International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 03, ICCT - 2026

I.

A ROBUST DEEP LEARNING FRAMEWORK FOR AUTOMATED LIVER TUMOR SEGMENTATION IN CT IMAGES

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Abstract **- Liver cancer is one of the most common and life-threatening diseases worldwide, and early detection plays an important role in improving patient survival. Accurate segmentation of liver tumors from medical images such as Computed Tomography (CT) scans is a challenging task due to the complex structure of the liver and the variation in tumor size, shape, and intensity. In recent years, deep learning techniques have shown significant success in medical image analysis. This paper presents a deep learning-based approach for automatic liver tumor segmentation using convolutional neural networks (CNN). The proposed system preprocesses CT scan images to remove noise and enhance image quality before feeding them into the deep learning model. A segmentation network, such as U-Net, is used to accurately identify and extract tumor regions from the liver images. The performance of the proposed model is evaluated using standard metrics such as accuracy, Dice similarity coefficient, and precision. Experimental results show that the deep learning model provides efficient and reliable tumor segmentation compared to traditional image processing methods. This approach can assist radiologists in faster diagnosis and treatment planning for liver cancer patients.**

Keywords - Liver Tumor, Deep Learning, Medical Image Segmentation, Convolutional Neural Network, CT Scan, U-Net.

I. INTRODUCTION

Liver cancer is one of the leading causes of cancer-related deaths worldwide. Early detection and accurate diagnosis are very important for effective treatment and improved survival rates. Medical imaging techniques such as CT scans and Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) are commonly used by radiologists to detect liver tumor abnormalities and tumors. However, manual analysis and segmentation of liver tumors from medical images is a time-consuming and challenging task because tumors may vary in size, shape, location, and intensity. Traditional image processing techniques for tumor segmentation rely on hand-crafted features and thresholding methods. These methods often produce less accurate results due to noise, low contrast, and complex liver structures in medical images. Therefore, there is a need for an automated and efficient system that can accurately identify and segment liver tumors. In recent years, deep learning has emerged as a powerful technique in the field of medical image analysis. Deep learning models, particularly Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs), have shown excellent performance in tasks such as image classification, detection, and segmentation. Architectures such as U-Net and its variants are widely used for medical image segmentation because they can capture both local and global features effectively. This paper proposes a deep learning-based approach for automatic liver tumor segmentation from CT scan images. The proposed method involves preprocessing the medical images, extracting relevant features using a deep neural network, and accurately segmenting tumor regions from the liver. The system aims to assist radiologists by reducing manual effort and improving the accuracy of tumor detection. Experimental results demonstrate that the proposed approach provides reliable and efficient segmentation performance. Liver cancer is one of the most serious and life-threatening diseases in the world. According to medical reports, liver tumors are responsible for a large number of cancer-related deaths every year. Early detection and accurate identification of liver tumors are very important for effective diagnosis and treatment planning. Medical imaging technologies such as CT scans and MRI are widely used to examine liver structures and detect abnormal tumor regions. These imaging techniques provide detailed information about the internal organs and help doctors analyze the condition of the liver. However, manual segmentation of liver tumors from medical images is a difficult and time-consuming process. Radiologists need to carefully examine each image slice to identify tumor regions, which requires high expertise and effort. In addition, liver tumors often have irregular shapes, different sizes, and similar intensity values compared to surrounding tissues. These challenges make manual detection less efficient and sometimes less accurate. Traditional image processing methods such as thresholding, region growing, and edge detection have been used for liver tumor segmentation. Although these techniques can provide basic segmentation results, they often fail to handle complex medical images due to noise, low contrast, and variations in tumor appearance. As a result, researchers have focused on developing advanced automated techniques to improve segmentation accuracy. In recent years, deep learning has gained significant attention in the field of medical image analysis. Deep learning models are capable of automatically learning important features from large datasets without the need for manual feature extraction. Convolutional Neural Networks (CNNs) are particularly effective for image analysis tasks such as classification, detection, and segmentation. In medical imaging, CNN-based models can learn complex patterns and identify tumor regions with high accuracy. Several deep learning architectures such as Net, Fully Convolutional Networks (FCN), and 3D Convolutional Neural Networks have been successfully applied for medical image segmentation. Among them, U-Net is one of the most widely used architectures for biomedical image segmentation due to its encoder–decoder structure, which helps capture both low-level and high-level features. These models can effectively segment liver tumors from CT scan images and assist doctors in clinical decision-making.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Olaf Ronneberger et al. [1] introduced the U-Net architecture for biomedical image segmentation. The U-Net model is based on a fully convolutional network with a symmetric encoder–decoder structure. The encoder (contracting path) extracts features from the input image, while the decoder (expanding path) reconstructs the segmentation map. A key innovation is the use of skip connections, which transfer feature maps from the encoder to the decoder.

