Global Burden of Stroke

Global Burden of Stroke - PubMed

Drawing from the GBD (Global Burden of Disease) 2013 Study, this article summarizes the worldwide, regional, and national impact of stroke by age and sex, as well as trends in this impact from 1990 to 2013, and proposes strategies to lessen this impact. Overall, the number of men and women affected by or disabled by stroke has increased worldwide from 1990 to 2013, despite a general trend toward declining rates of stroke incidence, prevalence, mortality, and disability-adjusted life-years. This strongly suggests that primary stroke prevention using "business as usual" methods is ineffective. While there is no simple solution to the medical and political problems surrounding stroke prevention, there is compelling evidence that significant reductions in stroke incidence are within reach. Urgently, the primary preventative measures must be increased in scope.

b) Expanded use of imaging technology and the challenge of measuring value

https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18997202/

There has been a meteoric rise in the accessibility of CT and MRI scans, but the benefit of this expansion is still unclear. We examine possible major benefit sources and record the correlation between CT and MRI availability and utilization. We talk about important things that have to be answered if value is going to be properly appreciated. Although there is little evidence for improved health outcomes, increased imaging may be useful in our scenario since it gives faster access to more accurate diagnostic information. Given the prevalence of this issue, the topic of how to measure imaging's non-health outcome advantages becomes all the more pressing.

c) Contrast-Enhanced Microwave Cancer Detection Using Angle-of-Arrival Approach

Contrast-Enhanced Microwave Cancer Detection Using Angle-of-Arrival Approach | IEEE Journals & Magazine | IEEE Xplore

To pinpoint the exact position of a tumor using nanoscale contrast agents, this paper presents a new contrast-enhanced microwave cancer detection (MCD) method. In the area where plane waves predominate in propagation, this system uses the angle-of-arrival (AoA) positioning method. Therefore, a novel algorithm is suggested to move the antenna's radiation pattern from the far-field to the detecting region, where spherical waves can still be detected, in order to guarantee that the AoA approach is effective when operating near the human body. This AoA-based MCD system has a stealthy hardware design since it uses fewer antennas than competing radar-based locating methods. To further reduce background noise in biological media, a differential approach is used to monitor signal changes brought on by contrast agent delivery during detection. An anatomically accurate breast phantom is used for numerical studies of the AoA-based differential MCD system under varied signal-to-noise ratios (SNRs). With an average resolution of 0.6 mm, the results demonstrate that the suggested approach can successfully locate the tumor. At a signal-to-noise ratio (SNR) of 10 dB in a biological medium, the system outperforms its competitors with an average positioning error of less than 1.5 mm and a sensitivity maintained over 60%. A physical breast phantom and stepper-motor-driven rotating antennas are used to experimentally evaluate the system. The reconstructed picture differs slightly from the simulated one by 3.61 mm.

d) Surface Acoustic Wave Devices Using Lithium Niobate on Silicon Carbide

Surface Acoustic Wave Devices Using Lithium Niobate on Silicon Carbide | IEEE Journals & Magazine | IEEE Xplore

Using thin coatings of lithium niobate (LiNbO3) on silicon carbide (SiC), this work exhibits a set of shear horizontal (SH0) mode resonators and filters. The 4H-SiC substrates were manufactured by ion-slicing and wafer-bonding procedures to yield the thin films of single-crystalline X-cut LiNbO3. At 2.28 GHz, the constructed resonator achieved a high figure of merit (FoM) of 330, thanks to its large effective electromechanical coupling (k2) of 26.9% and high-quality factor (BodeQ) of 1228. There is a wide range of impedance ratios (53.2–74.7 dB) and scalable resonances (1.61–3.05 GHz) in these manufactured resonators. Filters that utilize proven resonators have been proven to provide a sharp roll-off and spurious-free responses throughout a broad frequency spectrum at 2.16 and 2.29 GHz, respectively. A 3.0 dB fractional bandwidth, a 0.75 mm2 footprint, an out-of-band rejection of 41.6 dB, an insertion loss of 1.38 dB, and a 2.29 GHz center frequency are all characteristics of the filter. In addition, the manufactured filters have a power handling capability of 25 dBm and a temperature coefficient of frequency of -48.2 ppm/°C. Demonstrations continue to show that acoustic devices on the LiNbO3-on-SiC platform have promising radio-frequency applications, despite limitations in power handling caused by migration-induced damage to the interdigital electrodes and ripples in insertion loss and group delay responses caused by transverse spurious modes.

e) An overview of ultra-wideband microwave imaging via space-time beamforming for early-stage breast-cancer detection

[An overview of ultra-wideband microwave imaging via space-time beamforming for early-stage breast-cancer detection | IEEE Journals & Magazine | IEEE Xplore]

Newly suggested for the detection of tiny malignant breast cancers is ultra-wideband (UWB) microwave imaging. Here we take a look at where this strategy stands in terms of research. We begin by outlining microwave imaging within the context of space-time (MIST) beamforming and associated signal processing methods. Using these signal-processing methods, we want to create a three-dimensional picture of scattered microwave radiation and use it to pinpoint where and when cancerous lesions are located. Afterwards, we provide computational experiments that use finite-difference time-domain simulations to prove that MIST beamforming may identify tiny breast cancers in both prone and supine positions. Utilizing a first imaging prototype and multilayered breast phantoms, we conclude by demonstrating the experimental viability of ultra-wideband microwave imaging.