P. Bilic et al. [2] used LiTS dataset which consists of contrast-enhanced abdominal CT scans collected from multiple clinical sites. It includes expert-annotated liver and tumor masks, enabling supervised learning for segmentation models. The dataset addresses challenges such as variability in tumor size, shape, and intensity, making it suitable for testing robust deep learning models.

Christoph Christ et al. [3] proposed an automatic liver and tumor segmentation method using cascaded fully convolutional neural networks (FCNs). This work focuses on improving segmentation accuracy in both CT and MRI volumetric data. The authors introduced a two-stage cascaded approach. In the first stage, a fully convolutional network is used to segment the liver region from the entire medical image. In the second stage, another network is applied specifically to the liver region to detect and segment tumors. This cascade strategy helps reduce false positives and improves overall segmentation performance.

Geert Litjens et al. [4] discussed how convolutional neural networks (CNNs) have significantly improved performance in tasks such as image classification, detection, and segmentation. The survey covers multiple imaging modalities, including CT, MRI, ultrasound, and histopathology images.

Xiaomeng Li et al. [5] proposed a hybrid deep learning architecture called H-DenseUNet for liver and tumor segmentation. It integrates both 2D and 3D convolutional neural networks to capture intra-slice and inter-slice features effectively. The 2D DenseUNet extracts detailed spatial features from individual slices, while the 3D component captures volumetric contextual information across slices. This hybrid approach enhances the model's ability to accurately segment liver and tumor regions. The architecture uses dense connectivity, where each layer is connected to every other layer in a feed-forward manner. This improves feature reuse, strengthens gradient flow, and reduces the risk of vanishing gradients. As a result, the model achieves high accuracy and robustness in complex segmentation tasks.

Kaiming He et al. [6] proposed the Residual Network (ResNet), a deep neural network architecture designed to overcome the degradation problem in very deep networks. Traditional deep networks face performance saturation or degradation as layers increase. To address this, ResNet introduces residual learning through shortcut (skip) connections, allowing the network to learn identity mappings more easily.

Alex Krizhevsky et al. [7] introduced a deep convolutional neural network model. AlexNet consists of multiple convolutional and fully connected layers, using ReLU activation functions to improve training speed. It also introduced techniques such as dropout and data augmentation to reduce overfitting and enhance model generalization. The model was trained on the large-scale ImageNet dataset and achieved significantly better performance compared to traditional machine learning approaches.

Zongwei Zhou et al. [8] proposed an advanced segmentation architecture called UNet++, which introduces nested and dense skip connections between the encoder and decoder sub-networks. It uses a series of intermediate convolution layers to reduce the semantic gap between feature maps. This helps in better feature fusion and more precise segmentation. The architecture also supports deep supervision, allowing the model to produce outputs at multiple levels. This improves convergence during training and enhances performance.

Jonathan Long et al. [9] introduced Fully Convolutional Networks (FCNs) for semantic segmentation, allowing the network to accept input images of any size and produce correspondingly sized output segmentation maps. The model uses upsampling (deconvolution) layers to recover spatial resolution and generate dense predictions. A key contribution of this work is the introduction of skip connections that combine coarse, high-level semantic information with fine, low-level details from earlier layers. This improves localization accuracy and segmentation quality.

H. T. Shen et al. [10] introduced the U-Net architecture, which is one of the most widely used deep learning models for biomedical image segmentation. The model follows an encoder–decoder structure that captures both contextual and spatial information. In this method, the first neural network segments the liver region from CT images, and the second network detects tumor regions within the segmented liver. The cascaded approach significantly improved segmentation accuracy and reduced false detections.

III. METHODOLOGY

The methodology for liver tumor segmentation using deep learning involves a systematic pipeline that processes CT scan images to accurately identify tumor regions. Initially, a publicly available dataset such as the

International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 03, ICCT - 2026

LiTS dataset is used, which contains annotated liver and tumor images. The acquired images undergo preprocessing steps including normalization to standardize intensity values, resizing to a fixed dimension, and noise removal to improve image quality. Figure 1 shows the block diagram.

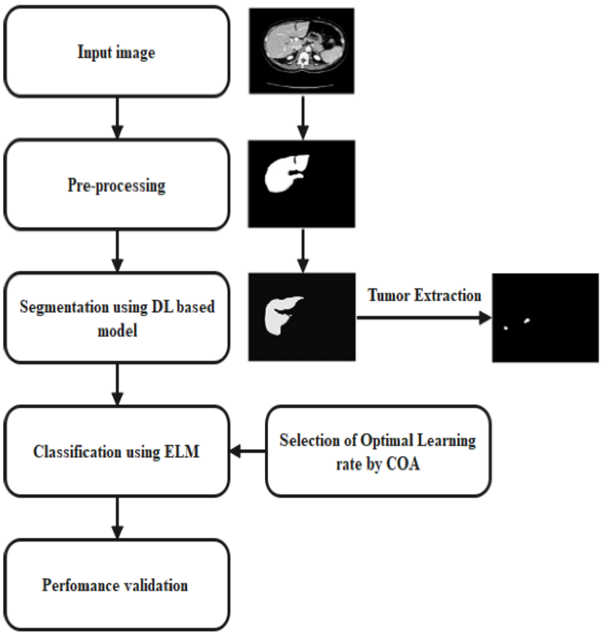

Figure1. Block Diagram

Liver tumor segmentation using deep learning follows a structured workflow to accurately detect tumor regions from CT images. Initially, the input CT scan image is acquired and passed through a preprocessing stage, where noise is removed, intensity values are normalized, and the image is resized to a standard format for better analysis. The preprocessed image is then fed into a deep learning-based segmentation model, which isolates the liver region from the background. From this segmented liver, tumor regions are extracted to identify abnormal areas. To enhance the training efficiency and performance of the model, the optimal learning rate is selected using the Cuckoo Optimization Algorithm (COA). Subsequently, an Extreme Learning Machine (ELM) classifier is used to classify the extracted regions as tumor or non-tumor. Finally, the overall performance of the system is validated using evaluation metrics such as accuracy, Dice coefficient, and other relevant measures to ensure the effectiveness and reliability of the proposed approach.

A. Proposed Method

The proposed method presents an efficient approach for liver tumor segmentation using deep learning techniques combined with optimization and classification methods. Initially, CT scan images are collected and subjected to preprocessing steps such as noise removal, normalization, and resizing to enhance image quality. The preprocessed images are then fed into a deep learning-based segmentation model, which accurately extracts the liver region from the background. From the segmented liver, tumor regions are identified and isolated using appropriate feature extraction techniques. To improve the training performance of the model, the optimal learning rate is selected using the Cuckoo Optimization Algorithm (COA), which enhances convergence speed and segmentation accuracy. Furthermore, an Extreme Learning Machine (ELM) classifier is employed to classify the extracted regions into tumor and non-tumor categories. Finally, the effectiveness of the proposed method is evaluated using standard performance metrics such as Dice Similarity Coefficient, accuracy, precision, and recall, demonstrating improved accuracy and reliability compared to traditional methods.

B. Preprocessing

Preprocessing is an essential step in liver tumor segmentation to improve the quality of CT images and enhance the performance of the deep learning model. Initially, the acquired CT scan images undergo normalization to standardize the intensity values, particularly the Hounsfield Units, ensuring consistency across different scans. The images are then resized to a fixed dimension (such as 256×256) to match the input requirements of the model and reduce computational complexity. To further improve image quality, noise removal techniques such as Gaussian or median filtering are applied to eliminate unwanted artifacts present in the scans. Additionally, the region of interest (liver area) may be emphasized to reduce background interference. Data augmentation techniques, including rotation, flipping, scaling, and translation, are also performed to increase the diversity of the dataset and prevent overfitting during model training. These preprocessing steps collectively enhance feature extraction and contribute to more accurate and reliable tumor segmentation.

C. Algorithm Used

The proposed system utilizes a combination of deep learning and optimization algorithms to achieve accurate liver tumor segmentation and classification.

1) *U-Net (Deep Learning Algorithm):* U-Net is a convolutional neural network widely used for medical image segmentation. It follows an encoder–decoder architecture with skip connections. The encoder extracts features, while the decoder reconstructs the segmented output. It is used to segment the liver and tumor regions from CT images.

2) *Cuckoo Optimization Algorithm (COA):* COA is a nature-inspired optimization algorithm based on the breeding behavior of cuckoo birds. It is used to select the optimal learning rate for training the deep learning model. This helps improve convergence speed and overall model accuracy.

3) *Extreme Learning Machine (ELM):* ELM is a fast learning algorithm for single-layer feedforward neural networks. It is used for classification of segmented regions into tumor and non-tumor classes. It provides high speed and good generalization performance.

D. Dataset

The dataset in Figure 2 is the Liver Tumor Segmentation (LiTS) dataset, which is a publicly available benchmark dataset for liver and tumor segmentation tasks. It consists of contrast-enhanced abdominal CT scan images collected from multiple medical institutions. The dataset includes both normal and abnormal liver cases with varying tumor sizes, shapes, and locations, making it suitable for training robust deep learning models. Before feeding into the model, the dataset undergoes preprocessing steps such as normalization of Hounsfield Units, resizing, and data augmentation techniques like rotation and flipping to improve generalization. The use of the LiTS dataset enables effective comparison with existing methods and ensures the reliability of the proposed liver tumor segmentation approach. The use of the LiTS dataset allows for standardized comparison with existing methods and ensures that the proposed model achieves reliable and reproducible results in liver tumor segmentation tasks.