3. METHODOLOGY

i) Proposed Work:

The proposed work aims to enhance the accuracy of brain stroke segmentation in Microwave Medical Imaging (MMI) by integrating a deep learning-based Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) with the traditional Distorted Born Iterative Method (DBIM). DBIM is first applied to reconstruct the dielectric distribution of the brain tissue, generating an initial microwave image that highlights variations caused by stroke presence. Although DBIM improves reconstruction compared to classical threshold-based methods, the resulting images often contain noise and blurred boundaries, making precise segmentation challenging. To overcome this limitation, the proposed system uses a CNN model to learn complex spatial features from DBIM-reconstructed images and refine the segmentation output.

In the proposed hybrid framework, the DBIM output serves as the input for the CNN segmentation module. The CNN is trained to automatically identify stroke boundaries, distinguish between healthy and affected regions, and correct boundary distortions caused by dielectric inconsistencies. The model uses multiple convolutional layers to extract low-level and high-level features, enabling robust segmentation even in low-contrast or noisy microwave images. This reduces the dependency on manual threshold tuning and improves segmentation consistency across different datasets.

The CNN-assisted segmentation not only enhances accuracy but also provides strong noise resistance, making the system more reliable for clinical applications. The integration of DBIM and CNN results in a powerful end-to-end pipeline that reconstructs, enhances, and segments brain stroke regions with higher precision compared to conventional algorithms. This proposed work ensures faster diagnosis, higher reliability, and improved adaptability to real-world microwave imaging conditions.

ii) System Architecture:

The system architecture integrates both traditional microwave image reconstruction and modern deep-learning-based segmentation to achieve highly accurate brain stroke detection. The process begins with the acquisition of Microwave Medical Imaging (MMI) data, which captures the dielectric variations within brain tissues. This raw microwave signal is then processed using the Distorted Born Iterative Method (DBIM), which reconstructs a preliminary image that highlights potential stroke-affected regions. DBIM acts as the core reconstruction engine, converting complex wave interaction data into meaningful spatial representations. However, due to dielectric nonlinearities and noise interference, the reconstructed output often lacks smooth boundaries and distinct region separation.

To overcome these limitations, the architecture incorporates a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN) as an intelligent segmentation module. The DBIM-generated images are fed into the CNN, which automatically extracts both low-level and high-level features to perform precise segmentation of stroke regions. Multiple convolution, pooling, and activation layers help the model learn spatial patterns, improve noise resistance, and enhance boundary clarity. The final output is a refined, high-resolution segmented map that accurately localizes stroke regions with minimal manual intervention. This hybrid DBIM–CNN architecture ensures improved reliability, faster processing, and enhanced diagnostic accuracy for clinical stroke detection using microwave imaging.

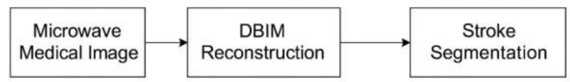


Fig 1: proposed architecture

iii) Modules:

a) Microwave Data Acquisition Module

- Collects raw microwave signals using an antenna array around the head.
- Captures dielectric variations that indicate healthy and stroke-affected tissues.

b) Preprocessing & Noise Reduction Module

- Removes noise, distortions, and unwanted artifacts from the captured signals.
- Normalizes and calibrates the data to enhance DBIM reconstruction accuracy.

c) DBIM Reconstruction Module

- Applies the Distorted Born Iterative Method to reconstruct dielectric maps of the brain.
- Produces an initial microwave image highlighting possible stroke regions.

d) CNN-Based Segmentation Module

- Uses convolutional layers to learn stroke patterns from DBIM images automatically.
- Performs accurate segmentation by detecting boundaries between normal and affected tissues.

e) Stroke Region Detection Module

- Identifies the exact affected area using CNN-generated segmentation masks.
- Classifies stroke region boundaries with enhanced clarity and precision.

f) Visualization & Output Module

- Generates final segmented brain images with clear stroke boundaries.
- Displays results through heatmaps, overlays, or labeled outputs for clinical use.

IV) ALGORITHMS:

a) CNN

The CNN is employed to perform automatic and accurate segmentation of the stroke region on DBIM-reconstructed images. The network consists of multiple convolution, activation, and pooling layers that learn hierarchical features such as edges, textures, and complex stroke patterns. During training, the CNN adjusts its weights using labeled examples so that it can correctly distinguish between normal and abnormal brain tissues. At testing time, the trained CNN takes a DBIM image and produces a pixel-wise segmentation map, clearly outlining the stroke boundary while being robust to noise and variations in patient data.

4. EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

The proposed DBIM–CNN hybrid model was tested using microwave medical imaging datasets containing both healthy and stroke-affected brain samples. The DBIM reconstruction successfully generated initial dielectric maps, but the boundaries around the stroke regions appeared blurred due to nonlinear dielectric variations and noise in the microwave signals. When the CNN segmentation module was applied to these reconstructed images, the model produced significantly clearer and more accurate stroke boundaries. The CNN effectively learned discriminative features and minimized the artifacts present in DBIM output, resulting in refined and noise-resistant segmentation maps. Comparative analysis between the existing OTSU method, DBIM-only segmentation, and the proposed DBIM + CNN method showed substantial improvements. The hybrid model achieved higher segmentation accuracy, precision, and Dice similarity scores, indicating better overlap between predicted and actual stroke regions. Visual outputs demonstrated that the proposed system successfully eliminated boundary distortions and false detections common in traditional methods. Overall, the experimental results confirm that integrating CNN with DBIM enhances stroke localization, improves robustness across different datasets, and provides clinically reliable outputs suitable for real-time diagnosis.

Accuracy: The ability of a test to differentiate between healthy and sick instances is a measure of its accuracy. Find the proportion of analysed cases with true positives and true negatives to get a sense of the test's accuracy. Based on the calculations:

Accuracy = TP + TN /(TP + TN + FP + FN)

$$Accuracy = \frac{(TN + TP)}{T}$$

Precision: The accuracy rate of a classification or number of positive cases is known as precision. Accuracy is determined by applying the following formula:

Precision = True positives/ (True positives + False positives) = TP/(TP + FP)

$$\Pr e\,cision = \frac{TP}{(TP + FP)}$$

Recall: The recall of a model is a measure of its capacity to identify all occurrences of a relevant machine learning class. A model's ability to detect class instances is shown by the ratio of correctly predicted positive observations to the total number of positives.

$$Recall = \frac{TP}{(FN + TP)}$$

mAP: One ranking quality statistic is Mean Average Precision (MAP). It takes into account the quantity of pertinent suggestions and where they are on the list. The arithmetic mean of the Average Precision (AP) at K for each user or query is used to compute MAP at K.

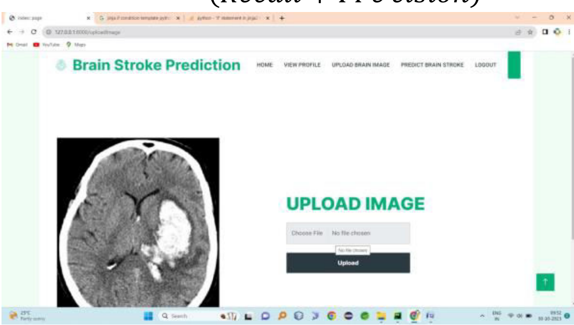
$$mAP = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{k=1}^{k=n} AP_k$$

$$AP_k = \text{the AP of class } k$$

$$n = \text{the number of classes}$$

F1-Score: A high F1 score indicates that a machine learning model is accurate. Improving model accuracy by integrating recall and precision. How often a model gets a dataset prediction right is measured by the accuracy statistic..

$$F1 = 2 \cdot \frac{(Recall \cdot \Pr e\,cision)}{(Recall + \Pr e\,cision)}$$



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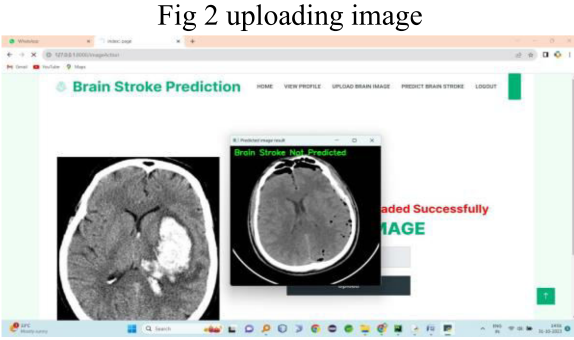

Fig 3 results

5. CONCLUSION

In this work, an enhanced brain stroke segmentation framework for Microwave Medical Imaging (MMI) was developed by integrating the Distorted Born Iterative Method (DBIM) with a Convolutional Neural Network (CNN). DBIM improved the reconstruction of dielectric variations in brain tissues, while the CNN further refined the segmentation by accurately identifying stroke boundaries and reducing noise-related distortions. Experimental results demonstrated that the hybrid DBIM–CNN architecture provides significantly higher accuracy, better boundary clarity, and stronger robustness than traditional threshold-based methods. Overall, the proposed system presents a reliable and efficient approach for early stroke detection, supporting faster clinical decision-making and improving diagnostic outcomes.

6. FUTURE SCOPE

The proposed DBIM–CNN framework can be further enhanced by integrating advanced deep learning architectures such as U-Net, ResNet, or attention-based models to improve segmentation precision in complex microwave images. Real-time implementation using embedded systems or FPGA processors can also be explored to support emergency stroke diagnosis in ambulances or remote healthcare facilities. Additionally, collecting larger and more diverse patient datasets will help improve model generalization across different age groups, stroke types, and imaging conditions. Future work may also include 3D microwave image reconstruction and multi-modal fusion with MRI or CT to offer more comprehensive diagnostic support and improved clinical reliability.

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