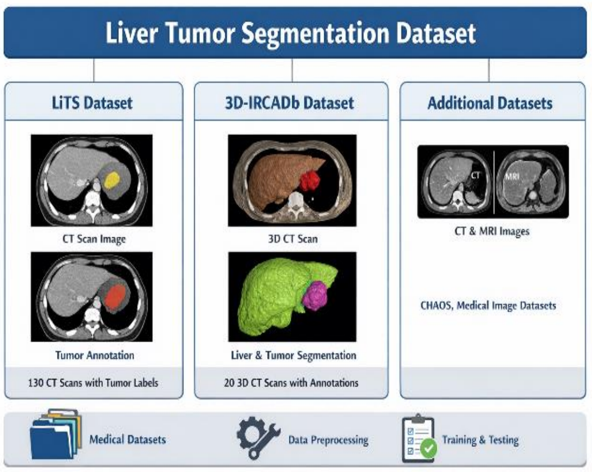

Figure 2. Dataset

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the proposed liver tumor segmentation system shown in Figure 3 is carried out using a deep learning framework to ensure accurate and efficient processing of CT scan images. Initially, the dataset is loaded and preprocessed through normalization, resizing, and augmentation techniques to prepare it for model training. The system is developed using programming languages such as Python along with deep learning libraries like TensorFlow or PyTorch. A U-Net-based convolutional neural network is implemented for segmenting the liver and tumor regions from the input CT images. The model is trained using annotated data with loss functions such as Dice loss and binary cross-entropy, and optimized using the Adam optimizer. To enhance model performance, the Cuckoo Optimization Algorithm (COA) is applied to determine the optimal learning rate, improving convergence speed and segmentation accuracy. After training, the model is tested on unseen data to generate segmentation masks for tumor regions. These segmented outputs are further processed and classified using the Extreme Learning Machine (ELM) to distinguish between tumor and non-tumor areas. The entire system is executed on a system with sufficient computational resources, such as a GPU-enabled environment, to handle large medical image data efficiently. Finally, the performance of the implemented model is evaluated using standard metrics, confirming the effectiveness of the proposed approach.

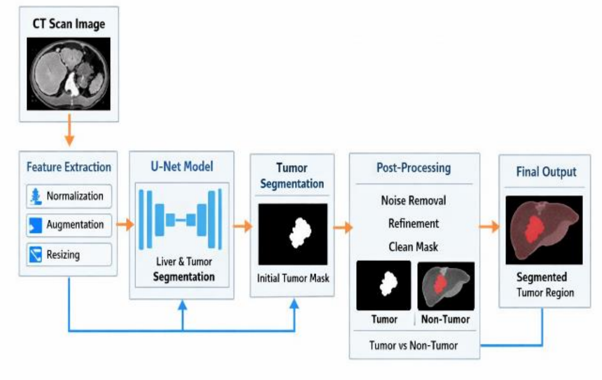

Figure 3. Implementation Diagram

The output of the proposed liver tumor segmentation system represents the final processed result obtained after passing the CT scan image through multiple stages. Initially, relevant features are extracted from the input image to capture important patterns. These features are then fed into the U-Net model, which performs accurate segmentation by identifying the liver and tumor regions. The tumor segmentation stage produces a binary mask where the tumor areas are highlighted distinctly from the surrounding tissues. Finally, postprocessing techniques are applied to refine the segmented output by removing noise and false positives, resulting in a clean and precise visualization of the tumor region. This output helps in better diagnosis and analysis by clearly indicating the location, shape, and size of the liver tumor.

V. CONCLUSION

Accurate segmentation of liver tumors is a critical task in medical image analysis, as it plays an important role in early diagnosis and effective treatment planning for liver cancer patients. Traditional image processing methods often fail to provide accurate results due to noise, low contrast, and variations in tumor shape and size. To overcome these challenges, the proposed system utilizes a deep learning model based on the U-Net architecture. The system includes multiple stages such as image preprocessing, feature extraction, model training, and tumor segmentation. Preprocessing techniques improve image quality, while the deep learning model.

VI. FUTURE ENHANCEMENT

Although the proposed deep learning-based liver tumor segmentation system provides accurate results, there is still scope for further improvement. Future work can focus on using advanced deep learning architectures such as Attention U-Net, Transformer-based models, and hybrid networks to improve segmentation accuracy. The performance of the model can be enhanced by training on

International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (IJERT)
ISSN: 2278-0181
Vol. 14, Issue 03, ICCT - 2026

larger and more diverse datasets collected from different medical sources. Additionally, incorporating 3D segmentation techniques can help capture spatial information more effectively from volumetric CT images.

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